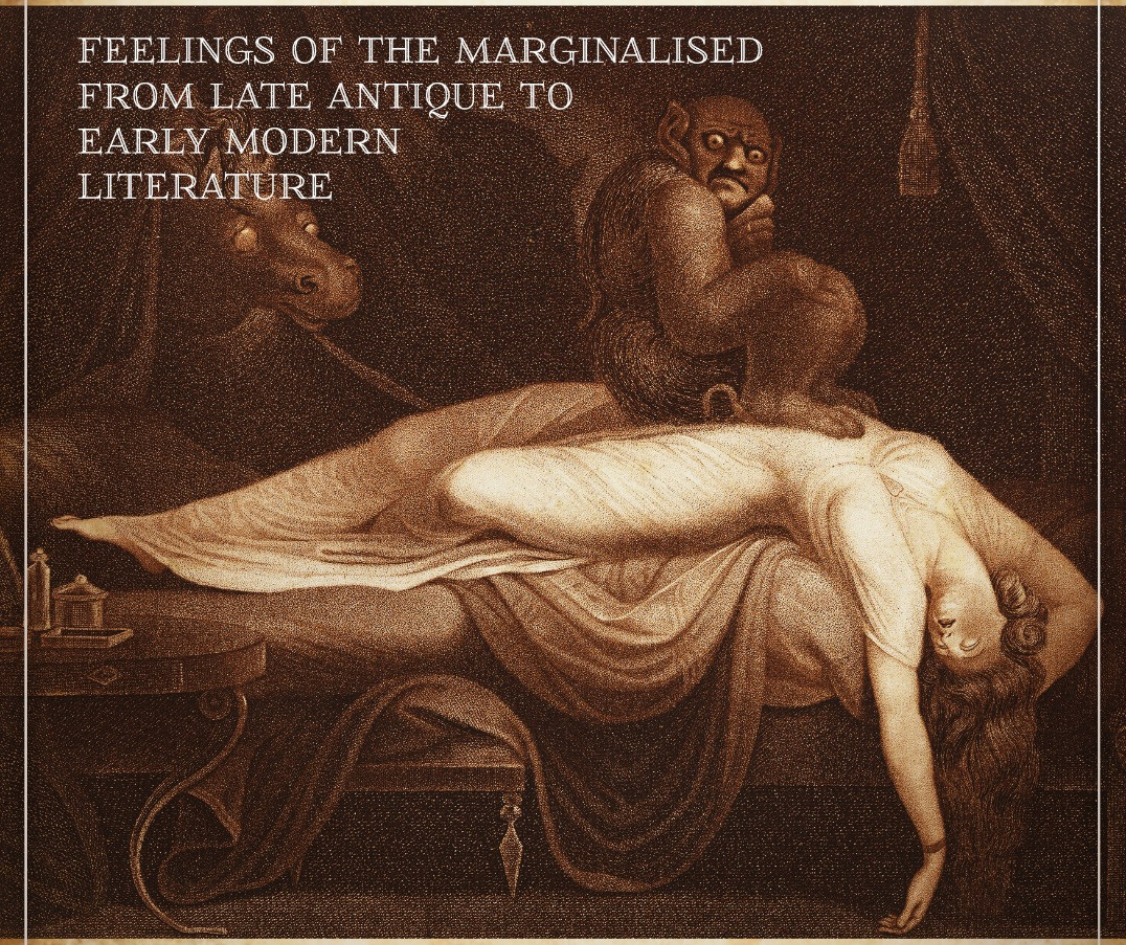
EMOTIONS ON THE FRINGES

FEELINGS OF THE MARGINALISED FROM LATE ANTIQUE TO EARLY MODERN LITERATURE



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Emotions on the Fringes

Feelings of the Marginalised from Late Antique to Early Modern Literature

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Felix Lummer

With a Foreword by

Sif Ríkharðsdóttir

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUPERNATURAL SENTIMENTS: THE LANGUAGE OF EMOTIONS IN THE *FORNALDARSÖGUR*

FELIX LUMMER,[*] KATRÍN LÍSA L. MIKAELSDÓTTIR[**]

Abstract

The study of emotion in Old Norse-Icelandic literature has sparked considerable scholarly debate in recent years. However, little attention has been given to the emotive language of non-human beings. This contribution seeks to examine the emotional lexis associated with supernatural figures in the fornaldarsögur *within the context of historical semantics. As will be shown, the function of the emotional language and its social implications will be discussed in context of the narratives, furthering the discussion of feelings of marginalised figures in medieval Icelandic literature.*

I. Introduction

The study of emotions in Old Norse-Icelandic literature has recently seen a significant increase in scholarly attention.[1] However, most research on emotions focuses on the *Íslendingasögur* ('Sagas of Icelanders') or translated *riddarasögur* ('chivalric romances'). By contrast, the literary

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[1] See, for example, Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature: Translations, Voices, Contexts*, Studies in Old Norse Literature 1, ed. Sif Rikhardsdottir and Carolyne Larrington (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017) and Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, "The Language of Feeling in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*: Construction of an Emotional Lexis," *Scripta Islandica* 71 (2020): 9–50.

representation of emotions in the rich corpus of the *fornaldarsögur* ('legendary sagas') and *þættir* (sing. *þáttr*, 'short stories'), which offer a fertile bedrock for further inquiry, have mostly been left unheeded.[2] Moreover, the main focus of previous research on emotional expressions in saga literature has been on human characters, whereas the feelings of supernatural beings who are featured in these stories have hitherto received little comprehensive attention.[3]

Literary figures and their emotions, as Else Koch notes, reflect the empirical worldview of their creators and audience alike.[4] The same applies to literary conceptualisations of supernatural entities. The emotions associated with such beings in saga literature are central to debates on attitudes towards marginalised groups in medieval Norse societies. In medieval Icelandic literature, these emotions are primarily, though not exclusively, expressed through performative acts, sensory experiences, non-verbal expressions of feelings and emotive dialogue. The various means of feelings and emotional responses manifest in the text through descriptions by the narrator or characters, thus making the choice of words used to convey emotions a fruitful subject of study.

Examining the emotive language of these 'other' beings can hence offer a deeper understanding of the representation of social stigmas and discrimination in saga literature, as language itself serves as a crucial tool to reflect cultural and societal changes and to provide insights into the knowledge and understanding of emotions.[5] As Asifa Majid states, "Language is at the nexus of cognition, on the one hand, and culture on

[2] There has been an ongoing debate on what texts to include under the label *fornaldarsögur*, with arguments being made both in favour of and against the inclusion of certain narratives. With regard to the debate surrounding *Þiðreks saga*, see, for instance, Susanne Kramarz-Bein, ed., *Hansische Literaturbeziehungen: Das Beispiel der* Þiðreks saga *und verwandter Literatur*, Ergänzungsbände zum RGA 14, ed. Heinrich Beck, Heiko Steuer and Dieter Timpe (Berlin/New York, NY: De Gruyter, 1996), X.

[3] Studies on emotions of supernatural entities include, for example, Kirsi Kanerva, "Restless Dead or Peaceful Cadavers? Preparations for Death and Afterlife in Medieval Iceland," in *Dying Prepared in Medieval and Early Modern Northern Europe*, ed. Anu Lahtinen and Mia Korpiola (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 18–43.

[4] Elke Koch, "Emotionsforschung," in *Literatur- und Kulturtheorien in der Germanistischen Mediävistik: Ein Handbuch*, ed. Christine Ackermann and Michael Egerding (Berlin/Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2015), 79.

[5] Ute Frevert, "Gefühle definieren: Begriffe und Debatten aus drei Jahrhunderten," in *Gefühlswissen: Eine lexikalische Spurensuche in der Moderne*, ed. Ute Frevert et al. (Frankfurt/New York, NY: Campus, 2011), 18.

the other. It is private, so intertwined with thought as to seem inseparable; yet it is also public, being the medium of communication. Language, then, is the ideal forum to examine the relationship between culture and cognition."[6] Therefore, we propose the first synchronic, lexico-semantic analysis of the emotional lexeme inventory associated with supernatural beings in the Old Norse-Icelandic *fornaldarsögur*, aiming to lay the foundation for further literary research on emotions in Icelandic sagas.

II. Towards an Empirical Study of Emotive Language

A. On Supernatural Figures and the Source Material

Although the present study investigates literary depiction of supernatural figures in Old Norse saga narratives, it is nonetheless worth bearing in mind that these beings had, at some point in time, played sizeable roles in Old Norse mythology. It is thus logical to assume that what was understood as 'natural' or 'supernatural' differed by time, region, social class, and/or gender, to name a few aspects. As Christianity influenced and subsequently altered the understanding of supernatural beings, these enigmatic figures became even more blurred. Considering the gap of several centuries between the tangible belief in these supernatural beings and the date of composition of these texts, descriptions of these figures encountered in medieval saga literature differ substantially from their original conceptualisations.

Regardless, it should be borne in mind that "[l]egends detailing encounters with beings of the other world presuppose belief in the existence of the beings, and the possibility of encountering them," as John Lindow has argued,[7] however diffused this belief may have been. Consequently, this study focuses on supernatural entities as opposed to natural ones, some of whom are of mythological origin, who are depicted as having "extraordinary powers, sometimes at different gradations."[8]

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[6] Asifa Majid, "Current Emotion Research in the Language Sciences," *Emotion Review* 4, no. 4 (2012): 432.

[7] John Lindow, *Swedish Legends and Folktales* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978), 28.

[8] Michael Jindra, "Natural/Supernatural Conceptions in Western Cultural Contexts," *Anthropological Forum* 13, no. 2 (2003), 159. Some of the latest anthologies on the

In the *fornaldarsögur*, these supernatural beings are characterised as mostly anthropomorphic beings; they act like and interact with human beings, but they are nonetheless classified as 'other' due to their appearance, character, habitat, behaviour, power and primordial knowledge, and explanatory lexis, among other things.

Thus, we considered literary figures in the *fornaldarsögur* who are described with the following terms: *dvergr* ('dwarf'), *álfr*, *álfkona* ('elf'), *flagð*, *gryla*, *gýgr*, *jötunn*, *risi*, *skálabúi*, *tröll* and (*hrim*)*þurs* (all terms connoting 'giant'[9]), seeresses (here: *dís*, *norn*, *völva*), and *fylgja*. Additionally, figures are considered who inhabit both the natural and supernatural worlds and/or possess particularly 'otherly' powers. This includes magic-wielders (here: *galdramenn*, *seiðkonur*, human figures described as being *fjölkunnigr*,[10]) shape-changers (*berserkir*, human figures transforming into animals), anthropomorphic figures and human-animal hybrids, animals with supernatural traits (e.g., *skergípr*, *blótnautr*, *blótgöltr*) and dragons (e.g., (*flug*)*drekar*, (*lyng*)*ormar*, *yrmlingar*), animated corpses (*draugar*, *haugbúar*), and animated objects.

The present evaluation is based on 30 sagas and short stories contained within Guðni Jónsson's four-volume edition[11] that feature

'supernatural', also referred to as the 'paranormal', include Daniel Sävborg and Karen Bek-Pedersen, eds. *Supernatural Encounters in Old Norse Literature and Tradition*, Borders, Boundaries, Landscapes 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), and Ármann Jakobsson and Miriam Mayburd, eds. *Paranormal Encounters in Iceland 1150–1400*, The Northern Medieval World, ed. Carolyne Larrington et al. (Boston, MA/Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).

9 It must be acknowledged here that, while the various Old Norse terms initially had different connotations, they merged over time, leading to an amalgamation of these beings which is also reflected in the source material. See, for instance, Felix Lummer, "Solitary Colossi and Not-So-Small Men: A Study of the Effect of Translation on the Old Norse Supernatural Concept of the *jötnar* in the Translated *riddarasögur*," *Arv – Nordic Yearbook of Folklore* 77, no. 1 (2021): 57–85.

10 Like the varied terminology of Old Norse giants, terms denoting magic also reflect numerous connotations which changed over time. For further information on the various magic terms and their meaning, see, for example, Stephen A. Mitchell, *Witchcraft and Magic in the Nordic Middle Ages*. The Middle Ages Series, ed. Ruth Mazo Karras (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Lucie Korecká, *Wizards and Words in the Old Norse Vocabulary of Magic in a Cultural Context*, Münchner Nordistische Studien 37, ed. Annegret Heitmann and Wilhelm Heizmann (Munich: utzverlag, 2019), and Felix Lummer, "The Translation of Magic in the Translated *riddarasögur*," *Medium Ævum* 91, no. 2 (2022): 210–235.

11 Guðni Jónsson ed., *Fornaldar sögur norðurlanda* [= *FN*; *The Norse Legendary Sagas*], 4 vols (1950; reprint, Reykjavík: Íslendingasagnaútgáfan, 1981), henceforth abbreviated as FN with a roman numeral indicating the volume. The *fornaldarsögur* are a corpus of Old Norse

emotive language relating to the above-mentioned supernatural beings. All observations discussed in this article are therefore based on the following narratives:

Ásmundar saga kappabana
Bósa saga ok Herrauðs
Egils saga einhenda ok Ásmundar berserkjabana
Eiríks saga víðförla
Gautreks saga ok Gjafa-Refs
Gríms saga loðinkinna
Göngu-Hrólfs saga
Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra
Hálfdanar saga Eysteinssonar
Hálfs saga ok Hálfsrekka
Helga þáttr Þórissonar
Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks
Hjálmþés saga ok Ölvis
Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar
Hrólfs saga kraka
Hrómundar saga Grípssonar
Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra
Ketils saga hængs
Norna-Gests þáttr
Ragnars saga loðbrókar
Ragnars sona þáttr
Sturlaugs saga starfsama
Sörla saga sterka
Sörla þáttr
Tóka þáttr Tókasonar

literature dating to the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, although some matters and episodes may date back to the twelfth century. An in-depth discussion about the legendary sagas is given in, for example, Annette Lassen, Agneta Ney, and Ármann Jakobsson, eds. *The Legendary Sagas: Origins and Development* (Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 2012). Regarding magic and the supernatural in the *fornaldarsögur*, see, for example, Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, "The Other World in the *Fornaldarsögur* and in Folklore," in *Folklore in Old Norse: Old Norse in Folklore*, ed. by Daniel Sävborg and Karen Bek-Pedersen. Nordistica Tartuensia 20 (Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2014), 14–40.

Völsunga saga
Yngvars saga víðförla
Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar
Þorsteins þáttr bœjarmagns
Örvar-Odds saga

B. Framework and Limitations

Taking into account the aforementioned considerations regarding the source material and supernatural beings, the object of the study is to provide insight into the literary incorporation and function of emotional language in the Old Norse-Icelandic *fornaldarsögur* by investigating the following research questions:

(1) What emotions are expressed by supernatural figures and which emotions do these figures evoke in other fictional characters through words, expressions, actions, or their appearance?
(2) What terms are employed to communicate the expressions of emotions in the *fornaldarsögur*?
(3) Are certain emotions predominately or exclusively linked with specific supernatural figures and if so, do certain groups represent emotional communities?[12]

Medieval Icelandic saga literature offers a variety of modes for expressing emotions, including but not limited to emotive dialogue, facial expressions, body language, biochemical changes, sensory stimuli, physical appearance, performance, actions, cognitive processes, attitudes and beliefs, religious practices[13] and social codes of conduct, imagery and symbolism, environmental cues, landscapes and physical spaces, or the

[12] See Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).
[13] Descriptions of divine emotions are not considered in the study, as godly emotions are best compared within their theological contexts rather than with secular works. Additionally, due to the Christian influence on the secular saga literature, representations of the Old Norse deities seem to have been subjected to more profound alterations than other mythological entities. See, for example, Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) and Ayoush S. Lazikani, *Cultivating the Heart: Feeling and Emotion in Twelfth and Thirteenth-Century Religious Texts*. Religion and Culture in the Middle Ages (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015).

absence of emotional expressions.[14] However, this study specifically focuses on emotions that are explicitly manifested through words, expressions, or dialogue in the text,[15] primarily including "(1) observations, descriptions, and expressions of emotions by characters and narrators […]; (2) vocalizations, actions, and gestures that communicate emotions; and (3) physical changes such as blushing, fainting, and trembling."[16] This approach allows for empirical categorisation and analysis of emotions in the text. Granted, exploring some of the modes of emotional expressions in addition to emotive language (see above) would undoubtedly provide a more complete understanding of emotional experiences in saga literature. However, such an endeavour would require a separate, thorough investigation. Therefore, by limiting our scope to emotive language, we aim to avoid the need for deduction or speculation about emotional states.

Further limitations inherent to historical investigations must be acknowledged, such as dependence on historical sources and the arbitrary survival of narratives and renditions, leading to incomplete medieval text corpora. Anachronism presents another obstacle, as the contemporary view of the meaning of words and concepts may have shifted during the Middle Ages.[17] Emotion words may have changed

[14] On emotional numbness and the absence of feeling, see Grace Catherine Greiner, "'Felynge […] nothing': Fringe Figures, Grief, and the Ethos of Unfeeling in Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess*" in this volume.

[15] See Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature: Translations, Voices, Contexts*, Studies in Old Norse Literature 1, ed. Sif Rikhardsdottir and Carolyne Larrington (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017), 12.

[16] Ann Marie Rasmussen, "Emotions, Gender, and Lordship in Medieval Literature," in *Codierungen von Emotionen im Mittelalter*, ed. C. Stephen Jaeger and Ingrid Kasten, Trends in Medieval Philology 1, ed. Ingrid Kasten, Niklaus Largier and Mireille Schnyder (Berlin/New York, NY: De Gruyter, 2003), 175.

[17] See, for instance, Koch, "Emotionsforschung," 82–84; Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature*, 13; Thomas Hinton, "Chrétien de Troyes' *Lancelot, ou le Chevalier de la charrette*: Courtly Love," in *Handbook of Arthurian Romance: King Arthur's Court in Medieval European Literature*, ed. by Leah Tether and Johnny McFayden (Berlin/Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2017), 373, and Alexander Bergs, "The Uniformitarian Principle and the Risk of Anachronism in Language and Social History," in *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics*, ed. Juan Manuel Hernández-Campoy and Juan Camilo Conde-Silvestre (Malden, MA: Wiley, 2012), 80–98.

their meaning or taken on additional ones,[18] making it difficult to assume how medieval writers and their audience would have understood any given word and what level of emotional intensity a phrase might have conveyed.[19] This also affects the problem of untranslatability, as it may be challenging to translate words, phrases, concepts, notions, or feelings from a source language that does not exist in the target language. Consequently, the outcome of such a translation may be slightly removed from its original meaning, resulting in the addition or deletion of nuances that the source language might not have reflected.[20]

In light of these limitations, this study combines both empirical strategies from statistical analyses[21] and qualitative research methods to address the outlined research questions and debate the use of emotive language related to supernatural figures. While the relationship between language and emotion is traceable on every linguistic level,[22] the semantics and pragmatics of speech acts and narrative descriptions provide a particularly rich source of data for examining this relationship.

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[18] See, for example, Benjamin W. Fortson, "An Approach to Semantic Change," in *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics*, ed. Brian D. Joseph and Richard D. Janda (Malden, MA: Wiley, 2017), 648–66.

[19] Piroska Nagy notes: "The emotions we meet in the sources have little to do with the contemporary category of emotions that belongs to any psychological trend, let alone neuroscience. To recognize this fact may have a liberating effect on the way we conceive of our methods of studying historical emotions. In the framework of a comparative and heuristic approach, we can study what people of a given culture describe or live as an equivalent or a sibling of our 'emotion' […].", see Piroska Nagy, "The Power of Medieval Emotions and Change: From Theory to Some Unexpected Uses of Spiritual Texts," in *Tears, Sighs and Laughter: Expressions of Emotions in the Middle Ages*, ed. Per Förnegård et al., KVHAA Konferenser 92 (Stockholm: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien, 2017), 21.

[20] Laurence Venuti states: "A translation never communicates in an untroubled fashion because the translator negotiates the linguistic and cultural differences drawn from the source text by reducing them and supplying another set of differences drawn from the receiving situation to enable the translation to circulate there. The source text, then, is not so much communicated as domesticated or, more precisely, assimilated to receiving intelligibilities and interests through an inscription.", see Laurence Venuti, *Translation Changes Everything. Theory and Practice* (London/New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 11.

[21] For quantitative research methods in linguistic research, see, for example, Robert J. Podesva and Devyani Sharma, eds. *Research Methods in Linguistics* (Cambridge/New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[22] See Kristen A. Lindquist, "Language and Emotion: Introduction to the Special Issue," *Affective Science* 2 (2021): 91–98. However, it should be noted that all language levels are not affected equally.

Reflecting on the field of historical semantics and its advantages for the study of emotions, Ingrid Kasten highlights the potential inherent in lexemes and semantic fields when evaluated with lexicological methods to assert their scope of meaning.[23]

Therefore, using the corpus defined above, we have sampled words and lexical phrases that are spoken by supernatural figures or said to them, descriptions of their character traits or appearance as well as references to emotional reactions that their presence or appearance evokes in other figures. These lexical phrases were catalogued along with additional information including the explanatory terms used to refer to the respective supernatural concept, their gender, and names (where applicable), and the mode and direction of communication. Building on Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir's work on emotion words in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*,[24] all emotional phrases were subsequently grouped into corresponding lexical-semantic fields.[25] Considering the resulting lexical inventory, the collected words and phrases were categorised into eleven semantic fields, including ANGER, CONTEMPT, COURAGE, ENVY, FEAR, JOY, LOVE, SADNESS, SHAME, SURPRISE, and TRANQUILLITY. In addition, the largest group of emotion words, labelled EXPRESSIONS, encompasses various somatic responses and expressions of emotions communicated through non-articulated vocalisations, facial expressions, body movements, and physiological markers. However, given the limitations of historical lexicology, a distinct classification of lexemes is not always possible, and some trends may only become apparent when considering the broader context of the narrative, supernatural concepts, and sociohistorical background. To address this, mixed-methods approaches are employed in the evaluation, allowing for some subjective interpretation.

Following the outlined framework, our observations are based on 410 instances of lexemes and lexical phrases conveying verbal and nonverbal expressions of emotions in 30 *fornaldarsögur* and *þættir*. The distribution of tokens per categorised lexical field is presented in Table 1.

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[23] Ingrid Kasten, "Einleitung: Forschungsfeld Emotionalität," in *Codierungen von Emotionen im Mittelalter*, ed. C. Stephen Jaeger and Ingrid Kasten, Trends in Medieval Philology 1, ed. Ingrid Kasten, Niklaus Largier and Mireille Schnyder (Berlin/New York, NY: De Gruyter, 2003), xviii.

[24] Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, "The Language of Feeling in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*."

[25] Furthermore, the present study takes into consideration Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir's rationale for the selection of these categories, see Ibidem, 16–19.

Table 1. Lexical fields of emotions and tokens examined in the Old Norse-Icelandic *fornaldarsögur*

Lexical field	Number of tokens	Percentage of tokens examined
ANGER	63	15.37
CONTEMPT	24	5.85
COURAGE	32	7.80
ENVY	1	0.24
FEAR	70	17.07
JOY	56	13.66
LOVE	20	4.88
SADNESS	15	3.66
SHAME	9	2.20
SURPRISE	6	1.46
TRANQUILLITY	6	1.46
EXPRESSIONS	108	26.34
Sum	**410**	**100.00**

C. Supernatural Concepts and their Emotions – The Lexis

The 30 *fornaldarsögur* and *þættir* under investigation feature a diverse array of supernatural beings who exhibit a wide range of emotions. In total, we recorded 141 distinct lexemes and lexical phrases used to express these emotions, which are organised into corresponding semantic fields as presented in Table 2 below. In the following, these lexical fields will be discussed in alphabetical order. However, non-articulated expressions will be addressed first, given that they are the most prevalent group of lexical phrases and pertain to all emotions. Each section will offer general information about the usage of emotion phrases and highlight exemplary interactions between natural and supernatural figures and the associated emotions conveyed through speech or descriptive language.

Table 2. Lexical fields of emotions and lexical phrases associated with supernatural figures in the Old Norse-Icelandic *fornaldarsögur*[26]

Lexical field	Lexemes and lexical phrases
ANGER	*angra* ('to anger'), *berserksgangr* ('berserker fury'), *grimmr*/*grimmligr* ('fierce, savage'), *móðr* ('wrath'), *ólmr* ('furious'), *ólmast* ('to rage'), *reiðast* ('to become angry'), *reiðr* ('angry'), *styggr* ('bad-tempered, irritable')
CONTEMPT	*argr*/*ragr* (here: 'lacking courage/manliness'), *armr* ('wretched'), *aumr* ('miserable'), *ámátligr* ('pathetic, loathsome'), *blauðr* ('weak, cowardly'), *bleyði* ('cowardice'), *fremdarlauss* ('inglorious'), *fýla* (here: 'pathetic person'), *hallmæla* ('to speak ill of someone'), *hata* ('to hate'), *hrakligr* ('disgraceful'), (*hvim*)*leiðr* ('loathsome'), *linr* ('weak'), *e-m lízt illa á* ('to dislike, consider to be bad'), *níðingr* ('nithing'), *ofsamaðr* ('overbearing person'), *óskapligr* ('monstrous, horrible'), *skauð* ('poltroon')
COURAGE	*afl* ('strength, virtue'), *atall* ('strenuous, brisk'), *árræðisfullr* ('daring'), *djarfr* ('bold'), *drengskapr* ('courage'), *fullhugi* ('dauntless person'), *harðfengi* ('valour'), *braustr* ('valiant'), *hreysti* ('valour'), *hugr* ('mind', here: 'courage'), *treystast* ('to encourage', here: 'to dare'), *vaskr* ('valiant'), *þora* ('to dare')
ENVY	*öfunda* ('to envy')
FEAR	*herfiligr* ('harrowing'), *hræða*(*st*) ('to fear, dread'), *hræddr* ('afraid'), *hræðiligr* ('dreadful'), *hræðsla* ('fear'), *kvíða* ('to fear'), *ógn* ('dread, terror'), *ógnarligr* ('dreadful'), *ótta*(*st*) ('to fear')
JOY	*blíða* ('blitheness, grace'), *fagna* ('to rejoice'), *feginn* ('joyful'), *gaman* ('pleasure, amusement'), *glaðr* ('glad'), *gleðja*(*st*) ('to gladden'), *hlægja* ('to gladden, make someone laugh'), *kátr* ('cheerful'), *e-m lízt vel á* ('to like, consider to be good'), *njóta* ('to enjoy'), *skemmta* ('to amuse, entertain'), *sæll* ('happy, blessed'), *una* ('to enjoy'), *vinsamligr* ('amicable, friendly')
LOVE	*ást* ('love'), (*ást*)*fanginn* ('captivated'), *ástríkr* ('full of love'), *elska* ('to love'), *ergi* (here: 'lewdness, wantonness'), *-gjarn* (suffix 'fond of, willing'), *kærleikr* ('love, intimacy'), *losti* ('lust'), *lysta* ('to desire'), *unna* ('to love')

[26] Unless indicated otherwise, all translations are those of the authors.

Lexical field	Lexemes and lexical phrases
SADNESS	*áhyggja* ('concern'), *dapr* ('sad'), *harma* ('to bewail'), *harmkvæli* (pl. 'torments'), *harmr* ('grief, sorrow'), (*harm*)*þrunginn* ('filled with sorrow'), *mein* ('hurt, harm'), *morna* ('to mourn'), *sakna* ('to miss, feel the loss of'), *sárr* ('sore, aching'), *þungr* ('heavy, with a heavy mind')
SHAME	*endemi* ('shame, scandal'), *óvirðing* ('disgrace'), *skömm* ('shame'), *smán* ('disgrace, shame'), *svívirða* ('shame')
SURPRISE	*kunna varla at ætla* ('to be hardly able to believe'), *ólíkindi* (here: 'disbelief'), *undrast* ('to wonder'), *verða bilt* ('to be astonished')
TRANQUILLITY	*kyrr* ('calm, quiet'), *þegja* ('to be silent'), *þögull* ('silent')
EXPRESSIONS	**Body movements** *bregða við* ('to move swiftly'), *fálma* ('to flinch'), *gan* ('frantic gestures'), *hrista/skaka höfuðit* ('to shake one's head'), *reigjast* ('to throw the body back with haughtiness') **Facial expressions** *gapa* ('to gape'), *gnísta* ('to gnash the teeth'), *ófrýnligr* ('frowning'), *óhýrligr* ('frowning'), *renna illa augum á* ('to glare'), *ygla* ('to frown') **Non-linguistic vocalisations** *beli* ('bellowing'), *blása við* ('to sigh'), *emja* ('howl'), *fnasa* ('to snort in rage'), *frýs*(*ing*) ('snorting'), *gella* ('to yell'), *gnýr* ('din'), *góla* ('to howl'), *grenja* ('to bellow'), *hlátr* ('laughter'), *hljóð* ('howling, screaming, voice'), *hlæja* ('to laugh'), *kall* ('cry, shouting'), *láta* ('to emit a sound, scream'), *læti* ('sound'), *óp* ('shouting, crying'), *skrækr* ('shriek'), *rymja* ('to roar') *æpa* ('to scream, shout'), *öskra* ('to scream') **Physiological markers and somatic responses** *bleikr sem bast* ('pale as bast'), *blár sem hel* ('black as hel'), *eiskra* ('to foam'), *fnýsa eitri* ('to blow out poison'), *fölr sem nár* ('pale as death'), *gráta* ('to weep'), *horr* ('mucus'), *litir færast* ('skin colours change'), *rauðr sem blóð* ('red as blood'), *skelfa/skjálfa* ('to shiver, to make tremble'), *sundla* ('to feel dizzy'), *þrútna* ('to swell')

EXPRESSIONS

As becomes evident from Tables 1 and 2, the most frequent emotion words fall into the category of emotional expressions. This seems due to three main reasons: First, expressions can convey a broad spectrum of different emotions. Second, with the exception of seeresses and the undead,[27] all supernatural concepts use emotional expressions, and third, some of the studied supernatural beings such as animals[28] cannot articulate speech, therefore they communicate feelings mainly through emotive expressions. In the *fornaldarsögur*, emotions that supernatural beings feel themselves or invoke in other figures are conveyed by four main modes of expressions:

(1) Non-linguistic vocalisations
    - Shouting, bellowing, howling
    - Snorting
    - Sighing
    - Laughing
(2) Facial expressions
    - Frowning
    - Glaring
    - Gnashing of teeth
    - Gaping
(3) Body movements
    - Sudden movements of the whole body
    - Shaking one's head
(4) Physiological markers and somatic responses
    - Changing skin colours
    - Vertigo, body tremors, swelling bodies
    - Body fluids: e.g., tears, poison, mucus from the nose, foam at the mouth

Communication of emotions relating to supernatural beings in the *fornaldarsögur* is most often achieved through vocalisations, which

[27] Regarding the undead in particular, one might speculate that this is, at least in part, due to the fact that the deceased do not feel emotions and thus cannot express feelings in the same way as the living, if at all.

[28] Animal emotionality could represent a prolific field for further scientific exploration, especially when the domesticated–wild dichotomy is considered.

encompass all forms of sounds made with the mouth other than articulated speech, including shouting, laughing, sighing, and snorting.[29] These sounds are frequently emitted by *tröll*, *jötnar*, animals, and dragons to express fury or intimidate their opponents.[30] Shape-changers, particularly the *berserkir*, use loud noise to embolden themselves and enter an enraged state (see below). In these instances, irate vocalisations may be accompanied by bodily changes, such as blushing, further emphasising an emotionally charged state. Facial expressions including frowning, evil glares, the gnashing of teeth and beasts opening their jaws also seem to play a significant role in expressing anger or evoking fear. Despite most noises being made to vocalise wrath, supernatural figures also emit sounds in other contexts. For instance, figures may scream when they experience physical pain, as is the case with the *tröll* Ýma in *Hjálmþés saga ok Ölvis*, who shrieks when her hand is cut off.[31] A far more ambiguous reaction in the *fornaldarsögur* is laughing. Supernatural beings either seem to laugh to ridicule other figures,[32] or to express genuine happiness[33] or malicious joy. In *Ketils saga hængs*, for instance, a group of *tröll* expresses their *Schadenfreude* as they laugh at the *jötunn* Kaldrani, who has been severely injured during his encounter with Ketill.[34]

Likewise, body movements often accompany feelings, as noted by Kirsi Kanerva, stating that sudden movement "was certainly integral to emotional states."[35] In the *fornaldarsögur*, abrupt movements of the whole

[29] As the majority of the vocalisations and facial expressions are uttered in the context of anger, individual examples will not be detailed here but are discussed in the following section on anger.

[30] One also notes how humans or humanoid figures occasionally utilise animalistic sounds such as howling, bellowing, or roaring.

[31] "Hún rak upp skræk mikinn ok leit í stúfinn" ('She let out a loud shriek and looked at the stump'), FN IV, 206.

[32] The drinking horn Grímr *inn góði* ('the Good') mentioned in *Þorsteins þáttr bæjarmagns* laughs scornfully at Goðmundr: "[…] ok fór Grímr hlæjandi frá honum." ('[…] and Grímr moved away from him with laughter.'), FN IV, 337.

[33] "Einn dag, þá er þeir fóstbræður fóru á jökla, heyrðu þeir skellihlátra mikla um kveldit." ('One day when the foster brothers went up the glacier, they heard much laughter from the cave in the evening.'), FN III, 301.

[34] "Þar sátu tröll við eld ok hlógu mjök ok kváðu Kaldrana hafa fengit makliga skrift fyrir sinn tilverknað." ('*Tröll* sat by the fire and laughed much and said that Kaldrani had received a deserved penalty for his action.'), FN II, 157.

[35] See Kanerva, "Restless Dead or Peaceful Cadavers?," 33–34 (note 57).

body[36] and frantic gestures are common reactions to supernatural encounters, often induced by fear.[37]

Beside vocalisations and gestures, emotions in the *fornaldarsögur* are frequently experienced as body sensations.[38] Accordingly, somatic responses to emotions may be felt as trembling or swelling of the body, light-headedness,[39] or the spurring of various body fluids, such as foaming at the mouth in anger,[40] while tears may also be shed in moments of grief.[41] Changes in skin colour, such as turning red, pale, or black, are among the most common physiological markers encountered here, most of which are manifestations of anger in the body.[42]

ANGER

Anger is a prevalent emotion in the Old Norse *fornaldarsögur* corpus. Lexemes and lexical phrases expressing this emotion are connected to all supernatural beings with the exception of the *álfar*.[43] In most instances, these figures experience some gradation of wrath, ranging from frustration to rage.

Indeed, such phrases are also encountered in a more instrumentalised form meaning that anger may in some instances be understood as an emotional state that provides the experiencer with an action potential.

[36] No distinct hand gestures were observed in the corpus.

[37] See, for instance, FN IV, 164: "ok er [skemmumeyin] næri höllinni, sá hún þetta it mikla tröll. Hljóp hún þá aftr til skemmunnar með ópi miklu ok gani" ('and when [the chambermaid] approached the hall she saw the huge *tröll*. Then she ran back to the chamber with much shouting and frantic gestures.')

[38] See Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, "Grotesque Emotions in Old Norse Literature: Swelling Bodies, Spurting Fluids, Tears of Hail," in *Impossible Emotions: Approaches to Medieval Emotional Alterity*, ed. Erin Sebo and Matthew Firth, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023), 17–42.

[39] See SURPRISE.

[40] "Ok er Hildibrandr spýrr þetta, eiskraði hann mjök." ('and when Hildibrandr hears that he was foaming at the mouth.'), FN I, 403.

[41] See SADNESS.

[42] In *Tóka páttr Tókasonar* (Ch. 1), Böðvarr's anger causes him to turn "rauðr sem blóð" ('red as blood'), "bleikr sem bast" ('pale as bast'), "blár sem hel" ('black as hel') and "fölr sem nár" ('pale as death'), see FN II, 139.

[43] On the concept of *álfar* in Old Icelandic literature, see Felix Lummer, "Of Magical Beings and Where to Find Them: On the Concept of *álfar* in the Translated *riddarasögur*," *Scripta Islandica* 72 (2021): 13.

More precisely, this state, or a *domain of effort*[44] as it were, enables a figure to (re)act with specific inward or outward means in certain situations. There seems to be no better group to elaborate on a possible outward appearance of this potential than the *berserkir* who appear to be more frequently linked to anger than any other supernatural concept. They can enter the ecstatic state of *berserksgangr*,[45] an emotional condition induced by intense rage which enables the *berserkir* to perform enormous feats of strength and prowess in battle.

Another figure that exemplifies the *domain of effort* by means of anger is King Aðils. His conflict with his rival King Hrólfr is one of the main narrative threads of *Hrólfs saga kraka*. Aðils, a magic-wielder, becomes enraged at the sight of Hrólfr's warriors assaulting his hall, vanquishing his retinue, and threatening his rulership. Aðils offers Hrólfr and his men a truce, as his imminent defeat becomes apparent to him. The saga states:

> Aðils konungr þrútnar nú í hásætinu, þá hann sér, at Hrólfs kappar brytja niðr sitt lið sem aðra hunda, ok sér hann, at ekki mun duga svá leikit, stendr upp ok mælti: 'Hverju gegnir þetta it mikla hark? Ok eru þetta inar mestu mannfýlur, hvat þér takið til bragðs, at þér látizt leita á þvílíka afburðamenn, sem oss hafa heim sótt, ok hættið skjótt ok setizt niðr, ok tökum á oss fagnað […].[46]

Here, the somatic term *þrútna* ('to swell') brings to light the physical changes in the person feeling ire.[47] Unable to act otherwise, as his

[44] See William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 56–57 and Stephen D. White, "The Politics of Anger," in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY/London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 127–52.

[45] Episodes describing *berserksgangr* can be found in, for example, *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*: "Þá brugðu Arngríms synir sverðum ok bitu í skjaldarrendr, ok kom á þá berserksgangr." ('Then Arngrímr's sons drew their swords and bit into the shieldrims, and they were overcome with berserker fury.'), FN II, 4, or in *Örvar-Odds saga*: "[…] kemr nú á þá berserksgangr, ok fara grenjandi." ('[…] they are overcome with berserker fury and start bellowing.'), FN II, 251.

[46] FN I, 79. '[The body of] King Aðils now swells in his high seat as he sees that Hrólfr's warriors slaughter his retinue like some dogs. He sees that his trickery will not suffice. He stands up and said: 'What does this uproar mean? You most pathetic men, what are you thinking that you attack such outstanding men who have come to visit us? Let us stop at once and sit down and let us rejoice […].'

[47] For an overview of swelling as a physical expression of anger in Old Norse and Old English literature see, for instance, Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, "Grotesque Emotions in Old

schemes have proven unsuccessful, Aðils becomes angry. Thus, spurred by the anger of his humiliating defeat, Aðils' anger situates him in an emotional state with a potential for action. His *domain of effort* thus achieves two things: 1) Aðils declares an immediate truce which provides him with further time to plot his revenge on Hrólfr (an operation which ultimately does not succeed); and 2) his reign is extended which subsequently leads to further strife between him and Hrólfr.

Ultimately, it can be stated that anger can bestow supernatural figures with the capability to act. One might therefore debate whether the *berserkir* specifically would be bereft of their capability to put themselves into the state of *berserksgangr* without anger and its *domain of effort*. The example of King Aðils indicates that this might also be the case for figures other than the *berserkir*, although to a lesser degree.

CONTEMPT

Contempt is a strong emotional response that seems to be linked inseparably to notions of disgust. In William Ian Miller's words, "[d]isgust must be accompanied by ideas of a particular kind of danger [which] in turn will be associated with rather predictable cultural and social scenarios."[48] These aspects are arguably present in the supernatural concepts in the *fornaldarsögur*, who, to some degree, may have been considered 'other' both in culture and nature. Consequently, it is not surprising that lexemes that express emotions of contempt and disgust are frequently encountered throughout the *fornaldarsögur*. Words and phrases associated with either of the two emotions often connote weakness, cowardice, and unmanliness as well as disgracefulness and loathing. Tying into the aforementioned function of contempt and disgust, that is, the repulsion that human figures experience on an emotional level when encountering supernatural being, words of contempt in the *fornaldarsögur* are primarily uttered by human figures facing supernatural beings. In these interactions, humans frequently express their disapproval of such beings, predominately (female) *tröll*, shape-changers, magic-wielders, seeresses, and the undead, and taunt, verbally abuse, or otherwise show disrespect towards them.

Norse Literature" and Carolyne Larrington, "The Psychology of Emotion and Study of the Medieval Period," *Early Medieval Europe* 10, no. 2 (2001): 251–56.

[48] William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1997), 8.

As a result, the usage of contemptuous language appears to serve two main purposes in the *fornaldarsögur*. First, it insults and undermines the character and integrity of supernatural beings. The use of gender-based abuse combined with sexual connotations reinforces this erosion of social reputation, as the example of Hrómundr's encounter with the *haugbúi* Þráinn in *Hrómundar saga Gripssonar* aptly demonstrates. Hrómundr breaks into the mound of Þráinn, a known magic-wielder and the erstwhile king of Valland, and offends him repeatedly, accusing him of cowardice and frailty by calling him, among other things, *hundr leiðr* ('loathsome dog'), *linr* ('weak'), *skálkr argr* ('cowardly wretch'), and *ragr ok blauðr* ('cowardly and weak').[49] These terms, particularly *argr*/*ragr* and *blauðr*[50] indicate, as Ármann Jakobsson has argued, a lack of strength and courage.[51] Moreover, since courage debatably lies at the core of manliness, a lack thereof not only indicates weakness but egregiously denotes the absence of manliness.[52] Therefore, by utilising words of contempt as a form of verbal abuse, Hrómundr not only humiliates his supernatural opponent but also undermines his masculinity and his social credibility as king.

In a second function, explicit references to the absence of contempt can be employed to define the desirable traits of an honourable person. For example, in *Hrólfs saga kraka*, Hjalti calls the shape-changer Böðvarr *hjarki* ('little bear') an honest man by emphasising the fact that he does not speak ill behind other people's backs: "Þú segir satt, eigi ertu hallmælasamr."[53] It can thus be argued that the recipients of these stories may have understood these accentuated character traits as socially advantageous qualities. Instances such as these create a significant contrast between the saga protagonist and supernatural beings, who are often marginalised in these narratives, and who are also being ostracised at an emotional level. This is further exemplified by the interaction between Örvar-Oddr and his long-standing rival Ögmundr in *Örvar-Odds saga*. The two fight against each other but neither side gains the upper

[49] See *Hrómundar saga Gripssonar* (Ch. 4), FN II, 411–12.
[50] On the implications of the term *blauðr*, see Carol Clover, "Regardless of Sex: Men, Women and Power in Early Northern Europe," *Speculum* 68 (1993): 363–87 (see esp. 363–65).
[51] See Ármann Jakobsson, "The Trollish Acts of Þorgrímr the Witch: The Meanings of *troll* and *ergi* in Medieval Iceland," *Saga-Book* 32 (2008): 57.
[52] Ibidem.
[53] FN I, 102. 'You tell the truth. You are not someone who speaks ill of others.'

hand, resulting in exhaustion. Ögmundr then suggests calling the fight a draw, so that both can take a rest. Oddr agrees only on the condition that Ögmundr does not charge him with cowardice, an accusation that would threaten his reputation and thus constitutes a serious allegation: "Því betr þykki mér […] sem vit skiljum fyrr, ef þú leggr eigi bleyðiorð á bak mér."[54] Oddr's answer may therefore underline a protagonist's "honor that is at stake and it is the mark of the hero not to bargain with the basic duty of defending his reputation."[55]

Once again, contempt in the *fornaldarsögur* subsequently seems to serve two purposes. On the one hand, words of contempt can appear as socially charged and gender-based verbal insults. On the other hand, they may also represent a useful device to characterise and establish human protagonists in a socially favourable position at the expense of supernatural beings.

COURAGE

In the *fornaldarsögur,* courage, a crucial quality of fighters, is most commonly associated with shape-changers who engage in combat, particularly the *berserkir*.[56] However, rather than being a desired attribute a character describes themself with, references to bravery appear as designations of (exclusively male) warriors bestowed upon by other figures. For example, Böðvarr *bjarki* can change into a bear, an ability which defines him as an outstanding warrior.[57] In *Hrólfs saga kraka*, Böðvarr remarks that valour is something that other people perpetually associate him with: "[ek] hef jafnan verit kallaðr fullhugi."[58] In fact, Böðvarr is characterised as particularly brave throughout the saga. For example, Elg-Fróði addresses his brother Böðvarr as follows: "þú munt verða fyrirmaðr flestra um afl ok hreysti ok um alla harðfengi ok

[54] FN II, 249. 'I'd prefer […] we parted early, if you do not charge me with cowardice.'
[55] Vilhjálmur Árnason, "Morality and Social Structure in the Icelandic Sagas," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 90, no. 2 (1991): 170.
[56] Specifically, the *berserkr* Angantýr and his eleven brothers are described as being *braustir* ('valiant') in *Örvar-Odds saga*, see FN II, 254. The *berserkir* in King Aðils' retinue in *Hrólfs saga kraka* are characterised as *vaskir* ('valiant') men, see FN I, 31.
[57] For further information on the importance of bear rites in *Hrólfs saga kraka*, see Clive Tolley, "*Hrólfs saga kraka* and Sámi Bear Rites," *Saga-Book* 31 (2007): 5–21.
[58] FN I, 103. '[I] have always been called a dauntless person.'

drengskap."[59] Here, the terms used to describe Böðvarr, that is, *afl* ('strength, virtue'), *drengskapr* ('courage'), *harðfengi* ('valour') and *hreysti* ('valour') stand in stark contrast to those found in the lexical field of contempt (see above), thus depicting him not only as brave but also a virtuous man.[60]

Equally, notions of courage are closely intertwined with the emotion of fear, particularly when confronting intimidating adversaries, such as *tröll*, dragons, or other monsters. In *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* (Ch. 2–4), the dragon episode illustrates how the fear-inducing characteristics or actions of these foes are used to establish them as a threat while emphasising the people's trepidation towards them, as no one has yet been brave enough to confront the dragon: "ok þorir engi maðr at koma til skemmunnar fyrir þessum ormi."[61] In this instance, words connoting boldness—here primarily seen in the phrases *þora* and *þreystast* ('to dare')—are accompanied with the negative pronoun *engi* ('none, not one'). This portrayal of not-daring[62] in turn implies that courage is a crucial condition to defeat a supernatural beast, thus classifying the figure who does not have the lack of courage that the general public displays *as* exceedingly brave and ultimately victorious.

ENVY

In Chapter 12 of *Egils saga einhenda ok Ásmundar berserkjabana*, the female *jötunn* Arinnefja recounts the story of how she conceived her daughter

[59] FN I, 59. '[…] you will excel most others in strength and prowess and valour and courage.'

[60] In addition, descriptions of Böðvarr's courage and honour may be exaggerated to set him further apart from other shape-changers encountered in the *fornaldarsögur* who are generally described with attributes understood to be less desired in the medieval Icelandic society.

[61] FN I, 226. 'and no one dares to enter the chamber and face this dragon.' The same dragon is mentioned in a similar manner in the same saga: "Þessi tíðendi spyrjast víðar of land, en þó treystist engi til at ráða fyrir þessum mikla ormi." ('This news is reported far across the land and yet no one dared to fight against this huge dragon.'), FN I, 227, and it also appears in *Ragnars sona þáttr*: "Hann gerist þá svá ólmr, at menn þorðu eigi at koma nær skemmunni." ('Then he [the dragon] became so furious that the people did not dare to come near the chamber.'), FN I, 289.

[62] It should be noted that similar narrative descriptions of 'not-daring' in the *fornaldarsögur* exclusively use neutral language by negating courage words rather than referring to the semantic field of contempt. This may be done to avoid the negative connotations associated with demeaning insults as well as the aforementioned social implications of cowardice.

Skinnefja. Arinnefja explains that the god Þórr lay with her eldest sister, whom the other sisters killed out of jealousy the following morning. Þórr continued to have sexual intercourse with the remaining sisters in the following nights, each of whom was murdered afterwards by her siblings until only Arinnefja was alive.[63] Although this single occurrence of an envy word attributed to a supernatural figure may provide little insight into how envy generally may have been perceived in medieval Iceland, this episode nonetheless aptly describes possible effects of envy as Arinnefja is driven to sororicide and ultimately left with *ergi* (here: 'lewdness, lust'). She is unable to control this lust towards men to the point of being unable to live without one.[64] As Ármann Jakobsson has noted: "In [Arinnefja's case], it is very clear that the *ergi* is seen as unnatural and that lustful behaviour is involved."[65]

Arinnefja's state of *ergi* proves tragic, as she is love-struck by Hringr, the son of the King of Smálönd, and subsequently develops jealously towards Ingibjörg, the woman Hringr is set to marry. Arinnefja then makes three attempts to sabotage the marriage.[66] As her efforts prove futile, Arinnefja tries to drown the groom, stating that, if she cannot have him, no woman shall: "ok ætlaða ek at drekkja honum, svá at engi skyldi mega njóta hans."[67] Conceivably, Arinnefja's description of her emotional state hints at a spiralling connection between jealousy and *ergi*, where envy is amplified as long as *ergi* is left unrealised.

Such an interpretation might be supported by a similar episode in *Hrólfs saga kraka*. Here, Björn's refusal to give in to Hvít's advances leads her, a Finnish sorceress, to strike him with wolf gloves, thus turning him into a bear.[68] Björn, in the guise of a grey bear, is subsequently killed.

[63] "[Þórr] lagðist með systur minni inni elztu ok lá hjá henni um nóttina, en þær systr öfunduðu hana ok drápu hana um morguninn." ('[Þórr] lay with my eldest sister and slept with her that night, but the [other] sisters envied her and killed her the next morning.'), FN III, 350.

[64] "Sótti mik nú svá mikil ergi, at ek þóttumst eigi mannlaus lifa mega." ('I was overcome with so much *ergi* that I thought I could not live without a man.'), FN III, 350.

[65] Ármann Jakobsson, "The Trollish Acts of Þorgrímr the Witch," 55.

[66] This episode is rendered in accordance with FN III, 350.

[67] FN III, 351. 'and I intended to drown [Hringr], so that no one should be able to enjoy him.'

[68] "Hún kvaðst þessu óvön, at hún væri hrökt eða barin, – '[…] ok væri þat ekki fjarri, þótt nokkut kæmi í mót þrá þinni ok heimsku.' Hún lýstr nú til hans með úlfhanzka ok segir, at hann skyldi verða at einum híðbirni ólmum ok grimmum." ('She said that she was not accustomed to being struck or beaten – '[…] and it would take very little for

However, Björn's death does not mark the end of Hvít's actions, as she attempts to feed the bear meat to Bera, Björn's lover. Granted, phrases connoting envy or *ergi* are not directly referenced in this episode there is reason to assume that these (emotional) states are implicitly employed here. Hvít's reaction after Björn's rebuke of her love could be seen as a result of her jealousy towards Bera, Björn's love interest: "'ok þykkir þér betra, Björn, at spenna heldr karlsdóttur, ok er þér þat makligt, sem ván er á, ok svívirðligra en njóta minnar ástar ok blíðu […]."[69] It would therefore seem that envy and *ergi* might occasionally be entangled with one another, indicating that envy could play a significant role in *ergi* experienced by women.

FEAR

Debating the meanings and representations of fear in the past, Anne Scott and Cynthia Kosso have argued that "if the diverse cultures of these earlier eras distinguished themselves from our own culture and milieu, it is precisely in this way: despite the omnipresence of various fears, fear was an emotion to be cultivated, harnessed, probed, explored, and exploited, not overcome or avoided."[70]

The presumption that fear was fostered in the European Middle Ages appears to be reflected in the prevalence of this emotion in the medieval Icelandic *fornaldarsögur*. Fear is not only the most frequently experienced emotion in the corpus of the *fornaldarsögur* but it also takes on various narrative functions. Words expressing fear are recurrently used to describe the dread-inducing nature of a *tröll*, a dragon, or an animal. Accordingly, they are used as devices to instill fear rather than to express feeling fear, as the numerous instances of the narrator employing terms such as *hræðiligr* or *ógnarligr* (both meaning 'dreadful') to describe such beings demonstrate (see, for example "Þetta tröll var svá grimmt ok ógurligt, at engi þorði til útgöngu at leita, ok svá mikil ógn fylgdi þessu

something to come between your stubbornness and foolery.' Now she strikes him with wolf gloves and says that he should turn into a furious and ferocious bear.'), FN I, 47.

[69] Ibidem, 'and you, Björn, prefer to embrace a peasant's daughter and consider it appropriate for you, which is worse and more disgraceful than to enjoy my love and tenderness […].'

[70] Anne Scott and Cynthia Kosso, "Introduction," in *Fear and its Representations in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Anne Scott and Cynthia Kosso, Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages 6, ed. Robert E. Bjork, Helen Nader and James Fitzmaurice (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), xii.

kvikendi, at af tók allan vísdóm af konunginum með megni ok bragðvísi.")[71]

As has already been mentioned above, fear words may be employed to describe courageous acts or people. Consequently, the high occurrence of fear words in the *fornaldarsögur* (see Table 1) can be partially explained by the frequent instances of negated words and phrases relating to the lexical field of fear.[72] Such phrases are uttered by human figures during an encounter with a supernatural being, most frequently[73] in the formulaic expression *ek hræðumk ekki þik* ('I am not afraid of you'). The choice of the causative verb *hræða* in these instances appears to be deliberate, not only explaining that a figure is unafraid but also implying that they cannot be frightened.[74] Likewise, rather than feeling fear themselves, supernatural figures utilise similar phrases to acknowledge the valour of a human warrior, as exemplified by the *tröll* Gríðr in *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra*: "Eigi ertu sem aðrir menn, þínar æðar skelfast hvergi, ok þú hræðist ekki."[75]

Scott and Kosso further add that fear may also have been "used to coerce, bully, control, manipulate."[76] This applies to the figures within the narratives, but it also extends to the audience receiving such stories. It is therefore not surprising that fear-inducing supernatural beings are instrumentalised in the *fornaldarsögur*. This may possibly be done to achieve three things. First, the utterances are linked with courage, as the use of negative markers accompanying fear words indicates. Subsequently, saga protagonists regularly state that they cannot be made afraid, leading supernatural beings to publicly acknowledge their courage,

[71] FN IV, 164. 'This *tröll* was so horrible and dreadful looking that no one dared to look for a way out, and so much dread followed this creature that the King was deprived of all wisdom through its strength and cunning.'

[72] Out of the 70 recorded instances of fear-related words in this category 26 utterances (37.14%) entail negative markers.

[73] Out of the 24 instances of lexical phrases connoting fear that feature a negative marker 15 phrases contain a causative verb.

[74] This observation is supported by the observation that, when a figure feels fear, often the adjective *hræddr* ('afraid') is used instead, describing a status of being afraid. See, for example, "en þeir sögðu [Möndul] svá hræddan, at hann þyrði eigi verja lið Hrólfs." ('but they said that [Möndull] was so afraid that he would not dare to defend Hrólfr's troops.'), FN III, 238.

[75] FN III, 420. 'You are not like other men. Your veins quiver nowhere, and you do not become afraid.'

[76] Scott and Kosso, "Introduction", xxii.

and thus setting human warriors apart from their supernatural opponents on an emotional level. Second, fear could be seen as a test of courage with its own plot-specific agenda. Third, fear can occasionally be utilised to play with the expectations of the recipients of the story.

Events portrayed in *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra* (Ch. 4) seem to reinforce these observations. Here, fear plays a central aspect in that *not* becoming afraid is the key to breaking a curse. The saga states how Princess Signý is cursed to live as a repulsively looking *tröllkona* called Gríðr. This curse can only be broken by a man who is unafraid of both her and her seax. This is ultimately accomplished by Illugi, the saga's protagonist, as he is not intimidated by Gríðr's repeated threats and instead proclaims respectively that he remains unafraid, for instance: "'Mitt hjarta hefir aldri hrætt orðit, […] ok því hræðumst ek ekki þínar ógnir.'", "Illugi sagðist eigi hræðast dauða sinn." and "Hún reiðir nú saxit, ok mjök er hún ófrýnlig at sjá, en allt fór sem fyrr, at Illugi kvaðst eigi hræðast."[77] The effectiveness of this episode is further underlined by the fact that Gríðr explains who she is and how her situation came about only after the curse is lifted. This revelation not only serves as a pivotal factor for Illugi's courage but plays with the expectations of literary encounters between human figures and *tröll*, thus serving as an element of surprise for the audience.

JOY

The *fornaldarsögur* contain a significant number of joy-related vocabulary expressing different shades of happiness, contentment, or amusement. For instance, in *Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra*, Brana's cheerfulness is depicted by the term *allkát* ('overjoyed').[78] Another example highlights the gratitude and polite behaviour of the *flagðkona* Mána towards Sörli, the King's son in *Sörla saga sterka*, as demonstrated by the following excerpt: "Varð nú Mána harðla fegin ok þakkaði konungssyni mörgum fögrum orðum liðveizluna."[79] It is worth noting that Mána's appreciation for

[77] FN III 419–20. 'My heart has never become afraid […] and that is why I do not fear your threats.'; 'Illugi said that he did not fear death.' and 'Now she raises the seax and she was terrible looking, but everything went as before and Illugi said that he was not afraid.'
[78] "Brana var þá allkát." ('Then, Brana was overjoyed.'), FN IV, 304.
[79] FN III, 379. 'Mána now became very glad and thanked the King's son with many beautiful words for his support.'

Sörli's help is a departure from the prevailing attitude of contempt towards supernatural beings (see above).

Indeed, most supernatural beings, that is, *dvergar*, *álfar*, *jötnar* and *tröll*, various magic-wielders, and shape-changers, experience some form of happiness or pleasure. Supernatural animals on the other hand generally do not show expressions of joy. A possible reason for this could be that beasts are portrayed as antagonists in the *fornaldarsögur* and seldom appear in situations that would elicit joy as an anticipated emotional reaction. Among these figures, the *dvergar* are particularly noteworthy, as they seem to experience joy more frequently than any other emotion. *Dvergar* typically express happiness through cordial greetings or wishes of well-being on parting, as demonstrated by the *dvergr* Sindri who bids Þorsteinn a warm welcome in *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar*: "Sindri heilsar Þorsteini glaðliga."[80] In the same narrative, Þorsteinn meets another *dvergr* called Litr. Their encounter is described as follows: "Þar gekk út dvergr sá […] er Litr hét. Þeir váru vinir miklir. Hann heilsar honum blíðliga […]."[81] A further example of such cordial relationships can be seen in the *dvergr* Möndull, who is well-received by the jarl in *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*: "Einn dag gekk maðr ókunnigr fyrir jarlinn. […] Hann var lágr á vöxt ok mjök riðvaxinn, fríðr at yfirlitum, utaneygðr var hann mjök. Jarl tók vel við þessum manni ok bað hann með sér dveljast."[82] Such emotional responses are rarely, if ever, uttered upon encounters with other supernatural beings, who, as has been argued above, are generally met with fear or contempt. The *dvergar* thus seem to present an exceptional case in this regard, as they are often friends and helpers of the saga protagonists, a relationship which will be investigated in more detail in the following chapter on love.

LOVE

Damien Boquet and Piroska Nagy note that "[i]f love was undoubtedly the summit of literary emotions, the emotional palette of medieval

[80] FN III, 62. 'Sindri greets Þorsteinn cheerfully.'

[81] FN III, 12. 'Then the *dvergr* came out [of the stone] […] who was called Litr. They were good friends. [Litr] greets him graciously […].'

[82] FN III, 220. 'One day an unknown man came before the Jarl. […] He was short and broad shouldered, handsome looking and goggle-eyed. The Jarl received this man well and asked him to stay with him.'

authors possessed an impressive variety of registers and nuances."[83] This statement holds true for the shades of love depicted in the *fornaldarsögur*. Although expressions of love associated with supernatural figures are limited to a few instances in the present saga corpus, they encompass various meanings. As Table 2 (see above) shows, words of love cover a broad spectrum from the fondness of someone or something to friendship, familial love between (foster-)brothers, or affection of parents towards their children, to romantic love and sexual desire. These emotions are experienced by several supernatural beings including *dvergar*, *álfar*, *jötnar* and *tröll*, magic-wielders, and shape-changers. However, these nuances seem to have different functions depending not only on the gender of the supernatural figure but also on their role in the respective narrative.

Accordingly, platonic love in the *fornaldarsögur* is typically linked to dwarfs, figures who, for the most part, give guidance to natural figures and fight by the protagonist's side. This can be seen, for instance, from Reginn mentoring Sigurðr in *Norna-Gests þáttr* and Möndull Pattason being an advisor to the Jarl in *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*.[84] Feelings of lust, on the other hand, exclusively revolve around a male human and a female supernatural figure. For example, King Helgi's lust for an unnamed *álfkona* in *Hrólfs saga kraka*[85] results in them having a child together.[86]

Romantic love between natural and supernatural partners on the contrary seems to revolve around conflicts that arise from a relationship's dichotomy, either because the love is unrequited or disapproved by third parties. In *Ketils saga hængs*, for instance, Hallbjörn is appalled by Ketill's love for Hrafnhildr, as he exclaims: "'Hví býðr þú trölli þessu hér at vera?' Ok var hann mjök byrstr og styggr við hennar kvámu. […] 'ok er þat illt,

[83] Damien Boquet and Piroska Nagy, eds. *Medieval Sensibilities: A History of Emotions in the Middle Ages,* trans. Robert Shaw (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), 123.

[84] "Reginn kenndi Sigurði marga hluti ok elskaði hann mjök" ('Reginn taught Sigurðr many things and loved him much'), FN I, 314. See also "Skemmti [Möndull] jarlinum oftliga ok sagði frá mörgu fróðliga. Þar kom, at jarlinn tók hann í mikla kærleika" ('[Möndull] amused the Jarl regularly and told him skilfully about many things. This is how it came to be that the Jarl loved him a lot'), FN III, 220.

[85] On lust in *Hrólfs saga kraka*, see Carl Phelpstead, "The Sexual Ideology of *Hrólfs saga kraka*," *Scandinavian Studies* 75, no. 1 (2003): 1–24.

[86] "Með lostum hefir þú nú til mín gert" ('You have had your way with me with lust'), FN I, 28.

at þú vilt elska tröll þat.'"[87] However, when a supernatural woman falls in love with a human man, their feelings are often not reciprocated and instead met with indifference, as the interactions between Hildigunnr and Oddr in *Örvar-Odds saga* demonstrate.[88] Since this episode illustrates a correlation between the love and grief of supernatural beings as well as the social and moral implications that such relations may have for human figures, the consequences of the loss of romantic love will be subject to further scrutiny in the following section on sadness.

SADNESS

Within the emotional field of sadness in the *fornaldarsögur*, it is primarily shape-changers, *dvergar, jötnar* and *tröll* who feel different gradations of despair, physical agony, or psychological pain as the result of loss of love or other bereavement. Grief appears as a response to the loss of a loved in the aforementioned episode from *Örvar-Odds saga*. In the saga, Örvar-Oddr abandons Hildigunnr Hildisdóttir, a *jötunn* girl who is in love with him despite being noticeably taller than him,[89] while she is pregnant with his child. During their final interaction, Hildigunnr reluctantly allows Oddr to leave her and their unborn child, although she claims to be capable of preventing him from doing so.[90] She bids him farewell, explaining her grief as follows: '"Nú vil ek heldr bera harm ok áhyggju ok morna hér."'[91] As this episode highlights, supernatural figures are capable of feeling despair and grief after bereavement, but it also reveals that sympathy for mourning supernatural figures is notably missing. Oddr agrees to take care of their son once he is ten years old but states

[87] FN II, 165. "How could you ask this *tröll* to come here?' And he was exasperated and abhorred by her arrival. […] 'and it is evil that you choose to love that *tröll*."

[88] See *Örvar-Odds saga* (Ch. 18), FN II, 275–76.

[89] "ek ann þér mikit, þó at þú sért lítill." ('I love you very much, even though you are short.'), FN II, 275. For a comprehensive discussion regarding the heavy implications of infantile sexuality and paedophilia inherent in this episode, see Matthew Harold Roby, "The 'Troll-Girl Revelation' Motif: Female Infantile Sexuality and Pedophilia in *Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra* and *Jökuls þáttr Búasonar*," *Scandinavian Studies* 93, no. 4 (2021): 553–85.

[90] "En þó at ek þættumst ekki mega af þér sjá sakir ástríkis, þá vil ek þó ekki meina þér at fara, hvert þú vilt, þar ek sé, at þú átt ekki eðli til at vera hér álengdar hjá oss, en efast þú ekki í því, at þú kæmist heðan aldri, nema ek vildi." ('And although I cannot seem to take my eyes off you for love's sake, I do not want to prevent you from going wherever you want, because I see that you are not made to stay here far off with us, but don't you doubt that you would never get away unless I wanted you to!'), FN II, 275–76.

[91] FN II, 276. 'Now I shall rather carry grief and sorrow and mourn here.'

that he has no intention of caring for Hildigunnr or their child if she gives birth to a daughter, as he proclaims in his final words to her: "ek mun þar engan gaum at gefa."[92] Oddr's lack of emotional response upon his departure exacerbates the situation, thus setting his reaction in stark contrast with Hildigunnr's feelings. Whereas Hildigunnr weeps in sorrow, Oddr boards the ships and never returns ("Grætr hún þá sáran, en Oddr ferr á skip."[93]) It may therefore be stated that sadness and grief are most often felt by supernatural beings while these emotions are rarely experienced by natural characters *for* supernatural figures. This observation might hint at the potential breaking of social and/or sexual taboos which consequentially could interdict the feeling of certain emotions, such as grief.[94] A second example of sadness as a response to loss can be seen in the despair of princess Signý in *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra*. The loss of her social standing and appearance via a curse takes so much from her that she is unable to speak: "Signý mátti ekki mæla fyrir harmi ok gráti."[95]

Yet a different kind of sadness seems to be particularly associated with the *dvergar* and revolves around a possible threat to the social status of their respective ward. In *Völsunga saga*, for instance, Reginn addresses his *protégé* Sigurðr "af áhyggju mikilli"[96] ('with great sorrow'), while later saying that it pains him to see Sigurðr impecunious, a remark which is further amplified by its subliminal social importance since Sigurðr is of royal descent.

SHAME

Shame is one of the less frequent emotions in the *fornaldarsögur*. In contrast to other saga genres, the *fornaldarsögur* generally do not seem to make a connection between shame and social status or renown which

[92] FN II, 276. 'Then I will not give [it] any attention.'
[93] Ibidem, 'She weeps bitterly, but Oddr boards the ship.'
[94] See Roby, "'The 'Troll-Girl Revelation' Motif" referenced in note 80.
[95] FN III, 421. 'Signý could not speak because of her grief and weeping.'
[96] "Þá mælti Reginn við Sigurð af áhyggju mikilli" ('Then Reginn spoke to Sigurðr with great concern'), FN I, 155, and "Enn mælti Reginn til Sigurðar: 'Oflítit fé eigu þér. Þat harmar oss, er þér hlaupið sem þorpara sveinar, en ek veit mikla féván at segja þér ok er þat meiri ván at þat sé sómi at sækja ok virðing […].'" ('Reginn further said to Sigurðr: 'You are not wealthy enough. I bewail that you run errands like a churl's boy, but I can tell you where there is much wealth to gain and honour and esteem to be won […].'"), FN I, 142.

may be due to a perceived lack of social reputation of the supernatural beings.[97] One notable exception is King Aðils, who receives "mikla smán"[98] ('great disgrace') as he is unable to reconquer his hall in *Hrólfs saga kraka*. For similar reasons, added notions of chivalry or other acts associated with faith, such as confessions, an understanding of shame which is prevalent among others in medieval English literature,[99] do not seem to apply here since there are debatably few, if any, indications of chivalry or piety found within the supernatural encounters described in the *fornaldarsögur*. Thus, rather than being a response to losing one's honour, words of shame are primarily utilised to humiliate or accuse a supernatural figure, predominately *flagðkonur*, *tröll*, shape-changers, and magic-wielders, of being dishonourable.

As Raffaele Rodogno has noted: "Many understand shame and contempt as counterpart emotions. Both emotions involve specific negative evaluations of a self, but while the shameful subject evaluates her own self, the contemptuous subject evaluates another's."[100] Indeed, supernatural beings understand the intention and recognise the impact of these verbal mistreatments and respond to them. Such an example of a supernatural being shamed by another figure concerns, for instance, the *tröllkona* Ýma in *Hjámþés saga ok Ölvis* who responds to Hjálmþér calling her "skauð it aumasta"[101] ('most wretched cunt') by acknowledging the shame she feels: "[Ýma] segir hann margt orð tala svívirðliga."[102]

Thus, through (contemptuous) threats to what Paul Gilbert has called "social attractiveness,"[103] these supernatural figures are thrust into an

[97] See Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, "The Language of Feeling in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*," 14–15.
[98] "Aðils konungr kom eigi í höllina, ok þóttist hann þungr af bíða ok mikla smán hafa fengit, hverra bragða sem hann leitaði." ('King Aðils could not enter the hall, and he was tired of waiting and believed to have received great disgrace, whatever trickery he tried.'), FN I, 87.
[99] Mary C. Flannery, "The Concept of Shame in Late-Medieval English Literature," *Literature Compass* 9, no. 2 (2012): 166.
[100] Raffaele Rodogno, "The Moral Shadows of Shame and Contempt," in *Shadows of the Soul: Philosophical Perspectives on Negative Emotions*, ed. Christine Tappolet, Fabrice Teroni and Anita Konzelmann Ziv, (New York London: Routledge, 2018), 116.
[101] FN IV, 206.
[102] Ibidem, '[Ýma] says that he speaks many disgraceful words.'
[103] Paul Gilbert, "The Evolution of Social Attractiveness and its Role in Shame, Humiliation, Guilt and Therapy," *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 70, no. 2 (1997): 113–47.

almost unrectifiable situation. Their shame might then represent a self-conscious response to these threats and could subsequently motivate an attempted "restoration of the damaged self,"[104] as King Aðils endeavours.

SURPRISE

In the words of Maital Neta and M. Justin Kim, surprise as an emotion is not only ambiguously valanced being either positive or negative but also appears to be strongly influenced by cultural contexts.[105] In the *fornaldarsögur*, human figures may react surprised when they encounter a supernatural being or when such beings make a sudden appearance, such as Sörli who is startled by the hideous and frightening appearance of the *jötunn* Skrímnir in *Sörla saga sterka*: "Lítr hann einn hræðiligan jötun liggja í rekkju. […] Hans búkr tók beggja veggja á milli með svo herfiligri ásýnd ok óskapligri, at konungsson undraðist þat stórliga."[106] Another instance features Örvar-Oddr's *jötunn* son Vignir who expresses astonishment at his father's short stature in comparison with his height: "[…] ek kann varla at ætla, at þú sért faðir at mér, svá lítill ok smáskítligr sem mér sýnist þú vera."[107]

However, the use of the surprise lexemes is generally ambiguous; surprise may in some cases appear as a secondary emotion, often triggered by fear or accentuating somatic reactions such as fight and flight responses that follow an initial surprise reaction.[108] For example, surprise may be expressed through flinching, as indicated by the use of the term *fálmandi* ('flinching') in an episode with the *jötunn* Hildir in *Örvar-Odds saga*.[109] Travelling on Oddr's ship, Hildir becomes seasick and flinches.

[104] Ilona E. de Hooge et al., "The Social Side of Shame: Approach versus Withdrawal," *Cognition and Emotion* 32, no. 8 (2018): 1676, col. 2.

[105] Maital Neta and M. Justin Kim, "Surprise as an Emotion: A Response to Ortony," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* (2022), 3.

[106] FN III, 373. 'He looks at a terrifying *jötunn* lying in a bed. […] His body filled [the space] between both walls, [and he] had such a harrowing and horrible appearance that the King's son was greatly surprised.'

[107] FN II, 287. 'I can hardly believe that you are my father, as short and tiny as you seem to me.'

[108] On the link of surprise, fear, and somatic responses, see, for instance, Jerome Kagan, *Surprise, Uncertainty, and Mental Structures* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 75–79; and Rodogno, "The Moral Shadows of Shame and Contempt," 114.

[109] "[Oddr] dregr segl upp, ok kom þegar byrr á, ok sigla þá fram með landinu ok eigi lengi, áðr Hildir hleypr upp fálmandi á nökkvanum ok at Oddi, þrífr til hans ok rekr hann

He then grabs Oddr, shouting at him that he will kill him if he heads further out to sea. Oddr then asks him to not be startled and Hildir remains silent after that.

In other cases, surprise may also be used to intensify other emotions, such as in *Sturlaugs saga starfsama*, where an astonished temple priestess becomes enraged after noticing an intrusion into her temple and charges at Sturlaugr.[110] It thus stands to reason that the surprise words encountered in the present corpus seem to be of an auxiliary nature, frequently accompanied by other emotions.

TRANQUILLITY

Similar to surprise, tranquillity is rarely expressed in the *fornaldarsögur*. All associated lexemes that express this emotion terms related to *kyrr* ('calm, quiet') and *þegja* ('to be silent'). Nonetheless, words expressing tranquillity seem to be more versatilely employed than those related to surprise. In the *fornaldarsögur*, tranquillity is associated with *jötnar*, the cow *síbilja* in *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, King Aðils' *berserkir* in *Hrólfs saga kraka*, and the *fylgjur*.[111] Apart from keeping silent, words related to tranquillity may, in certain circumstances, be indicative of warriors freezing in battle either at the order of a king or in response to fear-inducing situations. The account of the *berserkir* being associated with tranquillity is of particular interest here, as they are notably associated with the precise opposite,

undir sik ok mælti: 'Drepa mun ek þik, ef þú lætr eigi af gerningum þessum […]' Oddr bað hann eigi undrast […] ok er Hildir nú kyrr.", FN II, 276–77. ('[Oddr] hoists the sails and wind came up at once. They sail along the coastline, and it does not take long until Hildir runs up the boat flinching, heads towards Oddr, grabs him, thrusts him down under him and said: 'I will kill you if you do not stop these sorceries that you are using […]' Oddr asks him not to wonder […] and Hildir is now silent.')

110 "Hún grenjar illa á hann ok nístir tönnum á hann allgrimmliga, en verðr þó bilt til hans at ráða." ('She yells harshly at him and gnashes her teeth at him most savagely, but she becomes eager to attack him.'), FN III, 143.

111 The concept of *fylgjur* is not easily rendered into English. They are anthropomorphic or theriomorphic spirits that follow a person or family. While they are intrinsically connected to a person's luck (ON *hamingja*) or fate, their advent may predetermine the impending death for the person they appear to. For an extensive discussion of this motif, see, for instance, Else Mundal, *Fylgjemotiva i norrøn litteratur* [*The motif of the* fylgja *in Norse literature*] (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1974) and Zuzana Stankovitsová, "Following up on Female *fylgjur*: A Re-Examination of the Concept of Female *fylgjur* in Old Icelandic Literature," in *Paranormal Encounters in Iceland 1150–1400*, ed. Ármann Jakobsson and Miriam Mayburd, The Northern Medieval World, ed. Carolyne Larrington et al. (Berlin/Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2020), 245–62.

that is considerable vocal expressions of anger (see above). In *Hrólfs saga kraka*, King Aðils' *berserkir* are provoked, which agitates them. Despite their infuriation, the king commands them to remain silent for the rest of the evening, an order which they heed ("Ok við þessi orð óx þeim móðr ok kapp, en konungr bað þá vera kyrra um kveldit,")[112] indicating that the *berserkir* may require a figure of higher social standing to command them. Moreover, the call for silence here creates an emotional dichotomy, as the *berserkir* whose rage is habitually supplemented with intense gestures and loud vocalisations now fall silent and stand still. In so doing, the polarity of anger and tranquillity may also be amplified through sensory perception by contrasting sound and silence.

III. Discussion

The present study investigated the linguistic manifestation of emotions related to supernatural figures encountered in the corpus of the Old Norse-Icelandic *fornaldarsögur*. Their presence provides a prolific example of social interactions between human beings and marginalised groups, shedding light on the mindset of the medieval Icelandic society and its attitudes towards those perceived as 'others' residing on the fringes of society or outside of it. This investigation has not only identified a range of verbal and non-verbal emotional expressions conveyed by the lexis but also yielded considerable insight into the distinctions that arise among and between various groups of supernatural beings and their emotions. While each of the stipulated emotion categories has been discussed in some detail, it is worth iterating the main points. For instance, the *domain of effort* provided by anger enables supernatural beings with the potential to (re)act in situations where they might otherwise have been unable to take action.

Most notably, the present study has revealed that all groups of supernatural figures encountered in the *fornaldarsögur* exhibit a wide range of emotions, although every supernatural concept is not associated with the full emotional spectrum (see Fig. 1 below). Certain beings conglomerate gradually with others on an emotional level, such as the *berserkir*, whose emotional phrases align them with *tröll*. This convergence

[112] FN I, 34. 'And after [hearing his] words rage and eagerness grew in them, but the King asked them to stay calm in the evening.'

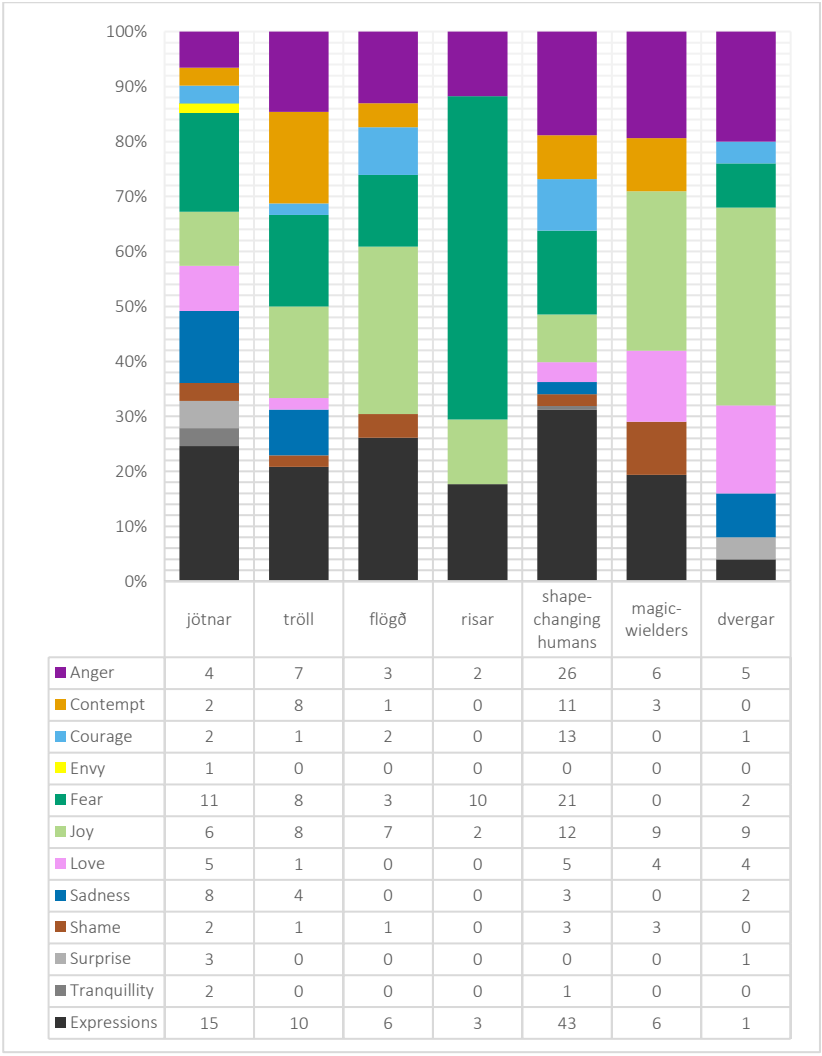
is also reflected in their taxonomy, as *berserkir* are frequently referred to as *risi*, *tröll*, or other concepts.[113]

Furthermore, some groups of supernatural beings are associated with distinct expressions of emotions. The data presented here thus indicates that the groups of the *berserkir* and *dvergar* in particular represent auspicious candidates for emotional communities. To elaborate this point further, the *berserkir* almost exclusively communicate anger and courage, but they feel joy or love only in isolated instances. Moreover, they do not seem to express emotions outside of battle. Anger is thus a chief emotion of this group which, given its *domain of effort*, enables their emotional state of *berserksgangr*. The *dvergar*, meanwhile, are typically well-received by natural characters in the *fornaldarsögur*. *Dvergar* display a range of emotions, albeit in unusual proportions and unique compositions when compared to other supernatural concepts. The comparably low number of *dvergar* vocalising their emotions in the corpus, however, might relativise this perspective. Regardless, fear and courage are noticeably absent from their emotional inventory. Thus, in light of Rosenwein's specification, both the groups of the *berserkir* and *dvergar* may represent emotional communities, as they "adhere to the same norms of emotional expressions and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions."[114]

In addition to that, the study has revealed that expressions of several feelings are connected on a linguistic level through semantic opposition and the use of negative markers, linking two or more – in some instances contrasting – semantic fields of emotions.

[113] "Þessi blámaðr var mikill sem risi, en digr sem naut, blár sem hel. Klær hafði hann svá miklar, at þær váru líkari gammsklóm en mannanöglum." ('This *blámaðr* was tall as a *risi*, big as a bull [and] black as hell. He had claws so big that they resembled those of a vulture rather than human nails.'), FN III, 126–27.

[114] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, 2.



	jötnar	tröll	flögð	risar	shape-changing humans	magic-wielders	dvergar
Anger	4	7	3	2	26	6	5
Contempt	2	8	1	0	11	3	0
Courage	2	1	2	0	13	0	1
Envy	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fear	11	8	3	10	21	0	2
Joy	6	8	7	2	12	9	9
Love	5	1	0	0	5	4	4
Sadness	8	4	0	0	3	0	2
Shame	2	1	1	0	3	3	0
Surprise	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Tranquillity	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Expressions	15	10	6	3	43	6	1

Fig. 1. Occurrences of lexical phrases in the semantic field of twelve emotions and emotional expressions in the *fornaldarsögur* associated with selected supernatural concepts (n≥10), including proportions and total numbers.

While such connections occur across the emotional spectrum,[115] links between emotions through linguistic markers are most prominently found between fear, courage, contempt, and shame, with courage certainly being the central emotion portrayed in the *fornaldarsögur*, representing various ideals of manliness, prowess, and honour.[116] Accordingly, words and lexical phrases communicating fear and courage amplify the other emotion – the more frightening a natural or supernatural adversary is, the more courageous a hero must be in order to overcome it. Phrases specifically connoting a state of 'not becoming afraid' are regularly employed to frame a warrior as brave. On the other hand, courage is often contrasted with notions of contempt or disgust, arguably illustrating the juxtaposition of what might be understood as socially acceptable appearance or behaviour and what is not.[117] This contrast is frequently exemplified by encounters between human figures and supernatural beings, mainly female *tröll* or shape-changing or magic-wielding men, who are on the receiving end of human disdain. In these instances, contempt is represented through abusive language, often rooted in effeminacy and weakness, aiming to taunt or humiliate another figure, assertions to which a disgraced figure commonly reacts with feelings of shame. As the examples of Böðvarr *bjarki* and Örvar-Oddr

[115] The use of linguistic amplifiers, negative markers, and semantic opposites to emphasise two or more emotions appears to be a common motif in the Old Norse-Icelandic *fornaldarsögur*. While such occurrences are most prominent in fear and courage words, almost all lexical fields of emotions show instances of negation. For example, negated joy words may also be used to express rage ("Hann gekk til rúms síns ok var heldr fákátr ok var rauðr sem blóð" ['He went to bed and was rather little cheerful and red as blood'], FN I, 47), or sadness ("'mér er ekki jafnglatt at vega sem áðr'" ['I am not as excited to fight as before'], FN I, 103).

[116] Regarding the importance of courage for saga heroes and implications of the link between courage and honour, see, for instance Ármann Jakobsson, "Enter the Dragon: Legendary Saga Courage and the Birth of the Hero," in *Making History: Essays on the* fornaldarsögur, ed. Martin Arnold and Alison Finlay (London: Viking Society for Northern Research and University College London, 2010), 33–52, and Kate Heslop, "Framing the Hero: Medium and Metalepsis in Old Norse Heroic Narrative," in *Old Norse Mythology: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Pernille Hermann, Stephen A. Mitchell and Jens Peter Schjødt (Cambridge, MA: The Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature, 2017), 53–88.

[117] A compelling study that tackles the question of monstrosity and its social implications in medieval Iceland using the example of the *Íslendingasögur* is Rebecca Merkelbach, *Monsters in Society: Alterity, Transgression, and the Use of the Past in Medieval Iceland* (Berlin/Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2019).

discussed above indicate, explicit references to the absence of contempt are made to characterise a figure as an honourable person. By contrast, literary descriptions of a lack of courage seem to be employed to avoid the negative social implications connected with contemptuous vocabulary. Consequently, as the case of the *dvergr* Möndull has illustrated, instead of being called a coward, descriptions of not daring to fight seemingly retain the social reputation of the respective figure.

As argued earlier, a thorough examination of the *fornaldarsögur* provides a useful perspective on the emotional language associated with fringe communities such as the supernatural beings investigated in this study. In conclusion, it can be said that supernatural figures are portrayed with a broad range of human emotions, similar to natural figures, yet distinct from them. This "like-but-unlike quality,"[118] with similarities in the portrayed emotional expressions but differences in nature, exposes supernatural figures to mistreatment. Emotional reactions towards supernatural figures thus often include phrases linked to contempt, fear, courage, and shame, more frequently than the reverse.

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[118] Julian Goodare, "Ghosts, fairies and the world of spirits," in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, ed. Susan Broomhall (London/New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 335.

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In keeping with Icelandic naming conventions, Icelandic scholars are listed alphabetically by given names.

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