

## OLD ICELANDIC NAMES OF EMOTIONS AND THE IRISH MIND

Gvozdetskaya N.

Ivanovo State University

Every modern European language distinctly separates two categories of human existence - life events as objective situations of the "outer" environment and emotions as subjective sensations of the individual characteristic of the "inner", psychic sphere of human life, cp. such semantic pairs as "misfortune - sorrow", "danger - fear", "quarrel - anger", etc. Their distinction is deeply embedded in the modern European mind due to the differentiation of linguistic contexts and the use of special verbal predicates (an emotion is what is felt while an event is what happens to us). Thus, the word semantics reflects that contrast in the psychosocial nature of man which is so typical of our culture - the contrast of the "man acting" and the "man feeling".

Following some other researchers of the Old Germanic vocabulary we have many reasons to think that the epic mind did not differentiate the concept of feeling(emotion) from the concept of social event (or action) as clearly as the compilers of glossaries are often apt to present in their definitions. For example, in H.Kuhn's glossary for the Elder Edda OI harmr is rendered through the German Harm ("sorrow") while its typical linguistic contexts show it to be closer to the English harm("injury"). Harmr is normally combined in the Elder Edda with such verbs as hefna, reca, gialda, boeta, vinna and, hence, should be more naturally understood as the objective results of revenge (damage, insult, crime) than the accompanying feeling. Cp. also the synonymous usage of harmr and bql (treated in the same glossary as "Unglück") as the members of epic variation: <sup>t</sup>pic hefir Brynhildr

ból at gerva, heiptan hvattan, harm at vinna (Br 3). Here, as in many other usages of harm, the visible, active, "outward" side of human behaviour is made much more distinct in the text than its often imperceptible, psychological side. F.Maurer (Bern 1951) appears to be quite right in stating that the heathen Germanic world, with its highly developed traditions of bloodfeud did not know the concept of suffering as separated from the concepts of damage and insult. The Old Germanic "Leid" was always imbued with the idea of "Beledigung".

This view helps us better understand some instances of contextual variability of those Old Icelandic word in the Elder Edda which at first glance seem to have one definite sense. E.g. OI reindr (or: vreindr) is generally treated in the glossaries as "angry" and can hardly be denied this sense in many contexts (Prk 1, etc.) but in Sg 13: Reindr varð Gunnarr, oc hnipnadi, sveip sinom hug, sat um allan dag; hann vissi þat vilgi gorla, hvat hánom væri vinna scemst, eða hánom væri vinna betzt. Here the unequivocal description of the hero's behaviour shows that his psychic state should be treated as depression or sorrow. The ability of reindr to refer to so different emotions as anger and sorrow may puzzle the modern reader until we take into account that "angry" and "sad" were regularly combined in this Common Germanic root with the third sense - "warlike, hostile", cp. Old English wrap "hostile, angry", wrappe "grieved"; Old Saxon wred "sad, angry, hostile". In Old English epic poetry wrap is often used substantively as a set expression for the "enemy". In the Elder Edda vreindr can be used substantively too, in the meaning of "warrior", but in the formulaic phrases only, cp. hvars scolo vreindr vega (Fm 17, Sd 27), hvars vreindr scolo vega (Fm 30). In case of predicative usage in the meaning "warlike" it always stands in alliteration with the verb vega "fight", e.g. vega þú gacc, ef þú vreindr ser (Ls 15). In our opinion, both the formulaic usage and the alliterative

pattern indicate that the oldest conceptual sphere of reidr was a kind of social activity (struggle or strife) which constituted the basic meaning of the root while the associated feelings (anger or grief) could appear as the connotative meanings depending on the context.

The adjective reidr in the Edda does not retain this arctic "wide" meaning but shows traces of its later differentiation ("angry" is the main semantic variant of the word, "sad" and "warlike" appearing as semantic relics). It is much more important, however, that the same semantic mode of combining the three different characteristics of a person in one word was still alive in the eddic epithets being highly relevant for the strategies of the epic narration. Thus, the semantic presentation of the epithet modugr in the glossary (1.erregt, zornig, 2.mutig, 3.schmerzerfüllt) can not be understood as modern polysemy as many usages of the epithet allow of double interpretation. E.g. modgir applied to Guðrun's sons (Ghv 7) who are ready to avenge the death of their sister should naturally be interpreted as "warlike, brave" though the sense "sad, mournful" cannot be excluded as this epithet is followed by Hamdir's prophecy of the brothers' death. Modugr applied to Sigurðr whom Guðrun tries to call up from the realm of Hel (Ghv 19) looks more like a set expression for the "warrior" though it can also be understood as a hint to the suffering lover. On the contrary, modug spiqlí (Ghv 9) told by "Guðrun grataindi" and generally translated as "sad story" turns out to be both an expression of grief and a scrupulous counting of damages and insults.

The epithet of Guðrún hardhugud in the beginning of Guðrunarhvqt can have three interpretations, each of them confirmed by the nearest context: Pá frá eg senno sliðfengligsta, traum mal, talid af trega stórom, er hardhugud hvatti at vígi grimmom orðom Guðrun sono. Here Guðrun is presented both as: 1.brave, warlike - because she "hvatti at vígi", 2. angry - because she provoked a "senno sliðfengligsta" with "grimmom orðom", 3. sad - because her

speech is also characterized as "raud mal, talio af trega stórom". In our opinion, the same three meanings are naturally combined in the epithets módug and hardhugud occurring in synonymous variation in Guðrúnarqvida in fyrsta: Feygi Guðrún grata matti; svá var hon móðug at meg daudan oc hardhugud um hrer fylkis. In this lay Guðrún can hardly be treated as a model of pure sorrow filled with elegiac sentiment. Her speech beginning as a lyric monologue very soon acquires a vindictive strain and turns into a sequence of accusations and curses provoking a passionate argument about the cause of Sigurðr's death.

Thus if Guðrún of the Guðrunarhvöt is not just an infuriated mother instigating the revenge, then Guðrun of the Guðrunarquida is not merely a sorrowful wife mourning over her dead husband. The two feelings - sorrow and anger- form a natural fusion in the epic narration which is more concentrated on the details of a family feud than on the psychological states of its participants. They do not require special designations, and the corresponding concepts appear in the text as a semantic "aura" of the words originally meant to designate behavioural human qualities. The images of both Guðrun and Brynhildr are outlined in all their mimics and gestures but the fine movements of their souls are hidden from the reader. They remain in the first place the subjects of actions which very often do not have a clear psychological motivation. In this we are inclined to see the same tendency that can be found in the Old Icelandic family sagas where feelings are mainly shown through their outward manifestations only.