

Beasts of War and Men of War

A philological and archaeological interdisciplinary study regarding the imagery of
beasts in war and warriors.



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Summary

The aim of this master thesis is to identify the impact of animals in the imagery of the societies in the Scandinavian Iron Age and the Viking age through written and archaeological sources. The figure of the animal is established in three levels and I will address them and the impact it had on the aforementioned societies, the animal itself, the beasts of war the savage warriors and the imagery of the animal in the context of savage warriors who used such imagery.

The analysis of the animals and beasts of war is important to understand the further roles that they carried. Then we would proceed to the analysis of the savage warriors that used a relationship with animals, this would be mostly the *Berserkr* and the *Úlfheðnar*, which are very present in the literary corpus. Then, an analysis of the animal in the archaeological sources gives us another perspective which will add consistency to this study.

This provided some interesting results which would be interesting to keep working on, such as the possibility of different warrior ranks or status that are identifiable through the analysis of the animals.

Foreword

I would like to thank many people, first of all my supervisors Mikael Males and Vibeke Maria, who without whom I would have been unable to proceed with this study and have given me so much recommendations and had so much patience that I have nothing but words of thanks. I would like to give my thanks to Lisa Virginia Benson, who without her I would have been lost in the Archaeology Library and gave me so many recommendations and helpful advices. I would like to thank the staff of the Libraries of the University of Oslo, who despite the closing of the libraries due to Coronavirus kept working so we could access those documents online. I would like to give a final thanks to Alba Ruiz, who helped me with some ideas and provided bibliography in Archaeozoology.

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1. Introduction

Animals have been and are important in human history. They served as a source of food and other raw material such as leather or as tools of war, being the First World War the last war that saw broad use of them¹. Nowadays they still serve as traction animals for ploughing or animal power for carts, be it either leisure or necessity, animals are more present in society than we think. This role is even more obvious in societies of the past, if now a truck can be driven from one city to another to deliver goods in the past it had to be done in a much smaller proportion and with animals. But still, this is not all, animals had also a role that has been lost in the present days.

The society in the Scandinavian Iron Age (5th to 8th) century and Viking Age (8th to 11th century) was subject to many changes that came from southern Europe, the most important and relevant is the introduction of Christianity². Not only as a religion and change of rites but as an explanation of the cosmos and things that surrounded the Scandinavians of that time. It is hard for humans today to understand this worldview, meanwhile, for societies of the past, this was as common as the rain. And it is that humans saw animals as something more than just a living being. They transmitted ideas, values, and characteristics that were present in society, perhaps the clearest aspect of this is the will to transmit this idea in the most savage aspect of humanity, battle. It is no secret that in the Germanic and Scandinavian Iron Age animals were had a prominent role in mythology, being the companions of the gods, sometimes their foes but other times being crucial to them, in many sagas these animals are also present, and other times we see something that goes deeper, where a human becomes an animal in shape and form. This is also seen in archaeology where animals are depicted in many objects of life, belt-buckles, shoulder-clasps, helmets, swords, spears, shields, etc.

¹ Hediger, Ryan: *Animals in war* in The Palgrave International handbook of Animal Abuse studies (2017) pp. 475 - 490

² Berend, Nora. «Cristianización y formación de Estados en Escandinavia y en la Europa Centro-oriental: Un proyecto de historia comparada». *Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia*, [online], 2008, Núm. 29, p. 479-95 <https://www.raco.cat/index.php/ActaHistorica/article/view/189001> accessed 21/04/2020

Even though we can assume that humans would have a closer relationship with animals in earlier periods of history, we must make distinctions, even today this distinction persists, that is between domesticated animals and wild animals. The first domesticated animals (goats and sheep³) revolutionized human sustenance and led to many important advances (such as dairy products or the use of animals for traction and traveling). At its turn, this also led to changes in human society⁴ in the Neolithic that made possible the colonization of new territories, domesticated animals are present in almost every society (apart from some hunter-gatherer societies). Domesticated animals are very well known and their relationship with humans even today is much more important than we might imagine, but still, there is something else, and that is wild animals.

Wild animals live, obviously, outside human societies. But to say that they do not partake directly in these societies and are exempted from relationships with humans would be wrong. It is precisely due to the habits unknown to humans that these animals live, they take a role in myths, stories, and for some of these humans who were in contact with the wilderness, it could represent a daily relationship. This led to an imagery of animals in human societies, giving them attributes, ideas, making them live in the imagery, sometimes as foes, and other times as allies. If we proceed to the imagery of animals in the Scandinavian Iron Age (and non-Scandinavian Iron Age to a lesser extent) societies we see that these animals are present, have significant roles, and partake in many, many myths.

In some cases, humans even tried to take these ideals that themselves attributed to the animals and project them to make other humans aware of this ideal. They used all kinds of resources available to send and transmit this message. We must assume that almost every human in society knew of these famous myths and was part of a conscious imaginary that accomplished this task.

³ Zeder, Melinda & Hesse, Brian: *The Initial domestication of goats (capra hircus) in the Zagros Mountains 10.000 years Ago* in Science n.287, (2000) pp. 2254 - 2257

⁴ Zeder, Melinda. *The Neolithic Macro-(R)evolution: Macrorevolutionary Theory and the Study of Culture change* (2008)

There are many famous animals in Norse mythology for example, the mighty and dreaded warg *Fenrir*, *Óðinn's* faithful steed *Sleipnir*, or *Freyr's* incredible *Gullinbursti*. It might be difficult for us as modern humans to understand the depths of this intricate symbolism, and many things might evade our attention since we will try to rationalize and understand this through our standards, worldviews, knowledge, and experience⁵.

Humans depended on animals and they represented the animal towards other humans. We have many examples of this: we can find that names try to convey this idea, the number of names and compound names that evoke some animal sense is diverse and multitudinous. In this category of compound names, we also find many references between animals and warfare. Some warriors tried to represent the animal in battle, maybe trying to impress and strike fear in the hearts of their enemies, I am talking of the known and infamous *Berserker* and the *Úlfheðnar*, but these two are not the only names and aspects of animals in warfare. The idea is to study and analyse these names from and figure. And also, two perspectives, mainly philological and archaeological in the Scandinavian Iron Age.

Animals conveyed an idea to the societies of the Scandinavian Iron Age and then these humans tried to evoke this idea and sentiment into other humans, this is especially true in warfare as we can see it in the sagas and the archaeological artifacts, but, do they convey the same idea? And how does it change through time?

2. Sources, previous research, and methodology

If I were to take in account every representation of animals in the Scandinavian Iron age, from the written sources, runestones, bracteates and archaeological record this work would be a titanic task, it would take too many pages and too much time,

⁵ Rohrbach, L. (2009). *Der Tierische Blick : Mensch-Tier-Relationen in Der Sagaliteratur*, Bd. 43, XI, 382.

perhaps in an extremely comprehensive PhD. This is why I decided to leave out the runestones since while they feature animals in some such as the Tjängvide runestone (G 110) or the Rämsund carving (Sö 101) the number of animals is pretty limited, almost marginal. The total opposite issue applies to bracteates, type C bracteates usually present a quadruped animal with a human head, some have speculated that this could be *Óðinn*, some of these bracteates also have figures with traits that could be attributed to birds, since the animal figures of the bracteates are unidentifiable, we could suggest that these quadrupeds could be horses, and the “birds” could be *Huginn* and *Muninn*.

Due to the issues exposed, my criteria for choosing certain written sources or archaeological artifacts relies upon either the apparition of animals or humans with animal traits. Sagas do not lack the presence of animals, and I find that the perspective that they give the reader is personal, they intend to convey this idea of animal and not only this but also the underlying idea of the animal. What I mean is, that while the written sources carry a heavy influence regarding the point of view of the writer, there are also tones that the writer would unconsciously deliver, and of course not only for the animal but also for the humans that represent this animal.

In regards of archaeological sources, the idea is similar, animals are present in a myriad of artifacts, there are many types of representation. We can find from animal heads in a complex piece of art to a depiction of a warrior wearing a wolfskin. On another note it is not only important the representation itself but also where is the representation found, the most notable case is perhaps, Valsgärde, where several helmets with very rich iconography were found.

2.1 Written sources

While myths would take the most important role when talking about animals, I am genuinely more interested in another aspect, and this is the idea of the animals that humans project to other humans. We, as modern-day readers, are not able to comprehend to its full extension the implications of metaphors, stories, and

characters, this is why we have to be careful, critics, and cautious with our interpretations.

This is why the figures of the *berserkr* and the *Úlfheðnar* are amusing to me, I find them very complex and would like to learn and study how they evolve through time while addressing some parts of the discussion that have been carried out for long and must be addressed too. Perhaps a new perspective might help to clear up or tip the scale. Not only these two figures, but other animals like boars, birds, and snakes are also an important but less studied part of this imagery. While there are no known names for boar warriors, we know some military tactics that relate to this, such as the *svínfylking*⁶, or the word *jǫfurr* and its counterpart in Old English *eofor*.

There are many sources in Scandinavian literature that provide insight about animals in warfare so the main focus will be the bears, the wolves, and boars with some attention to other represented animals.

Of course, the most relevant in this sense is Snorri's *Skáldskaparmál*, where he lists names for many animals that will be relevant in this discussion, in this sense, those names will shed some light in our current topic. And also, on the later discussion for the *berserkr* Snorri give us his definition in *Heimskringla*. It is interesting to see what Snorri has to say in this regard.

Both being found in the skaldic and the saga tradition, bears and wolves have been related to the *berserkr* and *Úlfheðnar* which first appear in *Hrafnsmál*, written by Þorbjörn Hornklofi in which he commemorates the victory of Harald Fairhair ca. 872⁷.

⁶ Adams, Anthony & other Authors; History and culture. (2009). *Old English Newsletter*, 42(1), 169-183. Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.uio.no/docview/763679261?accountid=14699> (Accessed 07/02/2020)

⁷ See, Klaus von. 1961b. 'Studien zum *Haraldskvæði*'. 96-111

Another mention comes from the mouth of god Porr where he boasts from defeating *brúðir berserkia*⁸ in the *Hárbarðsljóð*. We must refer also to Snorri Sturluson in his Edda, specially *Skaldskaparmál*⁹, and *Heimskringla*¹⁰ where he talks about Óðinn's men behaviour and *berserksgangr*. This is something we will take a look too. Another mention that is very interesting is found in *Grettis saga*.

Some other aspects of animals and *berserkir* are also seen in the *Völsunga saga*¹¹, *Hrólf saga kraka*, *Egils saga*, and many more. Since the corpus is so vast and extensive not all could be included here, I tried to be concise and stay relevant to the discussion mentioned above. In some cases, we will have to reach for some texts that are outside of the Scandinavian corpus, namely for *Beowulf*¹², while being considered as Old English it is relevant for the discussion of the imagery of the boar because the myth is set in Scandinavia with Scandinavian characters.

2.2 Archaeological sources

First of all, what is regarded as animal art style must be explained, the pioneer who introduced this category is Bernhard Salin¹³, in this work, the main focus is placed on what is regarded as Style II, in this style animals are represented as stylized beings, distorting the animal¹⁴. As said before, archaeological sources are many and extensive and while in Scandinavia we find many interesting cases, it is also relevant towards the discussion to see parallels in some cases from the continent or on the island of Great Britain due to the migration of early germanic tribes. In this sense, parallels are not only found in art but also, for example in burial rites or architecture.

⁸ stanza 37, in <https://heimskringla.no/wiki/H%C3%A1rbarðsljóð> accessed 28/04/2020

⁹ Sturluson, Snorri. (2007). *The Younger Edda: Also Called Snorre's Edda or the Prose Edda*.

¹⁰ Sturluson, Snorri *Heimskringla; or, Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*. (1844).

¹¹ *The Story of the Volsungs (Volsunga Saga); with Excerpts from the Poetic Edda*. (n.d.). Project Gutenberg.

¹² *Beowulf*. (n.d.). Project Gutenberg.

¹³ Bernhard S, *Die Altgermanische Thierornamentik* (1935)

¹⁴ Wetch, R & Williams, C (2014) *Decoding Anglosaxon art*

<https://blog.britishmuseum.org/decoding-anglo-saxon-art/> at British Museum, accessed online, 17/03/2020

The intent is to locate these savage warriors in different artifacts. The ideal situation would be to find artifacts that belong to a bigger archaeological complex, as said, Valsgärde, Vendel and, Sutton Hoo are perfect in this sense. Some other artifacts will provide other perspectives even though they are singular finds such as the Golden Horns of Gallehus, or the Torslunda Plates.

The first main issue for some of the finds is the lack of data during the excavation especially, old excavations, nowadays the archaeological methodology is rigorous and well established. In the 1800s and early 1900s not so much, many artifacts were lost to poor excavation practices, and in some cases only the “oldest” artifacts that are, in essence, the artifacts that would lie in the bottom, there is no way to overcome this issue, as I am sure that excavations nowadays will lack some data that future archaeologist will consider vital.

In another sense, the main virtue and at the same time the main issue of the archaeological interpretation is that it is subjective. Therefore, I find reasonable to distance myself from the archaeological artifacts, establish general guidelines that will be addressed in the methodology and discussed there. At the same time, as modern-day scholars we have access to extensive databases, we can contact other professionals in a matter of seconds and consult digital books, reviews, and articles. This is important because we will find there are some parallels in societies that existed long ago and in distant places. Some of the ideas that will be treated in this thesis are proven to be part of a much older society, for example, the idea of the *berserkr*, as we will see is present in other societies.

In the archaeological sources animals, we see that animals are an intrinsic part of society and are represented very often. I find that the most truthful representations can be found in what are considered “royal mounds” since the interpretation of them rely on the interpretation of archaeologists. The findings of Valsgärde and Vendel are particularly relevant in this topic, also the Sutton Hoo burial mounds are impressive in this regard while being in England will see how the Angles and the Saxons

exported this from the continent and also shared the same or at least a very similar worldview as the peoples from Scandinavia.

Many other archaeological finds would help us in this regard, one example particularly interesting are the Torslunda Plates, the plates consist of four different bronze dies used to make impressions in sheets of metal with some very interesting figures for our topic. Another example is the sword sheath from Gutenstein found in Germany. As what happens before, the corpus is vast, and I had to be selective to choose the artifacts that are relevant to the discussion.

2.3 Previous research

We must refer also to the etymology of the word *berserkr*, this debate is very old, and no clear consensus has been given, even though my intention is not to solve this debate but to add my point to it. If philology has not been able to clarify this, maybe we can from an archaeological perspective or an interdisciplinary perspective. The analysis of artifacts can tip the balance towards one side or another.

The idea of *berserkr* as “bare shirt” was prevalent from medieval times until the nineteenth century until Sveinbjörn Egilsson leaned towards the meaning of bear shirt¹⁵. After this, Erik Noreen tilted the public opinion and interceded for the meaning bare shirt¹⁶. This schism lasts until today but scholars are still divided. Some scholars such as Otto Höfler¹⁷ were fervent defenders of “bearshirt” while others such as Hans Kuhn¹⁸, Karl von See¹⁹ and Kim McCone²⁰ leaned towards “bareshirt” as Noreen suggested previously. More recently Vincent Samson does a great job summarizing and contributing to the topic²¹

¹⁵ Liberman, Anatoly. *Berserks in History and legend* (2005)

¹⁶ Noreen, Erik “Ordet bäsärk” Arkiv for nordisk filologi 48 (1932) pp. 242 - 254

¹⁷ Höfler, Otto. Kultische geheimbünde der Germanen, vol 1 (Frankfurt am Maint Mortiz Diesteweg) (1934)

¹⁸ Kuhn, Hans “Kappar og berserkr” Skirnir 123 (1949)

¹⁹ von See, Klaus, “berserkr” Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung 17 (1961) pp. 125 - 135

²⁰ McCone, Kim “Hund, Wolf und Krieger bei den Indorgermanen,” in Studien zum indogermanischen Wortschatz. Wolfgang meid ed. Innsbrucker beitrage zur Sprachwissenschaft 52 (1987)

²¹ Samson, Vincent: Les berserkr: les guerriers-fauves dans la scandinavie ancien, de l’age de Vendel v au vikings (2011)

If we move on to archaeology, it is difficult to identify the figure of the berserk, since its iconography can be heavily discussed. In any case, the main archaeological artifacts and dig sites are the following. First Valsgårde in Sweden archaeological dig site, being the work of Greta Arwidsson²² the main sources of information. Next, is the Sutton Hoo archaeological digsite, in England an Anglo-Saxon cemetery mainly studied by Rupert-Mitford²³. Lotte Hedeager²⁴ analyzes the role of animals in the Iron Age societies from Scandinavia and Michael Speidel²⁵ argues that the *berserkgangr* comes from an Indo-European background and so does too the figure of the *Berserkr*. On another note, there was the hypothesis of the *berserkgangr* induced through the use of drugs, mostly *Amanita Muscaria* (also known as fly agaric), this was firstly proposed by Samuel Lorenzo Ödman²⁶ and later backed by Howard Fabing²⁷, Jenny Wade in her article²⁸ proves a strong point about the real effects that *Amanita Muscaria* would have and Fatur Karsten²⁹ points towards *Hyoscyamus niger* (commonly known as nightshade) which would fit the symptoms of *berserkgangr* although there is no evidence in the sources.

2.4 Methodology

The methodology for the philological aspect of the work is to establish traits that can be seen in the archaeological artifacts, while this can prove somewhat difficult, we will have to observe how the animal (and the representation of the animal) is treated

²² Arwidsson, G. Valsgarde 6, 8 & 7 (1942, 1954, 1977)

²³ Bruce-Mitford, Rupert The Sutton Hoo ship-burial, Volume 1 & 2: excavations, background, the ship, dating and Inventory. The Sutton Hoo ship-burial: reflections after thirty years. The Sutton Hoo ship-burial, Volume 3: Late Roman and Byzantine silver, hanging-bowls, drinking vessels, cauldrons and other containers, textiles, the lyre and pottery bottle and other items. I & II (1975, 1978, 1979, 1983a, 1983b)

²⁴ Hedeager Lotte, Iron age myth and materiality: An archaeology of Scandinavia AD. 400 - 1000 (2011)

²⁵ Speidel Michael "Berserks: A history of Indo-European "mad warriors" in Journal of World History, Volume 13, Number 2, Fall 2002 pp. 253 - 290 (2002)

²⁶ Wasson, R. G Soma: divine mushroom of immortality. (1968)

²⁷ Fabing, Howard "On Going Berserk: a neurochemical Inquiry" The scientific monthly 83 (1956) pp. 223 - 237

²⁸ Wade, Jenny "Going Berserk: battle trance and Ecstatic Holy Warriors in the European War Magic Tradition" in International Journal of Transpersonal Studies vol. 35 pp. 21 - 38 (2016)

²⁹ Fatur, Karsten "Sagas of the Solanaceae: Speculative ethnobotanical perspectives on the Norse berserkir" in Journal of Ethnopharmacology 244 (2019)

in the saga, and how the *berserkr* and *Úlfheðnar* are also presented. Regarding the boar the situation is similar, but the circumstances differ. Boars are mostly addressed in Beowulf, the name *Eofor* presents a metaphor that will be addressed, and it is also stated that the warriors bear boar-crested helmets.

The *berserkr* is a popular character in the sagas and there have been studies that provide a classification of different types, they are part of a lengthy written corpus as recurrent characters, in some cases, the *berserkr* are part of a group, while in others they act alone. Regarding the *Úlfheðnar*, this proves to be a bit more difficult, their appearance is more limited than the *berserkr*, but very interesting. Regarding the etymology of both words, there has been an already referred lengthy discussion regarding the origin of the word *berserkr* and the etymology of *Úlfheðnar* is much clearer and does not present any difficulties.

Regarding the archaeological aspect, the idea is similar. I will establish a guideline to identify the animals. It is known that forms of animals and humans in Germanic and Scandinavian Iron Age art is distorted and stylized. Nevertheless, there must be general traits that might allow the identification or at least, the suggestion of what animals are interpreted. The idea is to look for specific traits in the animals that would allow this, these could be but are not limited to limbs, ears, fangs, claws, position, size, and digitigrade or plantigrade. With these guidelines, I expect to be able to identify or categorize some of the animals that previously were either mistakenly categorized.

While taking an idea from the sagas and try to transfer it in the archaeological record can prove difficult, I am confident that this is possible. Still, some of these ideas may be not possible to be transferred.

First, we must assume that the span of the study in the philological aspect ranges from the early *Hrafnsmál* dates after the battle of Hrafnsmál, said battle occurs in 872 A.D. and the poem is to be dated shortly after. On the other hand, Snorri's, who wrote his *Edda* and *Heimskringla* lived in the twelfth century, this is a span of almost

three hundred years. In the archaeological aspect Valsgärde is used from the 6th century A.D to the 11th century A.D. Sutton Hoo on the other hand dates from the 6th century, maybe 7th. What I intend to convey is to make the reader understand that there is a considerable period.

With this approach, I pretend to give a general understanding of the role of animals in warfare other than direct use. The multidisciplinary approach aims to supply or contrast all the deficiencies presented in the text that may arise and contribute with another perspective rather than the strictly philological.

3. Beasts and animals

3.1 Introduction

There is a specific group of animals that deserve attention, while in *Skáldskaparmál* we find both tamed and untamed animals our attention will be driven to those that have a relationship with war. These beasts could be considered “beasts of war” due to their close relationship with the battlefield. Still, not all animals approach the battlefield in the same way as we will see. Of course, the quantity of animals that have an impact in any society is very vast, so there is the need to specify which animals are we talking about. I have labelled them as “beasts of war”. The reason for this is that these animals would be related closely with the battlefield and war, it is plausible that humans saw them and established a relationship between these two, and at some point, this animal appears in the battlefield not as a proper animal, but as a method to convey an idea, and there are different ways to transmit this idea.

For this, the focus of this section is to look at these animals from the myths and the sagas. To look at the animal as a singular individual that takes part in a living world and acts with it. These animals have relationships being them with people, other animals, and legendary beings. Perhaps when observing the animal as a part of the myth we will be able to observe some traits that, otherwise, would evade us.

Something interesting would be to see the role of the animals in the myths and how they interact with their surroundings. An interesting way to carry out this task is to see how animals are addressed. Interestingly, Snorri provides a list of names that prove to be very revealing³⁰ and will be addressed thoroughly in the next chapters. Naming something recognizes it inside our world, we cannot name what escapes from our cognizance. These names carry ideas already by themselves as we will see in the following sections, we know these names through the written sources were authors of old expressed themselves.

Another aspect that we have to take in account is how other people transmitted these ideas, not only by names but by other means and scenarios, I am personally interested in the scenario of war and battles, where the ability to transmit is limited but still carried out by humans. These humans tried to express themselves even in war through iconography, seeing one of these animals in the enemy's apparel would give an idea to the viewer and conveying emotions. Even though the appreciation of the iconography would be brief, the idea is already transmitted. Therefore, this material expression of the idea has to be clear and concise. Still, the method to study the transmission of an idea through personal gear is somewhat limited in the text with some exceptions, that is if we have a detailed explanation of this gear. This in part we will delve into in the idea of the beast.

3.2 Beasts of war

Animals have been present in all human history, from foes to friends. They have been hunted, domesticated, befriended, and used in war. There are incredibly famous records of animals used in war, one of them might be the famous elephants used by Hannibal Barca while crossing the Alps or dogs trained specifically for war or even horses³¹. This does not represent all the animals studied here but are proof of the intimate relationship between humans and animals.

³⁰ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 Edda, pp. 58 - 60

³¹ Lancel, Serge "Hannibal" (1999) p. 71

It is interesting that the animals represented in the Migration period art are not domesticated, the horse being the only exception, which is an interesting case that will be treated on its own. On the other hand, we can find bears, wolves, boars, birds of prey, and snakes³². All these animals share some traits between themselves but there are some other traits that could group these animals in the specific term of “Beasts of War”. First, the main common trait between all these animals is that they are present on the battlefield in some way or another. Second, most are carnivores (and in the case of the boar and the bear they are omnivores). They search and hunt for food, but this is not their only source of food, some of them are scavengers which means that they eat meat from corpses that are already dead.

These are mainly the wolves, the boars, and the birds of prey, these birds of prey are mainly the crows and eagles which are well-known scavengers. It is possible here where this title of “Beasts of war” is born? These scavengers would appear on the battlefield once the battle is over, ripping the flesh from the corpses and consuming it. It is not strange that such a relationship is born. If we take a look at the list of names we will find that terminology in *Skáldskaparmál* is clear: *holdblóði*, *undskornir*, *vitnir* (flesh-marker, storm-cleaver, watcher) are some examples that will be discussed and expanded upon further below. The exception to the terminology and the animal in which its relation might be not as clear as the other is the boar, but it is still related and will be explained further in chapters 3.2.1 and 5.3.

This is not the only reason that they are called Beasts of War. Another reason is the iconography from Scandinavian Iron Age, Germanic Iron Age, and the Viking Age art³³. At some point in history, the relationship with these animals and the battlefield is seen, depicted, and appropriated as “Beasts of war” in the imagery of Germanic and Scandinavian people. Now, we should proceed to an analysis of each one of these beasts.

³² Hedeager Lotte, *Iron age myth and materiality: An archaeology of Scandinavia AD. 400 - 1000* (2011) pp- 62 - 98

³³ View the representation of said animals in different archaeological sites such as Valsgärde, Sutton Hoo, Vendel, all of them interpreted as high-status burial sites.

3.2.1 The boar

Boars (*Sus scrofa*) are animals from the suid family, they are omnivores and, what concerns us, is that they are scavengers³⁴. It is known that boars and pigs will cannibalise even members of their own species³⁵. They are thoroughly and detailedly represented in Germanic and Scandinavian art, the elements that permit their identifications are usually the tusks and the crest of the boar.

Boars result in one of the most adaptable animals in Europe, their diet consists of almost anything that is edible and would explain their presence in all of Europe and other parts of the world. In some places, boars are considered pests and hunted to avoid damages to crops and properties.

The boar must have been considered a dangerous animal, perhaps the most notorious boar hunts are the Calydonian boar hunt³⁶ and the Erymanthian boar³⁷ hunt from Greek Mythology. The Calydonian boar was sent by Artemis as a symbol of vengeance because no sacrifices were paid to her that year. Many heroes were present during the hunt of the boar and it was ultimately killed with a spear by Meleager and the hide was given to the huntress Atalante, who was the first to wound the boar. Regarding the Erymanthian boar, it was the fourth labour of Heracles. In this myth the boar was driven to thick snow which slowed him down and captured, the boar was then brought to the presence of king Eurystheus. The king was so afraid of it that he asked Heracles to kill the boar.

³⁴ Marsan, Andrea; Mattioli, Stefano (2013). Il Cinghiale (in Italian). Il Piviere (collana Fauna selvatica. Biologia e gestione) pp. 70

³⁵ Jericho, K. W., & Church, T. L. (1972). Cannibalism in pigs. *The Canadian veterinary journal = La revue vétérinaire canadienne*, 13(7), 156–159.

³⁶ Delahunty, A., & Dignen, S. (2010). Calydonian boar hunt ([Gk Myth.]). *The Oxford Dictionary of Reference and Allusion*, The Oxford Dictionary of Reference and Allusion.

³⁷ Anonymous. (2007). *The Twelve Labours of Hercules, Son of Jupiter & Alcmena*. Project Gutenberg.

The boar in the Scandinavian mythos is not related to the hunt but attributed to the Vanir, gods of fertility and agriculture³⁸. There are also present some clues that relate the boar to the culture warrior. In archaeology, the boar is well attested in burials and related to weaponry.

In *Skáldskaparmál* the names of the boars do not relate to the scavenging nor the warfare aspect of the animal. For instance, the names used in *Skáldskaparmál* are *Gǫltr*, *valglitnir*, *gríss*, *Hrímnir*, *svíntarr*, *runi*, *Sæhrímnir*, *þǫrgr*, *tarr*, *valbassi*, *roðr*, *drittroði*, *Þór*, *vigrir*, *skunpr Þrándr*, *vaningi*³⁹ (translation for this being hog, slaughter-shiner, grice, Hrimnir, swine-tar, boar, Sæhrimir, barrow, shoat, slaughter-bear, dirt-treader, thriver, warlike, sknup, Thronð (triving), Van-Child⁴⁰). The nomenclature is clear, the boar is considered a dangerous enemy, we find references to the warring nature of the boar.

To understand this further we must look at the place the boar occupies within Old Norse Mythology. Maybe the most known boar in Old Norse Mythology is *Gullinbursti*⁴¹, the boar of Frey. Not only it is his boar but is made of gold and Frey's ride as it is stated in *Skáldskaparmál*:

[...] þá lagði *«Eitri»* svínskinn í aflinn ok bað blása *«Brokk»* ok létta eigi fyrr en at tœki þat ór aflinum er hann lagði í. En þegar er hann gekk ór smiðjunni en hinn blés, þá settisk fluga ein á hönd honum ok kroppaði, en hann blés sem áðr þar til er smiðrinn tók ór aflinum, ok var þat gǫltr ok var bur<st>in ór gulli⁴².

[...] Eitri put a pig's hide in the forge and told Brokk to blow and not stop until he took out of the forge what he had put in. And as soon as he left the workshop and the other was blowing, a fly settled on the latter's arm and nibbled, but he went on

³⁸ Munch, Peter Andreas: (1926) Norse mythology Legends of gods and heroes. Translation by Bernhard Sigurd pp. 292

³⁹ Sturluson, Snorri edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 132

⁴⁰ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 164

⁴¹ Richard Cleasby and Gudbrand Vigufsson, (1874) An Icelandic-English dictionary, Oxford. Digital edition consulted in 19/03/2020

⁴² Sturluson, Snorri edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 132

blowing as before until the smith took his work out of the forge and it was a boar and its bristles were of gold⁴³.

It is interesting to note that there is another boar in Old Norse Mythology worth mentioning; *Hildisvina* which translates as “Battle boar” which belongs to *Freya*. Both of them are members of the Vanir tribe, which are commonly associated with fertility and nature and both of them have the boar as one of their faithful companions but still, there is more to this issue and will be expanded upon further.

The boar is a revered animal, but still a source of food, this is seen during the verbal confrontation in *Gylfaginning* between King *Gylfi* and *Hárr*, *Jafnhárr*, and *Priði*, while they are discussing one of the topics is regarding the *Sæhrímnir*, the food consumed in *Valhöll*, the *Sæhrímnir* is said to be a boar. The topic of consuming a boar during a feast is not uncommon in the societies that descent from Germanic tradition, even nowadays a head of a boar is consumed during the winter solstice in some places as a kind of tradition, while in turn, it might have been a ritual during the Migration Period. On the other hand, the god *Freyr* is associated with peace and prosperity, sunshine, good weather, and harvest⁴⁴.

For this the boar is undeniably associated with *Freyr* and vice versa, thus, the boar carries some of *Freyr's* aspects. This is relevant to the question because *Freyr's* area of influence is not only what was mentioned above, he is also the mythic ruler of Uppsala after the death of his father *Njörðr*. In *Heimskringla*⁴⁵ Snorri tells us that he built a temple and established there his throne, beginning the rule of the *Ynglings*, being this the oldest dynasty in Scandinavia. It is not unusual to trace the ruling dynasties to gods. It was usually done in antiquity, many Greek *poleis* trace themselves to some degree to a god or demigod the founders of Rome are

⁴³ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp.pp. 137

⁴⁴ Munch, Peter Andreas: (1926) Norse mythology Legends of gods and heroes. Translation by Bernhard Sigurd pp. 15

⁴⁵ Sturluson, Snorri: *Heimskringla* translation by Finlay, A & Faulkes, A. 1951 Viking Society publications pp. 13

descendants from gods, Caesar and Augustus also were descendants from gods⁴⁶. Even after pagan religions were substituted with Christianity, many rulers claimed that it was god's will that they sat upon the throne.

While the veracity of the *Ynglinga saga* is debatable at best, it is not the matter that occupies us. Then we would have this relationship with *Freyr* being the catalyst: the boar is related to *Freyr* as we have seen, and *Freyr* legitimizes the rule of the early kings so it would not be strange that boar helmets appear in rich graves which make it relatable with high standing members of society.

In this case, we have a clear relationship between the boar transmitted both from written sources where it establishes a relationship between the boar and princes or leaders, more again the boar in archaeological context also provides a proof of a relationship between princes and boars. Even more, the boar was an animal that was present in the society with its strong presence in the warriors' attire, in the tactics used between warring armies, its relationship with the Vanir gods, and as a dangerous enemy as we can see from the names mentioned in *Skáldskaparmál*.

3.2.2 The wolf

The wolves (*Canis lupus lupus*) belong to the canid family, the more known subspecies of canis is the *canis lupus familiaris* or as we commonly know the dog. Probably, the first animals used for war were either horses or dogs⁴⁷. Interestingly, these both animals are still used today, but dogs have shown us a very wide range of uses, for example, being able to detect explosives or drugs, locate survivors, or as assistants during police arrests and have seen extensive use. The domestication of dogs began around 12000 years ago⁴⁸ and dogs had vastly different functions in human societies, and nowadays they are one of the most variable subspecies

⁴⁶ Brent, Allan *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order: Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early Christianity before the Age of Cyprian* 1999 pp. 33 - 38

⁴⁷ Hediger, Ryan: *Animals in war* in *The Palgrave International handbook of Animal Abuse studies* (2017) pp. 475 - 490

⁴⁸ Morey, D. F. (1994). *The early evolution of the domestic dog*

regarding sizes and features⁴⁹. Humans today are remarkably close with this animal of the canid family, but what interests us here is its wild, undomesticated counterpart.

After one thousand years it is evident that we have lost the idea that humans in the Scandinavian Iron Age had of the wolves, for humans today wolves are dangerous animals that live in the wilderness and most of us have not seen one, we cannot know what humans thought of the wolves back then so we have to make an effort and through the depictions that have reached our days, we can try.

Most carnivorous mammals hunt alone, but the interesting thing about wolves is that they can form packs to hunt and scavenge together⁵⁰. Sociality, not only as a hunting behaviour results in some benefits. It increases the chance of success during a hunt and provide care for younger members of the pack. In other cases, grey wolves will hunt alone, mostly when prey is abundant.

In both cases the wolf is a fearsome hunter, it displays intelligence, coordination, is a persistent hunter and they communicate with each other and they usually hunt at night. Interestingly, they are also one of the animals at the top of the food chain and have next to no predators (mostly bears).

I find this enough reason to explain the presence of the wolf in so many myths and the reason why warriors would like to be associated with this animal. But still, we will look at the depictions both in the philological and archaeological aspects. In *Skáldskaparmál* there are different names to design them: *Vargr, úlfr, Geri, vitnir, hninnir ok grádýri, Hati, Hróðvitnir, heiðingi, Freki, viðnir, Fenrir, hlébarðr, Gori, gildir, glammi, gylðir, ímarr, imr, egðir, skólkinni*. The translation is as follows respectively: Warg, wolf, Geri, watcher and grey beast, Hati, Hrodvitnir and heath-dweller, Freki and forest-dweller, Fenrir, leopard, Goti worthy, noisy, howler, fighter, dusky, dreadful and dark checked respectively⁵¹. To further illustrate the nature of the wolf this stanza is truly clear:

⁴⁹ Morey, D. F. (1992). *Size, shape and development in the evolution of the domestic dog* March 1992 Journal of Archaeological Science 19(2):181-204

⁵⁰ Morey, D. F. (1994)

⁵¹ Geir T. Zoëga. (2004). *A concise dictionary of Old Icelandic*. Mineola, N.Y: Dover Publications.

[...] *Heiðingja sleit hungri,
hárr gylðir naut sára,
granar rauð gramr á Fenri,
gekk úlfr í ben drekka*⁵².

The heath-dweller's hunger was sated,
the grey howler fed on wounds,
the prince reddened Fenrir's chops,
the wolf went to drink from wounds⁵³.

In this case, the name “watcher” suggests that it observes from the afar, waiting for the right moment to strike, studying its prey, and being a smart and patient hunter. For the “heath-dweller” it is implied that he lives in the forests, and anyone that enters might encounter it. Regarding the stanza, it is clear, it feeds on meat and seems to drink blood. This portrays the wolf as a dangerous and carnivore enemy and anyone who fails to defeat it will become its food. Even more, if we look at what the wolf is feasting upon we see it is no normal man, it is a prince, which instils even more fear to those who were listening and contributes to the figure of the wolf. Still, some of the names design it as worthy and a fighter. This would be traits that are desirable for a warrior.

If we speak of the figure of the wolf, there is a crucial figure that embodies this. It is no other than the *Fenrisúlfr. Fenrir*, as one of the children of *Loki* has a particularly important role in Old Norse Mythology. Since the gods knew about the deeds that the children of *Loki* would carry out, they decided to take measures against them. After being chained Fenrir, he snapped the first one, *Leyding*, easily. The gods made a second one, stronger and called it *Drómi* with some more difficulties than the last one, *Fenrir* also broke this one. They asked the dwarves to construct the strongest chain of all and the dwarves complied. They built *Gleipnir*, this one was special as it

⁵² Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 88

⁵³ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 58

was not made from common materials, it is made from magic elements, the sound of a cat's foot, the beard of a woman, the roots of the mountain, the sinews of a bear, the breath of a fish and the spittle of a bird. Even though the chain was as thin as silk but stronger than any iron chain it managed to chain down *Fenrir*. But before being chained Fenrir asked for someone to put one of their hands in their mouth as a token of good faith, *Týr* complied and when *Fenrir* saw he was unable to free himself he bit *Týr's* hand and tore it off⁵⁴.

During *Ragnarøk*, he will be the slayer of the *Alfǫðr*, even though he will fall shortly after, in the hands of *Viðarr*, the deed is prophesized and will be done. In addition, Fenrir's sons will end up swallowing the Sun and the Moon.

The wolf is also present in the battlefield itself if we look at the *Úlfheðnar* which etymologically means "wolf coat" or "wolf fur"⁵⁵. They were on par with the berserk, this meaning that they were elite troops⁵⁶. The *Úlfheðnar* were elite warriors in the army of Harald Fairhair. The word *Úlfheðinn* is composed of two substantives *úlfr* which designates the animal aspect of these warriors and *heðinn*. The word *Úlfheðnar* is used as a name and as an anthroponym, the sources are unable to determine which one precedes which⁵⁷.

3.2.3 The bear

The bear is maybe the most interesting animal that has a presence in the Germanic and Scandinavian societies for the reasons we will see in the following chapters. The Eurasian bear is, since the Pleistocene extinction (or Quaternary extinction event), the largest carnivore in the continental Europe⁵⁸ and the "bear cult" is very well

⁵⁴ Sturluson, Snorri, translated by A. Faulkes, 1995 Edda, pp. 27 - 29

⁵⁵ Müller, G. (1967). Zum Namen Wolfhetan und seinen Verwandten, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 1, 200-212

⁵⁶ Hedeager Lotte, Iron age myth and materiality: An archaeology of Scandinavia AD. 400 - 1000 (2011) pp- 73

⁵⁷ Samson, Vincent Les berserkir: les guerriers-fauves dans la scandinavie ancien, de l'age de Vendel au vikings (2011) pp. 62 - 66

⁵⁸ Sommer, R. S.; N. Benecke. 2005. "The recolonization of Europe by brown bears *Ursus arctos* Linnaeus, 1758 after the Last Glacial Maximum". *Mammal Review* 35:2:156-164

known in some places of the world, mostly in the north of Eurasia and has been proposed as a part of a religion in the Paleolithic⁵⁹, especially in Finland, this cult was very known⁶⁰.

Interestingly, the presence of the bear is extremely limited in the mythos of the Scandinavian Iron Age, the most notorious mention in the sagas is the bear *hammrammr* of Bödvar Bjarki. (which will be discussed in detail in chapter 4.1.4). Besides this, there are no other bears in the sagas. Interestingly, we face the same issue when looking at the bear from the archaeological perspective, simply put, the presence of the bear is extremely limited.

In the case that we choose to read *berserkr* as a “bear warrior”, then we face a radical change since the figure of the *berserkr* is extremely common, and in this regard would be satisfactory, still, this would not explain why the bear is not present in the archaeological depictions.

Its names reflect other aspects of the animal such as physical traits or behaviour, in *Skaldskaparmál* the list is as follows.

*Björn, fetviðnir, húnn, vetriliði, bersi, fress, íugtanni, ifjungr, glúmr, jølfuðr, vilskarpr, bera, jórekr, riti, frekr, blómr, ysjungr*⁶¹ translation of these names is as follows bear, forest-walker, cub, winter-survivor, grizzly, snarler, greedy-tooth, hooded one, dark one, yellow-bum, shrivelled-gut, she-bear, lorek, scratcher, greedy one, mighty one, and bustler⁶² respectively.

As we can see there is no name referring to his feral and predatory nature. Maybe the only name that could be interpreted as such could be “*blómr*”, but this seems to

⁵⁹ Wunn, I. (2001) *Cave bear Worship in the Paelolithic*, Cadernos Lab. Xeoloxico de Laxe, vol 26 pp. 457 - 463

⁶⁰ Bonser W (2012) "The Mythology of the Kalevala, with Notes on Bear-Worship Among the Finns.", p. 344

⁶¹ Sturluson, Snorri edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skaldskaparmál*, pp. 88

⁶² Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 58

refer to the bear size and power rather than making a direct connection between battle, blood, or predatory traits such as before.

Even though the bear has such a strong presence in many cultures we find a dichotomy, the representations of bears in Scandinavian and Germanic iconography are very limited if there are present at all. Lotte Hedeager⁶³ enumerates the possible representations of bears and the lack of representation for such animals is unsatisfactory. As Hedeager says, there might be a warrior-bear in the Oseberg textiles, a volva-stick, the Toroslunda plates, a helmet plate from Valsgärde 7, and a lance in Vendel 12⁶⁴.

This amounts for a total of five representations of the bear, which is, at least, curious. Why is the bear, the biggest carnivore of the northern hemisphere so underrepresented? In the shamanistic cultures that worship the bear, there are many taboos associated with it⁶⁵, perhaps this is also the case. The lack of consistency indicates that there is something amiss, if it was taboo why are there representations of it in the first place?

If we look at them, these representations can be deceitful the clearest representation of a bear comes from the Valsgarde 7 plate helmet, and even this one could be contested due to the poor state of the helmet. But the bear was still present in society, Bödvar Bjarki might be a particularly good example of this, his name reminisces the bear but there is a stronger point. In *Hrólf kraka saga*, he is in a kind of trance and there is a description of a bear fighting in his place, when he wakes up, the bear has already disappeared. There are also many personal names in the literary corpus that refer to the bear (see below), so we now face a dichotomy.

⁶³ Hedeager Lotte, *Iron age myth and materiality: An archaeology of Scandinavia AD. 400 - 1000* (2011) pp - 77

⁶⁴ Hedeager, L. (2011) "*Iron age myth and materiality: An archaeology of Scandinavia AD. 400 - 1000*" pp- 62 - 98

⁶⁵ Petrov, A. (1989). The Bear Taboo in Even Language and Folklore. *Études/Inuit/Studies*, 13(1), 131-133. from www.jstor.org/stable/42869655

There are no representations of bears, but they are explicitly referred, they are present in the names of individuals and even in the *fygla* of some characters. So, there is the possibility of the taboo but aimed only at representations, but this hypothesis is weak. The other possibility would be that there are little, or no representations of bears because they have not survived or have not been found. Thus, the bear has little to no relation to the battlefield.

3.2.4 The bird of prey

While birds of prey comprise a large group, there are two types of birds that will be relevant but due to their nature and the impossibility to identify them in iconography, they are grouped in this larger group. These two birds are the Raven and the Eagle. The exact species of crow would depend on the country the two main subspecies of Europe are the *Corvus cornix*, commonly known as hooded crow while the other is the *Corvus corone* its common name being carrion crow. In Scandinavia, the hooded crow is the most common one while in the continent is the carrion crow. In the case of the eagles, the species that can be found in Europe are the White-tailed eagle and the Golden eagle.

Birds of prey are very present in the Scandinavian mythos and appear thoroughly represented. If we would consider the warriors depicted with boars in their helmets as “boar warriors” we should also consider the warriors with birds in their helmets as “bird warriors”. As said before, it would be impossible to determine what kind of bird is the one represented in helmets and other archaeological artifacts.

Interestingly, this is not the only depiction of birds of prey, there are also represented as flying birds in some other helmet dies or bracteates. Also, the birds from the corvid family are extremely intelligent, maybe this could relate to the names that the companions of Óðinn receive. The names that the birds receive are a symptom of this relationship with the deceased and for them, the battlefield is a place where they can feed.

Both birds are present in Scandinavian Mythology, but the crows comply with their duty while the role for the eagle is less important. The ravens are the companions of Óðinn, both *Huginn* and *Muninn* race the world every day and come back at night to tell the news to the *Alfǫðr*, their names mean Thought and Memory respectively⁶⁶. Even though, these are not the only names for the crows, some of the names are: *borginmóði*, *árflognir*, *ártali* and the more relevant to us *holdbloði*⁶⁷, the translation of the names are as follows: secure-mood, early-flier, year-counter and flesh-marker⁶⁸.

Why the name that is important regarding the topic issued here is clear, *holdbloði* or “flesh-marker” is a direct reference to the scavenging character of these birds.

The eagle has a secondary role in the Old Norse Mythology, even though there is a famous eagle no name is provided, this eagle sits at the top of Yggdrasil and the falcon *Veðrfǫlnir* sits between its eyes. This eagle spends its days arguing with *Niðhǫggr*, who dwells in the bottom of the ash, and *Ratatoskr* is the one who carries the message between one and other. In *Skáldskaparmál*, some of the names for the eagles are *gemlir*, *hreggskornir*, *egðir*, *ginnarr*, *undskornir*, and *gallópnir*⁶⁹. The translation is as follows: old-one, storm-cleaver, edged one, deluder, wound-cleaver, and shrill-crier⁷⁰ respectively. As again, there is one that denotes the aspect that we are looking for: *undskornir* in this sense the eagle feasts on carcasses opened wounds.

Birds of prey in the Iron Age are a quite common motif, they appear in helmets, belt-buckles, shield-mounts, and bracteates. But if there is a depiction that stands out it is the rider with two birds on each side. In some representations, the rider also has a bird depicted on its helmet and in other some there is also a snake. The interpretation of this figure is difficult, some have theorized that it is Óðinn with *Hugin* and *Munnin*.

⁶⁶ Munch, Peter Andreas: (1926) Norse mythology Legends of gods and heroes. Translation by Bernhard Sigurd pp. 7 - 8

⁶⁷ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 91

⁶⁸ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 138

⁶⁹ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 90

⁷⁰ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 138

Regarding the bracteate representation, it is the most common one, the so-called C-Bracteates show usually either a human figure riding an animal or just a head riding an animal⁷¹. Even though this is the main motif, there are also some variations to it. Some depict the animal being ridden with antlers, others depict flying birds, others depict a bird that is intertwined with the hair of the human figure.

All this iconography adjusts with *Óðinn's* attributes except for the horse, while in the depiction he rides a horse it is not the eight-legged horse *Sleipnir*. We could argue if it is, in fact, *Óðinn* through the crows and the spear which are vital attributes of *Óðinn*. Arguably, the bird-helmet could be a reference to his titles as Raven-god or Crow-god, another possibility is a reference to his stance as war or victory god while his crows guide him to the battlefield so he can claim the dead warriors for himself. while the serpent can be another of his aspects as using many disguises as it is said in the Sagas.

This would prove that *Óðinn* and the birds of prey share a strong connection with the battlefield and would make sense the classification as “beasts of war”, the birds accompany *Óðinn* in some aspects of him. First as a god of victory and battle *Sigrhofundr* and *Sigrúnnr* (Victory finder and Victory tree), *Böðgæðir*, *Hildolfr* *Hjaldrgegnir* *Hjaldrgoð*, (Battle enhancer, battle wolf, engager of battle and lastly, the god of battle. And with battles and victory come those who died, the slain: *Valtýr*, *Valkjosandi*, and *Valþognir* (God of the slain, chooser of the slain and Slain receiver) referemces to the relationship he has with the humans that have died. *Hrafnfreistuðr* and *Goði hrafnbólts* (raven-tester and priest of the raven offering) reference his relationship with these animals which are tied tightly with the battlefield. Interestingly no name that appears to be a reference to the eagle, animal that

⁷¹ Larsen, L., Olsen, R., Kjærum, P., Margrethe 2, & Det kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab. (1990). *Oldtidens ansigt : Til Hendes Majestæt Dronning Margrethe II 16. april 1990 = Faces of the past*. København: Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab.

already has little representation in the myths⁷². Therefore, I would lean towards the explanation of the raven as a companion of those figures of the riders.

The warriors with the birds in their helmet can be trying to show some relationship with the more bloody names for these birds of prey, or with the same intent that the boar helmet, to try to evoke these attributes of *Óðinn* related to the war and victory. The helmets that depict this iconography, which most of them come from barrows in Sweden, have been deemed as high-status barrows. In this case, they could also try to evoke the aspect of *Óðinn* as a ruler.

3.2.5 The serpent

The serpent is not a stranger to Germanic mythology with *Jormungandr*, *Níðhoggr* *Fáfnir* being the most known but has also a wide range of wyrms and other serpents. There is one thing I would like to point out.

The quantity of serpents that appear in the Scandinavian myths is limited but it contrasts with its importance. We could consider *Jormungandr* as one of the most vicious beings in the myths and is tied to the god *Þórr*. This serpent, also called the World Serpent, is said to be able to wrap itself around the world and to bite its tail, *Jormungandr* is one of the children of *Loki*, along with its siblings *Fenrir* and *Hel*.

We will go through the myths that the world serpent appears quickly to consider it further. First, it appears in the myth of *Þórr* and *Útgarda-Loki*, in which *Þórr* is asked to carry out a set of trials imposed by the giant *Útgarda-Loki*, one of them is to lift a cat. *Þórr* tries to comply but is only able to arch its back and lift one of the paws. Later, when all the deception is lifted and explained we are told that *Þórr* was able to lift the world serpent to the point where it almost touched the sky⁷³.

⁷² Munch, Peter Andreas: (1926) Norse mythology Legends of gods and heroes. Translation by Bernhard Sigurd pp.7

⁷³ Sturluson, Snorri, *Edda* edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 46

In the next myth, *Þórr* goes fishing with the giant Hymir. And when they are at open sea, *Þórr* ties an ox head to the line and casts it out to the sea and Jörmungandr bites. When the serpent rises from the sea the giant panics and cuts out the line, releasing the snake at the moment that *Þórr* was about to strike it down with its hammer⁷⁴, interestingly, this also appears in Bragi's *Ragnarsdrápa* which has been dated in the mid-late Ninth Century^{75 76}.

The last myth is part of the events of the *Ragnarøkkr*, the serpent joins the forces of Muspelheim in their siege of *Asgarðr*. The fearsome serpent will combat against *Þórr*. The mighty God will emerge victorious, only to die shortly after^{77 78}.

What we can interpret from these myths is that, as opposed to its brother Fenrir, the snake is a completely deadly enemy, we are not told of any interchange of words between *Þórr* and the serpent, as the wolf Fenrir. Snakes also appear in some of the helmet dies and bracteate, where they accompany some of the warriors or riders as we will see. This could suggest that there are other dimensions and facet of the snake that we do not know.

In *Skáldskaparmál*, the names are: *dreki, Fáfnir, Jörmungandr, naðr, Níðhoggr, linnr, naðra, Góinn, Móinn, Grafvitnir, Grábakr, ófnir, sváfnir, grímr*⁷⁹ Translation is as follows: dragon, Fafnir, Iormungand, adder, Nidhogg, snake, viper, Goin, Moin, Grafvitnir, Grabak, Ofnirm Svafnir, masked one. The most interesting names that are listed for snakes is *naðr* which its translation would be "adder", this word when found in dative with *binda* the translation for it is "bind, tie up" this could make a case for example with gear or ornaments that are bound together, for example, the Sutton Hoo shoulder-clasps⁸⁰. Some examples of it can be found in the Sutton Hoo belt

⁷⁴ Sturluson, Snorri, *Edda* edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 47

⁷⁵ *Ragnarsdrápa* in [https://heimskringla.no/wiki/Ragnarsdr%C3%A1pa_\(B1\)](https://heimskringla.no/wiki/Ragnarsdr%C3%A1pa_(B1)) accessed 30/04/2020

⁷⁶ Acker, P, & Larrington, C. (2002). "Þórr's Fishing Expedition" [Hymiskviða] [tr. Kirsten Williams]. In *the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Mythology* (pp. 137-156). Routledge.

⁷⁷ Sturluson, Snorri, *Edda* edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 51

⁷⁸ *Völuspá* in <https://heimskringla.no/wiki/V%C3%B6lusp%C3%A1> accessed 04/05/2020

⁷⁹ Sturluson, Snorri, *Edda* edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 90

⁸⁰ See https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1939-1010-4-a from the British Museum, accessed 06/03/2020

buckle⁸¹ as well, which has snakes depicted and they are interwoven between themselves.

But this motive is found in other pieces such as a Merovingian girdle-hanger from the 7th century⁸², or a Merovingian belt buckle also from the 7th century⁸³. The shared trait between these is that they are not clothes, but act as a union nexus between pieces of clothing. Coming back to the pin, while the head itself is not indicative of any animal if the pin and the chain are addressed together, it would resemble a snake, being the top of the pin the head and having the chain for the body.

Another interesting point is that the snake is also referred to as *grímr* which translates as “masked one” and, again the serpent is also found in the Sutton Hoo helmet, making it the central piece protecting the nose and the central piece crowning the helm. It is also interesting that in the Coppergate helm there is a similar detail. The serpent comes from the top of the helmet with its head reaching the central part of the helmet, while in the nose piece there are also two serpent-like beasts that get interlined and end up merging into one. Lastly, the zoomorphic borders have snakes represented that they seem to eat or bite themselves. Perhaps, the snake and the dragon besides being a fearsome enemy evokes some sense of danger and nobility.

3.2.6 The horse

Horses provide an interestingly different perspective which forces us to look at them with different eyes. The main difference between the horses and the other animals mentioned before is simple but clear, it does not feed on meat and is not a predator. The reason that the horse is presented here is because of its role. Horses have been

⁸¹ See

https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=87202&partId=1 from the British Museum, Accessed 05/03/2020

⁸² See

https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=89445&partId=1&school=1530&page=1 from the British Museum, London Accessed 05/03/2020

⁸³ See <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O112685/belt-buckle-unknown/> from the Victoria Albert Museum, West London, Accessed 05/03/2020

part of human history since the Palaeolithic firstly in cave pictures in which they were hunted for food. When horses were domesticated some other roles were added besides providing food, humans learned that horses could be ridden and used for traction.

On the other hand, have been and are still used today in some places. Generally, the use of horses and cavalry corps has seen a decline due to armoured motorized vehicles, but horses revolutionized warfare centuries ago.

The first revolution that horses contributed to warfare was the creation of cavalry, with being able to move faster and gain momentum horses were a force to be reckoned in the battlefield. Still there are more additions to warfare thanks to horses, another one is the use of chariots, which saw extensive use in antiquity, especially in Egypt. The most notable example of this is the Battle of Kadesh in 1274 b. C, where the Pharaoh Ramses II bested the Hittite king Muwatalli II in battle thanks to the chariots⁸⁴. In the 9th in the Neo-Assyrian empire, we see the next step of this revolution, which is mounted archers⁸⁵. This new advance allowed the use of hit and run tactics and skirmishing, the main problem with this tactic is that it relies heavily on the terrain.

In the early middle ages, there was still another revolution thanks to the horse, this is the Cataphract, a specialized and armoured heavy cavalry. Still, the first known cataphracts come from the Iranians approximately around the 100 b. C, they extended to the roman empire and saw extensive use by the Byzantine Empire⁸⁶.

It is interesting to see that a single animal had such a heavy influence in human warfare, this is why I decided to identify them as “beasts of war”. In the period that

⁸⁴ Ralby, A (2013). "Hatti and Mitanni, 18th–12th Centuries BCE: A Kingdom Found". *Atlas of Military History*. Parragon. pp. 52–53

⁸⁵ Anthony, D. W. and Brown D. "The Secondary Products Revolution, Horse-Riding, and Mounted Warfare." *Journal of World Prehistory* 24 (2011): 131-160.

⁸⁶ Bucy, P (2014) *The Alexiad of Anna Komnene: Artistic Strategy in the Making of a Myth* pp. 149 - 150

concerns us, the use of the horse is limited, they do not partake much in sagas and myths, but we observe that they are important thanks to the names listed by Snorri.

The use of the horse in the battlefield by the Scandinavian Iron Age warrior and the raiders from the Viking age is limited, this might have been attributed to the nature of raids, and they would have not been able to take horses with them during maritime navigation. Still, the horse is present in burials, sacrifices, and myth.

In any case, horses were signal of status, it is well attested in Antiquity after the Solonian Constitution the *Hippeis*⁸⁷ were established as a social class and were expected to be part of the citizen cavalry. In Rome. we find a parallel in the *Equites*⁸⁸.

It is not strange then, for horses to be present in society as part of belongings to high-status individuals. Also, the most interesting animal in *Skáldskaparmál* is the horse for the sole reason that is the only animal that is not referred with common names, every name is the proper name for a horse as we can see: “*Hrafn, Sleipnir, Valr, Léttfeti, Tjaldari, Gulltoppr, Goti, Sóta, Mór, Lungr, Mari, Viggr, Stúfr, Blakkr, Silfrtoppr, Sinir, Fáks, Gullfaxi, Jór, Blóðughófa, Gils, Falhófnir, Glær, Skeiðbrimir, Gyllis, Dröslí, Móðnir, Hjálmpér, Skævaði, Vali, Stúfi, Mói, Vakri, Hrafn, Kerti, Glaumi, Slungni, Holkvir, Følkvir, Gota, Grana, Árvakr, Alsviðr, Hrímfaxi, Fjörsvartnir, Skinfaxi (eða Glaðr)*. In English translations such as Faulkes⁸⁹, most of the names are not translated but only anglicized. Here are the names as follows: Hrafn, Sleipnir, Val, Lettfeti, Tjaldari, Gulltopp, Goti, Soti, Mur, Lung, Vigg, Stuf, Blakk, Silfrtiopp, Sinir, Fak, Gullfaxi, Ior, Blodughofi, Gils, Falhofnir, Glær, Skeidbrimir, Gyllir, Drosul, Modnir, Hialmther, Skævad, Val, Stuf, Mor, Vakr, Hrafn, Kort, Glaum, Slungnir, Holkvir, Folkvir, Goti, Grani, Arvak, Alsvinn, Hrimfaxi, Fiorsvartnir, Skinfaxi, Glad.

This is remarkably interesting, for each horse to have a proper name means that there is a personal relationship with its owner, the name refers to characteristics of

⁸⁷ Stanton, G. R. *Athenian Politics c. 800–500 BC: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, London (1990), p. 71, n. 6.

⁸⁸ Cornell, T. J. (1995): *The Beginnings of Rome* pp. 380

⁸⁹ Sturluson, Snorri, translated by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 136 - 137

the horse, such as behaviour, or physical appearance. This leads to the need to investigate further the relationship between the human and the horse. Horse and human unite in the figure of the rider and the incidence that this human has in the battlefield multiplies, as said before the roles that cavalry can perform are varied and everyone has a strong influence on the battlefield even though we know such cavalry was very limited in the Viking Age.

In mythology the horse is always subjected to a rider, maybe the most known horse is the steed of *Óðinn*, *Sleipnir*. The representation of *Óðinn* riding his steed is quite common in the iconography. We can find this representation from the Tjängvide runestone and in the Ardre VIII runestone but also in bracteates and helmets, making it a wide representation.

The horse as an animal is present in many myths, usually as a companion or a vital tool. One example could be the building of *Asgarðr*'s walls, where an unnamed builder offers to establish *Asgarðr*'s walls in exchange for *Freya*'s hand in marriage, the Sun and the Moon. After some debate, they establish that this must be done in one winter, and the builder requests to use his horse *Svaðilfari*. The horse role in the building is crucial, he carries enormous rocks and is impossibly strong and the gods soon realize their mistake. The gods meet and decided that *Loki* was at fault and that he must amend his actions, *Loki* takes the form of a mare and seduces the builder's horse, then the gods realize that the builder is a frost giant and proceed to kill him. However, *Loki* is pregnant and gives birth to a horse with eight legs called *Sleipnir* which is then gifted to *Óðinn*⁹⁰, he used *Sleipnir* extensively allowing him and *Hérmoðr* to travel far away, even to *Hel* itself⁹¹.

The role of horses in myths seems to be somewhat secondary, some examples could be *Grani* the horse of *Sigurð*, the relationship between both seems to be remarkably close, as when *Sigurð* dies *Grani* acknowledges his death. Some play a role in the cosmology, *Skinfaxi* and *Hrímfaxi* as the horse of *Dagr* and *Nótt*

⁹⁰ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 35 - 36

⁹¹ Sturluson, Snorri, edited by A. Faulkes, 1995 *Edda*, pp. 49

respectively, *Árkvakr* and *Alsviðr* who pull the chariot of *Sól*. The horse of *Freyr*, *Blóðughófi*, who presumably *Skírnir* rides to *Jotunheim*. But this is not all when *Baldr* is killed by *Höðr*, his horse is put in the pyre with his other possessions.

It is interesting to note that even though *Óðinn* and *Freyr* have horses, other gods have other kinds of animals that pull their chariots or ride. *Þórr*'s chariot is pulled by rides two goats: *Tanngrisnir* and *Tanngrjóstr*⁹² that he eats and resurrects using his powers. *Freyja*'s chariot is pulled by two cats⁹³. In conclusion, the horse is not a fearsome animal that instils fear in the heart of the enemies, it is a loyal companion, a friend to heroes and gods but still has a role in the battle even though its use dwindles.

4. Beastly warriors

This aspect of the savage warriors presents a variety that proves to be interesting. As said before, if we were to classify some of the warriors that appear in the Scandinavian and Germanic Iron Age art, we should classify them as boar and bird warriors, there is no written evidence of the last group but they appear in the archaeological record and then we still have the figure of the *Úlfhéðinn*, which does not have an animal crested helmet, but its relationship with the wolf they represent is made very clear.

In this section, we will explore and go deeper regarding these kinds of warrior focusing mostly in the discussion of the *berserkr* as a presumed bear warrior, the *Úlfheðnar*, and the mentioned bird and boar warriors. The overall idea is to provide a context on these warriors focusing mostly in the *berserk*, to try to contribute to the ongoing discussion and identifying the *Úlfheðnar* and other warriors.

⁹² Munch, Peter Andreas: (1926) Norse mythology Legends of gods and heroes. Translation by Bernhard Sigurd pp. 11

⁹³ Munch, Peter Andreas: (1926) Norse mythology Legends of gods and heroes. Translation by Bernhard Sigurd pp. 27

Sadly, for the bird crested warriors, there is no mention of this type of helmet contrary to the boar crested helmet which is present in the literary corpus. This gives us only an archaeological perspective.

Since I would like to provide a concrete analysis of the figure of the *berserk*, *úlfhéðinn* and other beastly warriors I will approach them firstly from the sagas, taking a look at the overall context regarding the different scenarios they appear and the etymology of the words for these savage warriors. The archaeological perspective will be approached in the following section of the work.

The rich variety of scenarios provide with different figures of the berserk as was studied by Beard⁹⁴ and Dale⁹⁵, in this sense I would like to be able to identify some of this evolution on another figure if possible, but perhaps to the low number of cases, this can will prove difficult. Still, the savage warriors are a vital part of the imagery of the Viking Age.

The analysis comes also from three points of view, first of all, the philological study going back to the real meaning of the word, the intended meaning and its representations in archaeological records, and a small approach to the etymology of the words.

The *berserkr* is perhaps one of the most prominent figures in Scandinavian literature, but also present in many modern books, series, films, and games. Nevertheless, after a lengthy discussion, scholars have not reached a clear consensus on the topic of the meaning of the word, *berserkr* also brings terms that need to be explained, such as *berserkr gang* or *Úlfheðnar*. I do not intend to solve this issue, but to share my opinion coming from a different perspective by providing an analysis of the context in which the word *berserk* is presented.

⁹⁴ Beard, D. 1980 *The Berserker in Icelandic Literature* pp. 101 - 102

⁹⁵ Dale, T. *Berserker a reexamination of the phenomenon in literature and life*. 2014 University of Nottingham

There are several issues regarding berserk figure, the first, mentioned before is the etymology of the word, mainly in the *ber- some scholars abide for “bare” while others for “bear” the consensus for *-serkr being “shirt” is pretty clear. The second one is the amount of information regarding the berserk figure, we have many sources, from Skaldic poetry to Snorri’s Edda, the third issue is that this information differs one from another. Sometimes the berserk is portrayed as a savage warrior and other times as a coordinated elite warrior.

We have to keep in mind that the first-mentioned reference to the berserkr comes from skaldic poetry, a poem that has been attributed to *Þorbjörn Hornklofi* as a commemoration of the victory of the king Harald Harfagr at the Hafrsfjord, the *Hrafnsmál* or sometimes also called *Haraldskvaedi*. Most surely, Snorri’s mention of the berserk figure in the Edda is what influenced modern-day depictions, but we must take a look at them without prejudices.

Another aspect of the berserk figure, perhaps a little less known in the general public is the *Úlfheðnar*, which is also mentioned in *Hrafnsmál*. The figure of the *Úlfheðnar* is a little more complicated than the berserk but we will look. In any case, both *berserkr* and *Úlfheðinn*, fall into the figure of the “savage warrior”. This figure is well testified in the background of Indo-European culture, can be traced in texts and archaeology. In this sense, the article of Michael Speidel⁹⁶ is extremely useful as he traces them through many societies from the past and provides general traits that can be helpful in our task. In conclusion, the beast of war is important and the *berserkr* and *Úlfheðnar* are the embodiment of these beasts

In regard to the *Svinfylking*, the term eofor and the boar imagery in warriors we can observe it on the Old English poem Beowulf and will be discussed in detail further below.

⁹⁶ Speidel, Michael P. “Berserks: A History of Indo-European ‘Mad Warriors.’” *Journal of World History*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2002, pp. 253–290. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20078974

4.1 Sources and analysis for the berserk, Úlfhéðnar and other savage warriors

As said before, the existing number of sources for the *berserkir* is extensive. But if we move the focus of the study towards other beastly warriors, we will see ourselves limited. *Úlfhéðnar* appear in *Hrafnsmál*, which is also the first mention of the *berserkir*, but besides this, they seem to disappear from the written sources in favour of the “*berserkr*” as we will see.

Regarding the mentioned boar and bird warriors, we will see that there is also a lack of written corpus in which we can work with. The most important reference to these boar warriors is in *Beowulf*, where there are several mentions to their attire and specifically to the boar crested helmets and guard-cheeks. Regarding the so-called “bird warriors” there are no mention nor any source that would give us insight in the case and since there is no term for these, we cannot take an etymological approach to the situation.

Still, there are some clues that could be helpful, such as the mentioned study of the Old English word *eofor* and the Old Norse counterpart *jǫfurr* which will be discussed in detail in chapter 4.4. This provides us a different perspective from the etymological point of view since we will see what do these terms refer to and how they impact this research. After this analysis, we might be able to draw some conclusion regarding the absence of the other savage warriors other than the *berserkr*.

Due to the reasons mentioned before, the *berserkr* is the centre of the focus in this chapter. Still we will see how he acts and establishes relationships, which roles does it perform, and be able to provide a general context and overview that will help us relate to other savage warriors and, perhaps, provide some clues to the ones we lack more information about. The general figure of the berserk is important, but the ramifications that it carries within its figure are even more vital for the research.

4.1.1 Hrafnsmál

As said before, the sources for the berserk and Úlfheðnar are many. It is a relevant figure throughout the Scandinavian literature but is represented to a lesser extent. First, we find the first mention of both in *Hrafnsmál* (or *Haraldskvæði*). In this poem, Þorbjörn Hornklofi commemorates the victory of Harald Fairhair. The poem has been dated to the 9th century, this would make Þorbjörn Hornklofi, Harald Fairhair, the victory at the battle of Hafrsfjord and the *berserkir* contemporaries.

‘Hlaðnir vöru þeir hǫlða ok hvíttra skjalda,
vígra vestrænna ok valskra sverða.
Grenjuðu berserkir; guðr vas þeim á sinnum;
emjuðu ulfheðnar ok ísǫrn dúðu.’⁹⁷

They (the ships) were loaded with men and white shields,
western spears and Frankish swords.

berserkir bellowed; battle was under way for them;
Wolfskins howled and brandished iron spears⁹⁸.

Here the *berserkir* and the *Úlfheðnar* are both presented for the first time. They both roar and is the first instance of battle in the poem, we can infer from this that either the *berserkir* and *úlfhéðinn* are either the first to initiate battle or are the only ones worth mentioning. From this first stanza we cannot learn much, only that they were roaring for combat (or in combat). Later some more information is given:

‘At berserkja reiðu vil ek þik spyrja, bergir hræsævar:
hversu es fengit, þeim es í folk vaða,
vígðjǫrfum verum?’

⁹⁷ R. D. Fulk (ed.) 2012, ‘Þorbjörn hornklofi, *Haraldskvæði* (*Hrafnsmál*) 8’ in Diana Whaley (ed.), *Poetry from the Kings’ Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 1. Turnhout: Brepols, p. 102.

⁹⁸ See, Klaus von. 1961b. ‘Studien zum *Haraldskvæði*’. *ANF* 76, 96-111. 1981a, 295-310. Translation by Ortensi, Daniel

‘Úlfheðnar heita, þeir es í orrostu
blóðgar randir bera;
vigrar rjóða, es til vígs koma;
þeim es þar sist saman.
Áræðismönnum einum, hygg ek, þar undir felisk
skyli sá inn skilvísi, þeim es í skjöld hoggva.’⁹⁹

I want to ask you about the equipment of berserks, taster of the corpse-sea
what provision is made for war-daring men,
those who surge into battle?

They are called wolfskins, who bear bloody shields in combat;
they redden spears when they come to war;
there they are seated together.

There, I believe, he, the sovereign wise in understanding
may entrust himself to men of courage alone, those who hew into a shield¹⁰⁰.

While Klaus von See’s analysis is interesting, he does not go much in depth in the issue of the *berserkr*. So, we must analyse from a new perspective. A little more information is given here. In the first stanza, they speak of *berserkir* and in the second one, they speak of *Úlfheðnar*. They seem to usually use shields and spears and seat at Harald’s court together, and Harald trusts them, they have proven to be worthy of his trust.

What we learn from *Hrafnsmál* is that Þorbjörn uses *berserkr* and *Úlfheðnar* interchangeably, this group of *berserkir* are the elite warriors of Harald, here is not

⁹⁹ R. D. Fulk (ed.) 2012, ‘Þorbjörn hornklofi, *Haraldskvæði (Hrafnsmál) 20*’ in Diana Whaley (ed.), *Poetry from the Kings’ Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 1. Turnhout: Brepols, p. 114

¹⁰⁰ See, Klaus von. 1961b. ‘Studien zum *Haraldskvæði*’. *ANF* 76, 96-111. 1981a, 295-310. Translation by Ortensi, Daniel

stated if by personal preference or have they undergone any kind of trial or ritual to become berserkir.

4.1.2 Hárbarðsljóð

In the poem, dated around the 11th century, the god Þorr and the ferryman Harbard exchange words in a verbal contest. There are some interesting stanzas, namely 37 to 39:

Þorr qvað:

*“Brvþir berserkia
barþac i Hléseyio,
þer hofðo verst vnnit,
velta þioþ alla.”*

Hárbarðr qvað:

*“Klęki vantv þa, Þorr!
er þv a konom barþir.”*

Þorr qvað:

*“Vargynior þat varo,
enn varla konor;
sceldo scip mitt,
er ec scorþat hafdac;
ogðo mer iarnlvrki,
enn elto þialfa.
Hvat vanntv meþan, Hárbarðr?”¹⁰¹*

Þorr spoke

"In Hlésey the brides | of the berserkir slew I;

¹⁰¹ From heimskringla.no - <https://heimskringla.no/wiki/H%C3%A1rbar%C3%B0slj%C3%B3%C3%B0> accessed 02/03/2020

Most evil they were, | and all they betrayed."

Harbarth spake:

"Shame didst thou win, | that women thou slewest, Þor."

Þorr spake:

"She-wolves they were like, | and women but little;
My ship, which well | I had trimmed, did they shake;
With clubs of iron they threatened, | and Thjalfi they drove off.
What, Harbarth, didst thou the while?"¹⁰²

This stanza is interesting in the sense that either if *Þorr* killed the brides of the *berserkir* or *berserkir* brides¹⁰³ they are not presented as in *Hrafnsmál* being elite warriors in the court of a king, but evil, treacherous individuals. The most interesting is that the god *Þorr*, compares them to wolves, invoking again the idea of the *Úlfheðnar* instead of bears. Even though this wolf mention may evoke the *Úlfheðnar* it is not invoked here, they are not mentioned nor is the bear.

4.1.3 Snorri's berserkir

Thanks to the *Heimskringla* (c. 1230) the berserkr figure is also related to Óðinn. In *Ynglinga saga*, this information is presented to us:

*Óðinn kunnir svá gera, at í orrostum urðu úvinir hans blindir eða daufir eða óttafullir, en vápn þeirra bitu eigi heldr en vendir; en hans menn fóru brynjulausir ok váru galnir sem hundar eða vargar, bitu í skjöldu sína, váru sterkir sem birnir eða griðungar; þeir drápu mannfólkit, en hvártki eldr né járn orti á þá. Þat er kallaðr berserksgangr.*¹⁰⁴

Óðinn could make his enemies in battle blind, or deaf, or terror-struck, and

¹⁰² Translation by Adams, H. 1936 *Hárbarðsljóð*

¹⁰³ Liberman, A (2005) *Berserkirs in history and legend* in *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 32, Nos - 3-4, Fall- Winter 2005. 401 - 411

¹⁰⁴ Sturluson, Snorri, *Heimskringla* https://heimskringla.no/wiki/Ynglinga_saga, accessed 15/03/2020

their weapons so blunt that they could no more but than a willow wand; on the other hand, his men rushed forwards without armour, were as mad as dogs or wolves, bit their shields, and were strong as bears or wild bulls, and killed people at a blow, but neither fire nor iron told upon themselves. This was called going Berserk.¹⁰⁵

Here we see the reminiscence of the dog or wolf, but not as a coordinated group of elite warriors we now find that these *berserkir* are not the same as the ones presented in *Hrafnsmál*. These berserkir are more presented as a group of warriors going crazy while battling. We see, again, the connection between them and wolves or dogs, and here is presented the bear as a resemblance. We have to take note that there is a 300+ year gap between Þorbjörn's poem and Snorri's prose, the figure of the berserk seems to evolve, and this brings ramifications. We do not know how much it evolved but we know it differs throughout time.

4.1.4 Hrólfr saga kraka

The figure of the *berserkr* is very present in *Hrólfr saga kraka*, especially in chapters XVI to XXII and XXXVII to XXXIX. The saga tells the story of *Hrólfr* and the people of his clan, the Skjöldungs. The events of the story are to be dated around the 5 or 6th century but the manuscript was written around the 13th century. Interestingly some characters that also appear in *Beowulf* and *Widsith*.

The *berserkir* in *Hrólfrs saga kraka* carry out different roles, they act as the king elite troops as we seen in the first chapters. We are told that the king *Aðils* has twelve *berserkir* and carry the burden of war and the protection of the country¹⁰⁶. In chapter XVIII, we observe how a *berserkr* challenges *Svipdagr*, one of king *Hrólfr's* companions. After a duel, *Svipdagr* defeats the *berserkr*, and then four more *berserkir* jump to avenge his colleague, lastly, due to the intervention of the queen

¹⁰⁵ Sturluson, Snorri: *Heimskringla* translation by Finlay, A & Faulkes, A. 1951 Viking Society publications pp. 13

¹⁰⁶ https://heimskringla.no/wiki/Hr%C3%B3lfrs_saga_kraka_ok_kappa_hans visited 29/04/2020, chapter XXII

the combat stops and declares that many more would die and that *Svipdagr* is a better fighter. In chapter XX, some of the *berserkir* seem to revolt against the king and ravage the kingdom¹⁰⁷. In the next group of chapters, we are told about king *Hrólf* and his *berserkir* and after a small discussion against three brothers the king, its *berserkir* and the brothers drink and feast together in the king's Hall¹⁰⁸.

Still, there is something else that results interesting in this saga, that is *Björn Barki's* "transformation" in a bear in chapter 50. The hall of king *Hrólf* is attacked and during the combat, a huge bear devastates king *Hrólf's* enemies resulting in a victory for the king. Still, this is an interesting passage, we are also told how *Björn Barki* is the greatest fighter of king *Hrólf*.

Here we can see that the *berserkr* is presented as a figure loyal to the king but also as a troublemaker. The fact that *Svipdagr* can battle and defeat some of them speaks of the ability and skill of this fighter and is used as a way for the reader to acknowledge this. Regarding the figure of *Björn Barki*, we face difficulty to explain its transformation. We are told how a bear devastates the opposing troops, but if we were to compare it to *Svipdagr*, *Björn* is even more capable, as we are told how he is the best fighter among King *Hrólf's* troops, perhaps the "transformation" in a bear would describe how he defeats the enemy troops as a metaphor, he is a warrior but fights so fiercely and with such vigour that the destruction he causes could be the same that a bear would cause. Still, the fact that we are told how he is not among the troops when they leave for the battle renders this explanation somewhat unsatisfactory, perhaps it is a mythical element with the pretension to embellish the story and add a supernatural component to it.

4.1.5 Völsunga saga

While not appearing as *Úlfheðinn* the figure of the wolf appears in the Völsunga saga. It is difficult to know when it was written, the oldest reference to it is the

¹⁰⁷ https://heimskringla.no/wiki/Hr%C3%B3lfs_saga_kraka_ok_kappa_hans visited 29/04/2020, chapter XX

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

Ramsund carving which is dated around 1000 A.D. Still in the Ramsund carving we are only told the story of *Sigurð*. When *Sigurð* lives with his foster father, slays the dragon *Fáfnir* and then his foster-father, the figure of *Ótr* is also carved. In any case, we are referenced to *Sigurð*'s predecessors, namely *Sigmund* and *Sinfjolti*. Both are descendants from *Sigi*, who is established as a ruler of the Huns, *Sigi*'s son, *Riri*, becomes the king after his father dies. He marries and after his death his wife begets *Volsungr*.

Volsungr has eleven children with his wife *Hljóð*. The two most important are *Signý* and *Sigmundur*. *Signý* gets married to king *Siggeir* and some events at the wedding, king *Siggeir* kills *Signý*'s brothers except for *Sigmundur* and he is forced to hiding. *Signý* has two sons with *Siggeir* but those two are not able to carry out the vengeance for their mother, so she then lies with her brother and *Sinfjolti* is born. After some years, to carry out their vengeance they use wolf-skins to become wolves and kill *Signý*, *Siggeir*, and all his men by burning them alive.

Burning someone alive is not a tactic a wolf would use, but before arriving at this part we are told that they killed two groups of them, one being composed of eleven individuals. They also seem to send signals to one another by howling and at one point *Sigmund* and *Sinfjolti* battle each other and we are told that *Sigmund* jumped to the throat of *Sinfjolti*. Then after their battle, they are not able to take out the skins of the wolves immediately and when they can, they dispose of them¹⁰⁹. In this scenario they are not warriors, they become something more dangerous, they seem to behave like crazed wolves, we lack any relationship with the group of the elite-bodyguard, the kingship, and the personal selection of individuals that is presented in *Hrafnmál*. The only relationship we can find is the wolf-skin, which is what transform both into these crazed, bloodthirsty monsters. The only thing maintained is howling.

¹⁰⁹ Volsunga Saga Translated from The Icelandic. (1907). Norroena Society. accessed in 18/02/2020

4.1.6 The outlawing of berserkir in the sources

The figure of the *berserkr* ended up being outlawed, we can see this in *Grettis saga*. *Grettis saga* was written a little bit earlier than in 1400. In the second chapter we are told about the battle of Hafrsfjord (the same as in *Hrafnsmál*) and the king's berserkir, not much is said, but as in *Hrafnsmál*, they seem to identify the *berserkir* and the *úlfhédinn* as the same figure. Not much more is said in this chapter. If we move on to chapter 19, we are told something extremely interesting here. Earl *Eiríkr* holds a meeting with other rich and influential people and decides to outlaw berserkir, we are told that they kidnapped women, robed people¹¹⁰.

They are presented as antagonists, as muggers, kidnappers, violent people that do not abide by the law but by strength. Something that extremely different from what we were told at first, no more is the figure of a loyal bodyguard of the king and elite troops.

4.1.7 Svinfylking in the sources

Svinfylking is a term used to designate the wedge formation, the name comes due to its resemblance to a boar snout¹¹¹. The wedge formation is very common in warfare and it is found throughout history. It is no surprise that germanic peoples developed or adapted it and the roman military adapted it¹¹². We can find the term *svínfylkjing* in Old Norse some examples are *Sögubrot af fornkonungum* where king *Hring* formed a *svínfylkjing*, *Gautreks saga*..:

In *Sögubrot af fornkonungum*:

¹¹⁰ Anonymous, "Grettir's Saga", William Morris & Eiríkr Magnússon, *Icelandic Saga Database*, Sveinbjorn Thordarson (ed.), URL = <http://www.sagadb.org/grettis_saga.en> accessed 21/02/2020

¹¹¹ Stock E. (2008). Figurative Uses of Animal Names in Latin and Their Application to Military. A Study in Semantics.

¹¹² Saxo Grammaticus. (2006). The History of the Danes: Books 2 (Hilda R. Ellis Davidson, ed., Peter Fisher, trans.). vol II pp. 36

*Hann hefir svínfulkt her sínum, ok mun eigi gott at berjast við hann.*¹¹³

The translation is as follows: He's drawn them up in a wedge formation, and it won't be good to fight with him.¹¹⁴

In *Gautreks saga*:

*ok svínfylktu liði sínu bardaga.*¹¹⁵

The translation would be: and went in a wedge formation to combat.

In regard to the topic that concerns us it is not useful, we have only the name and the form that relates to the boar. The main issue is if this is a military tactic would be connected with the commander, it is well attested the figure of warriors wearing boar-crested helmets and the boar helmet is mentioned in *Beowulf*, this leaves a faint trail that we might be able to follow.

4.2 The etymology of berserk and Úlfheðnar

The etymology of *berserkr* presented a discussion that has been going on for long while the etymology of *Úlfheðinn* seems to present little to no problem and is clear. But the etymology of *berserkr* is known to be lengthy and with no consensus at sight, in any case, it is important to go through it again, to clarify everything and familiarize ourselves with this topic.

4.2.1 Úlfheðnar

The compound *Úlfheðnar* is composed of two substantives *úlfr and *hedinn, the first one refers to the wolf, coming from the germanic *wulfaz while the second one refers

¹¹³ Guðni Jónsson, Bjarni Vilhjálmsson (1944), *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda* vol II, p. 127

¹¹⁴ Tunstall, P. (2008) *Fragment of a Saga about Certain Early Kings in Denmark and Sweden*.

¹¹⁵ Guðni Jónsson, Bjarni Vilhjálmsson (1944), *Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda* vol III, p. 21

to a skin or hide¹¹⁶. Compound names with wolf are very common both in personal names, some examples could be *Brynjólfr*, *Geirúlfr*, *Gunnúlfr*. It is interesting to note that these names are related to combat equipment: *brynja*, *geirr*, *gunn* (cuirass, lance and combat respectively) but not only limited to combat equipment, Ulf Uggason, Uflkell and more, wolves were very present not only as of the threat of the beast but in people's names.

The element **heðinn* seems to come from the German **heðanaz*. Jan de Vries suggests that **heðinn* refers to a suit without sleeves and a hood¹¹⁷. This figure correlates with archaeology, there are many warriors wearing wolf-skins in the material culture, this will be exposed in detail further below.

4.2.2 Berserk

Regarding the *berserkr* we have to proceed to an overview of the discussion. The two main currents defend **ber-* as in “bare” and **ber-* as in “bear”.

Firstly, Sveinbjörn Egilsson proposed the first change of current since Snorri's definition, he mentioned that the “ber” in *berserkr* comes from an archaic version of *bera*¹¹⁸, this hypothesis was later supported in the Cleasby-Vigufsson dictionary it is stated that the “bearskin” definition is preferred as they propose that “-serk is a substantive, not an adjective which is to be greatly preferred, for in olden ages champions and athletes used to wear hides of bears, wolves, and reindeer (as skins of lions in the south)¹¹⁹”.

This would establish a link between both the *berserkr* and the *Úlfheðinn* as both warriors wearing an animal skin to symbolize their connection with the animal and would be easily recognizable in depictions. The bear would stand out.

¹¹⁶ Müller (1967) pp. 200 - 212

¹¹⁷ Samson (2011) pp. 64

¹¹⁸ Samson (2011) pp. 72

¹¹⁹ Cleasby, R and Vigufsson G, (1874) An Icelandic-English dictionary, Oxford. Digital edition consulted in 08/04/2020

On the other hand, Noreen proposed that the *ber* should be interpreted as in “bare”¹²⁰, this has precedents in other words in Old Norse *berfoettr* and *berbakt*¹²¹ (meaning *barefoot and bare-back*), this argument comes back to Snorri’s definition of the *berserkgangr* and by this, we could consequently define “*berserk*”. As said before, in the Ynglinga saga, Snorri says “hans menn fóru brynjulausir ok váru galnir sem hundar eða vargar”¹²² this means “his men fought without armour and were as mad as dogs or wolves”, emphasizing the aspect of the naked fighting. As stated by Samson this presents a dichotomy, *berserk* could be interpreted as “bare-shirt” or “bare-armour”¹²³, while the general sense of this evokes an impression that these warriors would fight without armour or with their chests exposed.

4.3 Depiction of the berserkr and Úlfheðnar

As seen in the texts the *berserkr* figure represents different roles in sagas, Blaney¹²⁴ and Beard¹²⁵. Beard conducted an analysis and classification for the roles of the berserkr in the Old Norse Literature:

1. The primitive Germanic or Celtic fighter
2. King’s *berserkr* and defender
3. King’s *berserkr* as arrogant
4. The hólmgöngumadr
5. The hólmgöngumadr with some degree of invulnerability
6. The Viking *berserkr*
7. The *Berserk* with magical aspects

¹²⁰ Noreen, Edward “Ordet Barsark” Arkiv för Nordisk filologi 48 (1932) pp. 252 - 254

¹²¹ Dale, Roderick (2014) pp 81

¹²² Sturluson, Snorri, Heimskringla pt I.

¹²³ Samson (2011) pp 70 - 71

¹²⁴ Blaney, Benjamin, “*The berserk Suitor: The literary application of a Stereotyped Theme*”, in Scandinavian studies 54 (1982), pp. 279-94

¹²⁵ Beard, D. J. “*The berserkr in Icelandic Literature*” in *Approaches to Oral Tradition*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, Occasional Papers in Linguistics and Learning, 4 New University of Ulster, 1978, pp. 99 - 114

These roles depict the *berserkr* living on the edge or outside the society¹²⁶, this is also argued in Speidel's article¹²⁷ and reveals that this tendency of *berserkr* living as outlaws or outcasts is given in different societies throughout time and space. Going through the figures mentioned it would be better to use Dale's¹²⁸ suggestion of the *berserkr* as it has a major focus on the Old Norse texts and figures. He suggests grouping the *berserkr* in the following groups:

1. The King's *berserkr*
2. Hall-challenging *berserkr*
3. Hólmǫngumadr
4. Viking *berserkr*
5. Christian *berserkr*

I agree with this treatment of the figure of the *berserkr*, it shows it is not one-sided and focuses more in the Old Norse texts since there is no reason for this to include the figure of the Germanic/Celtic warrior in an Old Norse study but in the topic that concerns us the figure of the Christian *berserkr* will not be treated here as it is outside our concern.

The *berserkr* as a member of the king's circle is the role that we see in *Hrafnsmál*, the *berserkr* appears to be an important member of Harald's army, not only in *Hrafnsmál*, another example could be *Hrólf saga kraka*. They are bodyguards but also the trusty companion of the hero or king they accompany. Opposed to this, they are also sold as mercenaries in *Skaldskaparmál*, the *berserkr* are sold to King *Aðils* by King *Hrólf*. Another episode that furthermore illustrates the evolution of the *berserkr* is found in *Eyrbyggja saga*, where they are given for free, are treated badly, and seem to come from low social status¹²⁹. We see that the *berserkr* figure in this

¹²⁶ Dale, Roderick "Berserker: a re-examination of the phenomenon in literature and life" (2014) pp. 111 - 113

¹²⁷ Speidel, Michael "Berserker: a history of Indo-European warriors" (2002)

¹²⁸ Dale, Roderick "Berserker: a re-examination of the phenomenon in literature and life" (2014) pp. 163

¹²⁹ https://sagadb.org/eyrbyggja_saga.en - accessed on 22/03/2020

group goes from elite warriors who are trusted by the king to mercenaries to almost cattle.

Regarding the hall-challenging *berserk* the term is self-descriptive, he comes uninvited to a hall, either by himself or in a group, and goes around challenging the people that are found there. The hero then proceeds to challenge and defeat the *berserkr*. In *Hrólfr saga kraka* we can see this happening, in this sense the figure of the berserk is plain, it acts like a thug (albeit a strong one since everyone is afraid) and is defeated by the hero¹³⁰, this leads to the hero being praised and is necessary for the evolution of the character of the hero.

The *Hólmǫngumadr berserkr* consist usually of a *berserkr* or a group of *berserkir* that go around rural areas challenging farmers and taking their possessions. In *Gretti's* saga, it is stated that berserkir challenged noblemen to take their possessions. Since *Hólmǫngumadr* was legal as an alternative to settle a dispute, the *Hólmǫngumadr* berserk is someone who exploits this system due to their unnatural strength and capacities. As what happens in *Gretti's* saga, the *Hólmǫngumadr* berserk is defeated for the hero or protagonist to evolve and could be considered also as a thug or troublemaker, being in the same category with the hall-challenging berserk.

The Viking *berserkr* would be similar to the *Hólmǫngumadr berserkr* in the pillaging and marauding sense but with some differences, mostly, these *berserkir* operate in a group, and in the case of *Hrólfr saga kraka*, they give back their earnings to their lords or kings. In this sense, the Viking *berserkr* appears as a raider and pillager but under the influence of a king¹³¹.

All in all, the *berserkr* seems to evolve from elite-warrior in the king's court to mercenary and vagrant but retaining the idea of an excellent warrior as he is always

¹³⁰ Dale, Roderick "Berserkir: a re-examination of the phenomenon in literature and life" (2014) pp. 171 - 178

¹³¹ Dale, Roderick "Berserkir: a re-examination of the phenomenon in literature and life" (2014) pp. 178 - 180

only bested by the hero. This shows us that the figure of the *berserk* evolves through time. This would mean that the representation of *berserkr* should change too. In the sense of the *Úlfheðnar*, the berserk overshadows and eclipses it. First, it seems that *úlfhéðinn* and *berserkir* are the same. We see *úlfhéðinn* in early texts, but they become less and less common in the sagas being substituted with the figure of the *berserkr*.

4.4 The role of the boar: *jǫfurr* and *eofor*

There are many words to refer to the boar in the Old Norse corpus, some reflect the aggressive aspect of the boar such as *Vigrir* which could mean “bearing spears”¹³², but what concerns us is the use of the word *jǫfurr*. The most remarkable use of this as a personal name is in *Skáldskaparmál*, in which the word is used to name the son of Hálfðan. The names for the other sons also mean “ruler”¹³³. The relationship with the boar is limited in the Old Norse corpus since there are few uses of “*jǫfurr*” when referring to the wild boar^{134,135} even though it is not between the names that Snorri lists in his *Skáldskaparmál*.

There is something that needs to be discussed and is the term “*eofor*”, some scholars suggest that “*eofor*” and “*jǫfur*” come from the proto-germanic **eburaR*¹³⁶. In *Beowulf*, we see that the killer of king *Ogenþeow* is named *Eofor* (and his brother *Wulf*). It has been suggested that this name does not come from Old English but from Scandinavia¹³⁷. After killing the king *Ogenþeow*, *Eofor* is rewarded with the hand of *Hygelac*’s daughter in marriage and richly recompensated.

¹³² Sturluson, Snorri edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 132

¹³³ Sturluson, Snorri edited by A. Faulkes, 1998 *Skáldskaparmál*, pp. 101

¹³⁴Richard Cleasby and Gudbrand Vigfusson, (1874) *An Icelandic-English dictionary*, Beck, H. (1965) *Das Ebersignum im Germanischen: Ein Beitrag zur Germanischen Tier-Symbolik* pp. 183 - 195

¹³⁵Cleasby, Vigfusson, Merlínússpá, st. 39, and in *Guðrúnarkviða in forna*, st. 24 (1874), pp. 327

¹³⁶ Magnússon Á. (2008) [1989]. *Íslensk orðsifjabók*. Reikiavik: Orðabók Háskólans.

¹³⁷Owen-Crocker, Gale R. (2007). *Beast Men: Eofor and Wulf and the Mythic Significance of Names*. *Myth in Early Northwest Europe* (pp. 257-280).

It is interesting to note that the boar is also present in the helmets used in *Beowulf's* poem:

[...] *Eoforlic scionon ofer hleorbergan gehroden golde*¹³⁸;

[...] *þonne hniton féþan eoferas cnysedans*¹³⁹.

[...] Bright boar-shapes gleamed over cheek guards¹⁴⁰.

[...] When troops clashed, blade against boar-crest¹⁴¹

Not only this means that the boar was part of the crest but also represented in the cheeks, there is no parallel in archaeology for boar representation in the cheek guards but it would not be improbable as we have represented soldiers with bear crested helm.

5. Archaeological material

The figure of the *berserkr* seen from both the “bare” and the “bear” is difficult to locate, the representations of bare-chested men are many, and in no case are they located fighting. On the other hand, the representation of bears in the Iron Age Scandinavia is also limited, there are no bears represented in the Vendel Period and in the Viking age, its representation is limited¹⁴². The figure of the *Úlfheðinn* is much easier to locate, its wolf skin makes it very distinctive and it is more common. In regard to the boar, it is also a characteristic figure, its crest and tusks are, perhaps, the most distinctive traits of the boar in art. When talking about the boar and the relationship with kingship or high-status individuals it seems clear when looking at the archaeological records.

¹³⁸ Robinson, F., Webster, L., & Mitchell, B. (1998). *Beowulf: An edition with relevant shorter texts* pp. 59 vv. 303 - 304

¹³⁹ Robinson, F., Webster, L., & Mitchell, B. (1998). *Beowulf: An edition with relevant shorter texts* pp. 92 vv. 1327

¹⁴⁰ Williamson, C. (2011). *Beowulf and other Old English poems* pp. 45 vv 303 - 304

¹⁴¹ Williamson, C. (2011). *Beowulf and other Old English poems* pp. 72 vv. 1327

¹⁴² Lotte Hedeager, Iron age myth and materiality: An archaeology of Scandinavia AD. 400 - 1000 (2011) pp. 95

Regarding other animals such as horses, snakes, and birds of prey they are also distinctive in art, they are located commonly, horses appear often in bracteates, snakes and birds of prey are also found in places such as helmets, shoulder-clasp, and other artifacts.

5.1 Bears and bear warriors

When speaking of the representations of the bears in the archaeological sense we find ourselves limited, bears have little representation, but it is not non-existent. In one of her more recent work, Hedeager suggests the presence of a total of five artistic representations of bears in the Scandinavian Iron Age. A warrior-bear from the Oseberg textiles, on a völvastick from a female grave from Klinta, on a Helmet die from Valsgårde 7, on a lance in Vendel grave 12 and lastly, on the Torslunda Plates (Which will be addressed in Chapter 5.4). These representations are a little ambiguous and it is still not clear that they are bears.

Regarding the Oseberg textile¹⁴³ the figure represented there could be interpreted as a savage warrior, the character displayed there is wearing what seems to be a mask with pointy ears, has his body covered by a shield, and is bearing a spear. If we consider the ears as the most identifiable trait, they are portrayed as rhomboid, while a bear should have round ears. If I were to suggest an explanation for this character, I would keep the image of a savage warrior but would be inclined to identify it as an *Úlfhéðinn*.

If we now proceed to speak of the völvastick¹⁴⁴ (Fig. 1), we will find that the animal in question is part of a bigger composition. The supposed animals would be standing in each corner of the composition, but they are too damaged to be able to identify any of them.

¹⁴³ http://www.unimus.no/foto/#/search?q=Oseberg%20tekstil*&museum=KHM - accessed 13/03/2020

¹⁴⁴ <https://historiska.se/upptack-historien/artikel/klintastaven-en-riktig-trollstav/> - accessed 17/03/2020



Fig. 1 Detail of the staff from Klinta, one of the figures in the corner could be interpreted as bears.
From <https://historiska.se/upptack-historien/artikel/klintastaven-en-riktig-trollstav/>

Taking a look now at the helmet die from Valsgärde 7¹⁴⁵ (Fig. 2), we can see a composition (Motif F) that is somewhat recurrent in Germanic art, we find it in the Torslunda plates and also in the Sutton Hoo purse-lid, it presents a human figure between two animals. If we observe represented traits in the depicted animals these resemble more bears. They have five claws in their back legs and one of them has a round ear, sadly, most of the composition is damaged and we cannot observe it thoroughly.



Fig. 2. Man between animals extract from Arwidsson, G. (1977). "Die Gräberfunde von Valsgärde: 3: Valsgärde 7" pp. 118

¹⁴⁵ Arwidsson, G. (1942). *Die Gräberfunde von Valsgärde: 3: Valsgärde 7*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell. pp 23 - 50, 107 - 125

Lastly, the spearhead from the Vendel grave 12 figures two animals in prone position with their limbs flexed. The figure resembles more a canine animal while resting rather than a bear due to the extension of the back legs since they reach almost the front legs. Bear legs, both front, and back are rather short in proportion to the body, as a counterpoint to the identification of this animal, we should point the snout. It seems to be flattened removing authenticity to the animal.

As a counterpoint, we must turn our attention to an extremely interesting find. Namely, the masks found in Hedeby. They are made of felt and were found, rolled, in a ship. Inga Hagg¹⁴⁶ suggested that they are masks of a sheep and a cow, and they were worn in battle. If this was the case, there are no records, neither written nor represented, of warriors fighting while wearing a sheep or cow mask, still, this is only an interpretation.

This leaves us with a possible two instead of the initial five representations of bears. We face an underrepresentation of the animal and the savage warrior with its attributes; therefore, I would lean for the definition of *berserk* as a nude warrior.

5.2 Wolf and wolf warriors

The representation of wolves in the Germanic and Scandinavian Iron Age is quite common. In the Golden Horns of Gallehus, dating from the 5th century, also represent a figure with canine characteristics¹⁴⁷. In this case, the character is facing another figure of animal characteristics, it is interesting to note that in this panel of the horn three out of four figures have animal traits. We cannot identify this as an *Úlfheðnar* since it lacks all the other traits, but it is worth mentioning.

¹⁴⁶ Hagg, I (1984) *Die Textilfunde aus dem Hafen von Haithabu*.

¹⁴⁷ Horedt, Kurt. "Beziehungen Zwischen Den Bilderschriften Der Osterinsel Und Des Gallehus-Horns A (1639)." *Anthropos*, vol. 79, no. 1/3, 1984, pp. 258–260. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/40460809. Accessed 18/032020

In the Gutenstein sword sheath, dating from the 7th century, we can see what we could identify as an *Úlfhéðinn* holding a sword. The sword sheath was found in 1887 in Gutenstein, Deutschland we know little about the whereabouts of the findings, two men doing construction works were excavating and found two graves one of them contained the sword sheath¹⁴⁸. If we observe the sword held by the *Úlfhéðinn* we can appreciate that it has a sword-ring, a symbol of status, also there is something intertwined in the sword that is being held and the warrior perhaps a snake. In Böhner's adaptation¹⁴⁹. besides the figure that has been just mentioned it is also present the "naked dancing man" and perhaps another *Úlfhéðinn*, as represented in the Torslunda plates with slight changes, the naked dancing man is facing towards the *Úlfhéðinn* and one of the spears points to the sky. The *Úlfhéðinn* figure is interesting because it has an addition regarding the one represented in the Torslunda plates; he has a shield. The Obrigheim press plate is remarkably similar in composition as the Gutenstein sword sheath, it also dates from the 7th century. The press plate was found in 1884 during an excavation in a Merovingian cemetery. It presents the same motives as the Gutenstein sword sheath with a *Úlfhéðinn* bearing a spear, holding a sword the "naked dancing man" and what could be another *Úlfhéðinn* but due to the poor state of conservation, we cannot tell for sure¹⁵⁰.



Fig. 3: Detail from the Gutenstein scabbard. Böhner 1991: 38

In the Torslunda plates, there are two of the four plates that represent animals while another one represents a man in a wolf-skin. These first two are the A and B plates

¹⁴⁸ Steuer, Heit Seit 1945 verschollen, jüngst wieder aufgetaucht – Die Schwertscheide von Gutenstein an der Oberen Donau. In: Förderkreis Archäologie in Baden e.V. (Hrsg.): Archäologische Nachrichten aus Baden. Issue 76/77 (2008)

¹⁴⁹ Böhner (1991) "Eschwege" pp. 38

¹⁵⁰ Engels, C (2002) *Obrigheim* in Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde pp. 515 - 516

and the last one is plate D The A plate consists of a man between two animals, and while they have been interpreted as bears I would say they are, wolves, plate B consists of a man holding a roped animal and lastly, plate consists of a figure with a helmet followed by a man in a wolf skin, the Torslunda plates will be discussed further below (Chapter 5.4) as I believe they have been misinterpreted.

Sadly, the circumstances of most of the finds are flawed, either by being an accidental find or by being excavated long ago, the documentation of an archaeological find nowadays is much more detailed and meticulous than before. All in all the wolf is a very interesting animal, on one side we have the idea of a savage bloody wolf, the one who kills to feed, capable of great evil but still smart, not even the gods were able to chain and kill the *Fenrir* without terrible consequences. On the other side, we can see the wolf as a dangerous tool of war. With the *Úlfheðnar*, elite warriors that stood by the side of the king, they would dress up with skins of wolves to instil fear in their enemies, as a symbol of their position in the army but also reminisce the pack of wolves. They were strong warriors, coordinated, and knew when and where to strike as we see from *Hráfnsmal*¹⁵¹.

5.3 Boar and boar warriors

If we move forward to the iconography of boars in material remains the most remarkable is the helmet with a boar figurine or motif. The C Torslunda plate¹⁵² depicts this motif, the armed warriors with a spear and a sword and a helmet with a boar depicted on top. The plates are made of bronze and has been suggested that there was a workshop near Ölund, where they were found¹⁵³. Even though this is can be debated, there is one thing that is clear, the plates have traces of use, which means that they were used to imprint the motif depicted in the plates to other objects. This could mean that that this motif is somewhat extended and we find in the

¹⁵¹ See, Klaus von. 1961b. 'Studien zum *Haraldskvæði*'. *ANF* 76, 96-111. 1981a, 295-310.
Translation by Ortensi, Daniel

¹⁵² Numeration according to Bruce-Mitford's *Fresh Observations on the Torslunda plates* (1968)

¹⁵³ Bruce-Mitford (1968) pp. 233

Valsgärde 7 (Fig. 4) helmet the same motif, with a small variation, in the helmet the warriors have shields and the sword is sheathed¹⁵⁴.

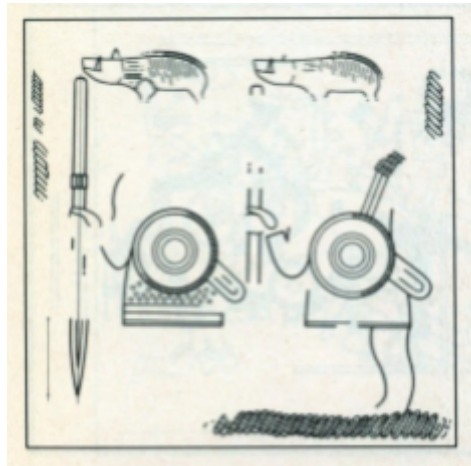


Fig. 4 Detail of the Vendel 7 helmet depicting warriors with figurines of boars. from Arwidsson, G. (1977). "Die Gräberfunde von Valsgärde: 3: Valsgärde 7 pp. 118

On the other hand, there are other helmets that can shed some light in this issue, the Benty Grange Helmet or the Pioneer Helmet both found in England, the so called "Gulden Morden boar". In this case, the helmet from the figures from the Torslunda Plates and the Valsgärde 7 helm have several real parallels. The main characteristic of both helmets is the same; they both have a Boar in the crest. The Benty Grange helmet (Fig. 5) comes from a barrow, this also contained several other artifacts that have been described as escutcheon or brooches, traces of silk, a hanging-bowl¹⁵⁵. This would indicate that the barrow belonged to a certain high standing individual.

¹⁵⁴ Arwidsson G. (1977) Die *Gräberfunde von Valsgärde: 3 :Valsgärde 7*. pp. 115

¹⁵⁵ Bateman, Thomas (1861). *Ten Years' Digging in Celtic and Saxon Grave Hills, in the counties of Derby, Stafford, and York, from 1848 to 1858; with notices of some former discoveries, hitherto unpublished, and remarks on the crania and pottery from the mounds*. London: John Russell Smith. pp. 28–33.



Fig.5: Benty grange helmet from

<http://collections.museums-sheffield.org.uk/view/objects/asitem/search@/3/title-asc?t:state:flow=6aba02ef-6911-4cea-b16a-2b2b60aa4d6c>

As for the Pioneer Helmet, the circumstances of the tomb proved fatal for its contents, the tomb was only 15 cm from the soil when excavated and found in a ploughing field, which would mean that some artifacts have deteriorated and disappeared, even though some of the artifacts found in there are as follows; a hanging bowl, a millefiori mount, iron buckles, and a patterned sword. All this would again make the case for a high-status grave¹⁵⁶.

Another example is the Sutton Hoo Shoulder clasp (Fig. 6), there can be seen two crossed boars in every shoulder-clasp, their identification is truly clear. The tusks, the crests and their legs can be identified very easily and are found in other finds in

¹⁵⁶Meadows, I., Atkins, R., Draper, A., James, J., Laing, L., Ponting, M., . . . Ladocha, J. (2019). *The pioneer burial: A high-status Anglian warrior burial from Wollaston, Northamptonshire.*

Sutton Hoo such as the helmet or hanging bowls. It has been suggested that due to the stance the boars have, crossed, they might be fighting, dead or that the representation is not of boars, but of boar's skins (Adams, Noel 2010). The Bentley Grange helmet presents a boar at the top of the helm, and warriors with a boar on the top of the helmet are usually represented in pairs. I personally would suggest that this would be representing either a boar scavenging and digging for food or a charging boar. Due to the context of a grave good from a high-ranking warrior (Bruce-Mitford, Rupert 1978) I would lean to a charging boar, being this a symbol of the warrior and commonly found in other weaponry.



*Figure 6: Detail of the Sutton Hoo shoulder-clasps depicting a boar.
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1939-1010-4-a*

5.4 Birds and bird warriors

Birds are also a common motif in the art of the Scandinavian Iron Age and the Viking Age. I will address this case similarly as I did with the previous ones. Still, the bird warriors are much more limited. The bird is attested in the Scandinavian Iron Age and the Viking age, perhaps one of the most known examples of a depiction of a bird is the Raven banner. Still there are many other interesting depictions of birds that

have a strong relation with the battlefield, and as what happens with the previous examples of animals, they also appear in helmets and other high-status burials.

Without a doubt, the most interesting piece would be the the Valsgärde XIV helmet due to the piece that protects the nose. This resembles a raptor bird with its features, we can appreciate the bird's beak and wings and, interestingly, it seems to be diving towards its prey. This is not the only feature that is remarkable for our investigation, as we also see that the helmet from Valsgärde 7¹⁵⁷ (Fig. 7) has in one of its panels the presence of warriors with bird-crested helmets.

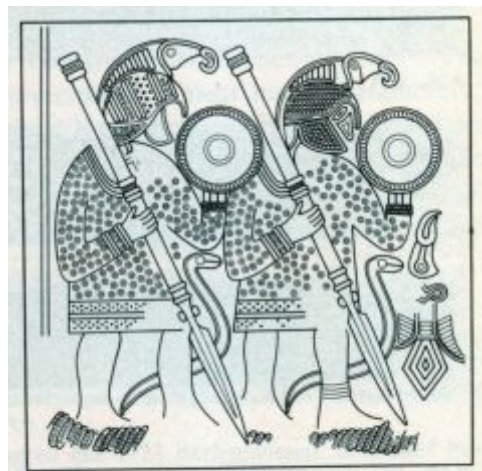


Fig. 7: *Bird warriors from Arwidsson, G. (1977). "Die Gräberfunde von Valsgärde: 3: Valsgärde 7" pp. 118*

In this helmet the warrior's attire is remarkably similar to the attire of the "boar" warriors that appears in the same helmet. The armour seems to be the same, they also bear a shield, but they are in a different position. The "bird warriors" seem to be marching, they wield a spear pointing to the floor, with a small round shield in the other half and the bird-crested helmet, these warriors bear no sword neither sheathed nor unsheathed. Interestingly, there are two snakes, one in front of each of these warriors. Still, there is another extremely interesting thing that in the panel we

¹⁵⁷ Arwidsson G. (1977) *Die Gräberfunde von Valsgärde: 3: Valsgärde 7*. pp. 114

can appreciate a raptor bird seemingly flying towards the sky in front of the front warrior, which is very similar to the bird that we find in the banner or bracteates.

If we were to assume that the proportions are correct in this helmet die, which they seem to be if we look at the snakes and warriors. The bird would be closer to a raven or crow rather than an eagle. Interestingly, those birds appear in other weaponry for example as shield mount. Still this is not the only place where birds appear, being the purse-lid from Sutton Hoo an example.

5.5 The Torslunda Plates

The Torslunda Plates (Fig. 8) were found in Öland in 1870, they were used as dies to make impression of the representation of each die. Bruce-Mitford wrote in his “Fresh observations on the Torslunda Plates” many details that will not be talked about here. I will focus on the representation and interpretation of the dies. It is interesting that the plates were not found in any context they are isolated finds, the only remarkable information about the context of the finds is that they were found in pairs of two, but we do not know in which pairs, the suggested dating is around 500 a.D.

The numeration used to refer to the Plates will be the same as Bruce-Mitford used¹⁵⁸

- A. Man between bears
- B. Man with axe holding a roped animal
- C. Walking warriors carrying spears
- D. Dancing man in horned headdress and man with spear wearing wolfskin.

¹⁵⁸ Rupert Bruce-Mitford, Fresh observations on the Torslunda Plates (1968)



Figure 8 The four Torslunda plates from <https://historiska.se/upptack-historien/object/618350-patris-av-brons/>

Initially the Plates seem to be simple, the human figures are distinguishable, their weapons, clothes, even the sword-ring found in high members of the society can be spotted in the plates. The animals are carnivore quadrupeds offering resistance to the human. One of the general traits of Style 2 in this type of art is the presence of indistinguishable animals, here these animals seem to fall under this category¹⁵⁹.

Since the human figures pose much less of a problem it will be easier to start with them, that is Plate C and D.

¹⁵⁹ Bernhard S, *Die Altgermanische Thierornamentik* (1935)

In plate C we can see two human figures, they are almost dressed the same with the same weaponry but subject to small distinctions. The figure in the front carries a spear and a sword with a small ring in the sword pommel, this is indicative of this individual belonging to a high social rank. Regarding the armour, they wear a boar-crested helmet with cheek-guard and neck-guard. This type of helmets are present in the written records such as Beowulf and some helmets such as the Bentley Grange Helmet or the Pioneer Helmet.

The second individual is remarkably similar to the first one, but he lacks the ring in the pommel he also has a boar-crested helmet and a spear and a protective armour such as a gambeson or mail-coat. Another of the small differences between these two individuals is in the clothing. The first one has a more detailed pattern in the armour, while the pattern in the second individual is less detailed but also has a pattern present in the sleeve. Another common trait is the two protuberances in the spears. The spears have wings which are used to avoid for the spear to go deeper than intended. Both figures stand in the same position with their head tilted upwards and seem to be in line, one behind the other.

Plate D also presents two figures but much more different than in plate C. The first figure seems to be a man, carrying two spears, a sword, and an ornate headdress. Seemingly he has a belt over the shoulder in which he carries the sword, this sword lacks the ring from the first figure. It has been theorized that this figure might be *Óðinn*. Then, the horned helmet would be a representation for *Huginn* and *Munin*, the eye of the dancing figure has been struck out recent studies have demonstrated that via laser scanning¹⁶⁰. The spear is also an attribute of *Óðinn*.

The second figure is a humanoid figure, he is wearing a spear and a sword. His clothes are either an individual wearing a wolf-skin or has been theorized as one of the beast-warriors, an *Úlfheðinn*. *Úlfhéðnar* were elite warriors and are known from the poem *Haraldrskvæði* in which they are presented as the most skilled warriors and handpicked by Harald Fairhair as we have seen. The equipment described in the

¹⁶⁰ Neil Price, *An Eye for Óðinn? Divine Role-Playing in the Age of Sutton Hoo* (2014)

Poem states them to be bearing (bloody) shields, and spears which they redden when they come to war¹⁶¹.

While in Plate C both figures were facing and standing in the same position the difference here is that the Wolf-warrior has a similar stance as the figures in plate C but he is drawing the sword, the other individual is facing towards the observer while seemingly dancing or moving, by the position of his body the difference is palpable. He has his arms semi-extended while holding two spears and exposing his chest while for the legs he has a flexed leg with the fingers of the feet touching the floor and the back part of the feet in the air. The other leg is completely flexed with the sole of the foot facing upwards.

Proceeding now to plate A we can observe it is the only plate with three individuals on it, two animals a human. The human is armed with a sword and a dagger, he also has an armour which could be a gambeson. For the animal figures they seem to be attacking the human grabbing him by the arms and trying to bite him in the face. The general stance of the figures is that the three are standing and have the same height. The legs of the human are positioned in the same way as the legs of the "dancing man" with his arms he is stabbing one of the animals in the stomach while with the dagger he seems to aim for the throat. Both animals are grabbing him by the arms, with the legs flexed and positioned in the same way and with their mouths facing the head of the human man. The representation is extremely similar to the Sutton Hoo Purse-lid where the canine traits of the animal figures are easier to appreciate.

The last plate, plate B is composed of two figures, a man and an animal. The man seems to be naked in the chest wearing only pants while holding an axe and a rope. The animal, for instance is not standing, in this case, the animal is not setting its lower feet in the ground and with one of the upper legs is grabbing the rope while the other is lowered facing the stomach of the same animal, with the rope tied to the neck, the face of the animal is also pointing towards the face of the human, in this

¹⁶¹ Thomas Percy, *The Old Norse Poetic Translations of Thomas Percy* (2002)

case, we can see the teeth of the animal all are sharpened teeth and a tongue coming out from the mouth.

While Bruce-Mitford suggests the animals in the A plate are bears and the one in plate B is unidentified I would propose that they are wolves. The main reason for me to believe this is the general position of the animals, the height and several attributes of these animals lead to interpret them as wolves.

First of all, in the animal figure of plate B the roped animal is presented as having pointy teeth, this is characteristic of wolves due to their carnivore diet all their teeth are sharp in order to make it easier to tear the meat. Bears have an omnivore diet due to this; they have both types of teeth the incisors and canine teeth are sharp while the premolars and molars are remarkably similar to humans. Another point is that the animal has its skin detailed in every part of its body for the exception of the head and the paws and claws. Wolves have hair throughout their bodies but have significantly less hair in their legs and jaws as for bears they have hair in their legs but not in their jaws. If we observe the two animal figures from plate A, they are depicted with ears even though small they are present in these figures. In wolves, the ears are triangular-shaped and pointed while on bears they are round. On another note, both figures have a kind of “collar” around their neck, wolves usually have much more hair in this area than bears.

There is another point suggesting that these might be wolves instead of bears. If we observe the legs of the animals, the legs in the corner is where it is easier to appreciate, we can see that they are arched this is very characteristic of wolves since they are digitigrade. They stand on the tip of their phalanges and the overall anatomy of wolves makes it impossible for them to stand with their legs stretched out completely. Bears, for instance, are plantigrades which means that when they walk they support all the weight in the palm instead of the toes and when they are standing, they have their legs stretched. In contrast, some characteristics that could point towards the bear would be the tails. While in plate B the animals seem to have a hairless tail the animals in A are depicted without any tail.

Lastly, if we take a look at the wolf-warrior, some of these distinctions are easy to see. He has sharpened teeth, small triangular ears even though the other characteristics (i.e lack of hair in the snout and paws, “collar” hair) are not applicable here. All this points towards the wolf. While the context of the plate dies does not provide any information, if we regard the wolf as the only living animal depicted instead of the bear, three of the four plates have a common motif between them. Maybe these plates could depict the process of hunting a wolf to dress with its skin and become an *Úlfheðnar*. Then Plate A would be the first one, the man is hunting one of the wolves he is armed with a dagger and a sword and wears a gambeson for protection. Plate B now shows the animal subdued and the man with the chest exposed, this could mean that there is no threat of the animal killing the man. Lastly, the warrior dresses with the skin of the wolf he killed. Then we could appreciate the story if the plates are rearranged in this order (Fig. 9):



Figure 9: The story of becoming an Úlfheðnar
<https://historiska.se/upptack-historien/object/618350-patris-av-brons/>

6. Conclusions

As we have seen, the importance of animals in the Scandinavian Iron Age and Viking age is capital. The animals bring with themselves implications and ideas that evade us as modern-day humans.

The figure of the horse seems to be clear, it acts as a steed, as a companion, as a vital animal that accompanies the rider where it needs to be, both in battle and outside of it. We have seen that in the myths the horse acts as a friend and the loyal companion of gods and heroes such as *Óðinn* and *Sigurd*. Still, the impact that the

horse had in the Scandinavian Iron age or Viking age is limited, as they would have been a problem when traveling by ship. Another interesting contribution is that when horses are addressed in *Skáldskaparmál*, they all have personal names and, in some cases, we are given the name of the rider. These conclusions, and the limited use of cavalry during Viking age, when we have extensive records of the raids perpetrated by Scandinavian groups, leads me to believe that the horse was used mostly for either traveling or agricultural use.

The role of the snake is still unclear, in the myths it acts as an evil being, as we see in the actions of the world serpent *Jörmungandr* and the evil dragon *Fafnir* but when looking at archaeological depictions of it we find it traveling alongside warriors. It is interesting that when snakes are referred to in *Skáldskaparmál* one of the names is masked one *Grímr* and adder *bindr* in the archaeological record we see that snakes are present in helmets and some cases they are seen in the crest of the helmet, such as in Sutton Hoo, regarding the “adder” name we also see that snakes are present in belt-buckles and the Sutton Hoo shoulder clasp. There is a direct correlation in these terms.

If we were to take the Valsgarde 7 helmet as an example, we find that the composition with the “bird warriors” have also present with them snakes with simple weaponry, besides the bird-crested helmet, spears and shields were very common weaponry as most of the battle tactics was forming a shield wall. In the same helmet we see the boar warriors, the main difference is that they bring with them a sword. If we now move to the same panel of the Toroslunda plates we see that the boar warriors seem to be in a higher rank than the bird warriors since we find a sword-ring which was a symbol of status. In the same helmet, we also face the motif of the man fighting an animal, presumably a wolf signalling the next stage of the chain on becoming an *Úlfheðinn*.

If my interpretations are correct, this would mean that the bird warriors would be the lowest rank of these “savage warriors”, since there is no explanation of bird warriors in the literary corpus this is still a supposition. The next step would be the boar

warrior, this type of warrior is present both in the literary corpus in Beowulf and in the archaeological context. The presence of boar warrior is found in different artifacts from the Scandinavian Iron Age and in Anglo-Saxon artifacts, we find helmets such as the Benty Grange helmet, the Pioneer Helmet or the Guilden Moar boar that has been interpreted to be the crest of a helmet, and these have been linked to high-status burial of warriors.

We see that the wolf in the sagas is a dangerous animal, *Fenrir* will be the killer of the *Alfǫðr*, and as we have seen this mighty wolf is cunning, it was trapped but at the cost of the hand of the god *Týr*. In the *Völsunga* saga when *Signý* and *Sigmund* wear themselves wolf skins and become as wild and strong being able to take different enemies at once and in the wolf lies the next step of advancing in the military apparel. This is seen in the Torslunda Plates, where one of the boar warriors undergoes the rite or challenge to become an *Úlfheðinn*, he faces two, captures one and is recognized as an *Úlfheðinn*. This could be corroborated if we were able to find a wolf skin in a high-status grave, but due to the perishable nature of the wolf skin, this might prove difficult. The *Úlfheðnar* are, as we have seen the *berserkr* and the bodyguards of the king, people that earned its trusts and are able to sit with him as we see in *Hráfnsmál*.

There is still, the issue of the *berserkr*. In *Hráfnsmál*, the *Úlfheðnar* and the *berserkr* seem to be the same, but different terms are used. The term *Úlfheðnar* sees less and less use while the term *berserkr* gains more usage. This leads me to believe that the *berserkr*, at the time of the *Hráfnsmál*, is the same as the *Uflhednar* but with time the *Úlfheðnar* ends up being engulfed in the term *berserkr*. The figure *berserkr* sees also an evolution, as we have seen it goes from bodyguard of the king to vagrant warrior.

In the archaeological aspect, the *berserkr* as a bear warrior seems to be flawed, there are little to no references to the bear warrior. If we were to look for “nude warriors” this could prove to be different, but due to current limitations, I have been unable to, even though it could be promising.

For a more complete research regarding this topic the next step would be to keep consulting the sources for a deeper understanding of the figure of the *berserkr*, in addition a reference to the boar warriors and bird warriors that are present in the archaeological record but have a limited presence in the literary corpus, perhaps there would be something useful in the Skaldic poetry. If there exists the possibility to elaborate a stronger foundation for the savage warriors then it should be done. Regarding the archaeological corpus, an even deeper investigation of the figure of the savage warrior would be promising, and also the interpretation of the *berserkr* as a “naked warrior” instead of a “bear warrior”.

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