„Sorg að segja“: The Language of Negative Emotions in Eddic Poetry

Ritgerð til M.A.-prófs

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Leiðbeinandi: Sif Ríkharðsdóttir
January 2018
I thought I was mistaken, I thought I heard your words
Tell me how do I feel? Tell me now, how do I feel?
- Blue Monday, New Order, 1983
Acknowledgments

This thesis has been written in many different countries, mostly in Iceland, Italy, and Austria. I am thankful to each one of those places. Also, this thesis would have hardly been completed without the help of some people, to whom I owe my gratitude.

First, I would like to thank my supervisor, Sif Ríkharðsdóttir, for her understanding, her constant support, her sound advice, and for her enthusiasm in my work. Sif represents an outstanding example of brilliant and dedicated scholar, with whom I heartily wish to continue to work. Many thanks also must go to Haraldur Bernharðsson, who kindly agreed to forward me the electronic edition of the Codex Regius.

Others must also be thanked now, those friends and colleagues who helped me out to navigate my feelings. I would like to thank Roberto, for being the most caring, demanding, straightforward, and loyal friend I’ve met along this road. Many heartfelt thanks also go to those who made my year in Iceland a memorable experience: to Jaka, for challenging me in every debate; to Elsa and to Giulia, for their loving support and understanding; to my classmates, especially to Embla; and to Julián, for the place he earned. To my lovely friends and flatmates Arléne, Piergiorgio and Francesco, for their daily care, for all the shared moments, and for being always close to me.

Many thanks go to all my friends, near and far, who supported me in every moment. A special mention goes to those who visited me up there: to Jay; to Camilla, to Flavia, to Caterina; to Gaia; to Chiara. Sharing with you my life in Reykjavík and what Iceland means to me proved me that, wherever I will go, you will always be next to me, unquestionably on my side.

I wish to express my gratitude to Selene for being an amazing friend, who always made time to listen to my worries, and proofreaded this thesis for the price of a hug.

I am thankful also to my workmates from The Deli, Yaroslav, Dima, Andréy and Daniel. To them I say Спасибо and köszönöm for their patience and support in teamwork, which was necessary to complete my project.

Last but not the least, I owe endless gratitude to my family for their unconditioned support, which made possible the accomplishment of this degree.

Questa tesi è dedicata a mia madre.
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Abstract

The main aim of this thesis is to explore the network of lexical items for “grief” and “sorrow”, as they appear in the poetic materials gathered in the Poetic Edda. Compared to other lexical domains, multi-layered emotions such as grief and sorrow have received little attention in the scholarly discourse on the conceptualization of emotions in pre-modern ages. In her survey of the vocabulary of emotions in Old Norse-Icelandic, Carolyne Larrington wished for a novel approach in studying emotion concepts in medieval texts, one which focused on the mapping of co-occurrences and contrasts in the lexicon (2001, 254). This thesis has been conceived with the purpose of developing this initial suggestion further.

For the present thesis, I have conducted a fine-grain analysis on lexemes and expressions which denote ‘grief’ or ‘sorrow’ in the eddic poems collected in the Codex Regius manuscript. This research is presented in a database featuring negative emotions, which has in turn enabled me to identify the main trends in the description of troubled emotional states within the selected corpus of texts. I ultimately discuss the strategies which underpins concepts for psychological suffering within the textual body. This process intensifies the perception of the poetic self within the textual environment. The approach utilized in this work combines both a linguistic and literary analyses and is indebted to recent studies in cognitive linguistics on the language of emotions and to other interdisciplinary methodologies in literary analysis of emotional systems in pre-modern texts.

Ágrip


Fyrir ritgerð þessa þá hef ég fíngreint merkingareiningar og orðtök sem tákna hryggleika eða sorg í eddukvæðunum sem varðveitt eru í Konungsþób Eddukvæða. Orðtök og upplýsingar þeim tengdum er að finna í gagnasafni sem fylgir ritgerðinni og hefur að geyma yfirlit yfir neikvæðar tilfinningar í eddukvæðum Konungsþókar. Gagnasafnið hefur gert mér kleift að bera kennsl á ákveðin mêrstur í lýsingum á erfiðum tilfinningum í þeim ljóðum sem varðveitt eru í handritinu. Ëg fjalla einnig um þær aðferðir sem beitt er til að miðla andlegum þjáningum í textanum. Í ritgerðinni er því haldið fram að tilfinningaorð og þær aðferðir sem notaðar eru til að miðla þeim geri okkur kleift að nálgast hið skáldlega sjálf innan textans. Aðferðafærðin sem beitt er hér byggr á bæði málvísindalegra nálgun sem og textagreiningu og dregur dám af nýlegum rannsóknunum í hugrænum málvísindum og ýnsum þverfræðilegum nálgunaraðferðum innan bokmenntarannsóknna á tilfinningum í fornþókmenntum.
Introduction: Worrying about Emotions in the Poetic Edda

Echoing a famous article by Barbara Rosenwein,¹ the purpose of the present thesis is to assess the impact of the language of emotions in eddic poetry. More specifically, this work will analyze the conceptualization of negative emotions in the poetic vocabulary of the Poetic Edda.

For the aims of this thesis, I postulate the existence of a specific layer of lexicon, that is employed in written sources to stage narratively the development of what I define as ‘negative emotions’, understood as emotionally affected states dominated by personal psychological suffering. Consequently, my thesis is built on the presumption of the existence of a set of lexemes that were employed to encode such emotive contents in texts. Additionally, I suggest that a significant amount of those lexemes might be thematically-dependent, and exert a catalyzer function within the textual environment, according to the specific attention that the text devotes to the representation of the inner world of the characters.

In their analyses of the depiction of emotions in Old Icelandic sources,² several scholars have underlined the substantial reticence of the lexical choice which, coupled with an objective narrative tone, has the effect of moving the emotional subtext in the background. They have noticed that emotions in saga narratives are rarely rendered explicitly, but are rather conveyed through somatic changes,³ or metonymically, through what Kirsi Kanerva in her doctoral dissertation defines as “alternative emotional discourse.”⁴ It is generally accepted, however, that a complex discourse on the inner life of the character was not prioritized, at least within the sagas. That does not mean that emotions are absent neither in prose texts nor in the Old Icelandic poetic diction. On the contrary, the sources deploy a specific terminology to qualify cognitive entities like emotions, as the present analysis will prove.⁵

In recent years numerous studies have dealt with the presumed laconic saga style. Carolyne Larrington has warned against the tendency of overlooking the emotional undertones embedded

² Given that this work is focused on the poems of the Codex Regius, as gathered under the label of Poetic Edda, I will usually refer to their language as “Old Icelandic”, thus addressing the tentative reconstruction of such language as recorded in the 12th century written sources. I will rather employ Old Norse/ Old Norse-Icelandic as umbrella-terms in cases in which I am considering in its broadest sense the literary tradition pertaining medieval Iceland and the sphere of influence of the Norwegian court, from the eleventh to fourteenth century.
in saga narratives. Other scholars have concentrated not only on the analysis of somatic reactions or performances of emotions, but also on physical gestures and emotive responses such as smiles or tears. Generally, though, not much space has been granted to the study of emotions in Old Icelandic poetic sources. It has indeed been noted also that a thorough discussion on the notion of ‘sorrow’ and ‘grief’ is absent within the broader context of Old Norse studies. The present thesis will try to delve further into the topic, with the aim of shedding light on the representation of instances of what I will refer to as ‘psychological pain’ in the Poetic Edda.

The preferred approach for this thesis will rely on the lexicon. In emphasizing the study of the emotion key-words, I assume Barbara Rosenwein’s theoretical presupposition on emotion studies. In her seminal publication on the history of emotions, Emotional Communities in the early Middle Ages, Rosenwein highlights the relevance of the lexical network embedded in texts, as mode of expression for the underlying emotional discourse, and as primary document to reconstruct the subsumed emotional scenario.

I read related texts, noting all the words, gestures, and cries that signify feelings - or the absence of feelings. I am interested in who is feeling what (or is imagined to feel what), when, and why. I look for narratives within which feelings have a place, and I try to find common patterns within and across texts. I also seek implicit theories -insofar as possible- of emotions, virtues, and vices.

This approach comes nevertheless with some caveats, considering the specificity of my sources. In the absence of a living community of speakers, to proceed with the careful examination of the extant written sources it is necessary to engage in what Antonina Harbus

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6 Larrington, Ibid., 90-91.

has termed “archeology of emotions”. Poetic diction is not the ideal format for this kind of survey, because it adopts a specific lexicon which is frequently more archaic and less common than the one employed in prose writings. In addition, the fixed norms of the metrical system and poetic conventions represent another restraint, which broadens the gap between natural language and recorded textual witnesses.

On the other hand, the poetic diction presents three great advantages, which in my opinion outrank the potential problems associated with it. Firstly, poetry as a textual medium is the preferred space for the expression of the poetic self, which relies on the underpinning of emotions within the text. The inherent dramatic potential of eddic poetry may result in foregrounding of the emotional undertones embedded in the text. Epic poetry depicts heroic deeds, tragedies, battles, and legendary events which call for an immanent sense of pathos as a main feature of the genre. This thesis assumes that this may be of relevance for the usage of emotional vocabulary in the text.

Secondarily, the language employed in poetry is highly imaginative. In this sense, also the more obsolete lexical choices could provide some insights into the culture to which they belonged. An analysis carried out on poetic materials might be checked against the background provided by prose texts, to identify variations in the usage of lexicon. It is fruitful to study the metaphorical domain implied in the deployment of emotion words, especially in the case of metaphors. To be understood, metaphors call for the employment of cognitive strategies, which are rooted in the hard-wired human predisposition for understanding the nuances of figurative language. This process provides insight into the cultural context within emotion words were

13 The term ‘genre’ here is employed with caution, because it belongs to the terminology of modern literary criticism. We do not know much about the perception of ’genres’ in medieval audiences, or whether they were actually perceived or conceived of differences in distinct modes of the literary discourse. It is evident, though, that different sets of literary conventions existed and were in use in the medieval period. Therefore, the applicability of ‘genre’ in the present case must be intended rather loosely.
14 The presupposition is discussed at length by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in the introduction of their seminal book Metaphors We Live By (London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3-25; and it is here assumed as fundamental theoretical stance. Kövecses echoes this position in Metaphor: A Practical Introduction (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1-7. The notion of conceptual metaphor, understood as the merging of two alternatively unrelated conceptual domains, informs Kövecses’ the study of figurative language and metaphorical expressions (Kövecses, Metaphor, 7-12). With their extensive works on emotion terms and their metaphoricity, authors like Lakoff and Johnson and Kövecses have proved the importance of conceptual mapping in understanding the cognitive nature of emotions and their cultural meaning.
embedded, thus enabling the identification of cross-cultural trends in the way emotion metaphors are organized within the language domain.\(^\text{15}\)

Thirdly, poetry in pre-modern and aural societies was understood to be performed orally.\(^\text{16}\) Thus, emotionality played a role in the construction of the meaning through an ongoing negotiation between the audience and the performer.\(^\text{17}\) This thesis will not discuss the strategies of emotional responses in the audience, an issue which is mirrored in the performative aspect of this kind of poetry.\(^\text{18}\) Rather, the focus will be restricted to the lexical analysis of emotion words.

The eddic verses therefore are the starting point for inspecting the nature of the underlying emotive discourse within the Poetic Edda. To do so, I will adopt an approach which traces back to cognitive linguistics. I will rely on the theories in lexical semantics developed by Anna Wierzbicka, and by Wierzbicka alongside with Clive Goddard in their seminal study about semantic primes in natural languages.\(^\text{19}\) In Wierzbicka’s view, emotion concepts are not universals, a point that she assumes after a synchronic analysis of emotion terms in various non-related languages.\(^\text{20}\) Rather, universal are the so-called ‘semantic primes’, the set of prototypical semantic elements which enable the individual to describe his or her cognitive life, volitions, thoughts, actions, geographical and spatial orientations.

Wierzbicka defines those lexical primitives as Natural Semantic Metalanguage [=NSM],\(^\text{21}\) which she furthermore argues are universally disseminated in every human communication

\(^{15}\) This stance lies at the core of Kövecses’ work in the conceptualization of emotions, as explained in his *Metaphor and Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), where he articulates a wide-ranging survey of the tendencies of expressing emotion concepts through the means of metaphorical expressions.


\(^{21}\) Wierzbicka’s definition of NSM will be explained in detail at Chapter 2, given its centrality for this thesis.
According to this view, some instances of the emotional vocabulary pertain to that section of the lexicon which is used to describe emotions, rather than to utter them verbally or vocally, as it might be the case of onomatopoeic expressions. Zoltán Kövecses echoes this distinction in observing the conceptual structure of emotion terms, and he also emphasizes the descriptive nature of this kind of vocabulary. Although Wierzbicka and Kövecses deal with modern languages, also historical languages possessed this repertoire of descriptive lexemes, including Old Norse-Icelandic, as pointed out by Carolyne Larrington.

Wierzbicka engages further with the study of emotion key-terms in a cross-cultural perspective, and her evaluation of emotion words as culture-specific cognitive constructs might be particularly useful in this thesis. NMS will be used to identify the emotion concepts inherent to the text, then to attempt a categorization of the conceptual and metaphorical structure of emotion words, as they are embedded in the eddic poems. This methodological choice will enable me to engage in the discussion of mentalities and cognitive entities, such as emotions, that relate to a cultural framework distant in time and space to the contemporary sensitivity.

A considerable part of the analytical work will therefore be focused on the mapping of the vocabulary for psychological pain in the Poetic Edda, drawing on previous works such as also Díaz-Vera and Manrique Antón’s survey on the lexicon of shame and anger in Old Norse-Icelandic sources, as well as Díaz-Vera’s attempt to cross the boundary between cognitive linguistics and historical sociolinguistics on the conceptualization of anger in Old English. The semantic field of ‘anger’ in Old and Middle English has been the preferred subject of numerous surveys, thus receiving an in-depth attention in scholarly literature on the historical conceptualization of emotions. Particularly insightful in this regard is also Caroline Gevaert

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22 Wierzbicka, Emotion Across Languages, 35-45.
27 The cultural-specificity of emotions will be diffusely addressed in Chapter 2.
29 On this theme, insightful is the recent volume of essays Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Language, Literature and Culture, ed. by Alice Jorgensen, Frances McCormack, Johnathan Wilcox (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), which was fundamental for the present thesis. Carolyne Larrington also signals
and Dirk Geraeert’s long-standing investigation on the semantic development of ‘anger’ across Old and Middle English.\(^30\) The present thesis will seek to combine cognitive linguistics and a more traditional approach in semantic analysis, as in the cases of Györi or Fabiszak,\(^31\) surveys focused on the historical dimension of lexical semantics in Old English sources.

In the first chapter of this thesis I will briefly outline the specificities of my corpus, from the point of view of emotion studies. Chapter 2 offers a definition of emotions and qualifies the concept of ‘negative emotions’, and how they are understood within the framework of the scholarly theories about emotions studies. Then I will provide a definition of GRIEF and SORROW as conceptualized by NMS, to display the prototypical characteristics of the emotional representations I retrieved in the eddic poems. I will then proceed with briefly stating the corpus linguistic methodology in Chapter 3, while in Chapter 4 I will discuss the main emotion lexemes for ‘grief’ and ‘sorrow’. A concluding section will follow, where I summarize the main trends gathered from the linguistic analysis. I eventually decided to provide a database where I discussed every lexeme, which I included as appendix to the present thesis.

the emergence of the emotion cluster of the ‘hostility triad’ of contempt-anger-disgust as one of the most productive research area in the field (see Larrington, “Learning to Feel”, 253).

\(^30\) The theme has been tackled in numerous publications. Just to name a single instance, relevant here is Caroline Gevaert’s doctoral dissertation *The history of ANGER*, discussed at Leuven University in 2007 and electronically available at <https://lirias.kuleuven.be/bitstream/1979/893/2/considered>.

1. The Poetic Edda

The focus of this research is on the lexicon of psychological suffering found in twenty-nine anonymous poems, most likely composed in the thirteenth century (c. 1270) and committed to parchment in a single manuscript, GKS 2365 4°, universally known as Codex Regius or Konungsbók Eddukvæða, currently stored in the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies in Reykjavík.32

The reason for limiting the scope of this research to the corpus of Codex Regius poems is justified by the fact that, as previously stated, neither a date nor the name of a compiler or of an author were recorded along with the eddic verses. Therefore, the Codex Regius manuscript is the sole textual witness of most the poems, as they were transmitted in c. 1270. For the sake of completeness, I decided to investigate the eddic poetry contained in the Codex Regius only, leaving aside the tangential poetic materials, known since Andreas Heusler and Wilhelm Ranisch’s analysis as Eddica Minora, which were gathered from other sources (Snorra-Edda, fornaldrarsögur, historical compilations) and in later manuscripts such as Flateyjarbók.

In a context of fluidity and instability of the textual tradition – Paul Zumthor’s notion of mouvance or Bernard Cerquiglini’s considerations about the philological variante in textual criticism33 -it must be borne in mind that the history of literary texts in medieval period raises specific questions, which must be taken into account in considering eddic poetry.34 More generally, those considerations are mirrored by Hans Robert Jauss’ interpretation of literature in the Middle Ages within the paradigms of Alterität (alterity) and Modernität (modernity).35 In the present case, the interpretation of medieval literature in its alterity constitutes an asset to describe the fluidity of the manuscript transmission, as well as the variety and intertextuality among the Old Norse-Icelandic literary tradition.

33 The notion of mouvance in medieval literary tradition is introduced by Zumthor in “Intertextualité et mouvance.”, Littérature 41/1 (1981), and in his 1972 seminal work Essai de poétique médiévale. For further readings, see Bernard Cerquiglini’s Éloge de la Variante. (Paris: Seuil Editeur, 1989). Within Old Norse studies, Odd Einar Haugen expressed an opposite stance in “The Spirit of Lachmann, the Spirit of Bédier: Old Norse Textual Editing in the Electronic Age”, read at the annual meeting of The Viking Society, University College London, 8 November 2002, electronically available at <http://www.ub.uib.no/elpub/2003/a/522001>.
Several studies aimed at the oral background of eddic poetry.36 Showing a fruitful interplay with the so-called ‘performative turn’, the insights from the oral theory provided a refreshing approach on issues like textual transmission, datation and reading of eddic poetry in context.37 Lars Lönnroth tackled the problem with an article on the so-called “Hjalmar’s Death Song”, a later example of eddic poetry not preserved in Codex Regius, but attested in two fornaldarsaga in different textual variants.38 The emphasis Lönnroth placed on the concept of oral delivery of eddic poetry, supported by a thorough examination of the metrics and the vocabulary of the poems, opened the path to further expansions on the topic, which would lead to several elaborations on the notion of ‘eddic audiences’.39

The rise of the oral theory and the ‘performative turn’ coincided with a revision of the Lachmaniann philological method in textual criticism. The so-called New Philological approach placed a new emphasis on the materiality of each textual witness, thus discarding the Lachmaniann fidelity to a supposed textual archetype as primary source in reconstructing the original text.40 This infused new vitality in the study of material culture during the Middle Ages, but it bears some relevance also for literary studies, particularly if we consider the medieval text as intertwined in its imaginative content and in the circumstances of its transmission. As Joseph Harris contends, “oral studies share some basic beliefs with New Philology: for both, origin and author have less meaning than version and variant (…); a living oral culture is generative, creative, in a similar way, and of course it is traditional, recycling cultural ‘material’ in a similar way”.41

Following these positions, it is now customary to consider the recorded text, in Cerquiglini’s words, as one of the possible varianter of a wider stream of literary tradition which may or may not have been committed to parchment, or perhaps could have been copied in a

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36 Insightful to this extent is Gísli Sigurðsson’s essay “On the Classification of Eddic Heroic Poetry in View of the Oral Theory, in Poetry in the Scandinavian Middle Ages, ed. by Teresa Pàroli (C.I.S.A.M., 1990), 245-255.
37 Examples of this scholarly trend are, for instance Terry Gunnell, The Origins of Drama in Scandinavia (D. S. Brewer: Woodbridge, 1995), or, more broadly, the volume The Textualization of Oral Epic, ed. by Lauri Honko, (Berlin: Mouton deGruyter, 2000).
41 Joseph Harris, “Traditions of Eddic Scholarship”, in A Handbook to Eddic Poetry: Myths and Legends of Early Scandinavia, ed. by Carolyne Larrington, Judy Quinn and Brittany Schorn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 50. This consideration applies well also to the post-modernist approach to the text and to other contemporary tendencies in literary theory, which operated a revision of the relation between the text and its social aspect.
later age and in different manuscripts, as Margaret Clunies Ross points out, “there was more eddic poetry in Icelandic oral tradition than ever made it into written form”. Nowadays it is generally accepted that there was a long tradition of oral background preceding the ultimate written form of eddic poems. It can be assumed then that eddic poetry circulated in Iceland also into the late medieval period, thus remaining somewhat latent in the cultural repertoire of audiences and poets, who might still value the eddic style and its poetic and thematic conventions as closely related to the genre. Brittany Schorn has recently problematized the applicability of the notion of ‘genre’ to eddic poetry in general. Her conclusions partially match the considerations expressed above, especially in the tentative definition of some generic markers within the eddic style, even though she rejects a clear-cut definition for genre in the case of the Poetic Edda. To quote an observation by Joseph Harris, however, “literary history must begin somewhere”. The lexical approach privileged for the present thesis presupposes the existence of a given text, which must be studied and analyzed in its specific codicological form, the one which has been received by the modern scholarly audience.

The significance of the eddic tradition transmitted in GKS 2365 for the understanding of Old Norse-Icelandic culture, and for the Icelandic cultural identity, is indisputable, as well as its pervasiveness in the Western fictional imaginary through the reception of Germanic epos. Secondly, the eddic poetry transmitted in the Codex Regius has been chosen for several other motives. The intention here is not to draw conclusions about the contextual influence of previous

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42 This is particularly striking in the case of prose narratives. As sufficient example I will mention the case of Njáls saga. The saga reckons a total of 60 manuscripts, only 21 of which originate from the medieval period. None of the medieval sources contains the complete text of the saga. Further insights on the topic are outlined in Emily Lethbridge “Hvorki glansar gull à mér/ né glæstir stafir í línum’. Some observations on Íslendingasögur manuscripts and the case of Njáls saga”, Arkiv för nordisk filologi 129, 2014 55-89.
44 This position echoes Shaun Hughes’ assumptions in his article “‘Where Are All the Eddic Champions Gone?’ The Disappearance and Recovery of the Eddic Heroes in Late Medieval Icelandic Literature, 1400–1800”, Viking and Medieval Scandinavia 9, 2013, 37-67. An analogous conclusion surfaces also in the closing remarks of Theodore Andersson in his examination of history of emotions in eddic poetry (cfr. Andersson “Is There a History of Emotions?”, 203), where he considers the elegiac undertone of some eddic lays as a genre-related feature.
47 On the issue, see Gísli Sigurðsson, “Bring the manuscript home!”, in: The Manuscripts of Iceland, ed. by Gísli Sigurðsson and Vesteinn Olason (Reykjavik: Arni Magnússon Institute of Iceland, 2004), 171-77. More generally, leaving aside the countless and diverse stunning examples from literature, visual arts, and music throughout the centuries, it might be sufficient to mention here the hyper-contemporary case of the spaghetti Western revisionist movie Django Unchained by Tarantino (2012), in which the parable of the black hero Django is openly compared to Sigurðr’s trial to obtain Brynhildr, although the reference points out to Richard Wagner’s Tetralogie in the first place.
and contemporary sources on eddic poetry, or about the pre-history of the poems: thorny issues which are difficult to ascertain, given the controversial aspects of textual transmission in medieval times briefly delineated above. Instead, the main interest here is to interrogate the text in the form in which it has been committed to parchment in Iceland in c.1270. To this regard, another reason to choose the eddic poems as subject of the present analysis relates to the structure of Codex Regius manuscript.

The first ten poems are centered on mythological narrations, gnomic wisdom, the cosmogony, and cosmology of the medieval Scandinavian cultural mindset. The following nineteen compositions relate to the heroic legends of some legendary heroes, such as Helgi Hundingsbani and Völundr the Smith, while the major cluster of poems focuses on the Nibelung tradition and the epos of Sigurðr the Dragon Slayer and the Burgundian clan. Those epic narratives were well-known in other Germanic literatures of the Middle Ages and disseminated in a broad geographical area, which stretched from the British Isles to Scandinavia, including a flourishing tradition on the Continent.48

The thematic progression in which the materials are arranged in the Codex Regius, coupled with the fact that signs of editorial practices are clearly visible in the manuscript itself (annotations in the *marginalia*, short prose explanations, introductory passages to bridge from one strophe to another), represents a convincing proof of the overall coherence of the text. This suggests at least one editorial mind that shaped the contents of the collection according to an identifiable rationale, or that possessed a clearer understanding or perception of ‘eddic poetry’.49

The major problem with the Codex Regius manuscript, though, is a lacuna of 8 leaves placed in the middle of the parchment, which resulted in a loss of approximately 200 stanzas.50 Consequently, the heroic and wisdom poem *Sigrdrífumál* has been transmitted incomplete, while the following composition, *Brot af Sigurdarkviðu*, is highly fragmentary and consists of 22 stanzas only. The nature of the content that has been lost has given rise to a lot of speculations,51 although some of it may be inferred directly only through the prose account of

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48 It falls beyond the aims of this thesis to review the astonishing variety of sources which document the fortune of the Germanic heroic legends in the Middle Ages and in post-medieval times, from runestone carvings onwards. To this extent, a comprehensive survey is outlined in The Nibelungen Tradition. An Encyclopedia, ed. by Frank Gentry, Winder McConnell, Ulrich Müller, Werner Wunderlich, (New York; London: Routledge, 2002).


50 The codicological aspect of the Codex Regius has been checked with the aid of *Konungsþób Eddukverða*. Codex Regius: *Stofnun Arna Magnússonar á Íslandi Gl.Kgl.Sml. 2365 4to*. Vésteinn Ólason ritaði inngang; Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson rístýrði textum, (Reykjavík: Lögberg, 2001).

51 A seminal publication on this topic is Heusler, Andreas, *Die Lieder der Lüke im Codex Regius der Edda*. (Strassburg: Verlag K.J. Trübner, 1902), as well as Theodore Andersson’s study The Legend of Brynhild (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980).
Völsunga saga and later sources. The leading view, supported by Vesteinn Ólason among others, holds true that a long and fully detailed sentimental poem about Sigurðr, Brynhildr and Guðrún was completely lost in the missing folios. Apart from the lacuna, however, the overall manuscript is in a good state of preservation.

From a thematic point of view, eddic poetry is admittedly distinct from skaldic poetry, the other traditional poetic diction of Old Norse-Icelandic literature, because it does not presuppose a eulogistic and memorial function, and it is not anchored neither to authorial figures, nor to any contextual historical event. Skaldic poetry, on the other hand, is strongly connected with the authority of the skald, the poet of the medieval Scandinavian courts, who through his poetic voice was responsible for shaping the collective memory of the kings’ deeds and to connect them to plausible historical circumstances.

The eddic poems of Codex Regius are, however, purely fictional. In this sense, they deploy different cognitive strategies to elicit an emotive response in the receiver, and they appeal directly to the imaginary of the audience. Although problematic, the contemporary appreciation of pre-modern epic poetry relies on the fact that they appeal to the so-called universal ‘reading mind’, which is rooted in the human predisposition for narratives and imaginative literature and shared in different degrees by every human audience, regardless of cultural contingencies. This cognitive apparatus allows a modern as well as an ancient audience to interpret narratives, draw inferences, and build up horizons of expectation while approaching a literary text.

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53 Further readings about the role of skaldic poetry in Old Norse society are suggested in Guðrún Nordal’s study Tools of Literacy: The Role of Skaldic Verse in Icelandic Textual Culture of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2001).
54 Examples of generic hybridity are nonetheless attested. Þornbjǫrn hornklofi’s Haraldskvædi, the anonymous Eiríksmál and Eyvindr skáldaspillir’s Húkonarmál are eulogistic poems in praise of kings written in eddic metre. For a circumstantiated analysis of those sources, see Poetry from the Kings’ Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035, ed. by Diana Whaley. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012).
56 On this note, aside from Erin Michelle Goeres’ survey The Poetics of Commemoration, a brilliant contribution is Roberta Frank’s paper “Why Skalds Address Women”, in: Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages. Atti del 12o Congresso Internazionale di Studi sull’Alto Medioevo, ed. by Teresa Pàroli (Spoleto: C.I.S.A.M., 1990), 67-83. For a subtler reading of the distinction between eddic and skaldic poetry, see Martin Chase, Eddic, Skaldic, and Beyond: Poetic Variety in Medieval Iceland and Norway (Fordham: Fordham University Press, 2014).
In this sense, the poetic verse implies constant negotiations between the audience and the text in the meaning-making process, a feature which is immanent to every literary text, but which is particularly striking in the poetic genre in itself due to its figurative language. To this regard, it might be particularly useful to consider Ellen Spolsky’s notion of “cognitive gaps” in the ongoing interaction between text and audience, understood as productive devices in the process of meaning-making in fictional literature. As Antonina Harbus states, “we might ask what sort of mental operations were anticipated by the creators of literary texts, especially those involving a high degree of imaginative and creative work on the part of the recipient, such as poetic texts, and also how we are able to interpret those same texts over one thousand year later.”

According to those views, poetry represents a fruitful ground for this line of enquiry. This holds true especially for the compositions transmitted in the Codex Regius. In fact, the poems might be appreciated not only in their linguistic content, but also as the ultimate crystalized element of an oral tradition which was imbued with the principle of storytelling, and presumed an informed audience that was able to successfully carry out the process of sense-making on one side, and to respond to the emotive contents contained in the poems on the other.

There is, however, an ulterior reason which needs to be clarified. The present thesis will consider primarily the nature of emotion words; therefore, the starting point of my argument will be the lexicon. This raises a crucial question, because poetry resorts to a specific learned vocabulary and to figurative language, which cannot be considered relevant for the common basic vocabulary of Old Icelandic as a whole.

In this, I am taking into account Carol Biggam’s criticism about the use of poetic language in her sociolinguistic analysis of Old English basic color lexemes, where she underscores the specificities of poetic vocabulary regarding its degree of refinement. Other critical aspects might be gathered from Kathryn Allan’s claim for the completeness of the chosen corpus, a stable assumption in corpus linguistic.

As discussed above, the communicative needs fulfilled by the epic nature of eddic poetry were of different nature. Thus, the eddic verses might be the ideal object of this study, precisely

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60 Harbus, Cognitive Approaches, 19.
62 Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, Introduction: Exploring the State of the Art in Historical Semantics, in: Current Methods in Historical Semantics, ed. by Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2012), 24. In the present case, however, the intention is not to provide an exhaustive review of the language of sorrow in the whole Old Norse-Icelandic literary corpus. This work is rather focused on a single literary text and intends to draw conclusions primarily in the conceptualization of a cluster of emotions within a specific literary tradition.
because they purport fictional events which are supposed to be appreciated by an audience also in their foregrounded emotive contents, if we assume that every literary text functions to elicit an esthetic and emotive response in its receivers. Following this statement, the necessary assumption will be that the information about the emotional content of a literary work should be in some way mirrored in its lexicon, whose correct understanding is a prerequisite to make sense of the emotional undertones embedded in the text.

Although Anglo-Saxon, Old and Middle English sources have received a great deal of scholarly attention, Old Norse-Icelandic documents have not been thoroughly examined in this respect so far. This must be ascribed to various reasons. Firstly, Old English poetry counts numerous examples of composition centered on the ‘self’, which displays a surprisingly rich cognitive life. The ‘Old English Elegies’ from Codex Exoniensis engage actively with the theme of retrospective meditations, and emotional undertones such as sorrow, grief, personal loss, and despair. This does not happen in the case of Old Icelandic, where purely elegiac laments, focused on the individual mindset of the character in the fashion of the Exeter Book’s elegies, are not easily retrieved. Sorrow, grief, and melancholy are notions widely expressed in Old English literature, whether of Christian influence or not, and the deployment of emotion words in this context often results in a surprisingly rich lexical choice.

The presence of the doleful poetic voice is generally recognized as a feature of the elegiac genre. This does not necessarily hold true for Old Icelandic poetic tradition, in which the

63 Oatley, “A Taxonomy”, 57.
65 Aside from the numerous examples mentioned in the Introduction, exceptions are William Ian Miller’s volume Humiliation and other essays on honor, social discomfort, and violence (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1993). Another trend is represented by a solid body of works centered on the emotional discourse in translated rídarasögur and Arthurian romances: see Carolyne Larrington’s article “Learning to Feel in Old Norse Camelot?” Scandinavian Studies 87/1 (2015), 74-94. Awaited is a comprehensive survey of the topic which may tackle the issue within the Old Norse-Icelandic context, such as Sif Rikhardsdottir’s monograph Emotion in Old Norse Literature. Translations, Voices, Contexts (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2017).
The notion of ‘elegiac poems’ is problematic and continues to be hotly debated.\textsuperscript{71} In short, the meditation upon the self in Old Norse-Icelandic sources seems to be a less explored theme.\textsuperscript{72} In addition, the reticence of Old Norse-Icelandic literature in deploying emotional vocabulary might be considered a stable assumption in the field, even though ‘reticence’ should not be understood as ‘absence’, as some scholars warn.\textsuperscript{73} The notion of metonymical displacement of pain and sympathy in sagas is on point here,\textsuperscript{74} although Miller’s premises are too centered on a legalistic point of view to be of use in the present thesis. Another consistent problem evidenced by Sif Rikhardsdottir in the examination of Old Norse-Icelandic translations of Old French romances is that “in the Norse text there is a reduction both in the quantity of emotion words used and the variety of such words”,\textsuperscript{75} a point underscored also by Larrington.\textsuperscript{76} This assumption enlightens the complexities of introducing a specific emotional discourse into a different culture, which lacked the analogous emotive perception.\textsuperscript{77}

The prose sources resort often to circumvoluted strategies to signal emotional alterations, as convincingly showed by Kirsi Kanerva.\textsuperscript{78} In terms of narrative strategies for the literary enactment of female agency, Jenny Jochens noticed an analogous discrepancy, a thought further expanded by Zoe Borowski with respects to sagas,\textsuperscript{79} and more recently by Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir in exploring the subversive features of female speech acts in the Edda.\textsuperscript{80} In eddic poetry, The discussion traces back to Andreas Heusler’s and Wolfgang Mohr’s approaches to the theme at the beginning of 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Their interpretation of some poems of the Edda stressed the difference in content and style within the collection of lays. The supposed discrepancy between an ‘older’ layer of heroic poems, more objective, and a ‘younger’ set of poems centered on female mourning and elegy was later called into questions (Gísli Sigurðsson “On the Classification”). Many scholars addressed the problem, in order to elucidate the nature of the ‘elegiac’ features of those compositions. For instance, Ulrike Sprenger and Daniel Sävborg delineated two opposite theoretical stances, in addressing the origin of the ‘eddic elegies’, as in Ulrike Sprenger, \textit{Die Altnordische Heroische Elegie} (Berlin: deGruyter, 1992), and in Daniel Sävborg “Elegy in Eddic Poetry: Its Origin and Context”, in \textit{Revisiting the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Heroic Legend}, ed. by Paul Acker and Carolyne Larrington (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 81-106. Harris especially profited of the parallelism with other West Germanic poetic traditions, such Old High German and Old English, as seen in Joseph Harris, “Elegy in Old English and Old Norse. A Problem in Literary History”, in \textit{The Old English Elegies}, ed. by Martin Green (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983), 47-50.

\textsuperscript{71} The discussion traces back to Andreas Heusler’s and Wolfgang Mohr’s approaches to the theme at the beginning of 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Their interpretation of some poems of the Edda stressed the difference in content and style within the collection of lays. The supposed discrepancy between an ‘older’ layer of heroic poems, more objective, and a ‘younger’ set of poems centered on female mourning and elegy was later called into questions (Gísli Sigurðsson “On the Classification”). Many scholars addressed the problem, in order to elucidate the nature of the ‘elegiac’ features of those compositions. For instance, Ulrike Sprenger and Daniel Sävborg delineated two opposite theoretical stances, in addressing the origin of the ‘eddic elegies’, as in Ulrike Sprenger, \textit{Die Altnordische Heroische Elegie} (Berlin: deGruyter, 1992), and in Daniel Sävborg “Elegy in Eddic Poetry: Its Origin and Context”, in \textit{Revisiting the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Heroic Legend}, ed. by Paul Acker and Carolyne Larrington (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 81-106. Harris especially profited of the parallelism with other West Germanic poetic traditions, such Old High German and Old English, as seen in Joseph Harris, “Elegy in Old English and Old Norse. A Problem in Literary History”, in \textit{The Old English Elegies}, ed. by Martin Green (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983), 47-50.

\textsuperscript{72} Heslop, “Gab mir ein Gott”, 154–157.


\textsuperscript{74} William Ian Miller, “Feeling Another’s Pain: Sympathy and Psychology Saga Style”, \textit{European Review} 22/1 (2014), 61-64.


\textsuperscript{76} Larrington, “Learning to Feel”, 76–77.


\textsuperscript{78} Kanerva, \textit{Porous Bodies}, 31.


women are leading figures with active agency, while in prose writings they seem to exert a more nuanced role, which recurs often to indirect means. The parallelism could be applied as well to the displacement of emotion undertones in sagas.\(^{81}\)

To sum up, in Kövecses and Wierzbicka’s terminology,\(^{82}\) this thesis concentrates on the descriptive language of emotions, as opposed to the expressive one.\(^{83}\) To this extent, the primary interest of this work are the cognitive labels employed in text to describe concepts of psychological sorrow.


\(^{82}\) Kövecses, Metaphor and Emotion, 3-4; Wierzbicka, Emotion Across Languages, 22-41.

2. Understanding Negative Emotions:

What We Talk About When We Talk About Sorrow

Hv, 118:
« Sorg etr hjarta
ef þú segja né náir
einhverjum allan hug. »

[Sorrow eats the heart
if you are not able to express
to someone all your concern.]

2.1. State of the Art in Emotion Studies

Jennifer Radden observes that, in post-medieval times, poetry and literature reflect the ideal space for the lyrical expression of the poetic self, which often results in an emphasis on a melancholic and retrospective look to the past. Countless examples reveal however that an interest in the cognitive life and in the emotional mindscape of the poetic self was perceivable in the Western literary culture since the Antiquity and the early medieval period.

A long tradition of studies in history of emotions advocated for the cultural dependence of conceptualization of emotions, thus suggesting that the present-day emotion concepts generally do not overlap with their past antecedents. Much of the appeal of pre-modern literature for contemporary audiences is therefore connected to the appreciation of the emotional undertones embedded in a text, and to the ability of processing them in light of the personal emotive experience of the receiver. In short, a text might resonate with audiences distant in time and space also because of its ability to elicit an affective response, mediated through the experience of its inherent aesthetic pleasure. I assume as foundation for the present thesis that the emotive contents purported in a text are conveyed mainly through the means of literary discourse. This view underscores the substantial discursive nature of emotion concepts and their relevance from the point of view of semantics and linguistics, as general categorizations employed

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88 I adopt here the theoretical stance proposed by Oatley, “A Taxonomy”, 55-64, which is relevant for narratology as well. Further insights on medieval studies are addressed in Sif Rikharsdottir, “Medieval Emotionality: The Feeling Subject in Medieval Literature”, Comparative Literature 69/1 (2017), 76.
in the human mind to label complex cognitive constructs such as emotions. For ‘emotional discourse’, I employ here the definition proposed by Derek Edwards regarding the discursive nature of emotion talk, understood in its loosest sense:

> Emotion terms occur not merely as one-off descriptions of specific acts or reactions, but as parts of interrelated sets of terms that implicate each other (syntagmatically) in narrative sequences, and also (paradigmatically) in rhetorically potent contrasts between alternative descriptions. Narrative sequence and rhetorical contrast are ways of talking about things, ways of constructing the sense of events, and orienting to normative and moral orders, to responsibility and blame, intentionality, and social evaluation. Emotion categories […] are discursive phenomena and can be studied as such. 89

Anna Wierzbicka assumes the centrality of words in understanding emotion categories. 90 In her view, we employ language to categorize the cognitive processes that express our emotional life, and to give them a name. 91 Merriam-Webster Dictionary offers the following definition of ‘emotion’ in Present-Day English: « a: the affective aspect of consciousness; b: a state of feeling; c: a conscious mental reaction (such as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feeling usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body. » As it seems, this definition encompasses the cognitive aspect and the physical aspect of emotionality as well, a point that reflects Kövecses’ notion of “Embodied Cultural Prototype” in his analysis of metaphorical conceptualizations of emotions. 92

The English word ‘emotion’ entered the lexicon via the Old French emouvour, originally stemming from the Latin e-movere. In all those senses, the idea of a stirring up movement which agitates the body remains at the foundation. In fact, the word originates from the same Proto Indo-European root of many verbs and substantives which designate the physical concept of motion (f. e. commotion, movement, momentum, mobile, move, promote). 93 After the 16th century the meaning of the term started to indicate morbidity and intemperance, on one side, or movements of the mind, on the other, whilst the current usage is attested only from the

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early 19th century onwards. ‘Emotion’, observes Andrew Lynch, is a modern word,94 which is not smoothly translatable in every contemporary language,95 and which does not fully entail the medieval notion of passio animae, more accurate on an historical point of view.96 On the other hand, “passions” it is too semantically-connoted to translate passio animae successfully, given its reference to the biblical Passion of Christ and to its late romantic offshoot. ‘Feeling’ has been considered less accurate as key-term in the scientific discourse on emotionality, and not without reason. Taking after the theories of Catherine Lutz and Michelle Rosaldo, Wierzbicka points out that ‘feeling’ entails primarily the reference to the biological dimension, while ‘emotion’ conveys the cognitive and cultural aspects as well.97 The assumption seems to be stable in the scholarly discourse, given that it reverberates not only in Solomon’s philosophical definition of emotion for the Handbook of Emotions,98 but also in Kövecses’ hierarchical organization of emotion terms on a linguistic dimension. In his view, ‘emotion’ is the prototypical superordinate entity which subsumes the notion of ‘feeling’ as subordinate.99

Modern Icelandic employs tilfinning indifferently for “emotion” and “feeling”. Old Icelandic utilizes the feminine noun hræring,100 “motion, movement”, and the compound hugar-hræring, “movements of the mind”, to convey the concept of ‘emotion’.101 The ONP gives both meanings, but the dictionaries emphasize the attested usage of the first word over the second, which occurs only in two cases from a late manuscript of Árna saga byskups, as showed in Fritzner’s Ordbog too.

The semantic root of hræring is the weak verb hræra, which relates to the cognate development of English rear, Danish røre and Old High German hruorian, resulted in the verb rühren, a productive lexeme in German that entails the reference to an agitating force that unsettles the body, conveying the idea of ‘stirring up’. Leaving the semantic aspect aside, though, it must be
noticed that hræring’s first meaning as “movement, motion” was predominant. Both Cleasby-Vigfússon and ONP report the extended meaning of “disturbance of the mind” as directly glossed from the Latin perturbatio animi in Stjórni and in other translations of learned Christian prose, including a reference found in a 16th century manuscript of Elucidarius. Overall, the formulation matches the bodily foundation of emotion concepts and their relevance for metaphorical source domains connected with physical perceptions. In this sense, hugar·hræring might roughly correspond to what we call ‘emotions’, despite the scanty attestations of the word in the sources.

From a psychological dimension, Paul Ekman has carried out a longstanding analysis of the biological basis of emotions in several studies. He grounds his enquiry in the universal recognition of facial expressions, thus he argues for the existence of six “basic or primary emotions”, codified modes of emotive responses that he claims are universal. Those “basic emotions” are identified as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise, and their codification was considered as independent from any cultural contingencies. Historians concerned with the history of emotions have, on the other hand, underlined the impossibility to trace a universal psychological standard for past societies, thus emphasizing the cultural relativity which informs the shifts in the emotional discourse throughout the ages.

Wierzbicka, alongside with Goddard, dismisses the universalist approach to emotions as ethnocentric and arbitrary, perhaps tailored on the English language, which was prevalent in the scholarly discourse about emotions. Well-known is Lutz’s argument against universalism, when in her study she attempted a translation of the Ifaluk emotions of fago and

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103 Wierzbicka, Emotions Across Languages, 4-5.
105 Ekman’s methodology echoes Berlin and Kay’s groundbreaking research in basic color terms in cross-linguistic perspective. For further readings, see Berlin, Brent, and Kay, Paul, Basic Color Terms. Their Universality and Evolution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).
106 Ekman’s theory was indebted to the traditional biological approach to emotions, which interpreted them as bodily reactions to external stimuli. The influence of this model ultimately traces back to William James’ views, expressed in his famous 1884 article “What is an Emotion?”, and to Darwin’s evolutionism (for a review, see also Solomon, “The Philosophy of Emotions”, 17).
107 This has been thoroughly discussed within emotion studies from an anthropological and an historical dimension. Barbara Rosenwein summarizes the main trends and adopt this perspective as fundamental assumption, which is also implied in the theoretical background of this thesis (Rosenwein, Emotional Communities, 5-25).
108 Insightful is Stearns and Stearns’ evaluation of the emotional shift in maternal affection and childcare in the Western society after the Industrial Revolution (Stearns and Stearns “Clarifying the History”, 816-824).
110 Wierzbicka, Emotion Across Languages, 9.
song, extremely relevant for the Ifaluk mentality, but untranslatable within the Western mindset. Challenging the ‘universalist’ view, studies in anthropology, history, and linguistics have developed a ‘componential’ theory of emotions, which understand them as primarily influenced by factors of social and cultural nature. The componential approach considers emotions as multi-layered cognitive entities, originated by various combinations of the same set of basic emotions, which some scholars consider to possess certain biological component (the bodily outcome of the emotive reaction), but whose codification is nonetheless culturally-dependent. This has given rise to the ‘appraisal-response theory’ of emotions, which considers emotive reactions as a form of negotiation within the human interchange, with the aim of fulfilling specific goals. The most relevant aim is the achievement of personal satisfaction. According to this view, emotions guide the actions of the individual, following culturally-bounded behavioral and physiological patterns, also defined by Johnson-Laird and Oatley as ‘emotional signals’.

The consequence is that the individual cognitively ‘appraises’ the emotion according to different values (positivity/negativity; pleasure/discomfort), to assess whether or not it will serve his or her specific purposes. This approach allows the scholars to re-consider how specific societies evaluated different emotional strategies in their historical development. It also emphasizes a more dynamic view of the interplay among society and the individual in the pursuit

111 On this point, see Lutz’s article “The Domain of Emotion Words in Ifaluk”, American Ethnologist (1982), 113-128, as well as the articulate exposition later developed in Unnatural Emotions.
113 Ortony and Turner advised against Ekman’s basic emotions theory, perhaps taking the argument of relativism in emotion studies to extremes, as claimed in Ortony, Andrew and Turner, Terence J., “What’s Basic About Basic Emotions?”, Psychological Review (1990), 315-331.
119 Although not directly involved in history of emotions, a brilliant example of this trend might be Ernesto De Martino’s study about the dramatization of funeral lament in Southern Italy, a milestone in the anthropological research about mourning practices: Ernesto De Martino, Morte e pianto rituale nel mondo antico. Dal lamento funebre antico al pianto di Maria (Milano: Bollati Boringhieri, 1958).
of personal goals. Moreover, the componential view has a relevance for the discussion of the historical change in emotional behaviors. As Frank Brandsma et al. reckon in their Introduction to *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature*, the ‘affective turn’ revitalized the theoretical approach to emotion studies, thus offering novel insights into the nature of emotions through the ages. In Old Norse studies, this line of enquiry had been further developed in various studies, centered on the interpretation of emotional responses as interrelated to the social norms inherent to that culture.

Historicizing the meaning of emotions has opened the path for a broader understanding of how emotional values shift throughout the centuries. William Reddy in his book *The Navigation of Feeling* evidences the relevance of prescriptive emotional styles, due to their influence in the dynamic of appraisal-response in specific cultures. To this extent, a prevalence of an emotional style within a society signals the preferred ‘emotional regime’, which we would define nowadays as the unmarked and socially-accepted emotional standard recognized within the social boundaries. Further expanding on the topic, Reddy postulates a directly opposed emotional standard, the so called ‘emotional refuge’, to justify the countless cases in which “one may display one’s deviant feelings openly, and sometimes realize deviant desires as well.”

The main constraint in Reddy’s view lies in the fact that he foresees only two available “emotional styles”, constantly conflicting with each other. On the contrary, Rosenwein’s ‘emotional communities’ are particularly insightful for the present study, given that the concept was developed in the framework of Rosenwein’s analysis of emotional discourses in the early Middle Ages. As Rosenwein reports, her purpose was also to challenge Reddy’s rigid dualism in his definition of ‘regimes’.

In the attempt to shed new light on the traditional view of medieval times as emotionally underdeveloped, Barbara Rosenwein in *Emotional Communities* compares emotional communities to concentric circles, a metaphor which gives an account of the composite nature

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120 Johnson-Laird, and Oatley, “Basic emotions”, 207.
123 Stearns and Stearns introduced the notion of ‘emotionology’, claiming that the history of emotions resolves in fact in the analysis of the prevalent emotional discourse, the ‘emotionology’ itself, and not on actual emotions (Stearns and Stearns, “Clarifying the History”, 814).
126 Moreover, Reddy’s view seems to be too much indebted to a specific age, the 19th century pre-Revolutionary France, to exemplify a universal historical tendency.
of the medieval social structure, in which various emotional styles, connected to different personal goals and modes of expression, might be at stake at the same moment. Drawing from Foucault’s “discourse” and Bourdieu’s *habitus*, Rosenwein outlines a situation of fluidity and coexistence of various emotional cultures, thus positing the existence of several, concurring emotional communities, which operated in the same historical circumstances.

Emotional communities are not constituted by one or two emotions, but rather by constellations of emotions. Their characteristic styles depend not only on the emotions that they emphasize and how and in what contexts they do so—also by the ones that they demote to the tangential or do not recognize at all.

Significantly, adds Rosenwein right after this statement, her analysis relies on words, wordlists, written sources, and textual tradition. A cursory survey of the lexicon of emotion words in different languages allows the scholar to appreciate the diversity of culturally-bound emotive representations. A few examples from European languages are the German concepts of *Fernweh* and *Schadenfreude*, the Danish *hygge*, the Portuguese *saudade*, or the Baudelerian idea of melancholic *spleen*. *Grief*, on a similar note, cannot be easily rendered in Italian, my mother tongue, as well as the English notion of *angst*, or the original German idea of *Angst*, which is nonetheless distinct from its English counterpart. With regard to the Old Norse-Icelandic context, Kirsi Kanerva brilliantly demonstrated the cultural specificity of *ó-gæfa* (“misfortune”) as emotion key-term in thirteenth century Iceland.

According to the theoretical background outlined so far, the approach adopted for this thesis takes into account emotion words as signals of the different cultural mindset, as it is purported in medieval literary sources. The emphasis of studies such as Barbara Rosenwein’s on the necessity to look closely to the emotional vocabulary, to trace its development throughout the age, represents a cue I will develop further in this thesis, with the aim of seeking to understand the usage of these emotionally-connoted words in a specific corpus of texts, such as the poems gathered under the collective label of Poetic Edda.

The foundation of the present analysis is grounded on the assumption that the human brain operates in a modular way, with a perceivable tendency to categorize information in

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130 *Ibidem.*
hierarchies, and to computationally process data, a principle which has informed not only the study of semantics in emotion words, but also the scholarly discourse about cognitive approach to literary analysis. I decided therefore to provide two definitions for sorrow and grief: the former tackles the issue from a psychological point of view, whereas the latter falls outside to theories in psychology of emotions.

To do so, I will resort to the prototypical notions of grief and sorrow according to Wierzbicka and Goddard’s Natural Semantic Metalanguage [=NSM]. Wierzbicka and Goddard developed this system of prototypical notation on the purpose of avoiding the use of contemporary, semantically-connoted, vocabulary to frame culturally-dependent concepts. Furthermore, NSM resolves the issue of universality very insightfully, because it posits the shared core of human natural language on a semantic and cognitive level, with the notion of semantic primitives or primes. NSM is rooted in the assumption that semantic primes are a set of more than 60 lexical units which constitute the basic set of lexemes of every language. Among their properties, semantic primes are versatile, thus they occur in every part of the discourse. Examples are pronouns like I, YOU, SOMEONE, or verbs like FEEL, SAY, THINK, HAPPEN, BE, or adjectives as GOOD/BAD, adverbs such as MUCH, VERY, or even conjunction (IF, AS). In addition, they can be combined, in order to build up longer semantic chains. Moreover, their meaning is intuitively grasped, because semantic primes consist of basic lexemes which cannot be further reduced to smaller lexical units. Adopting Goddard’s terminology, semantic primes embody the “semantic core inherent to every natural language”.

2.2. GRIEF and SORROW: A Prototypical Definition according to NSM

Bonanno et al. define grief and sorrow as multi-faceted emotional states, generated by cognitive responses to situations of distress, personal discomfort, and psychological suffering.

139 Goddard, “The Search for the Shared Semantic”, 8-9. The theory has been largely tested with several non-Indo-European languages in a synchronic dimension, in order to demonstrate its validity.
140 Undoubtedly the research on metaphoricity of the language of emotions made a consistent point here, because we usually require an ‘as if/like’ construction to translate the general notion into our perception (Solomon “The Philosophy of Emotions”, 10), in order to explain the nature of our feelings in each concept here mentioned.
which emerge as a consequence of a traumatic event.\textsuperscript{141} To feel grief or sorrow means that the individual is experiencing a moment of extreme fragility, and finds himself or herself emotionally drained and prostrated. Moreover, the pain related to grief and sorrow is of psychological nature and so is difficult to assess objectively.\textsuperscript{142}

The matter is further complicated by the fact that, in spite of their unpleasant content, grief and sorrow represent common experiences which are universal, unavoidable, and inherent to human nature. Grief and sorrow are experienced in various degrees, at different stages of life, even though they share common properties: they are INTENSE, PAINFUL, DISRUPTING, connected to NEGATIVE EVENTS that happen to the subject.\textsuperscript{143} Bonanno et al. contrast them with SADNESS),\textsuperscript{144} which is understood as a semi-permanent condition.

SADNESS has been described as a generalized feeling,\textsuperscript{145} while grief and sorrow are highly personal, and triggered by the negative event which is troubling the individual on a personal level. In Kövecses’ terminology, SADNESS might be considered the superordinate category which includes GRIEF and SORROW.

According to Charmaz and Milligan, mainstream folk psychology evaluates experiences of sorrow and grief as “hard times”, which need to be navigated and worked through by the individual, who eventually only after a process of recovery would be able to overcome such totalizing feelings.\textsuperscript{146} The prevalent tendency in Western psychology (Anglo-American in particular) has emphasized the medical approach to grief, which has been consistently framed as illness.\textsuperscript{147}

Emotions like grief and sorrow are frequently artistically re-worked in fiction, music, visual performative arts. As a universal mode of response to moments of personal rupture, grief and sorrow are not only socially relevant, but are also a core element of the human cognitive life, triggered by specific situation as responses to common strategies to cope with critical moments.\textsuperscript{148}

\textsuperscript{142} In her 2012 analysis of pain-related concepts Wierzbicka does not consider neither sorrow nor grief. She focuses rather on to hurt, pain, ache, and sore (Wierzbicka “Is Pain a Human Universal?”, 312-314).
\textsuperscript{144} Bonanno et al., “Sadness and Grief”, 797.
\textsuperscript{145} Wierzbicka, Emotion Across Languages, 62.
\textsuperscript{146} Charmaz and Milligan, “Grief”, 516.
\textsuperscript{148} The theme is further expanded in Katz, Jeanne et al., Grief, Mourning and Death Ritual (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001).
Sorrow and grief are generally reckoned among ‘negative’ emotions, a label which originated within the “appraisal-response” theory and ultimately traces back to classic and historical taxonomies of emotions.\textsuperscript{149} Ekman’s exhaustive survey \textit{The Nature of Emotions} (1994) employs the same terminology, which serves well the purpose of outlining a classification of basic emotions. In this sense, the emphasis on the polarity “negativity-positivity” had allowed scholars to make use of a viable scheme to categorize emotions.

As a general trend, positive emotions are understood to be highly rewarding for the individual, because their preferred outcome is the fulfillment of personal satisfaction understood in the broadest sense.\textsuperscript{150} For instance, the Augustine philosophical tradition during the Middle Ages interpreted emotional drives to personal happiness as inherently ‘positive’ for the individual.\textsuperscript{151} Feelings of grief and sorrow, therefore, ontologically contrast to happiness, joy, bliss, and satisfaction, which account for positive evaluations of the self and its cognitive experiences.

This taxonomy was developed further from the bi-dimensional interpretation of emotional states, defined as \textit{valence}, or their inherent value (pleasantness vs. unpleasantness, or positivity/negativity), and \textit{activation}, understood as the levels of bodily awareness, so the somatic reactions triggered by specific emotive responses.\textsuperscript{152} Within those parameters, scholars in emotion studies established a tentative framework for the classification of emotion states.\textsuperscript{153} There is, however, no consensus about the preferred rationale in the taxonomy of emotions, a thorny issue which is still currently debated and had led to countless attempts to provide a reliable scheme to categorize emotional states.\textsuperscript{154} Solomon’s criticisms about the usage of the term ‘negative’ must be taken into account, because a clear-cut distinction among emotional states it is hardly conceivable, as proved by numerous cases of ambiguity drawn from daily experiences.\textsuperscript{155} Other scholars stressed the various component inherent to sadness and grief.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{149} Solomon and Stone, “On ‘Positive’”, 418.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., 420.
\textsuperscript{153} The influence of the Activation/Valence Framework is perceivable also within literary studies. For instance, it was employed by Cynthia Whissell to assess the emotional flow in \textit{Beowulf} (see Cynthia Whissell, “The Flow of Emotions through \textit{Beowulf}”, \textit{Psychological Reports} 99/3 (2006), 835-850.
\textsuperscript{154} Reddy considered several types of taxonomy in the first chapter of his main study, including a detailed proposal of the Positive/Negative valence scheme (see Reddy, \textit{Navigation}, 6-13).
\textsuperscript{156} Averill and Nunley, “Grief as an Emotion”, 86-87.
especially when considering their wave-like nature and the swings within the range of a grieving emotional states or ‘oscillations’, as Bonanno et al. term them.\textsuperscript{157}

The adjective “negative” was adopted nonetheless for the present thesis, because it summarizes effectively the features of those kind of emotions, in a sense that it immediately clarifies the conceptual space in which this thesis situates. ‘Negativity’ in fact entails the ideas of pessimism, personal discomfort, isolation, gloom, and eventually darkness in an extended sense. As this contribution will show, those notions roughly correspond to the metaphorical domains which are likely to be immediately associated with “negative feelings” after Kövecses’ mappings of metaphorical domains.\textsuperscript{158} Furthermore, although it might seem arbitrary, ‘negativity’ implies a destructive attitude towards the self,\textsuperscript{159} a cue which is present also in severe depressive states.\textsuperscript{160} Gloominess, isolation, and the exclusive connection with states of retreat into interiority are specific markers to define the applicable range of sorrow and grief. For all these reasons, it seems appropriate to me to employ “negative emotions” as an umbrella-term to indicate the emotions in question in the current thesis.

Considerable space in the previous paragraph was devoted to account for the cultural contingency of emotions. One might argue therefore on which basis we should introduce concepts from modern psychology to provide a definition of sorrow and grief. The question is not secondary, because it challenges the possibility to describe emotional principles of pre-modern societies in light of contemporary sensitivity, a presupposition severely contested so far, given the emphasis placed on the relativity of emotion styles and their cross-cultural variation.

For the purposes of this contribution, the deployment of NSM might be insightful, because it has been originally applied by Wierzbicka to provide a cross-linguistic comparison of emotion words in natural languages. In fact, the productivity of NSM lies in the fact that it avoids the danger of ethnocentrism and, more specifically in this case, of inconsistency on one hand, and of anachronism on the other, a crucial point for this research. In this sense, NSM prompts a viable way to discuss emotional principles without falling either into universalism, or into relativism.

NSM, moreover, integrates a specific way to encode it in the natural language discourse. Wierzbicka names this set of intertwined linguistic utterances ‘\emph{cognitive scenario}’, which she defines in these terms: “every language has lexically encoded some \emph{scenarios} involving

\textsuperscript{157} Bonanno et al, “Sadness and Grief”, 803.
\textsuperscript{158} Kövecses, \textit{Metaphor and Emotion}, 25.
\textsuperscript{159} The point is contrasted by Averill and Nunley, which resort to the concept of “Privilege” of the bereaved in order to stress the social function of grieving practices (Averill and Nunley, “Grief as an Emotion”, 86).
\textsuperscript{160} Bonanno et al, “Sadness and Grief”, 800.
both thoughts and feelings and serving as a reference point for the identification of what the speakers of this language see as distinct kinds of feelings”.  

This strategy of describing emotional responses is surprisingly close to Averill and Nunley’s concept of ‘emotional roles’, fixed behavioral patterns triggered by the flow of emotional states and acted out by the individual through a recurring sequence of gestures, thoughts, utterances. I present here the notions of ‘sorrow’ and ‘grief’ according to Wierzbicka’s cognitive scenarios:

**Sorrow** (X felt sorrow)

(a) X felt something because X thought something
(b) sometimes a person thinks for a long time:
(c) ”something very bad is happening to me
(d) I don’t want this to be happening
(e) I can’t think: I will do something because of this
(f) I can’t do anything
(g) I can’t not think about this”
(h) when this person thinks this this person feels something very bad
(i) X felt something like this
(j) because X thought something like this.

The formulation “X felt something because X thought something” was employed to exemplify emotions’ relation with the cognitive life of the experiencer on one side, and with his or her bodily perception system on the other. This assumption resembles Kövecses’ view on the metaphorical or metonymical features of emotion metaphorical domains. Following those theories, it seems that describing emotions requires a cognitive strategy which literally ‘embodies’ them in the perception of the experiencer. Another interesting feature of cognitive scenarios is their *discursive* nature, an aspect which recalls Edwards’ stance on the rhetorical nature of the emotional talk, grounded in complex narrative sequences.

162 Adopting the language of theatre to define emotional reactions is a productive choice, because it evidences the connection with the performative aspect of human behavior. It is evident also in Schank and Abelson “Script Theory”, a milestone in analyzing the procedural nature of human cognition. The concept of ‘script’ has been lately extended to emotive practices too, thus developing the notion of ‘emotion scripts’. For further insights, see Roger Schank and Robert Abelson, *Scripts, Plans, Goals, and Understanding* (Hillsdale: Earlbaum Associated Press, 1977).
163 Averill and Nunley, “Grief as an Emotion”, 86.
164 Wierzbicka, *Emotion Across Languages*, 68.
166 Edwards, “Emotion Discourse”, 120.
In spite of the numerous contrasting views, scholars in psychology of emotions generally agree on two points: first, while sadness could be generic, sorrow is triggered by known reasons.\(^{167}\) Secondly, they agree on the fact that such overwhelming emotions rarely occur without a cause. Several scholars usually evidence the *causality* of sadness-related states,\(^{168}\) or their relation to an object, an event, or a person who triggered the emotion.\(^{169}\)

Contrarily to what affirmed in the first paragraph, Wierzbicka evaluates sorrow as a long-standing condition, more in the sense of ‘persistent sadness’ than of an emotion of episodic nature, while psychology scholars tend to see it as transitory.\(^{170}\) It is considered to be an *intense* emotion, highly distressful; Wierzbicka connects it to a negative event occurred in the past, whose consequences are still hunting the individual’s present.\(^{171}\) The cognitive scenario implies the persistence of sorrow, especially in the individual’s introspective thoughts, in which the memory of the traumatic event is constantly looming from the past. About the nature of “sorrow”, Wierzbicka states: “it is this semi-accepting, or at least semi-resigned attitude to long-term intense adversity or pain (‘something very bad is happening to me’) which lends *sorrow* its peculiar air of dignity, which commands not only compassion but also respect.”\(^{172}\)

\textit{Grief} (X felt grief)

(a) X felt something because X thought something

(b) sometimes a person thinks:

(c) ‘something very bad happened to me (a short time before now)

(d) someone was like a part of me

(e) something happened to this person

(f) because of this this person cannot be like a part of me any more

(h) I want to think about this

(i) I can’t think about other things now’

(j) when this person thinks this this person feels something very bad

(k) X felt something like this

(l) because X thought something like this.\(^{173}\)

\(^{167}\) Johnson-Laird and Oatley, “The Language of Emotions”, 120.
\(^{168}\) Bonanno et al, “Sadness and Grief”, 799.
\(^{170}\) Averill and Nunley, “Grief as an Emotion”, 81.
\(^{171}\) Wierzbicka, Emotions Across Languages, 66.
\(^{172}\) Ibid., 67.
\(^{173}\) Ibid., 68.
What seems clear considering grief, is that this emotion is understood as personal, but more intense than sorrow, and that grief is connected to a recent event which troubled the individual.\(^{174}\) In addition, grief is paralyzing, as stated by the condition (i): “I can’t think about other things now.” In Wierzbicka’s words, “sorrow and grief are also linked by the experiencer’s dwelling on the painful subject; in the case of grief and grieving the experiencer intentionally focusses on the painful subject (“I want to think about this”), whereas in the case of sorrow there is, rather, an inability to forget (“I can’t not think about this”).\(^{175}\)

According to this view, the volitional component of grief is exemplified by the transitive verb to grieve, which relates to the set of mourning practices enacted by the bereaved person.\(^{176}\) Some scholars emphasizes to this extent the social relevance of grief, which is culturally-related,\(^{177}\) according to the various social norms prescribed to cope with the experience of loss.\(^{178}\)

Wierzbicka introduces the most important feature of grievous feelings, a point which is generally accepted by scholars in emotion studies. Grief is related to a personal loss, “someone was like a part of me”, which could also be extended to “something that was like a part of me” (relation of causality). In this sense, grief is the emotional category which denotes the experience of the bereavement.\(^{179}\)

The totalizing force of grief is explained from its source. Grief originates from the rupture of the social bond within the human relational community, and from the impossibility to recover the lost individual which was invested with attachment, thus having become “like a part of me” for the bereaved.\(^{180}\) For this exclusive link with death and loss, grief is considered extremely intense and painful, more than other affective states related to sadness, and it is generally understood as a ‘complex’ emotion.\(^{181}\) Its complexity may be motivated by the various ‘stages’ which are confronted in the process of coping with the bereavement, or by its wave-like nature,\(^{182}\) but what it seems to me more relevant is Laird-Johnson and Oatley’s argument for the cultural specificity of emotion words: « A term referring explicitly to a complex emotion is not interpretable as referring solely to the underlying basic emotion. […] The word could not have

\(^{174}\) Bonanno et al, “Sadness and Grief”, 800.
\(^{175}\) Wierzbicka, Emotions Across Languages, 67.
\(^{176}\) The Oxford English Dictionary [=OED] does account for one entry of “sorrow” as the verb to sorrow, but it is considered less common and obsolete, compared to the noun itself (OED, XVI, 24-25). Moreover, to sorrow is not transitive, it does not entail any reference to mourning practices, and it is glossed as “to feel, or to express great sadness”.
\(^{177}\) Charmaz and Milligan, “Grief”, 525; Averill and Nunley, “Grief as an Emotion”, 88.
\(^{179}\) Charmaz and Milligan, “Grief”, 518.
\(^{180}\) Averill and Nunley, “Grief as an Emotion”, 84.
\(^{181}\) Ibid., 81; Charmaz and Milligan, “Grief”, 519.
been coined, or maintained in the language, unless this propositional information is available to members of the language community. In this sense, ‘sorrow’ and ‘grief’ cannot be subsumed in the concept of ‘sadness’, especially because sadness is too generic to overlap those modes of psychological suffering. They are specific ways of modulating sadness: thus, they belong to the emotional range of ‘sadness’, or negativity, but they cannot work as synonymies for “being sad”. The aim of the next chapter will be to trace a parallelism between this theoretical framework and the words for negative emotions retrieved in the chosen corpus.

2.3. A Corpus-based Lexicographic Analysis: Some Methodological Observations

In the previous section of this thesis I described prototypically the cluster of emotions I am concerned with in the present analysis.

My methodological approach is based on electronic tools that draw on recent research in corpus linguistics. Obviously, in the context of this thesis, the aim of research is limited to a single body of anonymous poems (within a single manuscript) and so is delineated by that corpus and the associated metrical constraints. Nonetheless this methodology will enable me to draw occasional reference to the larger corpus of Old Norse-Icelandic texts which are fully available in their digitalized version. The comparison with other textual sources motivates the relevance for specific collocations, and gives account of their importance in that cultural framework.

The assumption which lies at the core of this work is the centrality of words, understood as cultural repositories for reconstructing the conceptualization of emotions, especially in the case of historical languages such as Old Icelandic. Considering the traditional point of view of Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigation*, the human species adopts a specific language to give voice to feelings, sensations, thoughts, and to its inner world. In the attempt of challenging the idea of “private language”, I would rather assume that the linguistic realizations we employ to formulate our inner experiences fulfill the communicative needs foregrounded in our behavioral system. Words are therefore even more relevant within the discourse about emotions, especially in the case of an historical language which can be accessed only through written records, such as Old Icelandic.

My project could have hardly been completed without the possibility of conducting corpus linguistic research to the electronic edition of the Codex Regius manuscript GKS 2365 4to (2010) which, alongside with the scholarly edition of *Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst*
verwandten Denkmälern (1893) by Neckel and Kuhn, constituted the basic textual reference for this work.\textsuperscript{186} The electronic edition of GKS 2365 4to employs three levels of encoding in XML (Extensible Markup Language),\textsuperscript{187} thus enabling the interpreter to appreciate the text also in its codicological and non-normalized aspect. This feature was particularly useful to cross-check the occurrences of emotion words retrieved in the text, and to check the variants. Moreover, the XML format allowed me to annotate the negative emotions words within the body of the transcription.

In absence of a specific emotional linguistic corpus for Old Icelandic, I relied mostly on ONP for the counterexamples of the key terms, alongside with other dictionaries consulted in printed version: Fritzner’s Ordbog (1867), Cleasby-Vigfússon’s Icelandic-English Dictionary (1957), Sveinbjörn Egilsson’s Lexicon Poeticum (1860), a blended methodology which has proved to be extremely insightful, and which has been employed for historical languages before.\textsuperscript{188} In addition, I consulted etymological resources which helped me to elucidate the relations among cognate words within the same semantic field. A database summarizing the lexical data can be eventually found in the appendix of this thesis. The database is the primary reference for the following analysis and maps the occurrences of lexemes for ‘sorrow’ and ‘grief’ in the Poetic Edda.

In developing the database, I adopted the generic scheme prepared by Anatole Pierre Fukas, originally developed to identify the prevailing emotional styles in the four romances of Chrétien de Troyes.\textsuperscript{189} This scheme is particularly insightful for the present case, because it was conceived with the aim of highlighting trends and variations of the emotional style in

\textsuperscript{186} The electronic edition of GKS 2365 4to is still in progress. I am particularly grateful to the editors of the Codex Regius Group for the permission to use it for the present thesis. As previously stated, I double-checked the occurrence with the Neckel/Kuhn 1983 edition, online available at <http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/germ/anord/edda/edda.htm>, online accessed on the 8th of August 2017. In addition, I consulted also the printed edition of Konungsþök Eddavæða. Codex Regius: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi Gl. Kgl. Sml. 2365 4to. Vésteinn Ólason ritaði inngang; Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson ritsýrði textum (Reykjavík: Lögberg, 2001).

\textsuperscript{187} XML is an extensible and descriptive digital language employed in Digital Humanities to produce electronic texts, in order to represent them as most faithful to the original source as possible, and to include in the electronic representation all the relevant codicological and textual features. The project is shared among institutions and universities worldwide, and had produced a standardized set of encoding practices as Guidelines (available at <http://www.tei-c.org/index.xml>). For the Old Norse section of the project, see MeNoTa <http://www.menota.org/> and Odd Einar Haugen’s remarks in “The Spirit of Lachmann, the Spirit of Bédier: Old Norse Textual Editing in the Electronic Age”, read at the annual meeting of The Viking Society, University College London, 8 November 2002, electronic available at <http://www.ub.uib.no/elpub/2003/a/522001>, 12-19.

\textsuperscript{188} I am referring to Díaz-Vera and Manrique-Antón’s treatment of the figurative language for SHAME in Old Norse and Old English (cfr. Díaz-Vera and Manrique-Antón, “Better shamed before”, 226-227) or to Izdebska’s paper on the development of TORN in Old English (Izdebska, “The Curious Case”, 55-64).

\textsuperscript{189} Fukas, “Il Sistema delle emozioni”, 127-128. I am thankful to Professor Fukas who kindly agreed to share his scheme with me, with the purpose of adopting a unified international model to categorize emotion terms in pre-modern literature.
a specific corpus of pre-modern texts. Fuksas concentrates primarily on the affective responses of the characters of the romances, in light of the assumption that the representations of emotional states in Chrétien are mediated through recognizable somatic markers,\(^{190}\) according to the Somatic Marker Hypothesis developed by the psychologist Antonio Damasio in his seminal contribution *Descartes’ Error*.\(^{191}\) Moreover, Fuksas aims to identify the lexical network of co-occurrences which informs the emotional system of romances, an approach which befits this thesis, where the primary aim is mapping the occurrences of words for negative emotions.

The structure of Fuksas’ scheme allowed me to classify each emotion key term according to the following parameters: textual environment, target character, triggering events, emotion lemmas, somatic markers, macro lemmas, ensuing actions, description of the scene and general annotations.\(^{192}\) In this sense, I could remain faithful both to the linguistic and the literary dimension of the present analysis, as well as give account of the textual ecology of the considered emotion words.

\(^{190}\) The idea was further elaborated in Anatole Pierre Fuksas, “Ire, Peor and their Somatic Correlates in Chrétien’s Chevalier de la Charrette”, in *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature: Mind, Body, and Voice*, ed. by Frank Brandsma, Carolyne Larrington, Corinne Saunders (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2015), 67-87.


\(^{192}\) Where relevant, I inserted in square brackets the variants of every lemma, retrieved from the facsimile printed edition of *Konungsþók Edduksveða* (2001). In reporting the strophes, however, I privileged the normalized transcription used in the electronic edition of GKS 2365 4to, given that the codicological variant of each word is not the focus of this thesis.
3. Speaking Words of Sorrow

3.1. Constellations of Sorrow Words: *harmr, sorg, tregi, sárr.*

The term ‘constellations’ is employed here to exemplify a feature of the lexical choice I am considering in the Codex Regius poems. When considering emotional words connected to the semantic field of ‘grief’ and ‘sorrow’ there is a striking tendency to employ four main lexemes, whose occurrence far surpass the use of other related terms. This outcome collimates with the conclusions drawn by Carolyne Larrington and Sif Rikhardsdottir, for instance, in considering emotion lexemes in Old Norse-Icelandic. It runs parallel also to a more transversal trend observed by Esther Cohen in the development of vocabulary for pain in vernacular languages of the late Middle Ages. Old Norse-Icelandic seems to this extent to belong to those vernaculars which kept such vocabulary rather restricted and simplified, as far as it is represented in the textual witness of the Codex Regius.

The total occurrences of lexical items related to ‘sorrow’ and ‘grief’ counts to 188 tokens, based on the approach utilized here. The amount has been obtained through an accurate scanning of the XML edited version of the Codex Regius, where each lexeme has been annotated manually and cross-checked with the aid of ONP and Cleasby-Vigfússon. The textual references have been compared with the standard Neckel/Kuhn edition of the Poetic Edda, and eventually counter-checked with a corpus analysis software (AntConc). The instances were finally checked manually in the electronic edition of the Codex Regius once more, to be sure that the total amount was correct and to consider the syntactical environment of the single occurrence. This approach was intended to encompass any eventual linguistic counter-example stemming from poetical formulations or any potential problems with the adaptability of the software to Old Icelandic.

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195 This amount relates to the overall number of occurrences of expressions for ‘sorrow’ and ‘grief’ in the whole compilation, regardless of their contextual meaning. The database in Appendix presents instead a circumstantiated overview of the emotion key-terms in context, thus considering their role in the ecology of the eddic verses and in the network of lexemes which express psychological suffering.
196 Eventually they were checked again with the aid of Robert Kellogg’s *Concordance to Eddic Poetry* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1988).
In tagging the lexemes related to sorrow, I considered negative formulations (such as 
kostalauss, “cheerless”, or vilja lauss and glaums andvani, both meaning “without joys”) and
compounds in which one of the abovementioned lexemes is the base-word.¹⁹⁸ I included also
verbs for crying and lamenting, such as gráta, kveina, klækka and hjúfra, according to Averill
and Nunley’s concept of emotional roles and to the cognitive scenarios for grief and sorrow.¹⁹⁹

For analogous reasons, tár (“tear”) and related concepts have been also included in the total
amount of semantically relevant lexemes. In this section, however, I will concentrate my analysis
on abstract lexemes, such as harmr, tregi, and sorg, thus leaving aside the more somatically
connotated words (tár, gráta, kveina and so on), given that their meaning in context is self-evident,
as they exemplify kinetic and gestural expressions of sorrow and grief.²⁰⁰ The only exception to
this general rule is the neuter subst. sár (“wound”) and related terms, because of their centrality
in the conceptualization of negative emotions in the eddic poems.

As further methodological choice, I excluded from the lexical analysis the subst. n. ang-r
(‘grief, sorrow’), due to several reasons. Firstly, it presents scanty attestations in the present
corpus (4 occurrences in the whole compilation, excluding the verb angra in Grípispá 34.8).
In the Old Norse-Icelandic textual records, the neuter ang-r appears in translation of romances,
especially in the case of Strengleikar and Tristrams saga,²⁰¹ and in learned texts of Christian
inspiration,²⁰² but it is rarely employed in other contexts according to ONP.

Its semantic affinity with Old English anger,²⁰³ moreover, gives account for its closeness
and ultimate merging with this semantic sphere, rather than with the one specifically related
to grief. I decided also not to analyze thoroughly the subst. n. strið, which occurs four times,
excluding the hapax of-strið in Helreið Brynhildar 13.1, because in the poems it is seldom
employed to identify grief and sorrow, rather it appears consistently in relation to “strife” as
in Skamma 36.4.²⁰⁴

Negative emotions lexemes are scattered throughout the whole compilation, and not neces-
sarily reserved only to the heroic poems. In this sense, concepts related to grief and sorrow are
intertwined in the poetic material and not simply a feature of a selected group of poems, an

¹⁹⁸ For similar reasons, I excluded sorgalauss “free from care” and its superlative (sorgalausasatr), which
occurs in two cases throughout the compilation (Hv 55.6 and Brot 1.3).
¹⁹⁹ Wierzbicka, Emotions across Languages, 66-67; Averill and Nunley, “Grief as an Emotion”, 86.
²⁰⁰ These strata of the lexicon embody expressive emotion terms; thus, they are part of the lexical repertoire of bodily
expressions for sorrowful states, but they do not describe the specific emotion (Kövecses, Metaphor and Emotion, 2).
²⁰¹ Tríst1 143°. Nú er mér svá mikit angr at okkrum skilnaði, at aldri fæ ek huggun í [essu lifi] = “[Now I
suffer such great sorrow at your parting, that never will I be consoled in this life”, my translation].
²⁰² This might leave room for an interpretation which considers the difference in the distribution of ang-r
in contrast to harmr or other words, but it is a too far-reaching suggestion for the present thesis.
²⁰⁴ Beatrice La Farge and John Tucker, Glossary to the Poetic Edda (Heidelberg: Winter Verlag 1992), 250.
assumption already noted by Sävborg. To support his claims about the autochthonous origin of the so called “Eddic elegies”, Sävborg asserted that we cannot draw sharp conclusions from the employed vocabulary, because it is common to the whole Germanic poetic heritage, and therefore not specific at all, a position supported also by Joseph Harris in several articles through close-readings of elegiac passages in *Hildebrandslied* and *Beowulf*.

Following their conclusions, I prefer to define the presence of key terms for grief and sorrow as “constellations” within the textual body of the Poetic Edda. I agree with Theodore Andersson, however, in considering the differences in the distribution of lexemes for sorrow and grief as ultimately conditioned and determined by the genre. The main assumption of this thesis is that the recurrence of this vocabulary is more compelling and genre-related in the heroic poems of the Codex Regius. What follows is the analysis of the negative emotions lexemes, as retrieved in the eddic poems.

### 3.2.1. Harmr

*Total occurrences= 25 (2 in prose passages)*

The masculine noun *harmr* is the most productive lexeme for ‘sorrow, grief’, an indication which is stressed also in Modern Icelandic: the noun *harmur* seems still to be related to psychological pain due to personal loss and traumatic events, in the prototypical sense of “sorrow” outlined in the previous chapter through Wierzbicka’s taxonomy. In this sense, in Modern Icelandic the noun overlaps with ‘grief’, while in Old Icelandic *harmr* is not limited to that meaning. ONP lists the oldest occurrences of *harmr* in one of the earliest manuscript of *Elucidarius* (AM 674 a 4to, 1r(1)-33v (66), c.1150-1200), in which the noun is framed in a relation of proximity with *erfiði*, “(physical) labor, task”, the cognate word of Old High German *arapeit* and German *Arbeit*. This mention is particularly insightful because it is glossed in the *Elucidarius* with the Lat. *labor* and *dolor*, and not *passiones* according to the Classic and Augustinian taxonomy of affections of the soul. In this sense, it gives a hint about the nature of the pain

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206 Ibid., 92-94.
208 Andersson, “Is There a History of Emotion”, 201.
209 *Eluc674(1989)5*: « og þar es eige síðan harmr ne erveþe ». [ „and there is afterwards no sorrow nor travail”, my translation.]
210 ONP considers *erfiði* as “mental distress” as metaphorical extended meaning, similarly to Cleasby-Vigfússon (see note 136).
212 King, “Emotions in Medieval Thought”, 3.
encoded in harm: whether it was intended to be spiritual or not, it might be related to the psychological affliction of the individual anyway.\textsuperscript{213}

Harm\textsuperscript{r} is widespread and productive within the Germanic languages family. For instance, it appears in Faroese harmur (affliction, distress), in Old English hearm (injury, wound, pain), Old Frisian herm/harm, Old Saxon harm, Old High German har(a)m (wound, injury), and Middle High German harm (injury). Its etymology is obscure,\textsuperscript{214} and it has been tentatively connected to the Proto Indo-European roots \textit{*XARMA-ZI/*PKÓR-MO}, which would have been resulted in Sanskrit \textit{srám} “disgrace” and Avestic \textit{fšr̥ma} (shame).\textsuperscript{215} De Vries noticed that the psychological meaning is retained mostly by the North Germanic languages, while Old English tends to favor hearm as ‘injury, damage’ in its physical connotation,\textsuperscript{216} a shift from metaphorical to physical which is evident also in the Present-Day English harm, ‘damage’ (OED VI, 1121). On this note, the abstract meaning of hearm as ‘grief, sorrow’, was attested in some examples in Old and Middle English until 16\textsuperscript{th} century, especially in poetry of Christian inspiration such as \textit{Genesis A} or in \textit{Cursor Mundi} (OED VI, 1121).\textsuperscript{217} Analogous conclusions are provided by Alexander Jóhannesson’s \textit{Etymologisches Wörterbuch}, which underlines both meanings.\textsuperscript{218} The Skaldic Poetry Database evaluates the frequency of harm\textsuperscript{r} with 48 outputs on a corpus of 111.698 verses. At a closer look, the tokens appear to be exclusively related to ‘sorrow’.\textsuperscript{219} In the Codex Regius harm\textsuperscript{r} is attested from the first poem onward, \textit{Völuspá} (51.1),\textsuperscript{220} to indicate “the other sorrow of Hlína [heiti for Frigg]”, the death of Óðinn in the Ragnarǫk. Then the lexeme appears regularly throughout the compilation, where it relates mostly to

\textsuperscript{213} Larrington, “Learning to Feel”, 80.

\textsuperscript{214} Polomé, “Some Comments”, 133.


\textsuperscript{216} Jan de Vries, \textit{Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch.} Zweite verbesserte Auflage. (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 212.


\textsuperscript{218} Alexander Jóhannesson, \textit{Isländisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch}, 255.

\textsuperscript{219} Among many examples, one remarkable occurrence is retrieved in in \textit{Sólarljóð}, an anonymous Christian poem written in eddic meters: « Daprar þeim urðu inar dimmu nætr; engan máttu þeir sætan sofa; en af þeim harmi rann heipt saman millum virkotavina. » [“The dark nights became gloomy for them; they could sleep no sweet (sleep); but enmity sprang up from that grief between those affectionate friends.”], translated and edited by Carolyne Larrington and Peter Robinson, ‘Anonymous Poems, Sólarljóð 13’ in: \textit{Poetry on Christian Subjects. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 7}, ed. by Margaret Clunies Ross (Brepols: Turnhout, 2007), 304. Moreover, here the adj. \textit{dap-r-} “gloomy” seen in the Poetic Edda is employed in an analogous position, according to the conceptual metaphor SADNESS IS DARKNESS (see Kövecses, \textit{Metaphor and Emotions}, 26).

\textsuperscript{220} Vsp. 51.1: « bá kjöm frímir / harmr annarr fram». Before, at Vsp. 31.5, Frigg cries for the death of her son Baldr (« en Frigg um grét / í Fensólum /vá Valhallar »), thus she is framed as a lamenting figure in the first place.
psychological suffering. From Völundarkviða onwards, harmr exemplifies a kind of psychological pain which seems INTENSE, PERSONAL, DISTRESSFUL and, in addition, connected to NEGATIVE EVENTS which occurred to the experiencer. Völundr calls ‘harma minna’ the woeful deeds that king Nóðuðr plotted against him (Vkv.26.5, « Nú hefi ek hefnt harma minna »), which he eventually avenges thus causing the ruin of Nóðuðr and his family.

The cluster “hefna/reka harma” (to take revenge for the injury) constitutes a collocation within the considered corpus, given that it appears consistently throughout the compilation. “Reka harma” is employed to denote Sigurðr (Rm. 9.4), then further by Hreiðmarr (Fm. 12b.7), and also to indicate Högni in Gðr III.7.6. “Hefna harma” appears again in Rm.11.3, the sequence that comes after the already mentioned “reka harma” related to the hero Sigurðr, then it is employed later by Brynhildr (Sg.38.6) to express her resentment over the breaking of her betrothal. Overall, the formula is consistently attested within the compilation of poems, especially connected to the framework of heroic ethic.

In the lyrical dialogue with the dying hero Helgi Hjörvarðsson, a moment full of pathos and perhaps closer to the classical notion of elegy, the valkyrie Sváva mentions the « harðliga harma », the bitter sorrows that the fate brought upon her with the death of her lover (HHv. 38.3). Earlier in the same poem the giantess’ Hrímgerðr hardships has been indicated with an analogous phrasing (HHv.29.2, « Heyr þú nú, Hrímgerðr, ef ek bæti harma þé »).

In addition, it is of some interest in this context that harmr is used to form one of the few kenningar in the Codex Regius, embedded into one of the most moving and highly evocative moment of sorrow described in the compilation:

HHII 45.4:
« Ein veldr þú, Sigrún
frá Sefafjöllum,
er Helgi er
harmdögg sleginn
Grætr þú, gullvarið,
grimmum tárum,
sólbjört, suðræn,
áðr þú sofa gangir,
hvert “fellr blöðugt

221 The exception is in Hrbl.14.1, « Harm ljótað mér þikkir í því », in which harmr means “task, burden”.
222 Sg.38.1: «Áð þeygi skal þunnglæð kona annarrar ver aldri leiða; þá mun á hefndum harma minna. » [“that no light-minded woman should ever keep company with another’s man; then there’ll be vengeance for all my sorrows.”]
223 “Harma” are also Sigrún’s pains in Helgakviða Hundingsbana önnur (HHII. 35.6), which Dagr offers to repay in a similar fashion as the hero Helgi does here with the giantess.
á brjóst grami,  
*airsvalt*, *innfjálgt*  
ekka þrungið.  
[“You alone, Sigrun from Sefafell,  
cause Helgi to be soaked in sorrow-dew (= tears);  
you weep, gold-adorned lady, bitter tears,  
sun-bright southern girl, be-fore you go to sleep;  
each falls bloody on the breast of the prince,  
cold and wet, burning into me, thick with grief.”] 

As it seems from this stanza, the depiction of sorrow calls for multifarious strategies of combination among lexemes and different notions. The feeling of grief-stricken farewell encompasses the whole strophe, as it is evident from the lexical choice, but then it is enhanced by the rhetorical devices (alliterations, metaphors, similes) and by the numerous adjectives that emphasize Helgi’s pain. Particularly striking is also the contrast between the semantic sphere of coldness («*airsvalt*», “wet-cold”) and *innfjálgt*, an evocative compound in the sense of “stifled inside”, which exemplifies the excruciating anguish of the narrative voice, torn apart by the waves of pain of opposite natures. The kenning ‘*harmdögg*’ recalls ‘*valdögg*’, “slaughter-dew” (= blood-stains), seen in the previous strophe at HHII.44.8. The context suggests the final departure between the two lovers, in fact the dialogue between Helgi, returned from the otherworld, and his beloved Sigrún closes HHII and the group of poems dedicated to the homonymous hero. This outpouring of despair represents one of the scanty examples of male lyric lament within the Eddic poems, and it is even more striking because the expression of sorrow is connected mostly to his fate and to the separation from Sigrún.

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224 The italics is mine.  
226 The contrast between the brightness personified by Sigrún, addressed as “*súðræn*”, might be understood if we bear in mind that the North is prototypically connected with the otherworld, and the hero Helgi is addressing his lover while he is in form of revenant. For example, an analogous reference to the adjective *sval-r* is found in str.27 of *Vafþrúðnismál*, where Vindsvalr is the *heiti* for the father of Vetr (“winter”). The strophe 44 of the same poem mentions *fimbulvetr* (“terrible winter”), the three-years long winter which anticipates the Ragnarök. Further insights on the symbolism of coldness and winter in Old Norse-Icelandic literature might be found in Langeslag, P.S., *Seasons in the Literatures of the Medieval North* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2015).  
228 The Skaldic Poetry Database presents only a handful of cases in which *dögg* is employed in *kenningar*, but none of them relates to the semantic field of pain, whether psychological or not.  
230 Although the reference to “*fallr*” is supplied by the editor, the portrayal of the weeping Sigrún and her falling tears recalls Guðrún’s tears slowly pouring over the dead body of Sigurðr in Gðr I. 13.
Significantly, the overwhelming grief (the masculine noun ekki) is connected to the verb þröngva, “to press”, a connotation which recalls the metaphorical source domain of ‘SADNESS IS A PHYSICAL FORCE/ IS A BURDEN’, a concept expressed also in the first lines of Egill Skallagrímsson’s Sonatorrek, the magnificent mourning poem allegedly composed by Egill for the death of his son. Rarely do the heroes of the compilation unleash such elaborate and tense expressions of personal grief. A similar intensity is found perhaps also in Atlí and Guðrún’s final dialogue in the ending section of Atlamál (str.70-117), even though this latter case portrays a fierce confrontation and not a sorrowful farewell.

_Harm-r_ as ‘pain’ is associated with Brynhildr in Brot 3.4, who urges to avenge the awful insult that Sigurðr and the Gjúkungs deceitfully perpetrated against her. It is then reiterated at strophe 14, in which is connected to _sorg_, when Gunnar announces her _the doom of the hero_ Sigurðr. On this note, the richness of the vocabulary of emotions, which resounds especially through the poetic voice of Brynhildr, whose imposing presence outshines the other characters, is a main feature of Brot. On the other side, in the case of Guðrún, _harmr_ exemplifies the terrible pain of the loss in the aftermath of Sigurðr’s death.

In this last case Guðrún’s overwhelming sadness might be categorized as GRIEF, given that her extraordinary sense of anguish is leading her to die of heartache. Here, it is evident that this configuration of pain is closer to the abstract sense of psychological despair, than to _harmr_ as generic wrongdoing or as damage. Much has been written on Guðrún’s inexpressible pain, which is so dangerous precisely because it cannot be uttered nor ritually performed with tears and loud cries, as the closure of the strophe states (Gðr I.10.5-10). In Averill’s terminology,

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231 An analogous verb, cognate of þröngva, is found at the beginning of the Old English poem _The Wanderer_ at line 8: “Calde geþrungen waeron mine fet, forste gebundden caldum clommum, þær þa ceare seofedun hat ymb heortan” (“Afflicted by cold were my feet, frost bound by cold fetters, where the sorrow surged about the heart”, quoted in English translation from Treharne, _Old and Middle English c.890-1400. An Anthology_, 49).


233 The difficulty of expressing psychological pain is presented in the following terms in the incipit of the poem: “Mjǫk erum tregt tungu at hrœra með loptvætt ljóðpundara », IF II = _Egils saga Skalla-Grimssonar_. Sigurður Norðal gaf út (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzk fornritafélag, 1933), 257. The matter is discussed extensively in Sif Rickardsdóttir, _Emotion in Old Norse_, 79-117.

234 Brot 14.5: «Hvetið mik eða letið mik — harmr er unninn — sorg að segja eða svá láta! » [ “Egg me or let me, anguish is to come, sorrow is to be told, or so let be!”] 235 John McKinnell, “Female Reactions to the Death of Sigurðr”, in _Essays on Eddic Poetry_, ed. by John McKinnell, Donata Kick, John D. Schafer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 244.

236 Frá dauða Sigurðar; «Hon grét eigi sem aðrar konur en hon var búin til að springa af harmi. » [“About the death of Sigurd: She didn’t cry as the other women and she was on the verge of collapse for the grief”].

237 This is the infelicitous fate of Hrefna, Kjartan’s wife, in _Laxdæla saga_, which is reported to have died of heartbreak shortly after Kjartan’s death: _Laxd_ 196: »ær þat sógn manna, a hon hafi sprungit af striði. » Helga, the female protagonist of _Gunnlaugs saga örmstungu_, dies of presumed heartache in a similar fashion.


239 Hill, “Guðrún’s Healing Tears”, 108.
although she is entitled to perform the prescribed emotional role for situation of bereavement, the heroine is not adhering to the emotional script, a fact which worries the courtly ladies in a similar way as Egill’s silence after his son’s death troubled his daughter Þúriðr in Egils saga.240

This psychological pain is the focus of Guðrúnarkviða in fyrsta, as evidenced also by the recurring theme of speaking sorrowful words. One of the ladies in Gðr I.6.4 affirms « “Hefi ek hardara/harm að segja” »,241 to reckon a ‘chain of sorrow’ which ideally will enable Guðrún to release her desperation and soothe her pain.242 In Gðr II.8.2, with a rhetorical question, Guðrún does not want her brother Hǫgni to tell her (segja) slíka harma, such terrible sorrow, while he points at the recent death of Sigurðr, although the poem - narrated in first person - represents the elaborated narration of the misfortunes of her life.

The last occurrences of harm-r in the collection of poems are still related to Guðrún. In this sense, the lexeme can be interpreted as a distinctive feature of the emotional style of her character. In Am.59 the theme of recounting sorrowful deeds is declined differently, and Guðrún exploits it to rebuke Atli and to confront him: she exposes all his faults in what seems an unwanted marriage, that made them both resentful, then she eventually declares that she rejoices in his misfortunes (Am.59.8). Then, Atli urges his warriors to fight to increase Guðrún’s suffering and to make her cry, in a strophe which is dense of vocabulary for negative emotions.243 Judging from this passage, it seems that harmr entails the reference to the traumatic events of her past life. In this excerpt, however, it is hard to identify a prevailing emotion. Here anger, hatred and sadness are so much interrelated to constitute the undertone of the whole dialogue between the two characters, as proved also by Atli’s malevolent joy in delivering to his wife the woeful news that her brothers are killed (Am.70.1: « (…) Atli, sté hann um þá bán, *horskri harm sagði ok réð heldr að bregða. »).244

Towards the end of the Nibelung cycle, however, Guðrún resorts to harmr again in a moving strophe, when in Guðrúnarkvötp the heroine is on one side lamenting her troubles, and on the other inciting her sons to murder king Jǫrmunrekkr, as proved by Carol Clover in her brilliant analysis of the thematic cluster between the call for revenge and the motif of female

241 The introductory prose of Gðr.II explains that Guðrún and Þjóðrek spends time together discussing their sorrows.
242 Hill, “Guðrún’s Healing Tears”, 110.
243 Am.60: «Eggja ek yðr, jarlar, auka harm stóran vífs ins vegliga, “vilja ek það lita; kostið svá keppa að klókkvi Guðrún! Sjá ek þaða mættak að hon sér né yndøt. » ( «I urge you, warriors, to greatly increase the grief of this redoubtable woman! That I want to see. Do all you can to make Guðrún sob, so that I might see her without a vestige of joy!” ») Translated by Carolyne Larrington, The Poetic Edda (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 218. Unless otherwise specified, I will refer to Larrington’s English translation and I will signal the page number in the main text.
mourning in Old Norse-Icelandic sources.244 The hardest of her sorrows (harðast harma minna), she affirms, happened when her daughter Svanhilðr was trampled to death by the king Jórmunnrekkr’s horses (Ghv.17). This harm is the worst and the most bitter of all her troubles, she declares, and it is also the doleful deed which introduces the ending section of the tregróf, the “chain of woes” that, if uttered, might soothe the pain of the grief-stricken audience.245

3.2.2. Sorg and related lexemes

Total occurrences= 11

Contrary to what one might expect, given the semantic affinity to Old English sorh/sorg, the occurrences of sorg in the sense of “sorrow” in this corpus are not particularly salient. A brief survey of the Old English poetic sources proves instead that sorh/sorg might be the preferred lexeme for ‘sorrow’ in analogous contexts.246

More generally, sorg has a full-blown presence within the Germanic languages, as the cases of Gothic saurga, Old Saxon sorga, Dutch zorg, Old Franconian sworga, Old High German sorga and German Sorge proves.247 As reckoned by Pokorny and Orel,248 the common Proto-Indoeuropean root stems from *ȘÜRGH, which results in “care, illness”, as proved by the Old Irish serg (illness) and the Lithuanian sięgti (to be ill).249 Exhaustive in this sense might be the comparison with German, as well as Alexander Jóhannesson’s annotation to this regard:250 in most of the cases the cognate words of sorg indicate ‘care, worry, illness’, an instance represented also by the Old Icelandic verb syrgja. The English derivation seems, however, well grounded in numerous textual evidences in which sorh/sorg equates to sorrow, at least after a certain chronological standpoint (OED XVI, 24-25).

In the Poetic Edda, the case seems to be more blurred, even though sorg clearly relates to an affected psychological state. To this extent, Cleasby-Vigfússon considers ‘care’ as the

244 Clover, “Hildigunnr’s Lament”, 26-27.
245 Ghv.23.3: « snótum öllum sorg að minni að þetta tregróf um talið væri. » [“To all the ladies may your sorrow diminish, when this chain of woes has been recounted.”, my translation]
246 It is not possible here to give account of the whole Old English poetic corpus. For instance, Deōr presents instances of sorg at vv. 24-28, “Saet secg monig sorgum gebunden, wean on wenan, […] siteð sorgcearig saulum bidaeled” [ “Many a man bound up with sorrows, with woe all he could hope for, […] He sits with sorrowful care, deprived of fortunes”, text and translation from Richard North, Joe Allard, and Patricia Gillies (ed.) The Longman Anthology of Old English, Old Icelandic and Anglo-Norman Literatures (New York: Routledge, 2011), 104.]
247 Kroonen, Etymological Dictionary, 493.
original meaning, thus placing harmr as ‘sorrow’ in modern sense. Of the two relevant occurrences in Hávamál, the strophe 118.8 is a case in point, and it has already been quoted elsewhere in the present thesis: « Sorg et hjarta ef þú segja né náir einhverjum allan hug. » In absence of clear generic markers, however, it is hard to disambiguate sorg in this occurrence: what is relevant here seems to be the implied metaphor of SADNESS IS A LIVING CREATURE/SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT. Whether beast-like or a natural force, the metaphor embodies the wrath, the cruelty and the pain of unwanted thoughts, or sorrows, that troubles the heart of the individual.

After this brief mention, sorg is employed again in the cluster of poems of the Nibelung cycle. In Brot 14.8 the lexeme appears in the cluster “sorg að segja” from Gunnarr’s speech to Brynhildr, a collocation which informs the collection of poems also in the variant “harm/harm segja”. As seen in the previous paragraph, the theme of uttering grieving things is widespread in the heroic cycle and it might be interpreted also in light of the oral heritage of eddic poetry. Especially in the case of heroic poems, but also in numerous mythological ones, the dialogic structure might allude to the context of oral performance.

While Guðrún’s inner mindscape is rich in lexemes for sorrow, Brynhildr finds different ways of expressing her emotions, and her range of feelings seems more oriented to anger than to grief. The famous verse « er hon sat sorgfull yfir Sigurði » (“when she, full of sorrow, sat over Sigurðr”) (Gðr I.1.3), in which Guðrún is depicted as a doleful figure, sitting over the dead corpse of her husband, in her inconsolable pain which cannot be formulated in words provides an example.

Further in the poem, in Gðr I.22.9-10 Gullrönd calls Brynhildr « sorg sára sjau konunga » (“wounding sorrow of seven kings”, according to Larrington’s translation), thus framing her as an OPPONENT, according to an analogous metaphorical source domain as the one already considered for sorg. The poem closes with the image of Brynhildr scornfully snorting poison, with flames gleaming from her eyes (Gðr I.24). In this final appearance, her monstrosity matches the hyperbolic insult uttered by Gullrönd, in the sense of a legendary curse which destroyed generations of kings, a role which Brynhildr embodies also according to the use of sorg at Gðr I.22, leaving aside the pure metrical reasons of the alliteration of the consonant /sl/.

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251 Cleasby-Vigfússon, An Icelandic-English Dictionary, 578.
252 Hv.143.7: “Ljóð ek þau kann er kannat þjóðans kona ok mannzkis mögr; hjálp heitir eitt en það þér hjálpa mun við sökum ok sorðum ok situm görvöllum. ” [ “I know those spells which a ruler’s wife doesn’t know, nor any man’s son; ‘help’ one is called, and that will help you against law-suits and sorrows and every sort of anxiety.”, The Poetic Edda (Oxford, 2014), 33.]
254 Ibid., 25.
Sorg is the base noun of the compound sorg-móðr “distressed, sad” (Gðr II. 42), an adjective which sets the main undertone of Atli’s prophetic dreams, one of the gloomiest moment of the Nibelung cycle. Here Atli’s mood anticipates the approaching doom of his kin and his house, as well as the moment of catharsis for the whole Nibelung cycle. Through his prophetic dreams, the audience gains an unexpected access to his inner life, a narrative strategy which is largely employed in sagas, alongside with poetry, and constitutes a productive device to give way to alternative cognitive representations. In this case, Atli’s cycle of prophetic dreams in Guðrúnarkviða önnur embodies not only the awaited narrative development of the plot, which is going to take place shortly after the passage, but it relates also to his crippled emotive state, to his fears, and perhaps to his subtle remorses.

Although the extract does not employ a great amount of emotionally-connoted vocabulary, the adjectives sorg-móðr and glaums andvani (cheerless, deprived of joy) underscore the prevalent emotional undertone for the passage. It might be postulated, however, that desperation is not expressed openly, but is instead stated in a subtler and indirect way, which may represent the effort to shape emotions which would not have been accepted elsewhere, such as fear, sorrow, and mental prostration.

Towards the end of Codex Regius sorg is employed again in three cases, all centered on Guðrún. In Am.94.2 Atli confronts her with these words: «Seg þér slíkar sorgir ár morg! Fríðra vil ek dauða fara í ljós annað.» At this point, Guðrún had triumphantly confessed to have slaughtered her and Atli’s sons, thus this strophe portrays her husband’s despair: “sliðkar sorgir” are rendered necessarily with ‘such sorrowful deeds’, while the third and fourth verses express Atli’s pathetical forebodings for his own impending doom. These intensified emotional undertones are not so highlighted in Atlakviða, whereas in Atlamál the character seems to portray a similar stance to the Middle High German Etzel, which bewails his fate in several occasions and gives voice to Klagelieder, mourning poems. Eventually, sorg occurs at the very end of Guðrúnarhvǫt, in a passage which now I will briefly address.

Ghv. 22:
«Hlaðið ér, jarlar,
eikiköstinn,

255 The second occurrence of sorg-móðr in Odd.12.2 reflects her emotional life: Oddrún is the “sorgmóð kona” which recounts to the audience the grievous things of her life. Also from this second case it seems that sorg-móðr implies the reference to a state of deep sorrow.
256 Kanerva, Porous Bodies, 31.
257 «Recount such sorrows to yourself early tomorrow morning! I’ll want a more splendid death to journey to another light. » (The Poetic Edda, Oxford, 2014), 222.
látið þann und hilmi
hæstan verða!
Megi brenna brjóst
bölvafullt eldr
(...) um hjarta
þíni sorgir!
Jörlum öllum
ððal batni,
ßnótum öllum
sorg að minni
að þetta tregróf
um talið væri.
[
“Nobles, build high the oak-wood pyre!
Let it be the highest among the princes.
May fire burn up the breast so full of wrongs, may sorrows melt about my heart!
“To all warriors – may your lot be made better;
To all ladies – may your sorrow grow less,
now this chain of griefs has been recounted.”]

In this excerpt, sorg might be effectively translated with “sorrow”, and exemplifies this kind of negative emotions. I want to underline, however, the verses 7-8 in strophe 22. Although defective and supplied by the editor, the idea of frozen heart for sadness falls into the realm of SADNESS IS A LACK OF HEAT, an embodied metaphor which is extremely productive in Old English poetry, as showed, for instance, by the Old English elegies from the Codex Exoniensis.

On the other hand, the Codex Regius poems present a handful of cases which are relatable to this metaphor, admittedly only loosely. In Vkv.30 the king Niðudr affirms that he feels his head freezing (« “Kell mik í hǫfuð” ») after the death of his nephews. In the preceding strophe, the old king was connoted by vilja lauss, bereft of joy, to emphasize his sorrows and the solitary gloom of his old age. At this point of the legend, he still does not know the terrible revenge of Vǫlundr, who slaughtered the kids, served to Niðudr their skulls as goblets, and violated his daughter. The verses depict him as senescent, powerless, paralyzed in the bitterly cold emotions of grief, which he cannot get rid of. The numbness Niðudr feels correlates most likely to the suspicion that the king is nurturing within himself, about the terrible fate of his offspring.

261 “Vilja lauss” was referred to Vǫlundr at Vkv.13, when he discovered to have been enslaved by Niðuðr. Other compounds with vilja/vilja are ð−vilja (Sk.43) and vaðin að vilja. The latter is attested also in the Skamma (Sk.55) and in Hamðismál (Hm.4), both times connected to Guðrún’s sorrows.
Similarly, at the beginning of *Skamma* (Sk.8), the text reports that Brynhildr « oft gengr hon innan, illz um fyld, ísa ok jökla, aftan hvern, » (“Often she went outside, filled with frozen anger, cold of ice, of glaciers, every evening”). Here Larrington translates the verb *fylla* with reference to anger, perhaps according to Brynhildr’s role as inciter throughout the narrative, and also considering the environment of the verse: the heroine is presumably alone, frozen in her sorrowful anger and meditating terrible deeds, while Sigurðr every night lies in bed next to Guðrún, a relationship which here is portrayed with evident sexual connotations. Therefore, considering that in *Skamma* Brynhildr’s emotional life plays a key role, and it is depicted with various nuances, I would not dismiss the reference to SADNESS AS A LACK OF HEAT also in this second case, also considered that the metaphorical source domain for ANGER rarely entails coldness, rather it subsumes the domains of HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER/FIRE.

It is unquestionable, however, that the icy thoughts that stir Brynhildr are in their nature more complex than Niðudr’s bereavement. In both cases, the reference does not clearly account for vocabulary of sorrow, contrarily to blatant examples such as the Old English adjective *winter-cearig* from *The Wanderer*, a famous case despite its very rare usage. On a parallel note, in *Deōr* the adjective *winter-cealde* (wintry-cold) identifies Weland’s sorrowful situation as slave of Niðhad, while in the Old Icelandic version of Vǫlundr’s legend the smith is never framed in relation to coldness.

Eventually, *sorg* is further mentioned as ‘sorrow’in *Hamðismál*, one of the poems which was considered as purely heroic for a long time, and often contrasted to the preceding

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262 Sk.8.5: « er þau Guðrún ganga á beð ok hana Sigurðr sveipr í rifti, konungr inn húnski, kván frjá sína. » [“and he and Guðrún went to bed and Sigurðr wrapped her in the bedclothes, the souther king caressing his wife”, *The Poetic Edda* (Oxford, 2014), 178.]

263 McKinnell, “Female Reactions”, 256-257.


265 Another tentative connection with the concept of coldness for death is retrieved in Sigrún’s speech in HHIII.44, in which the valkyrie mentions the hoarfrost which drenches Helgi’s hair (« hélu þrungið »), as he comes from the realm of Hel.

266 For winter-cearig the Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary lists only this occurrence (Bosworth 1898, 1236): *The Wanderer*, from *Codex Exoniensis* 287, 24: «Ic hean þonan wod wintercearig ofer wapema gebind» [“I went from there winter-sorrowing over the binding waves”, translation from Treharne 2004, 43].

267 *Deōrs Klage*, from *Codex Exoniensis*, 377, 4: « Heðfe him to gesiþþe sorge ond longaþ, wintercealde wrece, wean oft onfond, siþþan hine Niðhad on nede legde » [“He had sorrow and longing for his companions, the pain of winter-cold, he often encountered misfortune, since Niðhad had laid constraints upon him”, translated by Treharne, *Old and Middle English*, 61].
Guðrún’s poems in terms of dating.\textsuperscript{268} In Hm.1 we find several emotion words lexemes related to sorrow and sadness, which are interwoven in the textual structure of the strophe.

Hm.1

«Spruttu á tái
tregnariðir,
grætìálfa
in glýstömu;
árumorgin
manna bölva
sátîrhverjar
sorg um
kveykva.»

[“There sprang up on the threshold grievous actions,
to make elves weep, their joy dammed up;
early in the morning the wicked deeds of men,
all kinds of miseries, kindle sorrow.”]\textsuperscript{269}

I emphasized the words related to the expression of negative emotions, to prove their relevance in the present case.\textsuperscript{270} As it seems from this strophe, the concepts for sorrow are not mutually exclusive, and they contribute to the poetic variation which is embedded in the metrical system, as well as contributing to the general harmonic flow of the poem.

The verb springa related to sadness has been observed before in relation to Guðrún’s bereavement. Here it conveys the idea that SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM/SADNESS IS AN ILLNESS,\textsuperscript{271} thus suggesting the idea of the violent intensity of sorrow. Besides glý-stam-r, “joyless”, and sátîr, “illness”, it must be noticed, however, that the emotionally-connoted words tend to pertain to the same set of expressions already encountered in this research.

3.2.3. Tregi, trega and related lexemes

Total occurrences= 18

\begin{itemize}
  \item tregi \quad 6
  \item aldrtrregi \quad 1
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{268} The position was supported by several scholars from the German school, notably von See, Heusler and Sprenger, but it was recently challenged by Sävborg (“Elegy in Eddic Poetry”, 89). Lönnroth also reduced its claims in light of the oral-formulaic theory (Lönnroth, “Heroine in Grief”, 124).

\textsuperscript{269} The Poetic Edda (Oxford, 2014), 230.

\textsuperscript{270} The cluster « manna bölva » is not considered relevant to sorrow and grief, given that the neuter noun böll refers to the semantic sphere of evilness, rather than of psychological despair. It is very common throughout the compilation in cases in which relates to personal misfortunes, bad luck, and wrongdoings. For instance, Brynhildr employs it to refer to Atli in Gðr I.23, while in the Skamma the situation is reverted, and she is blamed to be the root of every evil deed: “Ein veldr Brynhildr / öllu bölvi” (Skamma 24.7-8).

\textsuperscript{271} Kövecses, Metaphor and Emotion, 25.
According to the etymological data, the cluster \textit{tregi} (subst.)/\textit{trega} (verb) derives from the Indo-European root *DRÉGH, which originally meant ‘to become slow’ within the Germanic family, as in the Gothic \textit{trigo} and in Old Norse \textit{tregr}, ‘reluctantly, with difficulty’, even though the productivity of this lexeme resulted in a broad range of occurrences within the semantic field of ‘to be grieved, downcast’ as in Old Icelandic \textit{trega}, Old English \textit{tregian}, Old Saxon \textit{tregan} and Old Danish \textit{treje}.\textsuperscript{272} In this, however, DeVries evidences the recurrence of ‘grief’ as primary meaning for Old English \textit{trega} and Old Saxon \textit{trego}, coupled with the Old Norse \textit{tregi}.\textsuperscript{273}

In this context Kroonen mentions the Old Saxon maxim “\textit{ni tharf iu uiiht tregan}”, translated as ‘you don’t need to feel sad’.\textsuperscript{274} This suggests that \textit{trega} requires an oblique subject in dative, a feature shared by most of the \textit{verba sentiendi} in eddic poetry and sagas as observed by Smirnickaja,\textsuperscript{275} which collimates with the cultural-conditioned perception of emotions as external forces impacting on the individual’s balance. Kroonen identifies the North Germanic cluster connected to Old Icelandic \textit{tregi}, Old English \textit{trega} and Old Saxon \textit{trego} as logically drawing from the impersonal verbal construct, in the sense of ‘it is tough to me => I am grieving’.\textsuperscript{276}

Following these conclusions, we could argue that Old Icelandic \textit{tregi} and \textit{trega} represent the actual lexical choice for ‘grief’ and for the transitive verb ‘to grieve’.

Given that \textit{tregi} constitutes a semantically-prominent lexeme in the sphere of ‘grief’ and ‘sorrow’, one would expect it to be mentioned several times in a collection of poems, which recount legendary tales and heroic deeds. In contrast to what seen for the previous lexemes,

\textsuperscript{272} de Vries, \textit{Altnordisches Etymologisches}, 597.
\textsuperscript{274} Kroonen, \textit{Etymological Dictionary}, 522.
\textsuperscript{276} Kroonen, \textit{Etymological Dictionary}, 521-522.
however, *tregi* and *trega* appear in scattered occurrences throughout the compilation of the Codex Regius, although they do play a role in the depiction of negative emotions.

Concerning *tregi*/*trega*, it must be noted that the lexemes are employed mostly in their psychological meaning. For instance, at Hv 19.3 the “*aldr-tregi*” (deadly sorrow), which devours the greedy men responds to the metaphorical domain SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM/SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT, which recalls stanza 118.8, where *sorg* is connotated in a similar way.

Further in *Skírnismál* (Sk 5.3) Freyr’s love labors for the giantess Gerðr are defined “*mikinn móðtrega*” (great heart’s grief), and from Skírnr’s words in stanza 3 it is evident that his master Freyr is undergoing through a moment of intimate personal suffering, given that he sits alone, day by day, in his large hall (Sk 3.4-6). The prose passage is in this sense more illuminating than the verses, because it introduces the theme of love as sickness through the adjective *hug-sóttir* (mentally sick, obsessed), accompanied by the idea of the persistent feeling that troubles the everyday life of Freyr. In this, it emphasizes the conceptual metaphor of LOVE IS AN ILLNESS, which in the present case relates also to Freyr’s persistent sadness. It is noteworthy to mention that in the Codex Regius the theme of love sickness from a male perspective is rarely found.

Moreover, also in *Skírnismál*, Skírnir uses the concept of *tregi* to threaten the giantess Gerðr, in a long and articulated set of disgraces which will severely trouble her life, if she does not accept to lay with Freyr (Sk 29-30). In these two stanzas, *tregi* and *trega* are repeated three times, alongside with other lexical items related to ‘grief’, such as the somatic marker *tár*. Particularly interesting is the sequence of stanza 29.4, which introduces Skírnir’s chain of curses to Geirðr: « *Seztu niðr en ek mun segja þér sváran súsbreka ok tvennan trega* » [“Sit down, and I will tell you heavy afflictions and twofold grief!”].

Aside from the theme of recounting grievous events, recurring in the compilation, the adjective *svár-r* in context of psychological suffering recurs in other three examples within the compilation, namely in Hv 103.7, in *Skamma* (23, 25.3) and eventually in *Guðrúnarhvǫt*, although in this last case it is due to editorial intervention. In all those occurrences, *svár-r* functions as intensifier for negative emotions, especially when connected to psychological pain. In *Skírnismál*’s case, however, the depiction of sorrows is functional to Skírnir’s

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278 The long and hyperbolic articulation of sorrows sketched by Skírnir continues until strophe 38. The insistence of Skírnir and the high degree of elaboration of the curses and the *senna*-like context might be interpreted as the parody of a *tregróf*, the chain of woes which is reckoned by Guðrún Gjúkadóttir in *Guðrúnarhvǫt*.
279 Ghv 12.1 « *Svárra sára sákat ek né *kunna, meirr þóttuz mér um stríða er mik öðlingar Atla gáfu. » [“Heavier wounds I have not seen, nor did they know of such, yet they intended to hurt me more when the noble men gave me to Atli”, The Poetic Edda (Oxford 2014, 189).]
aim, so it does not account for a real presence of negative emotion. It is nonetheless relevant, because the messenger Skírnir uses a vivid and elaborated imagery to sketch Gerðr’s future pains, and in doing this he refers to lexemes which are widely attested in the compilation of poems, such as tár and gráta,280 understood as universal markers for despair, and the already mentioned adjective svár-r.

Similarly, trega is connected to the gesture of weeping in Völundarkviða. In this sense, if we consider the occurrences of trega and tregi from this point of the compilation onwards, it seems that the lexemes relate mostly with personal despair due to traumatic events, as in Bóðvildr’s case (Vk 27.5), or in Níðuðr’s intimate suffering when he discovers the cruel fate of his sons,281 and also in light of the way in which Dagr delivers to Sigrún the news of Helgi’s death in Helgakviða Hundingsbana önnur (HHII 30.2).

Further support for this interpretation of trega/tre gi might be located in two instances from Grípispá, where mein-tregi, “affliction”, and of-tre gi are employed to connote the sorrowful events of Sigurðr’s life, especially concerning his deceitful behavior towards Brynhildr. Grípir’s prophecies disclose to Sigurðr (and to the audience) the great tragedy of the Nibelung cycle. Consequently, the text employs lexemes which are strongly connotated in the sense of negative emotions: the compounds from tre gi emphasize this reading, also because they have been preferred over sorg and havmr, semantically less close to ‘grief’ than tre gi and its family, and adopted twice in a span of few strophes. The contrast between Sigurðr’s controlled reaction, who in the present case restrains his feelings and avoid any pathetic outpourings,282 and Helgi’s display of grief at HHII.45-46 remains however striking, as seen in the previous paragraph.

Moving towards the end of the compilation, the lexemes tre gi and trega appear often in relation which the heroines’ griefs, as in the third stanza of Guðrúnarkviða í fyrsta, when the courtly audience gathers around the protagonist to tell her about their “bitrastan oftrega”, “bitterest great grief”, in order to move her to tears. In addition, the cluster “af trega stórum”,

280 Sk 30: « Tramar gneypa þík skulu gerstan dag jötta göðum i; til hrímþursa hallar þú skalt hverjan dag kranga kostalaus, kranga kostavönn; grát að gamni skaltu í gögn hafa ok leiða með tárum trega. » [“Fiends will oppress you all the long weary day, in the giants’ courts; to the hall of frost-giants every day you shall creep without choice, without hope of choice; weeping you shall have for pleasure, and misery shall go with your tears”, The Poetic Edda (Oxford 2014, 62)].

281 Vk 36.2: « Mæltira þú það mál er mik meirr tregi né ek þík vilja, Völundr, verr um níta; » [“You could say no words that would grieve me more, nor, Volund, would I deny you any worse fate,” The Poetic Edda Larrington (Oxford 2014, 104).]

282 It is remarkable also that Brynhildr is represented as the main source of tragedy and despair, also through the use of emotion-connoted lexemes, as in Grp 29.1: “Hon firrir þík flestu gamin” (“she will deprive you of all your happiness”, my translation), a recurring syntax in framing Brynhildr’s actions within the compilation, as seen in Góðr 1.22-23 and in Skamma 43.
“from great grief”, as connected to *telja/segja* or other *verba dicendi*, is retrieved three times more within the compilation, always in cases in which it refers to traumatic events of the past of the characters. For instances, Hógni uses it to announce to his sister the further disgraces which await the Gjúkungs’ clan (Gðr II. 8-9). In the two extant examples, the collocate “*af trega stórum*” denotes the beginning of Oddrún’s sequence of lamentation (Odd 12.4) and eventually the incipit of *Guðrúnarhvǫt* (Ghv 1), so it might be interpreted as a genre-marker for female mourning poems and whets, according to Clover’s considerations about the interrelation of the two discourses.

In the case of *Guðrúnarhvǫt*, however, the word family of *trega* is well-attested, given that in Ghv 2.3 the heroine rhetorically utters to her sons: « Hví tregr-atยกkr teiti að maðla? », “Why does not sadden you to talk cheerfully?”, in order to incite them to the revenge. The adverb *tregliga*, “sorrowfully”, is further referred to Guðrún in Ghv 10 as well, when the protagonist goes to sit on the threshold and, sorrowfully, with tears on her cheeks, starts to remember the sad events of her life. In addition, the compound *treg-róf* from *tregi* gives the name to the “chain of sorrows”, the speech-act that Guðrún utters in the second half of *Guðrúnarhvǫt*, after having doomed her sons to death.

Eventually *treginn*, past participle of *trega* in its adjectival form, occurs at the beginning of *Hamðismál* (Hm 1.2), in a fashion that is tangentially – although clearly – related to Guðrún. In fact, the first strophe presents a meaningful number of interwoven concepts for ‘sorrow’ and ‘grief’, which have been already observed in the previous paragraph. As the second strophe of the poem clarifies, the “*tregnar íðir*” (“deeds that cause grief”) earlier mentioned are Guðrún’s attempts to urge her sons to avenge Svanhildr’s death, an action which will lead to the extinction to the Gjúkungs’ dynasty, and will ultimately call for blood after other blood.

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283 Odd 12: «Þá nam að setjaz sorgmóð kona að telja ból af trega stórum » ["Then took to seat, the sorrow-hearted woman, to recount the evil, from great grief", my translation].
285 La Farge and Tucker, *Glossary to the Poetic Edda*, 266.
286 Ghv 10: « Guðrún grátandi, Gjúka dóttir, gekk hon tregliga á tái sitja ok að telja, tárughlýra, móðug spjöll á marga veg. »
287 La Farge and Tucker, *Glossary to the Poetic Edda*, 266.
289 Hm 1: « Spruttu á tái tregnar íðir, graeti álfa in glystömu; ár um morgin manna bölva sútir hverja sorg um kveykva. » [“There sprang up on the threshold grievous actions, to make elves weep, their joy damned up; early in the morning the wicked deeds of men, all kinds of miseries, kindle sorrow.” *The Poetic Edda*, (Oxford 2014, 230)].
290 Hm 2: «Vara það nú né í gær, það hefir langt lóðið söðan; er fátt fornara, fremr var það hálfu er hvatti Guðrún, Gjúka borin, sonu sina unga að hefna Svanhildr. » [“It was not today nor yesterday; a long time has passed since then – few things are so long ago that is not twice as long – when Gudrun born of Gjuki urged his sons to avenge Svanhildr.” *The Poetic Edda*, (Oxford, 2014, 230)].
To sum up, the occurrences of tregi and related notions are evidently connected to psychological suffering due to a personal LOSS, given that they refer consistently to TRAUMATIC EVENTS happened in the PAST which are RECURRING in the individual mind and HAUNTING in the memory, according to Wierzbicka’s cognitive scenario for GRIEF.\(^\text{291}\)

In addition, it is remarkable that the occurrences of tregi and trega are in most cases connected to female characters, either as a lingering perspective (such as in Skirnismál and in Helgakviða Hundingsbana önnur) or as actual representation of the heroines’ troubled emotional state. One notable exception, however, is the reference to King Nóttur’s loss inVk 36.2. In the cases considered here, anyway, tregi seems to be one of the prevailing lexeme to conceptualize intense states of personal sorrow.

\section*{3.2.4. Sár, sár and related lexemes}

Total occurrences= 12

\begin{itemize}
  \item sár 4
  \item sárr 5
  \item sárligr\(^\text{292}\) -
  \item sára 1
  \item sárla 2\(^\text{293}\)
\end{itemize}

Sár and related concepts exemplify the lexical choices for “sore, wound” and, as partially analogous to sorg, they are also understood in their physical connotation, as the bodily source of pain. From the Gothic sair onwards, sár appears to be very productive within the Germanic languages. For instance, it is attested in Old Saxon sêr, Old Frisian sar, Old High German sêr and Old English sár with analogous meaning, and also outside the language family, as in Old Irish saeth “illness” and in the Finnish adjective sairas “wounded”.\(^\text{294}\) The allegedly Indo-European roots are *SAIRAN for the noun sár, extended to *SAIRJANAN for the verbs (see, for example, Old Icelandic særa, Old Frisian sera and Old Saxon serian, “to injure”), and *SAIRA-Z for the adjectives, meaning in this last case “wounded, injured”.\(^\text{295}\) We might therefore conclude that the formulation of sár and related words do not pertain to psychological suffering. Judging from the cognate etymologies, in fact, sár and

\(^{291}\) Wierzbicka, Emotions Across Languages, 68.

\(^{292}\) The only occurrence of the adjective sárlig-r was not considered relevant because it refers to the quality of the oblivion potion that Grímhildr offers to the daughter Guðrún (Gðr II.21.3).

\(^{293}\) Only the occurrence of sárla at Gör II.11 has been considered relevant for the present analysis.

\(^{294}\) de Vries, Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch, 463.

\(^{295}\) Orel, A Handbook of Germanic Etymology, 313.
sár-r seem to have a rather somatic connotation, so they should not pertain to the field of psychological suffering. Although it literal meaning, however, in the poems of the Codex Regius sár and its family could relate also to states of psychological pain.

In this case the corpus analysis does not suffice as tool. In this sense, a contextual reading is necessary to disambiguate sár’s occurrences in its literal meaning, which are numerous within the Codex Regius, with the aim of grasping its ecology within the body of poems.

Neither sár nor sár-r or related lexemes appear in the first part of the compilation, within the thematic complex of mythological poems. The first mention of sár is retrieved in HH I.32, but here it does not relate to psychological pain, given that it occurs in the context of the ritual flying between Sinfjóti and Guðmundr, a senna, in which the purpose of each contestant is to downgrade and insult the other.

In the later poems, excluding occurrences like bana-sár “death-wound” or like the kenning sár-dropi “blood”, both found in HHI, then sár and related terms occur in the Nibelung cycle. Aside from one entry in Regísmál (Rm 26.6), the adjective sár-r appears in Gðr I.18.8, in a stanza which belongs to the general framework of the heroine’s lamentation, after she eventually released the tensions which were blocking her from expressing her sorrow. In this case, sár-r is strongly connoted as intensifier marker, which denotes negative emotions. An analogous example of powerful expression of sorrow and anger is further displayed at Skamma 55. Brynhildr’s imposing voice in Skamma has been addressed earlier in this work. Several interpreters noticed the force of Brynhildr’s character, underscored by her use of verbal utterances, which she uses to shape her own point of view on the events. Close to death after having stabbed herself, Brynhildr carries on a long verbal interchange with Gunnar, and, through the deployment of different lexemes related to sorrow, she gives

296 Examples such as Gðr I.24.6-7 (“er hon sár um leið á Sigurði”), or as HH I.36 (“oft sár sogin með svöllum munni”) or eventually as Skamma 28 (“blöðugt sár”) refer to the concept of “wound” as physical damage, rather than metaphorically imply the reference to psychological wound or to sorrow.

297 HHI 36.1 “Oft sár sogin með svöllum munni, hefr í hreyfi hvarleiðr skriðið! “[“Often you’ve sucked wounds with a cold snout, hated everywhere, you’ve slunk into a stone-tip!”], The Poetic Edda (Oxford 2014, 115).]

298 Rm 26.4 “ […] talarðisir standa þér á tvær hliðar ok viða þik sárun sjá. » [“Guileful disir stand on both sides of you and want to see you wounded”, The Poetic Edda (Oxford 2014, 152).]

299 Gðr I.18.5: “ […] valda meigir Gjúka mínu (bölvi) ok systr *sinnar sárum gráti. » [“The kin of Gjuki caused my sorrow, wrenching weeping for their sister”, The Poetic Edda (Oxford 2014, 174)].

300 Further in the same poem Brynhildr will be called “sorg sára sjau konunga ok vinspell vífa mest” (Gðr I.22). In this example, the connection with sorg underscores the abstract meaning of sár-r as “sorrowful”. Jóhanna Katrín Fríðriksdóttir, “Women and Subversion”, 125; McKinnell, “Female Reactions”, 254.
voice to her own personal tragedy.  

Further in the same poem sár-r will indicate Guðrún’s revenge against Atli (Skamma 58), as prophesized by the dying Brynhildr. In this, the heroine anticipates the development in her rival’s behavior, for Guðrún will slaughter her and Atli’s sons “af sárum hug” (“from her wounded heart”). The adjective sár-r is employed again in Gör II 6.4, thus the cluster “sárum + Noun” appears three times within the compilation, always in connection to Guðrún, in a similar fashion as “af trega stórum”. Further in Gör II, another related lexeme, sárla, is found in stanza 11.3-4 (« “er ek sárla satk yfir Sigurði” »). These later examples present a narrating voice in first person, who conceptualizes her own affliction through sár-r and related lemmas.

Eventually sár and sár-r are attested together in the sequence of tregróf towards the end of Guðrúnarhvötn (Ghv 12). In considering the word family of sár, which is strongly denoted by a tangible and non-abstract meaning, the context might help to shed light on the meaning of the lexeme. In this example in particular sár is connected to the description of sorrow and grief, in fact Guðrún is displaying all her miseries in first person, in a cumulative process which has the effect of being totalizing and overwhelming for the audience.

The lament proceeds for several stanzas, until strophe 20, and it summarizes the main stages of the Nibelung legend. Each loss which the protagonist endured is connoted by a superlative (hardast, sárastr, grimmastr, hvassastr), to stress the extraordinary quality of the pain of every traumatic event (harm-r) inflicted to the experiencer subject. The corollary of this mourning process results in the so called tregróf, which brings the poem to an end.

This last example closes the survey of sár and related lexemes, as relevant for the chosen corpus of texts. In contrast with the trend identified with harmr, sorg, and tregi, the deployment of sár in its abstract meaning is perhaps subtler, and its recurrence within the corpus is not as conclusive as in the cases of the other emotion key-terms considered so far. It shows undoubtedly, however, that sár acquires also a metaphorical meaning, especially in connection with female speakers, when it comes about the depiction of intimate suffering.

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302 Skamma 55: « Margs á ek minnaz hvé við mik fóru þá er mik sára svikna höfðuð; vaðin að vilja varð meðan ek lifðak. » [“Much I remember: how they acted against me, how you bitterly betrayed me, caused me pain; robbed of what I wished for I was, while I lived”, The Poetic Edda (Oxford 2014, 184).]

303 Gör II.6: « Hnipnaði Gunnarr, sagði mér Högni frá Sigurðar sárum dauða » [“Downcast was Gunnar; Högn told me of Sigurðr’s sorrowful death”, my translation].

304 Ghv 12, although supplied by editorial intervention: « *Svárra sára sákat ek né *kunna, meirr þóttuz mér um stríða er mik öðlingar Atla gáfu. » [“Heavier wounds have I not seen, nor did they know of such; yet they intended to hurt me more, when the noble man gave me to Atli”, The Poetic Edda, (Oxford 2014, 228)].
Concluding Remarks

The nouns for psychological suffering constitute a restricted group, which recurs throughout the text and covers many instances of depictions of sadness. The prevailing occurrences relate in most cases to harm-r and sorg, while other lexemes for ‘grief’, such as tregi and ang-r, are less frequent within the compilation. The case of súr-r has been considered separately, given its literal meaning as ‘wound’ and its recurrence in the cluster of poems centered on the Nibelung legend. Taking insights from Kövecses and from several studies in the conceptualization of emotions, the emotion key-terms identified are interpreted as part of a broader lexical category, which encompasses more central and recurring members – such as harm-r, for instance – and less central, thus non-prototypical instances – such as tregi and related words. The fact that different lexemes are associated with analogous conceptual metaphors, as showed in my database, proves that all of them are subsumed under the general label of ‘psychological pain’. Thus, they embody a recurring cognitive model, which is specifically enacted within the text for the depiction of negative emotions.

The metaphorical source domains encompassed in the poems are broad-range: they cover most of the trends outlined by Kövecses for SADNESS. The examples entail SADNESS IS A PHYSICAL/NATURAL FORCE, SADNESS IS A BURDEN, SADNESS IS A LACK OF HEAT, SADNESS IS DARKNESS, SADNESS IS A FLUID, SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM/SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT, SADNESS IS A NATURAL FORCE. These metaphorical concepts belong to the more general framework of metaphorical source domains for EMOTION.

EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER
EMOTION IS A NATURAL FORCE
EMOTION IS A PHYSICAL FORCE
EMOTION IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR
EMOTION IS AN OPPONENT
EMOTION IS A CAPTIVE ANIMAL
EMOTION IS A FORCE DISLOCATING THE SELF
EMOTION IS A BURDEN

307 They are surveyed one by one in the “Notes” of the Negative Emotion Words Database included in appendix.
308 Kövecses, Metaphor and Emotion, 64.
These source domains seem to be productive also in the case of Old Norse-Icelandic, according to the examples discussed in this thesis.  

My conclusions generally align with Carolyne Larrington’s remarks about the standardization of the lexicon for ‘sorrow’ in Old Icelandic sagas. The recurrence of similar lexemes in a different textual medium, such as eddic poetry, confirms that an emotionally-connoted vocabulary was shared and widespread within the Old Norse-Icelandic literary tradition. In addition, its recurrence accounts for the relative stability of such vocabulary.

When it comes to the staging of negative emotions in text, however, some distinctions should be noted. The conceptualization of grief and sorrow in eddic poetry not only resorts to emotion key-terms, but it is enacted within the textual environment with the help of metaphorical discourse and other stylistic strategies, in a way that echoes Sif Rikhardsdottir’s remarks about the usage of emotion words in sagas:

The scarcity of emotion words has the effect of making the emotive range of each emotion word broader or more complex. The same word can thus have multiple connotative meanings within the text that are context-based and require the reader (or audience) to read deeply into the circumstances of their usage to determine the way in which it should be interpreted.

To this extent, a purely linguistic observation of every lexeme cannot wholly account for its role as catalyzer of emotional resonance within the text. To grasp the meaning of each lexeme, it must be considered alongside with the stanzaic context in which it is embedded. This feature recalls Sif Rikhardsdottir’s notion of ‘emotional signposts’ or ‘signifiers’, in a sense that the emotional undertones of the text are the outcome of multiple narrative strategies, such as the intersection between the construction of the scenes, the narrative development, and the dramatic staging of the plot. These are narrative hints that the audience should decode, to appraise the emotive content subsumed in the text. As an additional element to this formulation, I would add the usage of specific lexical items and their implied metaphorical domain.

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310 See, for instance, the recurring use of wrecked plants as comparison for doleful states in Gðr I-II and in Hm discussed in the Database and highlighted also in Lönnroth, “Heroine in Grief”, 117-119.
311 Larrington, “Learning to Feel”, 86.
312 Ibid., 86-88. Larrington’s evaluation matches Teresa Pàroli’s conclusion in “The Tears of the Heroes”, where she compares the Old Norse-Icelandic restraint to the creativity of Old English Christian sources in the employment of the terminology of sorrow (see Pàroli, “The Tears of the Heroes”, 257).
313 Sif Rikhardsdottir, Emotions in Old Norse, 64.
314 The concept is widely discussed by Sif Rikhardsdottir, “The Feeling Subject”, 77.
The linguistic analysis proves nonetheless the centrality of words in the conceptualization of troubled emotive states, given that the text duly resorts to them to describe emotive scenarios for grief and sorrow.\textsuperscript{315} The interconnection between the emotion key-terms and their textual environment underscores a situation which recalls Ellen Spolsky’s theory of “cognitive gaps” as features of the literary discourse but also,\textsuperscript{316} more specifically, the notion of culturally contingency of emotions.\textsuperscript{317} Thence, the audience should possess the adequate cultural competence to make sense of the textual hints provided by the lexemes in context, then reconstruct the emotive scenario in question. This process ultimately results in the correct interpretation of the subsumed emotional undertones, as mirrored by the lexical network.

According to these statements, the database included in appendix gives an overview of the lexical network of emotionally-connoted lexemes, as they innervate the structure of the poems of the Codex Regius. The lexical data gathered for the database enabled me to identify some trends in the representation of grief and sorrow, which appears consistently throughout the compilation.

The greatest amount of emotion words is retrieved in the heroic poems of the collection. There are indeed conceptualizations of negative emotions in the mythological poems of the Codex Regius, but the recurrence of such terms is tangible from \textit{Völundarkviða} onwards. We may infer to this extent that the marked emotional undertones become relevant when the reader or the audience approaches a content variation. Therefore, the attention towards the depiction of affected emotional states is mirrored by the genre distinction within the Poetic Edda, a consideration which recalls Brittany Schorn’s notion of eddic modes and genres and,\textsuperscript{318} less recently, Theodore Andersson’s assumptions about the implied generic boundaries in eddic poetry.\textsuperscript{319} Moreover, as the database shows, the lexemes are used almost exclusively to address or frame the narrative discourse related to specific characters. They seem to belong to conventional narrative strategies to give voice to the characters’ subjectivity, in this underscoring the relation between the means of poetry as textual medium and the expression of the poetic self. Especially in the case of heroines, negative emotion lexemes seem to complement their preferred mode of expression, to the extent that their employment in text functions as signifier for the heroines’ emotional style. For instance, as observed in my analysis, Brynhildr is never framed in states of grief and sorrow. She is rather associated with emotional ranges that span anger, distress, and disillusion, and her poetic voice in poems like \textit{Skamma, Brot} or \textit{Helreið Brynhildar} seems the preferred

\textsuperscript{315}Wierzbicka, \textit{Emotions Across Languages}, 66-69.
\textsuperscript{317}Miller, “Emotions and the Sagas”, 95.
\textsuperscript{318}Schorn, “Eddic modes and genres”, 238.
\textsuperscript{319}Andersson, “Is There a History of Emotions”, 201.
device to assert her own powerful individuality over the flow of events. Significantly, in Helreið Brynhildar, which represents her defense against a giantess in her journey to hell, she never resorts to lexemes for negative emotions to support her emotive statements, even though she is the main narrating voice of the poem: she rather expresses herself with severe intensity. The poem is retrospective and recalls the structure of a female lament, although the character does not utter a treg-róf nor does she stages narratively her personal sorrows, as the other heroines do in analogous cases. It would be going too far to suggest that outbursts of grief were not perhaps considered suitable for her emotional script, but I would assume that such data related to her agency were implied in the lexical repertoire associated with Brynhildr as character.

More generically, this support my hypothesis for genre-related boundaries within the materials of the eddic poems. The recurrence of certain lexical elements within the compilation suggests the presence of compelling stylistic constraints, which might have been ultimately motivated by the thematical variation of the poems.

An analogous conclusion is strengthened by the lexemes for gestural representations of sorrow. This connoted lexicon refers to gestures and kinetic expressions understood as somatic markers for grief, such as tears, lamenting, bewailing, and related terms. These instances are related to specific characters, thus recalling Teresa Pàroli’s considerations about the engendering of mourning practices, an assumption which lately has become a commonplace in assessing gender influences in the description of post-mortem rituals. As both Erin Michelle Goeres or as Kristen Mills have shown, I assume that the Codex Regius poems present only a handful of cases of male or collective weeping, while crying over the loss of an endeared person seems to be the dominant emotional regime for female characters, whether goddesses or heroines, with the meaningful exception of Brynhildr.

Eddic poetry seems to adhere to a clear tendency in the representation of sorrow, which is strictly polarized according to the gender. As Hógni laughs when his heart is cut out (Am 67), heroes and warriors seldom cry over the miseries of their life. They show a more restrained emotional range, in the style of the erfikvæði (“funeral poem”), which recalls the impassioned

321 Hlr 4.5 « hvé gjörðu mik Gjúka arfar ástalausa ok eiðrofa. » [“How made me, they, the heirs of Gjúki, loveless and an oath-breaker”, my translation.]
323 Goeres, “How to Do Things with Tears”, 6-7; Mills, “Male Weeping”, 477.
324 Akv 13, Akv 41, Am 68 and the reference to crying elves in Hm 1. Remarkably, the first three examples belong to the same thematic clusters, and they are linked to similar prototypical scenes (the collective mourning of warriors/courtly vassals).
325 Óðinn’s trick to Gunnlöð is framed as the reason that made the giantess cry (Hv 103.5-108.6).
326 McKinnell, “Female Reactions”, 262.
dirge recited to praise the death of chieftains and lords. For instance, Sigurðr in *Grípispá* does not unleash his despair, although he is forced to acknowledge the terrible events of his future through Grípir’s prophecies (see Grp 34.5–48.6 in the database). Gunnar and Hógni are framed as “sorrowful” or “downcast” in a couple of occurrences but, especially in Gunnar’s case, his suffering is connected to Brynhildr’s agency, a theme which is deeply explored in Brot, and which seems to pertain to Brynhildr’s characterization in the poetic sources.

Although Old Norse-Icelandic poetry collects records of mourning poems connected to male figures, such as the already mentioned *Sonatorrek*, it seems to me that the depiction of sorrow in such texts recalls the gender distinction outlined above. The topic is still debated. Joseph Harris has carried out a long-standing defense of the common origin of mourning and elegiac poems within the Proto-Germanic poetic tradition, drawing from comparative evidences from Old English and Old High German poetic records. Thus, he tends to rule out the differences in the literary depiction of mourning practices. Admittedly, Old English poetry shows a well-rooted mourning and elegiac tradition, as well as instances of male lamentations over the dead – this is often the case of the death of the son, also reported in *Beowulf*. Aside from those cases, and aside from the Christian and biblical tradition, which testify a subtler situation, in the Old English sources weeping is performed collectively for men, while remains individual in the case of female mourning.

Eddic poetry presents scanty, although unquestionable, depictions of male sorrow, which is exacerbated, for example, in King Níðuðr’s grief after the death of his sons (Vk 29-30), or in Atli’s doleful position in witnessing the end of his kinship (Am 94). The last section of *Atlamál* (Am 70-117) recalls the elaborate staging of personal sorrows and miseries seen also in the female-oriented poems. These cases, however, stress the isolation of both kings,

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328 See Hógni in Gðr II 9 and Gunnar in the occurrences found in Brot.

329 Harris, “A Nativist Approach”, 56.

330 Harris, “Hadubrand’s Lament”, 90-91. See also Harris, “Elegy in Old English and Old Norse”, 47.

331 Harris, “Elegy in Old English and Old Norse”,


335 Pàroli, “The Tears of the Heroes”, 257.

336 Cooper, “The Shedding of Tears”, 186.

337 Pàroli, “The Tears of the Heroes”, 242-245.

338 Harris, “Hadubrand’s Lament”, 91-92.
who outlived their offspring, and whose situation resembles Egill Skalla-Grímsson’s senile desperation in *Egils saga.*

Other representations of personal male grief are rarely addressed in the compilation. An exception is the mourning passage in HHI I 45-46, which is centered on Helgi Hundingsbani’s affliction. This outpouring of grief mirrors Sigrún’s own process of bereavement, but here the hero Helgi also proves to be emotionally struck and gives way to a sequence which recalls an elegiac lament. As well as in the case of Atli’s ominous dreams in *Guðrúnarkviða önnur* (Gðr II.42-43), such elaborated instances of male sadness might be motivated by the fact that they do not occur in the narrative space of reality, rather they pertain to liminal dimensions (dreams or afterlife, given that Helgi appears to Sigrún as revenant). Thus, they can be interpreted as instances of “alternative emotional discourse”, or perhaps according to the notion of “disenfranchised grief”, as sorrows which cannot be openly mourned and therefore are displaced, thus giving way to alternative modes of expression. In this light, the occurrences of male sorrow in the Poetic Edda might be explained as diverging from the reigning emotional style in Old Norse-Icelandic literary sources, which assessed negatively the male weeping.

Considering the female roles in eddic poetry, women do perform a ritualized set of lamenting practices, which prescribe a specific emotional script, related to blatant acts of despair such as wailing, shedding tears, striking the hands, and loosening the hair as in *Guðrúnarkviða in fyrsta.* The female lament in eddic poetry revolves around the act of treg-róf, “chain of woes”, whose features might be interpreted as analogous to the Austenian’s notion of speech acts. The treg-róf epitomizes the idea of speaking about the heroines’ own sorrows and doleful deeds, thus setting them free from the unexpressed grief which troubles their mind. The theme of recounting one’s own sorrows from the past occurs widely within the compilation, signaled by the occurrences of *harma að telja/sorg að segja* (“to tell/recounts harms”), and it is almost exclusively linked to female characters. In this sense, developing further a cue from Anatole Pierre Fuksas, I assume that the emotionally-connoted lexical network which innervates the eddic poems represents a valuable textual tool, which sustains the main narrative pattern.

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341 Charmaz and Milligan, “Grief”, 531.
342 For an in-depth discussion of gender issues on this topic, see David Clark and Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir, “The representation of gender”, 334-335.
343 Pároli, “The Tears of the Heroes”, 264.
346 Fuksas, “Il sistema delle emozioni”, 129.
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Larrington, Carolyne, “‘I Have Long Desired to Cure You of Old Age’": Sibling Drama in the Later Heroic Poems of the Edda”, in *Revisiting the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old


## Appendix: The Negative Emotion Words Database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Triggering Events</th>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Somatic Markers</th>
<th>Emotion Word (Lemmas)</th>
<th>Macrolemmas</th>
<th>Ensuing Actions</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vsp 51.3</td>
<td>Frigg (under her heiti Hlína)</td>
<td>Frigg’s “other sorrow” is said to be the fall of Óðinn in battle against Fenrir the wolf.</td>
<td>Sorrow, grief</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>harm-r</td>
<td>harm-r</td>
<td></td>
<td>Frigg’s “first sorrow” is likely to be the death of Baldr, her and Odin’s offspring, the event which marks the beginning of Ragnarók in Old Norse mythology. At Vsp. 34 is reported that she cried for “en Frigg um grét í Fensöllum vá Valhallar” at her son’s funeral, so a similar reaction would be expected for</td>
<td>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hv 19.3</td>
<td>An unnamed greedy man, or the audience</td>
<td>Advice administered by Óðinn to an unnamed listening subject (the collective audience of the poem).</td>
<td>Grief, anguish</td>
<td>aldrtrégia</td>
<td>aldr (subst. masc. “age”) + tregi; tregi;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>The verses belong to the Gestaþáttr section of Hávamál (str. 1-77) and warn the audience about the destructive behavior of the greedy man, which will cause himself lifelong sorrows and literally “eat himself”.</td>
<td>Metaphorical source domain: SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM/SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hv 54.5</td>
<td>An unnamed man, or the audience</td>
<td>Advice administered by Óðinn to an unnamed listening subject (the collective audience of the poem).</td>
<td>Sorrow</td>
<td>sjaldan glatt [sialþan glatt]</td>
<td>sjaldan (adv. “seldom, rarely”) + glaðr (adj. “cheerful”, “glad”)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>The strophe is placed at the ending sequence of Gestaþáttr, so it is another advice which the god Óðinn counsels the audience about which attitude and temper are adequate for a wise man. It is noteworthy the connection with hjarta (hiarta) and the emotional key term, The following strophe of Hv (Hv 55) presents another emotionally-connoted term, sorgalausastr (sorga-lauss, adj. “free from care”), which relates to the notion of sorg as lexeme connected to psychological con-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hv</td>
<td>103.5-108.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>lét ek hana [Gunnlǫð] eftir hafa síns ins heila hugar, síns ins svára sefa [...]</strong> Suttungr svikinn hann lét summblí frá ok graettara Gunnlǫðu.</td>
<td><strong>Gunnlǫð, daughter of Suttungr, is a giantess who was set to guard the mead of poetry. She was tricked by Óðinn, who stole her the mead from her and then abandoned her.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sorrow</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weeping (graetta)</strong></td>
<td><strong>graetta [grotta]</strong></td>
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</table>

The poem in itself does not report any ensuing reaction from the giantess or from his relatives. At this point, the narrative voice shifts from Óðinn to an impersonal narrator, which stresses Óðinn’s unreliability using Gunnlǫð’s story as example. The flew of Óðinn and Suttungr’s reaction are instead appreciated in Snorra-Edda. Hv seems to imply that Gunnlǫð voluntarily decided to spend the night with Óðinn, but the use of “þeirrar er lögðumk arm yfir” at Hv 106.6 gives room to a more ambiguous reading. Earlier at Hv 103 and Hv.106 the god praises her and describes her in tender terms, but the mention of svára sefa (“heavy heart”) suggests the intimate suffering the giantess went through after the deception of the god. On a note, the...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hv 111.11</th>
<th>deliberate mention of her good-heartedness may perhaps account for her naiveté as well, thus suggesting a less positive account for the god Óðinn in this passage.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mat þú vil-lat né mannzkis gaman, ferr þú sor-gafullr að sofa.</td>
<td>Advice directed by Óðinn to a listening subject, unmentioned otherwise, named Loddfáfnir.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(alleg-edly) Loddfáfnir</td>
<td>Sorrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hv 118.8</td>
<td>The saying opens the Loddfáfnismál section of Hávamál (str. 110-135). It is connected to the previous strophe, where the High One (Óðinn) warns his pupil against sleeping with witches (fjölkunnigra konu).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sorg etr hjarta ef þú segja né náir</td>
<td>Advice delivered by Óðinn to a listening subject, unmentioned otherwise, named Loddfáfnir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(alleg-edly) Loddfáfnir</td>
<td>Sorrow</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The maxim is transmitted within the Loddfáfnismál section (str. 110-135). Here Óðinn warns Loddfáfnir to Metaphorical source domain: SADNESS IS A LIVING ORGANISM/SADNESS IS AN</td>
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<tr>
<td>einhverjum allan hug.</td>
<td>the danger of leaving sorrow unexpressed. Possible connection with the theme of ineffable pain of Gör I.</td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hv 143.4</td>
<td>OPPONENT. See also Hv 19.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hjálp heitir eitt en það þér hjálpa mun við sökum ok sorgum ok sútum görvöllum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Óðinn (allegedly) to the audience</td>
<td>Advice delivered to an unnamed listening subject (the collective audience of the poem).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorrow and troubles</td>
<td>við sorgum ok sútum [vid sorgom oc sutom]</td>
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<tr>
<td>sorg; sút;</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>In this strophe Óðinn is addressing the poem’s audience in the last section of Hávamál, Ljóðatát (str. 143-161). As seen also in Loddfafnismál, the aim here is not to express emotions, rather to describe their effects and to advise the audience against them. To this extent, the relation between ‘sorrow’ and ‘disease’ leaves room for an embodied conceptualization of altered emotional states, which was attested in</td>
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<td>The clusters sút ok grátr and sút ok/eða sorg are well represented in ONP. Considering sút as the word for “disease, illness”, they seem to refer to the metaphorical source domain of SADNESS IS AN ILLNESS.</td>
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</table>
Sk 5.3

Hví um segjak þér, seggr inn ungi, mikinn módtrega?

Freyr

The prose passage in the opening of Skírnismála states that the god Freyr became hugsóttir ("mentally sick, obsessed, caught by love") for one of the giantesses of Jötunheimr, named Gerðr.

Heart-ache, sorrow

mikinn módtrega

mikil módtregi

Freyr decides to open his heart to Skírnir and talks about his sadness, then Skírnir sets the plan for winning Gerðr’s heart to Freyr.

The affliction which troubles Freyr is related to a giantess, Gerðr. The god fell in love with her, and since then he sits alone in his all the whole day, as told in the previous strophe. In this, he shows the symptoms of his depressive state, the "mikinn módtregi" recognized by Skírnir.

The prose passage is in this sense more illuminating than the verses, because it introduces the theme of love as sickness, accompanied by the idea of sorrow that troubles the everyday life of Freyr. In this, it emphasizes the concept of LOVE IS AN ILLNESS, which in the present case is related also to Freyr’s persistent sadness. In the Codex Regius the theme...
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sk 29</strong></td>
<td>Tópi ok ópi tjosull ok óþoli, vaxi þér tár með trega!</td>
<td>Skínr to Gerðr</td>
<td>Gerðr’s refusal of Freyr’s proposal triggers the long curse of Skínr.</td>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>tár [tar]; trega (verb); súsbreka [sùsbreca], tvennan trega</td>
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<td>tár, trega (verb, infinitive), tregi, súsbreki</td>
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<td>The strophe presents the first set of elaborate curses that Skínr utters to threaten Gerðr, to make her accept to follow him at Freyr’s place. Skínr is not manifesting any emotion, rather he is wishing disgrace and grief to the giantess, so he is trying to induce such emotions in his addressee. The sequence continues in the following strophe.</td>
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<td>The masculine compound súsbreki is a hapax legomenon within the compilation. Literally it means “destroyer of joy”, or “billow of torments”, and it is attested primarily within the poetic language (La Farge and Tucker 1992, 252).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Sk 30** | Tramar gnéypa þík skulu gerstan dag | Skínr to Gerðr | Gerðr’s refusal of Skínr’s offerings leads to this second wave of miseries and curses. | Grief, disgrace | Weeping (gráta), shedding tears (leíða med túrum trega) | kostalaus, kostavän [kosta vaun], grátt [grat], leíða med túrum trega [leida med tarom trega] |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | kostr-lauss, kostra-vanir, gráta, tár, tregi |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Gerðr eventually accepts to lay with Freyr, under the condition of waiting nine nights. |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Coupled with the previous strophe, Sk 30 shows a remarkable use of semantically-connnotated lexicon. |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | The long and hyperbolic articulation of sorrows sketched by |
Skirnir is verbally staging the expression of grief, in positing all the various sorrows and troubles that Gerðr will endure in her future, if she does not accept the offering to lay with Freyr. The emphasis on tregi "grief" and its related verb trega is evident, as well as the somatic marker of grief, tár, “tears”, repeatedly connected to Gerðr’s fate.

Skirnir continues until strophe 38. The insistence of Skirnir and the high degree of elaboration of the curses might be interpreted as the parody of a tregróf, the chain of woes which is later reckoned by Guðrún Gjúkadóttir in Guðrúnarhvǫt. In the present case, Skinir’s elaborate portrayal of afflictions has the effect of frightening Gerðr and winning her resistances.

See Vk29.4, where the attribute vilja lauss is now
að hann sofnadi ok hann vaknaði vilja lauss,

most traumatic events of his life: his beloved valkyrie’s flight, and the moment in which he realizes he has been captured by Niðudr.

gloomy awakening, as he finds himself fettered in chains by King Niðudr, thus adding another sorrow to his troubled situation.

referred to King Niðudr.

Vk 26.5

Nú hefi ek hefnt harma minna, allra nema einna, "íviðgiarna!

Vǫlunr

Vǫlunr celebrates with these words his revenge against King Niðuðr, his oppressor.

Sorrow

.harm-

reka harma (connected to hefna harma)

Weeping of Bǫðvildr, triumphant laughing of Vǫlunr (see Vk 27).

The utterance is reported in direct speech, while Vǫlunr confronts Bǫðvildr after having violated her and after the slaying of Niðuðr’s sons. The harma minna refers to Vǫlunr enslavement, due to King Niðuðr’s greediness.

At Vk.13 it is stated that Vǫlunr, after his enslavement, could not sleep nor do anything else than striking with his hammer to shape “something” for King Niðuðr. This might metaphorically refer to his own revenge, the “task” at which the smith is
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vk 27.5</th>
<th>Bòdvildr be-</th>
<th>Grief</th>
<th>Weeping (grátandi [gráta]), lamenting (trega)</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>Bòdvildr’s mourning (grátandi) over her misfortunes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hlæjandi Völundr hófz að lofti; grátandi Bòdvildr gekk ór eyju, trega fór friðils ok fôdur reiði</td>
<td>becomes aware of Vǫlundr’s crimes, then he escapes the island thus abandoning her.</td>
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In this excerpt Bòdvildr embodies the victim of Völundr’s evil plots. She is in fact framed as a grieving figure, as indicated by the verb *trega* “to grieve”. Völundr will rise again in the air laughing at the end of the poem, to emphasize his success against Niðudr.

The formula “grátandi + Subj. + main Verb” is attested four more times in the compilation, referred twice to Guðrún, once to her mother Grímhildr and once to Brynhildr in *Brot*, so it recurs as cluster to identify grieving women. On the contrary, Brynhildr is associated with the verb *hlæja* in *Brot* at str.9, and once again in *Skamma*, to underline her agency in ob-
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<tr>
<th>Vk 29.4</th>
<th>Njödr</th>
<th>Grief</th>
<th>Insomnia, difficulty to sleep (“vaki ek ávallt” [vaki ec a valt]; “sofna ek minnzt” [sofna ec miNzt])</th>
<th>vilja lauss [vilia lauss]</th>
<th>vili (sb. Masc., “joy”) + lauss (adj. “deprived”)</th>
<th>King Njödr starts to lament his condition with his wife.</th>
<th>Njödr reports in directed speech his bereavement. The cluster vilja lauss is clearly depicting his depression for the loss of his sons, as it is also connected to the motif of insomnia.</th>
<th>taining the revenge on Sig-urðr.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Vakir þú, Njödr, Njára dróttinn? Vaki ek ávallt vilja lauss, sofna ek minnzt sízt mína sonu dauða.</td>
<td>King Njödr mourns the death of his sons.</td>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Insomnia, difficulty to sleep (“vaki ek ávallt” [vaki ec a valt]; “sofna ek minnzt” [sofna ec miNzt])</td>
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<td>taining the revenge on Sig-urðr.</td>
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<td>Vk 30</td>
<td>Níðudr</td>
<td>King Níðudr laments the death of his sons</td>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Numbness, coldness (&quot;Kell mik í höfuð&quot; [kell mic i haufuþ])</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>kala í höfuð (impersonal)</td>
<td>Níðudr asks for Vǫlundr’s advice, because he wants to know what happened to his sons.</td>
<td>The King is here addressing his wife, stating his depressive condition, before reaching out to Vǫlundr to ask him if he knows about the fate of his sons. The reference to the idea of coldness, coupled with the description of Níðudr as grief-stricken and isolated, strengthens the pathetic depiction of the old king in all his frailty, once he has been deprived of his offspring and he cannot carry on any revenge for them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vk 36.2</td>
<td>Mæltira þú það mál er mik me- irr tregi né ek þik vilja, Vö- lundr, verr um níta;</td>
<td>Grief</td>
<td></td>
<td>tregi</td>
<td>trega</td>
<td>Mourning, curse to Völundr</td>
<td>In the following verses, it is stated that Völundr flies away laughing at the King’s miseries, while Níðudr sits in his island sorrowfully, thus his passivity and powerlessness are emphasized.</td>
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<td>Níðudr</td>
<td>King Níðudr discovers that Völundr slaughtered his sons and made jewels out of their corpses, then that he raped his daughter Bóðvidr, who is now pregnant with Völundr’s child.</td>
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<td>HHv 38.3</td>
<td>Mér er harðliga harma leitað!</td>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Weeping (from str. 41)</td>
<td>harma</td>
<td>harm leita (impersonal)</td>
<td>Sváva and Helgi’s last meeting; Sváva begins to cry</td>
<td>Sváva affirms that she will bring vengeance on whomever struck Helgi to death, after having declared her inconsolable suffering. In the following verses Helgi bids Sváva not to cry for him, and prophesizes that she will marry his brother Heðinn (HHv 41). The beginning of the verse has been supplied in the <em>Codex Regius</em>, but the structure of the strophe is overall clear about who is talking.</td>
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<td>HHII 30.1</td>
<td>Trauðr em ek, systir, trega þér að segja því að ek hefi nauðigr nífti gretaða:</td>
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<td>Dagr to Sigrún</td>
<td>Dagr, her brother-in-law, is telling Sigrún that he has killed Helgi Hundingsbani, her husband.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Weeping (gretaða [grotta]) (allegedly, because the text does not report Sigrún’s weeping yet)</td>
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<td>trega að segja [trega at segia]:</td>
<td>tregi: gráta;</td>
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<td>Sigrún casts a curse upon Dagr and calls for the avenging of Helgi’s death. Later (HHII 35.5) Dagr offers her golden rings and lands to repay her damage, an offer that his sister turns down.</td>
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<th>HHII.45- 46</th>
<th>Ein veldr þú, Sigrún frá Sefafjól-lum, er Helgi er harmdögg sleppinn:</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Helgi Hundingsbani</td>
<td>With these words, Helgi and Sigrún’s last dialogue begins, when Helgi, standing up from his burial mound, comes back</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Weeping, shedding tears (grætr grimmum tårum) harmdögg [harmdogg]. grætr [grétr]; grimmum tårum [grimmom tarom]; ekka þrungð [ecka þrungit]; angrljóð [angrlið] harm-dögg (kenning: harm-r “sorrow” + dögg “dew”); gráta; grim-r tår; eki þrunginn (past participle, infinitive þrongva); angr-ljóð After a lyric exchange about their respective sorrows, Sigrún expresses the desire to end her life, while Helgi tries to dissuade her. Sigrún waits for Helgi to The verses stage the moving and impressive last dialogue between Sigrún and her lover Helgi. In this extract, the more sorrowful of the two seems to be the male hero, who</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Although Sigrún’s reaction is more angered than sorrowful, as her terrible curse shows, Dagr refers to her situation in the style of mourning and weeping, as proves his usage of the vocabulary of sorrow. The prose passage of Codex Regius before strophe 22 already framed Sigrún as weeping figure, similarly to other female figures already encountered in the compilation. Sigrún’s tears are mentioned also in strophe 45 of HHIII and in the prose explanation that closes the poem. The cluster “ekki þrung- inn” entails the metaphoric source domain SADNESS IS A PHYSICAL FORCE/ SADNESS IS A BURDEN, an
Grætr þú, gullvarið, grimmum tárum, sólbjört, suðræn, ádr þú sofa gangir, hvert *fellr blóðugt á brjóst grami, úrsvalt, innfjálgt ekka þrun-gið. [...] Skal engi maðr angrijoð kveða þótt mér á brjósti benjar líti!

from the other-world to bid her farewell.

(subst. n. plur)

reveal himself the night after, but when at dawn he does not show up she is portrayed as hopeless.

employ s a wide range of lyric expressions to emphasize the pain of being separated from Sigrún. The valkyrie, however, is said to weep over her miseries; in this, the strophe is consistent with the engendered representation of grieving women. It must be noticed anyway that Helgi too in this case expresses sorrow for Sigrún’s grief, a trait which is not shared by most of the eddic heroes.

interpretation hinted also by the image of Sigrún’s tears falling down (although *fellr is supplied by the editors) one by one on Helgi’s chest, thus oppressing him with their intensity – they are indicated at once as both cold-wet and burning. The prose annotation in Codex Regius after the last strophe of HHII recounts that “Sigrún varð skammlíf af harmi ok trega”, thus her emotive state is framed again in the notions...
Grp 34.5 – 48.6

| Sigurðr; and Brynhildr towards Sigurðr | Grief | Grípir is revealing to Sigurðr his fate, because he is foreseeing the great sorrows that Brynhildr’s wrath and grief will bring upon him. | Grief | meintregar angrāðit [angradit]; oftrega; mein-trega (mein-n adj. „evil, bad, mean” + tregi) angra (verb “to suffer”, impersonal); oftrega (of + tregi) | Sigurðr accepts the terrible revelations about his fate with dignity and firmness, knowing that he cannot change his forthcoming future. | Griprí’s prophecies disclose to Sigurðr (and to the audience) the great tragedy of the Nibelung cycle. Consequently, the text employs lexemes which are strongly connoted in the sense of negative emotions: the compounds of tregi emphasize this reading, also because they have been preferred over sorg and harmr, semantically less connected to ‘grief’ than tregi and of grief and bereavement, which will lead her to her own death. |
It is striking the contrast with Helgi’s display of sadness, while Sigurðr in the present case restrains his feelings. It is remarkable instead that Brynhildr is represented as the main source of tragedy and despair, also with emotion lexemes, as in Grp 29.1: “Hon firrir þik flestu gamin” (“she will deprive you of all your happiness”).

Brot 3.1

Pík hefir Brynhildr bōl að gerva heĭtar hvattan, (Allegedly) Hogni to Gunnar about Brynhildr

Brynhildr is inciting Gunnar to avenge her insult and kill Sigurðr. Sorrow

- hvattan, harm að vinna [harm at vinna] hvetja; harm að vinna; Gunnar and Hogni prepare their half-brother Guðormr to ambush and kill Sigurðr

Brynhildr is here framed in the role of the inciter, the one who calls for murder and who is openly referred to as the source of the Gjukungs’ misfortunes.
| Brot 14-15 | Vaknaði Brynhildr Buðla dót-tir, dís skjöldunga, fyr dag litlu: Hvetið mîk eða letið mik | Brynhildr awakes the day after the murder of Sigurðr, and she realizes the deed at this point is irrevocably done. | Sorrow | Weeping (laughing) (grátandi vs. hlæjandi) | harmr; sorg að segja [sorg at segia]; unninn (past participle, infinitive of v. vinna “to do”); harm-r; sorg að segja: grátav vs. hlæja [hlæia] | Brynhildr foresees the extinction of the Gjukungs’ dynasty, for they have been proved to be betrayers and oath-breakers in murdering Sigurðr | Brot is centered on Brynhildr’s reactions in the main plot, and it renders her extremely refined psychological dimension. In this excerpt, her emotional shifts from laughing to weeping are highlighted, an element which may correspond to the wave-like atmosphere of gloominess and impending disaster for the Gjukungs’ clan is imputed on Brynhildr’s only, considering this excerpt. Later at strophe 10 she is the one that laughs loudly at the news of Sigurdr’s death (Cfr. Vk 27, Vk 36). |
| Brot 16 | Brynhildr towards herself and towards Gunnar | Brynhildr explains her sorrowful state, but her feelings move towards sorrow and anger in a way that calls for an interwoven notion of the two emotions and exemplifies the nature of sorrow and grief. | Sorrow | grimmt [grimt] í svefni; svalt [sualt] allt í sal; seeing kalda; glaums andvani | grimm-r; sval-r, kald-r; glaums (glaum-r, subst. mase. „joy“) andvani (adj. inv. „destitute“) | Brynhildr calls the Gjukungs “oath-breakers” and she reveals that Sigurðr never betrayed his allegiance with them. | Here the heroine is telling Gunnar about her ominous dream, in which she recognized her husband riding in chains among a troop of enemies, an anticipation of Gunnar’s fate in Atli’s hands. | In this example, Brynhildr’s reference to cold might entail the metaphorical source domain of SADNESS IS A LACK OF HEAT, an interpretation strengthened |
| Gðr I.1 | Ár var þaðs | Guðrún | Sigurðr’s death, caused by Guðrún’s brothers | Sorrow | Weeping, lamenting (hjúfra, kveina); striking of hands (höndum slá) [NEGATED] | gjördís að deyja [gordiz at deyia]; sorgfull; gera að deyja [gera at deyja]; sorgfull; | The warriors and their wives are upset by Guðrún’s lack of reactions to Sigurðr’s death, so they try to soothe her mind and to make her cry | The opening of Gðr.I is centered on Guðrún’s impossibility to express her sorrow for the death of her husband. The insistence of the women of the court in recounting their grievous stories by adjectives such as grimr and glaums andvani. The fact that the hint about the idea of cold is introduced in an alternate reality, coupled with another reference to Brynhildr as related to coldness (see Skamma 8.3), may account for this interpretation. | The short prose introduction to the poem reports that the heroine “grét eigi sem aðrar konur en hon var búin til að springa af harmi” (Cfr. |
gerðit hon hjúfra né hóndum slá né kveina um sem konur aðrar.

to move her to tears suggests the idea of the social function of ritualized lament, understood as a necessary step to overcome the bereavement.

Sigrún at the end of HHII). In this case, Guðrún’s sadness is so deep and ineffable that her life is in serious danger, and she is willing to die of sorrow, as reported in the first strophe.

The verb springa is connected to Guðrún throughout the poem, to stress the fear that she might burst from sorrow. Moreover, the prose passage mentions the verbal construction “sitja yfir” to indicate Guðrún’s static position in bewailing.
| Gðr I.2.5 | þeygi Guðrún gráta mátti, svá var hon möðug, mundi hon springa. | Guðrún | Sigurðr’s death is the triggering event that caused Guðrún’s inexplicable grief. | Sorrow | Weeping (gráta) [NEGATED] | gráta [grata]; möðug [moþvg]; springa | The courtly ladies solicit Guðrún to cry. To do this, they tell her the sad stories of their past, in order to save her life. | These verses consist of the refrain of the poem, which will be repeated four times within the text, and eventually re-worked when the heroine will be able to unleash her sorrows. |
| Gðr I.3 | Sátu ítrar jarla brúðir gulli búnar fyr Guðrúnu; hver sagði þeira | Guðrún; fictitious audience within the poem | Guðrún’s paralysis in expressing her emotions is felt as life-threatening for her life, so it must be contrasted in some way | Sorrow | - | bitrastan ofþrega; sagði [sagði] ofþrega; | Gjaflaug and Herborg begin to recount their sorrows in a hyperbolic way, perhaps in the fashion of tregróf, the chain of sorrows, a theme which will be The bitrastan ofþrega that the women are recounting to Guðrún seem to call for the use of superlatives. In fact, Gjaflaug defines herself as “munarnaúsasta” (mun-r “love” + |
| Gðr I. 13-14 | Guðrún | Gullrønd, daughter of Gjúki, decides to unveil Sigurðr’s body, which has been kept hidden so far. The sight of her dead husband triggers a violent emotive reaction in Guðrún, who eventually displays a | Grief | Weeping (grét [grét]) shedding tears (regns dropi rann nídr [regns dropi raN nídr]/ að tár flugu tresk [at tár flugo tresc]), reddening of cheeks (hlýr roðnaði [hlir roþnadi]), kneeling (hné [hné]), loosening the hair (haddir losnaði [losnadi]) | further developed in Guðrúnarhvöpt lauss + astr), “the most deprived of love” on earth (Gðr I.4.3), while later at str.6 Herborg affirms: “Hef ek hardhara harm að segja” , thus repeating the theme of harma að segja with an emphasis on the bitterness of her sorrows. |
| Guðrún | by the ladies of the court. |

It is noteworthy to mention that Guðrún’s violent outburst is signaled primarily through her gestures and somatic markers (such as the reddening of cheeks, or the loosening of the hair), rather than through lexemes for negative emotions. In this sense, her grief is rendered only metonymically, The metaphorical source domains in this strophe pertain to various prototypical representations. Firstly, the emphasis on the somatic reactions might be retrieved in SADNESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, as the use of
Guðrún, Gjúka dóttir, svá að tár flugu tresk í gögnum.

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<td>The violent effect of grief on the character is represented by the disruption of her composure, thus she let her hair loose and let her tears fall into her hair, in this sense following the prototypical domain of SADNESS IS A PHYSICAL FORCE. Similarly, the kneeling and the downward movement of the falling tears might be subsumed in SADNESS IS DOWN.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sigrún’s mourning scene in HHII 45-46, who is also depicted in a similar position, with her tears falling down on her wounded chest. Her character is represented by the disruption of her composure. The violent effect of grief on the character is indicated by the disruption of her composure, thus she let her hair loose and let her tears fall into her hair, in this sense following the prototypical domain of SADNESS IS A PHYSICAL FORCE.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of the altered emotional state the heroine is experiencing. To this respect, *roðna* in this meaning is nowhere else to be found within the *Codex Regius*. In the context of Old Norse-Icelandic literature, *roðna* seems to be rather associated with anger or shame (Cfr. Díaz-Vera and Manrique-Antón 2014, 9-10).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gör I. 17-18</th>
<th>Guðrún</th>
<th>The uncovering of Sigurðr’s corpse enables Guðrún to begin her mourning over his dead body. She eventually performs her ritual lament.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guðrún openly refers to her lament with the lexeme “grátr”. In this sense, she in aware of the performative nature of the ritual she is acting out. Besides this reference, however, Guðrún’s emotive state is expressed in metaphors, and not directly addressed with prototypical emotionally-connoted words.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although the second term of the comparison is supplied by editorial emendation, Guðrún depicts her isolation and her sense of despair in defining herself “as little as a leaf”, while in the previous strophe the heroine stressed her and Sigurðr’s prominence among the common people (also in Gör II.2). Shortly before, at the previous strophe, Gullrǫnd (str. 15) put great emphasis on Guðrún’s happiness (ynði) with her husband, thus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skamma 21</td>
<td>Sofnúð var Guðrún í sæingu sorgalaus hja Sigurði; en hon vaknaði vilja firrð</td>
<td>Guðrún</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After the depiction of Guðrún’s sorrow, the Skamma presents a long dialogue between Brynhildr and Gunnar, in which the woman blames the Gjukungs for the tragic events of her life. Brynhildr is retelling the main plot from her perspective, triggered by Gunnar’s Sorrow.

Brynhildr’s next act will be her suicide (Skamma 47), regardless of Gunnar’s attempts to dissuade her (Skamma 39). Then the final part of the poem is dedicated to Brynhildr’s prophecies about Gunnar’s future and to her preparation for her own funeral with Sigurðr.

In this case, the cluster “hefna harm” is connected to the offences that Brynhildr suffered from Sigurðr and from the Gjukungs. It represents also the only moment, throughout the Skamma, in which the heroine is represented as sorrowful, as hinted by the usage of harm-r and the mention of her suicidal intent (morðför). In contrast to Brynhildr’s At Skamma 43.3 Högni describes Brynhildr in these terms: « “hon æ borin óvilja til, mörgum manni að móðtrega.” » According to this, the woman is again represented as the source of all miseries, the root of every disgrace which
Skamma 55.3-6  | “Margs á ek minnaz hvé við mik fóru þá er mik sára svikna höfðuð; vaðin að vilja vark meðan ek lifðak.”

Bryn- | Now death-wounded, Brynhildr is revealing to Gunnar which fate awaits him, after having described Guðrún’s unhappy marriage with Atli (Skamma 51).

hildr | Sorrow | - | sára [sara]; vaðin að vilja [uadin at ulia]; sár-r; vaðinn (past participle of infinitive vaða “wade, gone”) + vilja (vili, “joy”)

Brynhildr continues her speech with the narration of Gunnar and Oddrun’s affair, with his own death and with the eventual extinction of the Gujukung’s clan.

Also in this strophe Brynhildr’s wrath seems to leave room for a more subtle and nuanced depiction of sorrow. To support his interpretation, previously in Skamma Guðrún was denoted by an analogous set of adjectives, such as “daprar minjar” (Skamma 52) and “munat has ever happened to the Gjukungs, a concept stressed also in Grp.21 and in Gðr I.22, when Gullrönd calls her “sorg sára sjau konunga” “the sorrowful ruin of seven kings.”
| Skamma 57-58 | “Pað mun ok verða þvígít lengra að Atli mun öndu týna, sælu sinni, ok sofa lifi. Því að hánunum Guðrún grýmir á heð snörpum eggjum | Atli and Guðrún | Brynhildr is here referring the future tragic events of Guðrún and Atli’s life. In the present case, Brynhildr describes Atli’s death, due to Guðrún’s vengeful purposes after the slaying of her brothers. | Sorrow | - | týna, sælu sinni [tina salo sinni]; af sárum hug [af sarom hug] | týna sæla (“to lose happiness”); sár-r; | To this revelation, Gunnar expresses the wish that his sister should have been following Sigurðr’s faith in death (Skamma 51.5), instead of marrying Atli. After having recounted the end of the Gjukungs’ dynasty, so the events of the last poems od Codex Regius, Brynhildr instructs Gunnar about her funeral. | In Brynhildr’s words, Atli and Guðrún are both governed by sorrowful feelings. In Guðrún’s case, moreover, her wounded, sorrowful heart (“af sárum hug”) leads her to avenge her brothers and to slaughter the sons she had with Atli. |
Gðr II. 5

| Sorrow  | Weeping (grátandi [grátandi]), with the cheeks wet from tears (úrughlíra [úrughlíra]) | gráta; úrigr ("wet") + hlíra ("cheeks"); hnipa | Grani’s saddened reaction urges Guðrún to question her brothers about Sigurðr’s fate. | “Úrughlíra” is a compound adjective and hapax legomenon which is not attested anywhere else in Old Icelandic poetry (Cfr. Sävborg 2003, 94), but repeated further at str.10 of Guðrúnarhvötl. Besides “harmr” mentioned in the prose opening, the strophe represents Guðrún’s emotive outbursts primarily through her somatic reactions, such as the tears. | The prose interlude at the beginning of Gðr II sketches the following situation: « Þjóðrekr ok Guðrún kærðu harma sin á milli », in a sense that both are recounting their sorrows. Gðr II represents then Guðrún’s first person poetic narration of the |
and the weeping. The protagonist’s sorrow is extended to the horse Grani as well, which, now downcast, bends down his head in the grass, according to the metaphorical source domain of SAD IS DOWN. Further at Gðr II 6.1 Gunnar is said to be downcast, as he was also in Skamma 13.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gðr II. 8-9</th>
<th>Hví þú mér, Högni, harmslika vilja laussi vill um segja? [...]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guðrún and Högni</td>
<td>Guðrún questions her brothers about Sigurðr’s death, and Högni answers her with a poetic narration of the place where the hero was wounded to death. After Guðrún’s curse, Högni runs from the conversation with the brothers to look for Sigurðr’s body in the southern forest where he was murdered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Weeping (greiti að fleiri) [presumed]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harma slíka um segja [harna slica um segia]; vilja laussi [vilja laussi]; trega stórum [af trega storom]; greiti að fleiri [gróti at fleiri]; slík-r harm um segja; vilja (vili „joy”) laussi (laus-s „deprived of”); stór-r tregi; gráta að fleiri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The intensity of the heroine’s grief is suggested by the deployment of many instances of the lexicon of psychological pain. Moreover, we find here the references to themes which are familiar to Guðrún’s emotional style: weeping, re-

misfortunes of her life.
sinni einu, traúr göðs hugar, af trega stórum: Þess áttu, Guðrún, græti að fleiri að hjarta mitt hrafnar sílí.

renews the obscure foreboding that his sister will cry even more after his own death.

counting sorrows, to be bereft of any happiness (Cfr. Skamma, where Brynhildr repeatedly address her with similar clusters).

contrarily to Gðr I, the focus of the poem here shifts towards Guðrún’s life after the death of her husband. Her effective lamentation is therefore confined to the first part of Gðr II.

The emotion here expressed is classified as “grief” according to the reference to the desire to die, according to the prototypical scenario of grief described by Wierzbicka’s (1999, 68).

The textual relationships with Gðr I seem to be transparent here, given that this whole strophe echoes almost literally Gðr I.1 and the prose interlude placed before Gðr I.

Gðr II. 5-10

| [...] geröiga ek hjúfra né höndum slá né kveina ver sem konur aðrar þá er sat soltin um Sigurði. | Guðrún reacts to Sigurðr’s death in an analogous way as in Gðr I: the intensity of the bereavement paralyzes her and brings her to the point that she cannot verbally express her sorrow. | Grief | Mourning (hjúfra), clapping hands (höndum slá), lamenting (kveina) [NEGATED] | söltn | hjúfra [húfra]; kveina [qveina]; höndum slá [höndum slá]; sítja söltn [sitja soltin] [past. part. svélta “dying”) um |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Gðr I: the intensity of the bereavement paralyzes her and brings her to the point that she cannot verbally express her sorrow.

Contrarily to Gðr I, the focus of the poem here shifts towards Guðrún’s life after the death of her husband. Her effective lamentation is therefore confined to the first part of Gðr II.

The emotion here expressed is classified as “grief” according to the reference to the desire to die, according to the prototypical scenario of grief described by Wierzbicka’s (1999, 68).

The textual relationships with Gðr I seem to be transparent here, given that this whole strophe echoes almost literally Gðr I.1 and the prose interlude placed before Gðr I.
| Gör II.11 | Guðrún | The heroine is still narrating her reaction to Sigurðr’s death in retrospection. This verse exemplifies the profundity of her sadness with the aid of three elaborate metaphorical constructions. | Grief | - | sárla [sarla] (adv. “bitterly”) | sárla sitjask um | After this moment, the protagonist, troubled by sorrow, will reach Denmark and abandon the Gjukungs’ court. | The image of Guðrún sitting over Sigurðr’s body in his bellow is here further elaborated, as well as the generic theme of the heroine’s grief. | This strophe condenses three different metaphorical source domains, which elevate Guðrún’s sadness to an hyperbolean state of prostration. In fact, the heroine’s reference to the darkest of the nights might be interpreted in light of SADNESS IS DARKNESS, while the conceptualization of her situation as worse than being seized by wild wolves appeals to the idea of SADNESS IS A LIVING OR- |

111
GAN-ISM/SADNESS IS AN OPPONENT. Lastly, the reference to the burning birch wood might be subsumed in the metaphorical source domain of SADNESS IS A NATURAL FORCE. In all those cases, the heroine is voicing a different aspect of the pain which is troubling her, thus stressing the extraordinary intensity of this excruciating feeling.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gðr II.29</th>
<th>Guðrún</th>
<th>Guðrún is addressing her mother Grímhildr, who urges her to re-marry and had already administered her an oblivion potion, to make her daughter forget about Sigurðr.</th>
<th>Sorrow</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>glaumi bella; váñir telja [uanir telia] [NEGATED]</th>
<th>glaum-r bella; váñ telja [NEGA-TED]</th>
<th>These gloomy words - and her daughter’s prophecy about the imminent death of her brothers – bring Grímhildr to tears, even though she offers again lands and treasure to Guðrún, to persuade her to accept a second marriage.</th>
<th>In comparing this strophe to Gðr II.11, it must be noticed that this depiction of grief might be somewhat less intense and softened. The fact that the protagonist is indeed suffering under a severe sorrowful state is indicated by the impossibility for her to exert positive emotions, such as glaum-r (“joy”) and váñ (“hope”).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gðr II.42-43</td>
<td>Atli</td>
<td>The last section of Gðr II is centered on the doom which approaches Atli’s house, after his unhappy marriage with Guðrún. The sequence of Atli’s ominous</td>
<td>Sorrow</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>sorgmóðs [sorg mó[ps] sefa; glaums andvana</td>
<td>sorg-móð-r (sorg “sorrow” + móð-r “mind”) sefi; glaum-r andvani;</td>
<td>Atli’s prophetic dreams are interpreted by Guðrún, who tries to mislead her husband’s premonitions of an impending tragedy. Atli however, not entirely convinced, cannot sleep anymore.</td>
<td>The King of Huns Atli is here represented as doleful figure, because he foresees the terrible fate which awaits him and his offspring as well. In this strophe, he is clearly addressed with negative emotions, which</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
dreams starts at str.39 and ends at str.43. The only triggering event here seems to be the threat represented by the presence of Guðrún.

also have the effect of anticipating to the audience the next development of the plot.
| Oddrún | Oddrún begins to recount the story of her life and of her secret affair with Gunnar. | Sorrow | - | sorgmóðr; af trega stórum [af trega stórom] | sorgmóðr; af trega stórum | Oddrún articulates the whole story of the Nibelung cycle from her perspective. | Oddrún is noted by two sets of adjectives which are recurring throughout this section of the Codex Regius. Moreover, the reference to “setjask”, as in sitting to retell past events, shares some similarities with str. 10 of Guðrúnarhvǫt, and with the other disseminated cases in which a character laments his or her misfortunes from a center-stage position. Significantly, in the previous Guðrún’s poems her sitting position next to Sigurðr’s body was not sufficient to make her utter the mourning lament. | Right after Guðrúnarkviða in þriðja the narration focuses on Oddrún’s miseries. The framework of Oddrúnargrátr is a side-episode of the main plot. Borgný, daughter of King Heiðrek, is having problems in delivering her child, so she requests Oddrún’s help. The first part of the poem until str. 12 is occupied by Oddrún and Borgný’s exchange, while the former successfully helps her friend in her labor’s... |
Oddrún is now at the end of her lament, and she realizes the powerful intensity of the tragedies she has endured in her life.

Oddrún closes her lament with the remarks that everyone lives according to his or her own desires (Oddrún 34. 5-6).

Although the character is not openly deploying any emotion key term, Oddrún refers indeed to a situation of personal aggrigated suffering. In fact, while addressing Borgný (the kenning “linnvengis Bil” = goddess of the linen-pillow), she wonders how she can still hold on to life, after all the tragedies endured so far. In this, the periphrasis deployed pertains. After str. 12, Oddrún becomes the primary narrating voice of the poem and utters a long retrospective lament.
| Akv 13.4 | The Burgunds | "Leiddu landrögni lýðar óneisir, grátendr, *gunnhvatan, ór garði Húna;" | The passage signals the doleful farewell from the warriors from the Burgundian court to their leaders, while they prepare to leave for Hunaland. | Sorrow, despair | grátendr [gratendr] | gráta | The Burgundian court salutes the chief-tains’ journey to Atli’s kingdom in this way. The text has already gathered several hints, which lead the audience to infer that there will be no return from this last expedition. | Instances of collective mourning are rare within the *Codex Regius*. Significantly, two of them appear in Akv. Considered as a whole, three cases of collective lamentation belong to the whole thematic cluster of Akv and Am, a textual hint which may account for the intertextual relations between the two poems. Regarding the collective mourning scenes, these shares similarities with Guðrún’s closeness to death in Góðr I and Góðr II. |
| Akv 41 | Ymr varð á bekkjum, afkárr söngr virða, gnýr und guðvefjum, grétu bōrn Húna, nema ein Guðrún | The Huns | This depiction of collective mourning is placed after Guðrún’s terrible revenge against Atlí. She slaughters her own and Atlí’s sons and serves their flesh at Atlí’s | Sor-row, despair | Groaning and clashing (ynr, gnýr); weeping (grétu [gréto/greto] / grét [gret]); [also NEGATED in the latter case] | - | gráta | The strophe introduces the last sequence of Akv, in which Guðrún displays an innovative fierce and cold-hearted temper, in carrying out her revenge against him. The following poems seem to underscore the role of a commenting audience, which on one side may represent the popular sensitivity towards the events, such as in the case of the Huns’ bewilderment after Guðrún’s murder of her own sons, and on the other it functions as textual representation of a fictive audience for oral poetry. | In Akv it is told of Guðrún that she never cried, while in most of the poems of the compilation she is seen crying or lamenting many times. In this |
er hon æva
grét

banquet. Then she reveals her deeds to the king and his court, thus triggering the aforementioned shocked reaction.

strophes present her ultimate triumph over Atli: she kills him while he is asleep, then she sets fire to the Huns’ hall and leaves.

of somatic markers, such as the bewildered reaction of the Huns, which preludes to their tears.

strofhes present her ultimate triumph over Atli: she kills him while he is asleep, then she sets fire to the Huns’ hall and leaves.

of somatic markers, such as the bewildered reaction of the Huns, which preludes to their tears.

Am 60

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eggja ek yór, jarlar, auka harm stóran vífs ins vegliga, *vilja ek það líta; kostið svá keppta að klökkvi Guðrún! Sjá ek það mættak</th>
<th>Atli to-wards Guðrún</th>
<th>Here Atli and Guðrún start their long verbal duel, which continues throughout the whole Atlamál. Atli has already seized Guðrún’s brothers, and he is now prepared to slaughter them.</th>
<th>Anger, sorrow</th>
<th>Sobbing (klókkvi [klócqvi/kloçqui]) [intended]</th>
<th>harm stóran [harm storan]; ynðit [intended] [NEGATED]</th>
<th>klókkva; stór-r harm-r; ynði “happiness” [NEGATED]</th>
<th>Enraged, Atli orders Hǫgni to be tortured and have his heart cut out. Further at strophe 67 it is recounted that Hogni laughed loudly when they cut his heart out. Although Atli’s whetting seems to be more connected to anger than to sorrow, it stresses the idea of increasing Guðrún’s afflictions by depriving her of Gunnar and Hogni. Significantly, the relevant word in this sense is harm-r, thus it entails the idea of intensifying Atli’s anger.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the previous strophe of the poem, Guðrún employs the same term to refer to Atli’s misfortunes: « hlægligt mér það þikkir er þú þinn harm tínir. »</td>
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<tr>
<td>að hon sér né yndt.</td>
<td>mate and psychological suffering.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Am 68.4-5</strong> Hörpu tók Gunnarr, hraerði ílkvistum; slá hann svá kunni að snótir grétu; klukku þeir karlar er kunnu gjörst heyra;</td>
<td>The Huns After Hógni’s death, Atli turns to Gunnar, and orders him to be thrown in the snake-pit. Gunnar plays the harp with his toes to try to soothe the snakes – thus moving the Huns to tears. Sorrow (implied) Weeping (gr étu [gréto/greto]), sobbing (klukku [klucco]) - gráta; kløkkva; Although Gunnar’s last example of prowess impressed the Hunnish court greatly, the hero is doomed to die anyway. After his death, Atli boldly informs Guðrún that she has lost both her brothers. The strophe presents another case of depiction of collective sorrow, a theme which is rare within the compilation and not explored in the eddic poems. In this case, the underlying emotional concept is not expressed directly, but implied in the representation of the weeping Hunnish court.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Am 94.1-2</td>
<td>Atli</td>
<td>Guðrún reveals to the Hunnish king that she has murdered their sons, Erpr and Eitill, served him their flesh, made goblets out of their skulls, and mixed their blood to the wine she offered him. Atli’s reaction to her bloodthirsty and cruel deeds calls to question her savage fury in carrying out her plans.</td>
<td>Sorrow</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>slíkar sorgir segja [slíkar sorgir]; vil ek dauða [vil ec dauða]</td>
<td>sorg; dauða að vilja;</td>
<td>Guðrún and Atli’s hatred increases, until the heroine plots his death with the help of Hǫgni’s son.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The scene is found almost at the end of *Atlamál*. Guðrún and her nephew (Högni’s son) have already struck the death-blow to Atli, while he was sleeping. At the end of his life, the king of the Huns and Guðrún engage an articulate dialogue full of bitterness and sorrow; kvǫl (subst. f. “torment, torture; passion”). The verse anticipates the ending of Atli and Guðrún’s last speech in the closing section of *Atlamál*. This outpouring of sorrow will be followed by Atli’s instruction for his funeral, which Guðrún promises to respect.

The heroine uses a semantically-connoted vocabulary in this strophe, which renders her state of psychological suffering. In this case, she does not rely on *harmr*, rather on *angr* (n. “grief, sorrow”), a somewhat less frequent lexeme in the depiction of sorrow in the Poetic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>self-reproaches. In this strophe, the protagonist is retelling the events of her first union with Sigurðr, and the despair which followed his death.</th>
<th></th>
<th>The strophe represents only the incipit of the elaborate whet of Guðrún, which occupies the whole poem.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ghv 1</td>
<td>þá frá ek sennu slíðrfengligasta, trauð mál talið af trega stórum er hardhugud</td>
<td>Guðrún</td>
<td>Here begins Guðrúnarhvǫt, the poem that depicts Guðrún’s incitement towards her sons, to obtain the revenge against King Jǫrmunrekkr.</td>
<td>slíð-r + fenglig-r (adj. sup. “direst, most fearful”) stór-r tregi;</td>
<td>Although the opening of the strophe presumes an external narrating voice, the “great grief” which urges Guðrún to reproach her sons is undoubtedly marked as</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Edda. The connection with kvǫl, “torture” (but also “passion” in Christian sense), exemplifies the embodied perception of the feeling of psychological pain, an aspect highlighted also by the usage of þrá (f. “throe, pang, longing”) in Skamma 7.6.
Ghv 2.3

| Hví tregrat ykkr teiti að mæla er Jörmunrekr yðra systur, unga að aldri, jóm of traddi? | Guðrún | Guðrún appeals fiercely to the passivity of her sons and reminds them of the great affliction they all had to endure, when King Jörmunrekr butchered their sister, Guðrún’s beloved daughter Svanhildr. | Grief | - | treg- at teiti að meða [tregraþ teiti at meða] | trega (impers.); teiti “cheerfulness” [NEGATED] | The first stage of the incitement recalls the memory of the wrong-doing towards the male relatives of the whetter, while the second passage will question their masculinity in comparison with the example provided by the sequence of the incitement follows a recurring pattern, in which Hamðir and Sǫrli (Guðrún’s sons) are also called to intervene and answer to their mother. In the end, however, they will be stirred up and prepared to the revenge. | her feeling, so it does not belong to the narrator. |
| Ghv 10 | Guðrún | From this point (str. 10) the sequence of the whetting develops in the female lament, which Guðrún utters sorrowfully sitting on the threshold, to an unnamed audience. | Grief | grátandi [gratandi]; táruhlýra [tárok hlýra]; tregliga; móðug [móþug] | gráta; treglig-r; táruhlýra-móðug-r (adj. “tearful”) + hlýra (“cheeks”); móðug-r; | Similarly to the whet, also the lamentation follows a recognizable pattern. The following strophes will be centered on the personal history of the character, from her marriage with Sigurðr to his death and the revenge. | Strategically placed in the middle of the poem, the strophe depicts the beginning of Guðrún’s lament, and summarizes the representation of the female mourning which was prominent in the Eddic tradition considered here. The formula “grátandi +” | In the preceding strophe, Guðrún has been depicted as laughing, while she provided her kids with weapons and mail coat to fight against Jǫrmunrekk. In this, her representation is similar to Brynhildr’s, when she also urged Gunnar to slaughter Sigurðr and avenge her deceit. |
against Atli, thus providing another point of view for the whole plot of the Nibellung legend as reported so far. From this point onward, the heroine will address the audience in first person. Subj. + main Verb” is attested, as well as the second instance of the compound tárughlíra (see Gör II 5.3), which is not found anywhere else in the Old Norse-Icelandic poetic corpus. Moreover, here the poem presents also another theme relevant to mourning practices, which is telja móðug spjóll, echoed by the numerous segja/telja harma/sorgir.
Ghv 12

*Svára sára sákat ek né *kunna, meirr þóttuz mér um stríða er mik öðlingar Atla gáfu. [...] það er mér harðast harma minna

Guðrún

The character here narrates in sequence all the tragedies of her life, emphasizing which one represented the most excruciating of all of them.

Grief

- sára [sara]; stríða [stríþa]; það harðast [hardaz]/sárastr [sarastr]/grimmastr [grimmastr]/hvassastr [huassastr] ... harma minna [harma minna]

sár; stríð (subst. n. “affliction, grief”): sár-r; (harð-r, grim-r; hvas-s) harm-r;

This exhibition of miseries and tragedies represents the culmination of the lament, and prepares the audience to the end of the poem.

The rationale of this passage of the female lament is to sum up together all the doleful events of Guðrún’s life. Each of them is connotated by a superlative, to stress the extraordinary quality of the pain that every traumatic event (harm-r, in
The invocation introduces the ending sequence of the poem, in which the tregróf is openly mentioned.

Guðrún wishes to her audience better fortune and less sorrow, now that her painful memories have been recounted.

At str. 22 we can find another conceptualization of the metaphor SADNESS IS A LACK OF HEAT, given that the poem refers to the verb þíðna “to melt away”, while the first
| Hm 1 | Spruttu á tái tregnar iðir, græti álfa in glýstömu; ár um mör-gin manna bólva sútir hver- jar sorg um kveykva. | The elves (allegedly: the audience of the poem) | The stanza opens *Hamðismál* and sets the prevalent tone for the poem. | Sorrow | Weeping (græti [gréti]) | tregnar; glýstömu [gly stomo]; sút [sut]; sorg; trega; gráta; glýs (subst. n. glý “joy”) + stam-r (adj. „stammering“) sút; sorg; - | The strophe is an introductory passage, which not only anticipates the emotional undertones for the whole poem, but also has the effect of setting the events in a remote and legendary past, as the reference to the elves proves. It is and second verses introduce the element of fire as burning force which can purify the bölva-fullt brjóst, “the chest full of wrongs.” |
| Hm 4.5-10 | [...] einstæð em ek orðin sem ösp í holti, fallin að frændum sem fura að kvisti, vaðin að vilja sem viðr að laufi [...] | Guðrún | The heroine describes her situation of isolation and sadness metaphorically, thus stressing her last claim for revenge. | Sorrow | vadín að vilja [vadin at vilja] | vadínn (past participle of infinitive vada “wade, go”) + vilja (vili, “joy”) | In this stanza, the female protagonist is placing emphasis on her intimate life-long sorrows to urge her sons to the revenge. Thus, she is preparing to articulate the incitement, as seen in the previous poem. | Hm recounts the events of the revenge against king Jörmunrekkr, this time from the perspective of Hamðir and Sörli, Guðrún’s last surviving sons. | The cluster vadín að vilja “joy-bereft” is reported also in the Skamma, where Brynhildr used it to refer to Gunnar’s situation after her suicide. Moreover, the strophe in Hm presents an articulated comparison between Guðrún’s isolated position and elements from the natural realm, such to appreciate the reference to sút and sorg, already seen in the Codex Regius compilation. |
as plants (ǫsp, fura, vidr), a suggestion already elaborated in Gðr II and in Gðr I. Moreover, the mentioned plants all get wrecked and deprived of their branches, to represent the impact of the traumatic events on Guðrún’s life (metaphorical source domain: SADNESS IS A PHYSICAL/NATURAL FORCE).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hm 8</th>
<th>Braðr grát þú þína ok buri svása, niðja náborna *leidda nær rógi; okkr skaltu ok, Guðrún, gráta báða [...]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guðrún</td>
<td>The strophe quotes Hamðir and Sǫrli’s speech in first person, while they salute their mother and prepare themselves for the revenge, which will lead them to die far away, in a distant land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorrow</td>
<td>Weeping (grát [grat], gráta [grata])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>gráta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>The poem does not report any reaction from Guðrún. The focus of the narration shifts on Hamðir and Sǫrli’s attempt to kill Jǫrmunrekkr; their mother is erased from the plot from this point onwards. The repetition of the theme of her mourning seems however to suggest that a fate of solitude and bitterness awaits her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>The introductory stanza of Hm suggested that woeful events were to be awaited, and this is exactly what is recounted in the second section of the poem. On her way to Jǫrmunrekkr, the boys meet their half-brother on the way, they misunderstand his riddle and kill him. Then, after having successfully overcome the king, they lack a third person to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
strike him the final blow. So, Ærmun-rekkr orders his warriors to stone them to death.