

# THE WILD MAN

## Medieval Myth and Symbolism

Timothy Husband

with the assistance of  
Gloria Gilmore-House

The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
New York

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# FOREWORD

Although the scholar's standard endeavor is to trace the history of an idea, the layman rarely has the opportunity to follow this trail of the historian's investigation. The exhibition *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism* offers a valuable examination of an idea together with its imagery: one of the most delightful and fascinating inventions of the medieval imagination—the hairy, primitive, woodland creature who at first embodied all that medieval man hoped he was not, then, as the old order declined, became the object of his envy. By focusing on the wild man's evolution in art, the exhibition presents the range and tone of life in medieval times. Seldom does a gathering of objects related to an iconographic theme offer as much variety, scope, and quality. Thanks to the graciousness of the lending institutions, both in the United States and in Europe, we are fortunate not only to be able to shed considerable light on a dark corner of medieval mythology, but also to present some of the finest works—drawings, prints, tapestries, ivories, sculptures, manuscripts, and metalwork—of the late Middle Ages.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is especially pleased to present this important exhibition at The Cloisters as part of that institution's ongoing small-scale exhibitions, which in various ways emphasize aspects of the Museum's permanent collections. Timothy Husband, Administrator of The Cloisters and originator of the exhibition, deserves special credit for his excellent research and his devotion to the exacting task of arranging loans and preparing this catalogue. His assistant Gloria Gilmore-House researched and wrote a number of the catalogue entries, and the entire staff of The Cloisters, especially Carl Koivuniemi, contributed an outstanding effort to the exhibition's realization. Finally, we are particularly grateful to the individuals and groups who made the exhibition and the catalogue possible through their generous financial support.

WILLIAM D. WIXOM  
Chairman, Department of  
Medieval Art and The Cloisters  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The wild man in late medieval art appeared in many roles and guises. Through vicissitude, his representations and themes essential to his understanding often survived in only a single object. Consequently, without the cooperation and generosity of numerous contributing institutions, both in this country and in Europe, this exhibition could not have taken place. The willingness of many of these institutions to lend some of their finest treasures has, furthermore, elevated the exhibition from an iconographic survey to a true feast of the arts. To these institutions, to the directors and curators who lent their wholehearted support to this project, I am gratefully indebted.

While space prevents listing the many people who generously gave their expertise and time, I would like to express my particular thanks to several scholars who contributed invaluable advice, guidance, and assistance. I am indebted to François Avril, Conservateur, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, for bringing to my attention Ms. fr. 2366 and 2374, heretofore unpublished and key to the interpretation of the four miniatures of Jean Bourdichon (no. 32). Mr. Avril also provided a transcription of the manuscript, as well as a transliteration into modern French. Walter Cahn, Chairman, Department of Art History, Yale University, introduced me to the Vanderbilt Hours (no. 38), and Claude Schaefer, Ancien Professeur d'histoire de l'art à l'Université de Tours, and James Marrow, Professor, Department of Art History, Yale University, shared their knowledge of this important manuscript with us. Larry Silver, Associate Professor, Department of Art History, Northwestern University, generously provided a copy of his forthcoming article, "Forest Primeval: Wilderness Images by Albrecht Altdorfer (1506–1516)." Susan E. Tholl researched and provided significant contributions to catalogue entry nos. 1 through 4 and 38, as well as produced a thorough and perceptive study of the earliest manifestations of hairiness in Western art. Stephen Gardner, Assistant Professor, Department of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University, supported her in these efforts and also made available his researches on the wild man. Alan Shestack, Director of the Yale University Art Gallery, assisted with his census of fifteenth-century German engravings in American museum collections. P. Michel of Zurich kindly provided modern German translations of fifteenth-century Swiss inscriptions. Sarah Ferguson collaborated with Françoise Vachon on the English translation found in Appendix A. Fred A. Childs of Union University–Albany produced the excellent translation found in Appendix B. Edda Gentry translated several of the Middle High German texts used for research. Bella Bessard kindly helped with research and offered organizational assistance in Paris. Florens Deuchler, Professeur de l'Histoire de l'art, Université de Genève, in-



vited my participation in the symposium of the Society of Swiss Historians held in Basel on the subject of *Volkskunst*; some of the resulting research is incorporated into the introduction to this volume. I am extremely grateful to Sibyll Kummer-Rothenhäusler of Zurich for the untiring help she gave in coordinating numerous loan requests, assisting in research, and introducing me to some of the more arcane regions of Swiss folklore. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to William D. Wixom, Chairman of the Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters, and Jane Hayward, Curator of The Cloisters, for reading the manuscript of this catalogue, giving their valuable advice and criticism, and lending their steadfast support to this project. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Gloria Gilmore-House, who not only contributed a number of entries to this catalogue, but also served as an assistant of admirable competence and remarkable endurance through all aspects of preparing the catalogue and organizing the exhibition.

Special thanks go also to those who have assisted and contributed to both the catalogue and exhibition in many other ways. Suse Childs located many obscure references and coordinated arrangements with several German lending institutions. To Jeffrey Daly and the Design Department are owed the effective installation of the exhibition. The Conservation Department lent their expert hands to the mounting and care of the many delicate objects. I am grateful to Stephanie Wada for her conscientious work in preparing the bibliography. To Lauren Shakely of the Museum's editorial staff, a particular thanks for the skillful and painstaking effort she devoted to the editing of this volume, as well as for the efficient handling of the myriad of details throughout its production. Carl Koivuniemi not only typed the entire manuscript several times over with unflagging patience and accuracy, but he also aided me throughout all organizational aspects of the exhibition and catalogue; for his energetic and cheerful dependability I am extremely grateful. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the many contributors, whose generous support made this catalogue possible, and to Reliance Group, Inc., which has sponsored the exhibition.

It is my hope that this exhibition and catalogue, the result of contributions by so many, will illuminate a curious but revealing figure of medieval art and thought.

TIMOTHY HUSBAND  
Administrator of The Cloisters  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

# LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

Basel: Historisches Museum  
Basel: Öffentlichen Kunstsammlung, Kunstmuseum Basel, Kupferstichkabinett  
Bern: Bernisches Historisches Museum  
Boston: Museum of Fine Arts  
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University  
Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago  
Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art  
Cologne: Kunstgewerbemuseum  
Cologne: Schnütgen-Museum  
Frankfurt am Main: Historisches Museum  
London: The British Library, Reference Division, Department of Manuscripts  
London: The British Library, Reference Division, Rare Book Collections  
London: The British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings  
London: Victoria and Albert Museum  
New Haven: The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University  
New York: The American Numismatic Society  
New York: The New York Public Library; Spencer Collection; Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations  
New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library  
Nuremberg: Stadtbibliothek  
Paris: Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Bibliothèque  
Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Sammlung für Plastik und Kunstgewerbe  
Vienna: Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst  
Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art



Fig. 1 Wild man. Pen-and-ink illustration from "Ballade d'une home sauvage." France, about 1500. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. fr. 2366, fol. 3v

# INTRODUCTION

*Myths are things that never happen but always are.*

*Sallustius, On the Gods and the Universe*

Toward the end of the Middle Ages, all aspects of life had become so steeped in an atmosphere of deep religiosity that no object or incident, no idea or action could escape religious interpretation. A state of tension grew, as J. Huizinga observed, in which “all that is meant to stimulate spiritual consciousness is reduced to appalling commonplace profanity, to a startling worldliness in otherworldly guise.”<sup>1</sup> Concepts generated by faith tended to be seized upon and externalized in a naive and literal fashion, and thus abstractions became rendered as concrete realities. Holy and profane thought were constantly intermingled. The ordinary was transmuted to the sacred and the sacred to the commonplace with such consistency that any real distinction between religious and secular thought virtually disappeared.<sup>2</sup> Nothing could better demonstrate this phenomenon than the myth of the medieval wild man.

The wild man, a purely mythic creature, was a literary and artistic invention of the medieval imagination. In physical appearance he differed from man mainly in his thick coat of hair, which left only his face, hands, feet—and, with wild women, breasts—bare (Figs. 1, 11). Elbows, and knees were often exposed, as though hair could not grow on these areas of flex and wear. The hair was long and tufted, at times well groomed and at others filthy and matted with dirt, moss, and other accretions. A variant form of the wild man, well illustrated in fifteenth-century engravings (see Fig. 112), shows him covered with a thick growth of leafy foliage rather than hair, which was generally thought to be black. Renaud de Montaubon describes social outcasts, personified by wild men, as “noir et velu com ours enchainé” (“black and hairy like a chained bear”).<sup>3</sup> Wirnt von Gravenberg, in the thirteenth-century German epic *Wigalois*, draws a comparable image of a wild woman: “Diu was in einer varwe gar swarz ruch als ein beer” (“She was of a black color, hairy as a bear”).<sup>4</sup> In early medieval times the wild man was universally thought of as a giant, but as gigantism became equated with irredeemable stupid-

Fig. 2 The capture of a wild man. Photograph of a scene from *z'Wild Mandji*, performed at Baltschieder (Wallis), Switzerland, 1976. Photo courtesy the Gemeindepräsident, Baltschieder



ity, the wild man's scale reduced as a matter of self-preservation. Consequently some authors attempted to resolve the question of scale by asserting that the wild man could change size at will. Caesarus of Heisterbach, in the thirteenth century, reports that he witnessed a wild man suddenly begin to grow until he towered over the entire forest.<sup>5</sup> By the late Middle Ages, many depictions show the wild man reduced to Lilliputian scale, disporting among the leaves and tendrils of plants (see nos. 36, 37, 45, 46A; Fig. 108). In the earlier representations, the wild man protects his modesty by his thick hair alone, sometimes, though rarely, appearing naked and hairless. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, wild folk often wear leafy vines over their groins, intertwined branches about their waists, and even garlands of flowers around their heads. The universal attribute of the wild man is a large club, or occasionally an uprooted tree, which he holds in his hand, often with the end resting on his shoulder. Chrétien de Troyes describes an ogrish wild man, black like a Moor, large and hideous, sitting on a tree stump and holding a large club in his hand ("un vilain, qui resambloit mor, grant et hideus a desmure . . . vi je seoir sor une çache / Une grant maçe an sa main").<sup>6</sup> This common image is well rendered on the front panel of a casket from Cologne (no. 16).

Thought to live in remote, mountainous, and forested regions, the wild man especially flourished in the wooded or alpine regions of the German-speaking lands, such as the Harz, Fichtel, and Algäu Mountains of Germany, the alpine regions of Carinthia and the Tirol in Austria, and Graubünden and Wallis in Switzerland. In many such areas the myths have survived to this day, still celebrated in festivals, masquerades, and dramas (Fig. 2). Not limited to these regions, however, the wild man myth thrived throughout western and central Europe.

In these forests, the wild man was said to make his home in caves, rocky crags, dank burrows, hollows in tree trunks (Fig. 1), and other rude places. Occasionally he fashioned primitive hovels of branches and mud; an eleventh-century Hessian document refers to such an abode as a *wildero wibu hus* ("wild woman's house").<sup>7</sup> Toward the end of the fourteenth century, Heinrich von Hesler states in *Die Apokalypse* that the wild man lived only in places unfit for human habitation, in fens and woods, in water and in mountains, in caves and in bushes ("In



Fig. 3 Wild man. Detail of manuscript illumination from the *Luttrell Psalter*. England (East Anglia), 1335–40. London, The British Library, Ms. Add. 42130, fol. 70. Photo copyright The British Library

bruchen und in walden, / In wazzeren und in bergen / Und swa sie sich vorbergen, / In holn und in cruten").<sup>8</sup> Notions of the wild man's habitat had changed little by the end of the sixteenth century, as Edmund Spenser's description in *The Faerie Queene* indicates:

Farre in the forrest by a hollow glade,  
Couered with mossie shrubs, which spredde brode  
Did vnderneath them make a gloomy shade;  
Where foot of liuing creature neuer trode,  
Ne scarce wyld beasts durst come, there was this wights abode.<sup>9</sup>

By every account the wild man's behavior matched his primitive surroundings. Strong enough to uproot trees, he was violent and aggressive, not only against wild animals but also against his own kind. His brutish, contentious nature expressed itself in a natural combativeness against which neither beast nor man was equal, though his club—and sometimes only his bare hands—was his only weapon. With his instinctive knowledge of the ways of wild beasts (see Fig. 72), the wild man was a skilled hunter, but, in spite of his physical supremacy, shrank from contact with humans and frequently even with his own kind. Indeed, his inept social abilities apparently limited him to only that cooperative union required for procreation. Lacking agriculture, he was forced to eke out a subsistence from hunting and gathering. Thought to crawl around on all fours (Fig. 3), he scratched tubers and roots from the ground, picked berries, and gnawed on verdure. When he killed game, he ate it completely raw ("et si manjue / La veneison trestote crue"), according to Chrétien de Troyes in *Yvain*.<sup>10</sup> By many accounts, the wild man also indulged in cannibalism. By the sixteenth century this habit brought him into association with werewolves and other flesh-eaters (see no. 25). Wild men were commonly thought to abduct children, but often only to fulfill parental instincts.<sup>11</sup> Instances of wild folk substituting changelings for human children are also recorded.<sup>12</sup> Although he was a hunter, the wild man was frequently hunted. Illustrations of the fourteenth century depict the wild man on all fours at bay, pursued by hounds and hunters on horseback (Figs. 4, 5). Incapable of speech, the wild man muttered only unintelligible sounds or none at all. Orson, in



Fig. 4 A hunting party. Detail of manuscript illumination from the *Psalter of Queen Mary*. England, 1300–25. London, The British Library, Royal Ms. 2 B VII, fol. 172v. Photo copyright The British Library

the French epic *Valentine and Orson* (see no. 34), is so described. The idea persists in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*:

For other language he had none nor speech,  
But a soft murmur, and confused sound  
Of senseless words, which nature did him teach,  
T'expresse his passions, which his reason did empeach.<sup>13</sup>

The wild man was innately irrational, a condition that was compounded by his limited powers to reason and articulate. He set up a woodland clamor, ripping out trees by their roots, raving in frustration at the elements, venting rage and fear. In less irrational, but equally abandoned, moods, he gave full rein to sensual desire. Although the wild man could hardly be suspected of overweening faith, medieval authors stressed not that the wild man was without belief in God, but that he was utterly without knowledge of Him. They are “shaped like humans,” declares Heinrich von Hesler in his *Apokalypse*, “but are so crude and wild that they have never heard God’s word” (“Die nach menschen sin gebildet / Und aber also vorwildet / Daz sie Gotes wort nie vornamen”).<sup>14</sup>

Against this background it is then surprising to find the wild man ubiquitously represented in works of art of the highest quality beginning in the fourteenth century and continuing well into the sixteenth century. Not only is he represented in every medium — panel painting, manuscript illumination, sculpture, stained glass, glass vessels, metalwork, enamels, leatherwork, textiles, tapestries, printed books, graphics, bronzes, and ceramics—but he also appears in the most unexpected places—in the marginalia of Books of Hours (no. 38), biblical illustration (Figs. 8, 9), as the bearer of coats-of-arms of popes and kings, on playing cards (no. 47), in choir stalls (no. 26), on ordinary household objects (Fig. 6), and even as jamb figures on cathedral portals (Fig. 7). Primitive, irrational, and heretical, the wild man would seem to have been a pariah in a world obsessed with religious interpretation and order. Yet it is largely these very characteristics of medieval society that explain the wild man’s invention and development.

The sociological and psychological ramifications of the wild man myth were far-reaching.



Fig. 5 Wild man at bay. Detail of manuscript illumination from the *Psalter of Queen Mary*. England, 1300–25. London, The British Library, Royal Ms. 2 B VII, fol. 173. Photo copyright The British Library

His terrifying nature made him the focus of a broad range of anxieties and, in the folkloric context at least, the scapegoat for unexplained calamities or quirks of nature. Frustrated farmers often blamed failed crops on the rampagings or supernatural machinations of the wild man. On a pedagogical level, a misbehaving child could be frightened into obedience by the specter of wild men who would come to snatch him away if he persisted. Faengge, a colossal ogreish wild woman with matted hair, who exuded a foul odor and had breasts so large that she had to fling them over her shoulders when she ran through the woods, was thought to kidnap and devour small children.<sup>15</sup> For obstreperous youth in the Tirolian and Bavarian Alps, where her legend prospered, Faengge was a particularly effective threat.

The wild man likewise served to counterpoise the accepted standards of conduct of society in general. If the average man could not articulate what he meant by “civilized” in positive terms, he could readily do so in negative terms by pointing to the wild man. As the dialectical antithesis of all man should strive for, the wild man was the abstract concept of “noncivilization” rendered as a fearful physical reality. This myth exemplifies man’s tendency to dignify or credit his own mode of life by contrasting it to that of others who are considered not merely different but lesser. Such figures, whether real or mythic, embody the essential qualities of the society that identifies them.<sup>16</sup> As medieval man became progressively obsessed with a highly ordered social structure, a rational disposition to direct it, and a committed faith in God to sustain it, the wild man came to represent the opposite. Sublimated in the wild man were the preeminent phobias of medieval society—chaos, insanity, and ungodliness.

Looking beyond his own immediate world, medieval man gave flesh to his fears by identifying and synthesizing characteristics from a broad range of prototypal forms. In the earliest Greek literature, races of aberrational human forms were reported to live in India, Ethiopia, Libya, and other remote lands. Over the centuries natural histories, cosmologies, chronicles, and encyclopedias continued the tradition in accounts referred to generically as the *Marvels of the East* (nos. 1, 2). One of the first to mention these creatures was Herodotus. In his *Historia* of the fifth century B.C., the Greek historian describes many species in detail. In addition to huge snakes, elephants, bears, horned asses, and other beasts, he states that “there dwelled in Libya





Fig. 6 Wild man playing a rebec (Orpheus?). Wooden bread mold. Switzerland, sixteenth century. Zurich, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, 50716

the dog-headed men and the headless that have their eyes in their breasts, as the Libyans say, and the wild men and women, besides many other creatures not fabulous.”<sup>17</sup> Thus, in the earliest literature, antecedent wild men were numbered among the monstrous races.

In a virtually uninterrupted continuum, the notion of these monstrous races was perpetuated from classical times through the Middle Ages. In the beginning of the fourth century B.C., Ktesias wrote a treatise providing accounts of races purported to live in India. These legends were repeated by Pliny in his fanciful miscellanea, *Historia Naturalis* (77 A.D.). In the third century, Solinus’s *Collectanea rerum memorabilium* dwelled on the fantastic legends of the East to an even greater extent than Pliny’s history. Solinus’s work, along with Martianus Capella’s *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, written in the fifth century, were the primary sources for the monstrous races for medieval writers.

The first major Christian writer to discuss the monstrous races was Augustine, whose views were adopted by most later authors. Isidore of Seville, in his *Etymologiae*, drawing his information primarily from Solinus, traced the hierarchy of the divine order from the Holy Trinity down to the lowest creatures, with the monstrous races between man and the animal kingdom. Most later medieval texts follow this formula. Hrabanus Maurus’s *De universo* (ca. 844) is in large part a copy of the *Etymologiae*. The tradition was perpetuated by Honorius Augustodinesis’s *Imago mundi* (ca. 1100), Gervase of Tilbury’s *Otia imperialia* (ca. 1211), Thomas de Cantimpré’s *De natura rerum* (1228–44), Walter von Metz’s *Imago mundi* (1246), Rudolf von Ems’s *Weltchronik* (1250–54), Vincent de Beauvais’s *Speculum naturale* (ca. 1250), and Brunetto Latini’s *Livres dou Tresor* (1260–70). These works were followed in the late Middle Ages by the *Buch der Natur* (ca. 1350) of Conrad von Megenberg (no. 3) and the *Liber chronicarum* (1493) of Hartmann Schedel (no. 4). Although accounts were progressively elaborated, moralized, or otherwise amplified, the descriptions of the monstrous races, in the absence of apodictic evidence, remained unchanged. Herodotus’s account of the dog-headed people, for example, reappears practically unaltered in Hartmann Schedel’s fifteenth-century description.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the *Marvels of the East*, the Alexandrine legends also promoted accounts of the



Fig. 7 Jamb figures in the form of wild men. Detail of right jamb of main portal of the College of San Gregorio, Valladolid. Spain, about 1490. Photo: Mas

monstrous races. These chronicles of the travels and adventures of the great conqueror describe the many monstrous races he encountered (see no. 5). That these accounts were thought, although erroneously, to be based on the writings of Callisthenes, who accompanied Alexander, only increased their credibility. As the *Marvels* and Alexander legends rely on common sources, many of the creatures they describe are the same.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, wild men are frequently mentioned. The archpresbyter Leo of Naples, one of the principal sources of medieval Alexandrine legends, refers in his tenth-century account, known as the *Historia de preliis*, to “*Magnus homo agrestis*” (“large wild men”) and later to “*homines agrestes*.”<sup>20</sup>

The wild men mentioned in both the *Marvels of the East* and the Alexander legends, in terms of their existence in a remote habitat, are analogous to the medieval wild men. Only one feature distinguishes the wild man from his Eastern antecedents: hairiness. Before the twelfth century, no accounts describe the wild men as covered with hair, even though they occasionally so describe others of the monstrous races. Although evidence is scant, the earlier pictorial cycles seem consistent with the texts. The hominoid figure in an illumination from a Solinus text (Fig. 17), dating from the thirteenth century but based on an archetype of the sixth or seventh century, is depicted as hairless. In another manuscript (ca. 1023), an illumination accompanying the text of Hrabanus Maurus again shows aberrant hominoids with smooth bodies.<sup>21</sup> One of the earliest representations of a member of the monstrous races, a cannibalistic giant who resembles the medieval wild man and who displays at least incipient hairiness, appears in the eleventh-century Tiberius manuscript from The British Library (no. 1, colorplate I).

During the twelfth century, hairiness became an iconographic convention. Not an attribute associated with the wild men of the *Marvels*, hairiness was a visual cipher bestowed upon the medieval wild man to indicate, in part, his existence outside man’s civilized order. This remote and base living condition alone related the prototypal primitives to the wild man. As the wild man’s symbolic and formal attributes became conventionalized, the monstrous races and other forebears were increasingly made to conform to him (see nos. 2, 5).

The convention of hairiness, however, signified not only an uncivilized living condition, but

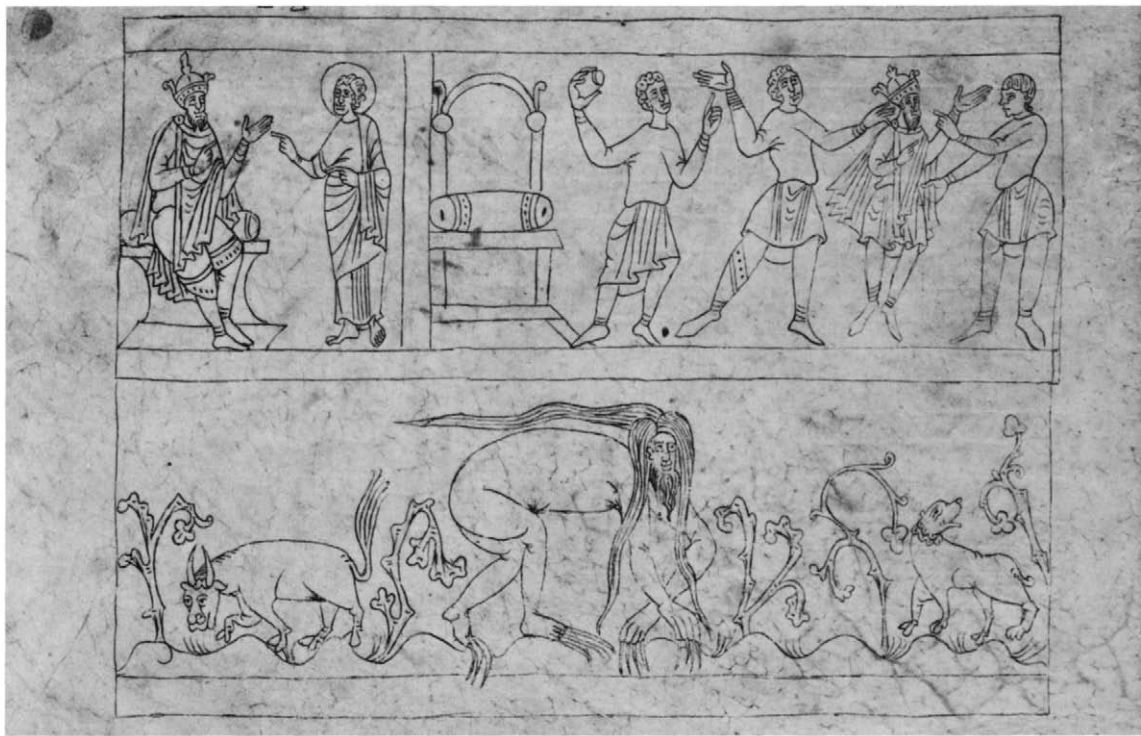


Fig. 8 Nebuchadrezzar cast out among the beasts. Detail of manuscript illumination from the Bible of San Pedro de Roda. Spain (Catalonia), about 1000. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. lat. 6111, fol. 65v

also a debased mental state. As early as the seventh century, Isidore of Seville, in his *Etymologiae*, identified mania and melancholia as the principal mental disorders. He describes mania as “a disordered state of mind characterized by fury and agitation,” while melancholia is characterized by “disorientation, social withdrawal, and feelings of mistrust.”<sup>22</sup> Mania, as viewed by Isidore, was true insanity, and melancholia the result of physical disorder—an overabundance of black bile—which could lead to insanity. Addressing symptoms and popular images of medieval delusion, Arnold of Villanova, a thirteenth-century encyclopedist, stated that if the mania stems from choler, the victim shouts, jumps, runs, is wakeful, and can even assume the guises of animals.<sup>23</sup> Even the layman in medieval Europe recognized the “fiery-complexioned, hyperactive, enraged, noisy, and murderous” behavior of the maniac and the “dark, shaggy [for medieval doctors agreed that insanity manifested itself not only in behavior but in physical appearance as well], immobile, depressed, silent, solitary, and suspicious” behavior of the melancholic.<sup>24</sup> A syndrome with these symptoms, readily recognizable as those of the wild man, would be diagnosed today as manic-depressive.

All disorders, whether mental or physical, were in medieval thought considered diseases and were undifferentiated with regard to etiology. Ancient tradition often linked disease to moral disturbances. In Christian interpretation, however, imperfections of the mind and body, introduced with the fall of Adam, were unequivocally associated with sin. This characteristic marriage between religious and secular thought gave issue to specific cosmological interpretation. Disease served three major functions: it was a test of man’s moral and religious fiber, which would spiritually elevate his earthly existence; it was a purgation to achieve salvation through the expiation of sin; and it was a punishment for religious disobedience or serious lapses in faith.<sup>25</sup> The *Glossa ordinaria*, written between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, states that God used disease “for testing, or for improving the just, or for damning the wicked.”<sup>26</sup> Mental disease, perhaps more frequently than physical, exemplified these functions, manifest not only in the Bible and hagiographies, but also in a great variety of medieval writings, in commentaries, moralities, allegories, romances, and epics. Numerous literary



Fig. 9 Nebuchadrezzar cast out among the beasts. Manuscript illumination from the Bible of King Sancho el Fuerte. Spain (Navarre), 1194-97. Amiens, Bibliothèque Communale, Ms. lat. 108, fol. 136

figures, though otherwise unrelated, become identified with wild men because of their common insane condition. Perhaps the most striking of these are the holy anchorites and penitential saints.

Anchorities such as Paul and Anthony, who sought spiritual perfection through earthly deprivation, espousing a remote and penitential life—viewed as a type of insanity—exemplify the first function of disease. The second is represented by the penitents who voluntarily subjected themselves to a wilderness life of hardship and deprivation in contrition for a particular sin. With Saints Mary Magdalene (no. 21) and John Chrysostom (nos. 22, 23, 24) the sin was adultery. By sacrificing their physical well-being in atonement these saints achieved spiritual redemption. Related to the eremitic saints is Nebuchadrezzar, the great sixth-century B.C. Babylonian king, who in many ways is the forebear of all madmen in literature. Cast out in the wilderness, he assumed the bestial behavior, irrationality, and futile ravings of a madman, until, after seven years, he had sufficiently atoned for his sins of idolatry, blasphemy, and pride. In the secular realm, a large group of characters, mostly in High Gothic literature, also experience momentary rather than permanent madness, not for disavowal of God, but because of faithlessness in love, moral turpitude, excessive grief, or even lovesickness. Like Nebuchadrezzar, their insanity is both purgative and punitive. After their period of suffering they are restored to health by divine grace, magical forces, love of a lady, or other cure, purer and more fit in the eyes of both God and man. Merlin (see no. 8), Ywain, Lancelot, Tristram, and a host of others fall into this category. Most typical of those enduring punitive insanity are the pagan kings who are stricken because of their disavowal of God and persecution of his people. According to medieval tradition, Herod, for example, died in a wild frenzy of madness because he had perpetrated such outrages as the massacre of the innocents. For sinners of this magnitude, madness is irrevocable and final damnation certain.

Like the wild men of the *Marvels of the East*, insane figures in literature are not depicted with the medieval wild man's growth of body hair until the twelfth century. The earliest Western representations of the mad Nebuchadrezzar invariably show him simply as a naked man. In the Roda Bible (ca. 1000), Nebuchadrezzar, naked, with exaggeratedly long claws and hair flowing

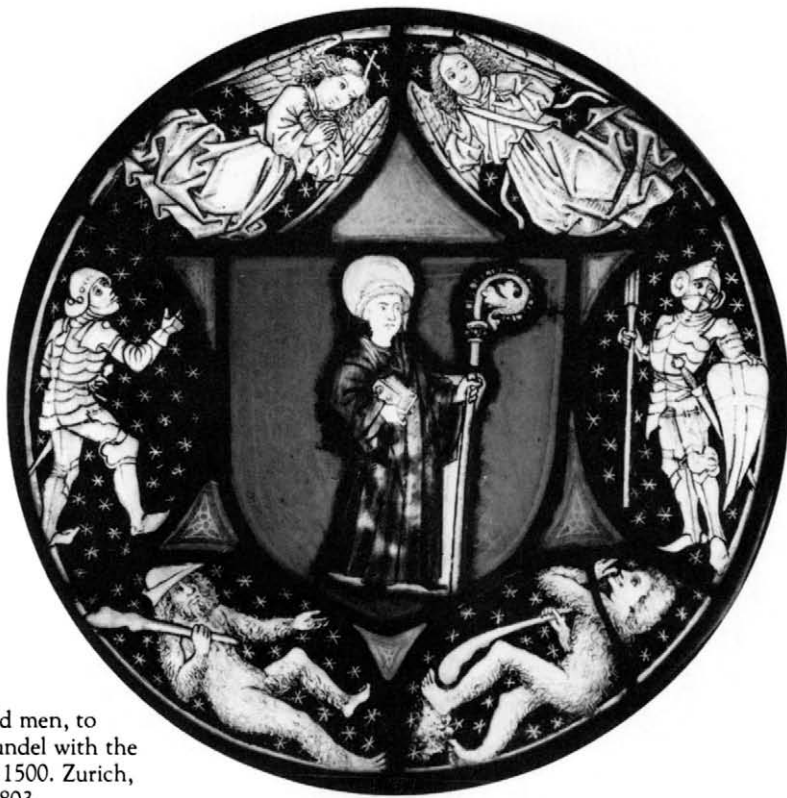


Fig. 10 The divine order, from wild men, to knights, to angels. Stained glass roundel with the arms of Glarus. Switzerland, about 1500. Zurich, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, 12803

down his back like a mane, crawls on all fours across an undulating ground sprouting with gnarled tendrils. He is flanked by a grazing ox and a lion representing the bestial company he has been forced to keep (Fig. 8). In a Pamplona picture Bible completed by 1197,<sup>27</sup> however, Nebuchadrezzar is depicted on all fours, without claws, and entirely covered with hair (Fig. 9), like the medieval wild man. Hairiness also becomes a prominent feature of Nebuchadrezzar in twelfth-century capitals from the cloister of Moissac and Saint-Gaudens (Haute-Garonne), in the transept of Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire, and at Saint-Hilaire-de-Foussay at Poitou. The association of hairiness with insanity during the twelfth century is further evidenced by representations of the penitent saints. The hirsute Onuphrius, in Western art, makes an appearance at this time in a mosaic in the basilica of Monreale, Sicily. In a secular literary context, the convention first occurs in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini* (ca. 1148),<sup>28</sup> in which Merlin several times retreats to the woods in fits of insanity, hides like a wild animal, and feeds on grass. He is called a "silvester," a name that has been interpreted specifically to denote a wild man.<sup>29</sup>

The mental imbalance, though often temporary, that characterizes these kings, saints, and wizards was, like the primitiveness of the monstrous races, seized upon and absorbed into the myth of the wild man. These isolated and anathematic features were externalized in the fully developed image of the mythic wild man—and subsequently in all other figures that displayed common characteristics—through the convention of hairiness. That Nebuchadrezzar was rendered as a wild man, contrary to the Bible, which states, "his hair grew like feathers of eagles, and his nails like birds' claws" (Daniel 4:30), bears witness to the compelling nature of the myth.

The convention of hair, as well as much of the wild man's nature, can be traced to his ancient ancestors in pagan mythologies and the interpretation given to them by medieval man. The hairy Enkidu, who, in the Babylonian epic *Gilgamesh*, lives with and protects wild animals and is alternately referred to as a man and a beast, can be viewed as a prototype of the medieval wild man. In classical mythology the giant Polyphemus and Hercules—wearing the pelt of the Nemean lion, brandishing a huge cudgel, and performing feats of superhuman strength—certain-



Fig. 11 Wild folk family. Engraving by Master bxg. Germany, 1470–90. Vienna, Albertina

ly have their parallels. More akin are the sirens, fauns, centaurs, satyrs, and other woodland demons and deities whose wild habitat, hairiness, supernatural powers, and wanton raucous behavior were inherited by the medieval wild man. Silvanus, the god of fertile lands and gardens, who customarily carries a tree in his hand, shows a strong resemblance to the wild man, who wields a similar attribute.<sup>30</sup> One of the wild man's closest classical prototypes, however, is Silenus, the god of the mountain forests, who, like the wild man, carries an uprooted tree and dwells in a rugged habitat. To symbolize his wantonness, supernatural strength, and hardened nature, classical artists often depicted Silenus with a thick coat of hair.<sup>31</sup>

Saint Jerome, perhaps more than any patristic writer, gave heretical and demonic interpretation to the hairiness of such mythical creatures. In his translation of the Bible from Hebrew into Latin he used the term *pilosi*, "hairy ones," to describe the demons who suffered the wrath of God by roaming through the ruins of Palestine ("and the hairy ones will dance there," Isaiah 13:21). While the Hebrew word connoted only a demon, *pilosi*—Jerome explains in his commentaries on Isaiah—refers to a variety of pagan hairy woodland demons who are collectively immoral.<sup>32</sup> Not only did this interpretation give the wild man his reputation for sexual prowess and heathen behavior, but it permitted medieval interpreters to subsume any of the wild man's antecedents under the general convention of hairiness.<sup>33</sup> The type and prototype became so confused that Isidore of Seville viewed fauns and satyrs as wild man (*homines silvestres*), a notion repeated by Bartholomaeus Anglicus in his *De proprietatibus rerum* (1230–50).<sup>34</sup>

While men of antiquity could comfortably place woodland deities in a mythological pantheon, Christian thinkers could not so readily categorize the wild man. Whether he was man or beast and where he took his place in the divine order were subjects of considerable debate. Addressing the issue in the fourth century (see no. 3), Saint Augustine declares that mortality and reason distinguish man from animals. As far as aberrational human forms are concerned, he declares, "however strange he may appear to our senses in bodily form or color or motion or utterance, or in any faculty, part or quality of his nature whatsoever, let no true believer have any doubt that such an individual is descended from one man who was first created."<sup>35</sup> While



Fig. 12 Death and lapiths (?) attacking a wild woman (Hippodameia?) and a centaur (Eurythion?). Manuscript illumination from the *Hours of Charles of Angoulême* by Robinet Tesard. France (Orléans?), before 1496. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. lat. 1173, fol. 41v

Augustine's claim that the wild men were created within the divine order was generally accepted throughout the medieval period (Fig. 10), questions concerning the wild man's redeemability persisted. Heinrich von Hesler, who asserts the existence of wild men in his day, confesses, "Whether they shall be saved or whether they shall be lost and fare with the devil, that will have to be left to God's mercy" (Werden sulle, daz sie genesen, / Oder sie suln vorlorn wesen / Oder mit dem Tuvele hin gen, / Daz muz an Goter guaden sten").<sup>36</sup>

The fifteenth-century Strasbourg theologian Geiler von Kayserberg, in one of a collection of sermons published under the title *Die Emeis* (*The Ant*), categorized five types of wild men: the *solitarii*, or the penitent saints; the *sacchani*, satyrs who lived in the desert wilderness and were seen by both Saints Anthony and Paul; the *hispani*, a particular type of demented folk (the term may, through orthographic confusion, refer to *ziegane*, or "gypsies"); the *piginini* or pygmies; and finally the *diaboli*, satyrlike creatures identified with the mythic wild men, called devils.<sup>37</sup> By identifying wild men with familiar ideas—eremitic saints, gypsies(?), pygmies, and creatures of classical mythology—Geiler dispels the superstitious and fearful notions associated with them. On the other hand, he notes that some wild men are consummately evil and must be construed as the work, if not the incarnation, of the devil. Geiler thus underscores the fundamental dualism of the wild man. At once benign and malevolent, retiring and aggressive, rational and insane, the wild man is perhaps most notable for the contradictory representations created of him throughout the late medieval period.

This duality, so striking in late medieval imagery, results from the contrasting functions of the wild man as a myth on one hand and as a symbol on the other. The descriptions given in the beginning of this introduction reveal the beliefs associated primarily with the wild man in his mythic context. Here, as the archetype of chaos, heresy, and insanity, he is the embodiment of all the sublimated fears that inspired his invention. As long as conviction sustained this myth, the wild man remained a figure of convention and tradition. Attitudes toward, or representations of, the mythic wild man are confined mainly to the realm of folklore and to those literary forms—the *Marvels*, the Alexandrine legends, the legends of the hairy saints, and





Fig. 13 *The Age of Silver*. Panel painting by Lucas Cranach the Elder. Germany, about 1530. London, National Gallery, 3922

the numerous Gothic epics, romances, and allegories—that initially provided sources for the myth and later conformed to it. In his symbolic context, however, the wild man receives more complex iconographic interpretation. Here the imagery of the wild man represents a variety of ideas or sentiments that frequently contradict the very myth from which the imagery sprang. The characteristic late medieval image of a free and enlightened creature living in complete harmony with nature reflects not the mythic wild man as the embodiment of all that man should eschew but, on the contrary, the wild man as a symbol of all that man should strive to achieve. As both myth and symbol, then, the wild man could be at once savage and sublime, evoke fear and admiration, and represent man's antithesis and his ideal. Through this repeated phenomenon of transmutation from myth to symbol, the interpretive value of the wild man developed and grew increasingly complex.

By nature an evolving notion, the wild man myth shifted in content and complexion as the society that created it evolved and changed in its patterns and outlook. Once conviction in a myth is lost by the society it reinforces, it ceases to play a meaningful role in the collective imagination and is relegated to the realm of fiction.<sup>38</sup> When first-hand reports from Africa, the East, and the New World began to filter back to Europe at the end of the fifteenth century, earlier reports of the monstrous races were discredited. But, as White states, "the dissolution by scientific knowledge of the ignorance which led earlier men to locate their imagined wild men in specific times and places does not necessarily touch on the levels of psychic anxiety where such images have their origins."<sup>39</sup> Since disorder, insanity, and heresy symbolized by the wild man still existed, medieval man realized that "wildness" was not just a remote, but a universal condition, as evident within "civilization" as without.<sup>40</sup> This discomfiting notion further implied that the potential for wildness not only existed within a social unit collectively, but also dwelled within the hidden recesses of every man.

Despite the arguments of Saint Augustine and many of his followers to the contrary, popular belief held that the wild man was hopelessly damned. Except for particular classes of wildness, such as that of the eremitic saints, this conviction even received dogmatic reinforcement from



such theologians as Geiler von Kayserberg. Against its original intentions, then, religious interpretation of wildness aroused less concern about the way in which man could achieve salvation than it did over the possibility that in some cases salvation might be precluded altogether.<sup>41</sup> Thus the wild man, who once menaced civilized man in general, now posed a threat to man as an individual. The remote, external myth of the wild man, reduced to fiction by increased knowledge of distant lands, was reconstituted, perhaps more compellingly, as a psychic, internal myth.

This altered concept of wildness, frequently expressed in wild man symbolism of the fourteenth century, is evidenced by a sequence of *bas-de-page* illuminations in the *Psalter of Queen Mary* (Figs. 4, 5), which depicts a party of hunters on horseback pursuing a crawling wild man at bay. Ostensibly a courtly scene in which the stag or other suitable game has been substituted with a wild man, the hunt suggests man's desire to root out and eliminate his own base instincts. The wild man in his erotic role, a theme of great popularity in fourteenth century, reinforces this idea. In an observable progression, the wild man was thrust into themes of courtly romance, notably the storming of the Castle of Love, until eventually he supplanted all of the courtly figures (see nos. 11–14). While these scenes were clearly parodies of an outmoded, decadent system, they postdated the decline of the feudal order by a sufficiently comfortable margin to deprive them of any political poignancy. The erotic type of wild man betrays a subliminal desire that the prevailing social and religious codes still repressed, as well as its concomitant guilt. In his struggle with a wild man, Enyas (no. 11) not only vanquishes a libidinous woodland ogre, but also symbolically eradicates the evil of which all men are potentially guilty. As the wild man myth was internalized, such conflation of a moral issue with a physical one became increasingly common.

With the eventual collapse of feudal Europe and the rise of an urban middle class in the fifteenth century, however, the very social, political, and religious concepts that had established the wild man as a negative myth grew themselves into disfavor. Disillusionment was rampant, and demand for radical change universal. Just as scientific knowledge had exposed the fallacy of the external myth of the wild man, the changing social climate dispelled the internal myth.



Fig. 14 The pope as wild man. Engraving by Melchior Lorsch, with text of Martin Luther. Germany, after 1545. Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett. Photo: Jörg P. Anders, copyright Staatliche Museen

The wild man's disassociation from the collapsed institutions from which he had been barred and from which he had derived no benefit suddenly placed him in a positive light. As he was without knowledge of God he could not commit sin against Him. He indulged his impulses at will and without guilt. Unburdened with man's stagnant values he enjoyed a free existence. Once viewed with repugnance, the wild man now elicited envy. No longer an object of fear and loathing, he was again transformed from a myth into a fiction. This modified perception, along with the wild man's dual nature, inspired an expansion of the wild man's symbolic context to encompass a broad range of new attitudes and values, precluded in his earlier manifestations. Thus the wild man reflected the dramatically changing fabric of the late medieval world around him.

The wild man myth was predicated on the concept of original sin: man fell from innocence, only to be redeemed by true faith, and the mythic wild man was the personification of man's sin. With the upheaval at the end of the Middle Ages, however, this view of man's condition was seriously challenged. One of the more radical philosophies, primitivism, contended that man, throughout all ages, was essentially good but was periodically driven into evil by social or other external forces.<sup>42</sup> A form of social criticism, primitivism encouraged a return to a life free from social impositions. Although the wild man was not necessarily superior to man, his closeness to nature rendered him immune to the ills of civilization and his existence could therefore be considered ideal. Where his habitat was once vilified, the woodlands were now celebrated for their freedom from the trammels of convention and the corruption of man's society. Images of this woodland idyll are common in the fifteenth century; in tapestries, for example, wild men cavort with fantastic beasts, who offer more faithful company than man (no. 30); in scenes on a *Minnekästchen*, the wild man engages in the full range of carefree pursuits (no. 27); and in prints the wild man appears with his contented family in an unspoiled environment (Fig. 11). Unlike those of the fourteenth century, such visions were not so much a complaint against outmoded feudal society, for this had long since crumbled in its own disorder, but of frustrations with the inequities of the new social, political, and economic systems that rose in its place. The depiction of wild folk as winsome, elfin creatures merrily tilling the soil

and harvesting their crops (no. 31) could only have appealed to an urban bourgeoisie with no conception of the realities of rural life.

The positive valuation that primitivism placed on nature did not at first serve to elevate the wild man. As White observes, the wild man as “the idea of the Noble Savage is used, not to dignify the native but to undermine the idea of nobility itself.”<sup>43</sup> This concept emerges in fourteenth-century representations of the knight in combat with the wild man (nos. 11, 16), in which the debasement of the chivalric order, not the aggrandizement of the wild man, is the point. By the sixteenth century, however, the wild man had achieved not only an attractive alternative to man’s existence but a superior one. Hans Sachs’s satirical poem, “The Lament of the Wild Forest Folk over the Perfidious World” (“Klag der wilden Holtzleüt vber die vngetrewen Welt,” no. 33) cites a litany of social complaints avoided by his rustic life, while a poem illustrated by Jean Bourdichon (no. 32) expresses a preference for the wild man’s way of life over that of any other class of man—whether the poor, the craftsman, or the nobility.

Under humanistic influences, the wild man and his forest abode experienced a concurrent philosophical shift in perspective known as “archaism.” In contrast to primitivism, which idealizes the wild man for his lack of “civilization,” archaism idealizes any remote ancestral form, whether wild or civilized.<sup>44</sup> Hans Burgkmair’s drawing (no. 34) pits the wild man (or Namelos) against the raw, violent forces of nature. Perceived as the embodiment of legendary Germanic strength and endurance, he became the standard by which man must test his own mettle. Whereas the nature of the wild man once defined the forests, now the forest defined the wild man.<sup>45</sup>

The Renaissance influences that reinterpreted the wild man imagery eventually caused its erosion. While the wild man’s affinities to the creatures of classical mythologies were recognized throughout the Middle Ages (Fig. 12), his mythic substance was never subsumed by them. Only in the first several decades of the sixteenth century did medieval imagery yield to classical resurgence. In Lucas Cranach the Elder’s view, the rustic, savage world of the Age of Silver (see no. 55), a natural habitat for the wild man, is now populated with ancient primitives (Fig. 13), and Piero di Cosimo’s primeval woodlands abound with satyrs, centaurs, and other



Fig. 15 *Der wilde Mann* (*The Wild Man*). Mixed media on linen by Paul Klee. Switzerland, 1922. Munich, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Gift of Gabriele Münter and Johannes Eichner

classical demons and deities. Albrecht Dürer was perhaps the last major artist to successfully fuse medieval mythology with classical imagery (see no. 59). Ironically, the wild man was ultimately supplanted by the very mythological creatures from whom he descended.

The dual nature of the wild man, however, persisted throughout his late and postmedieval symbolic manifestations. Curiously, the wild man, at once benevolent and malevolent, held up before man the possibilities of a free existence if he broke the shackles of convention placed upon him, but simultaneously threatened him with the consequences of doing so. The wild man was an image of both desire and punishment, a legacy of the penitent saints he never shed. Exploiting this dualism for polemical purposes, Heinrich IX the Younger of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel used the wild man on his coinage (no. 44) to curb the rebellious impulses of his subjects. Melchior Lorsch, in an engraving promoting the Reformation (Fig. 14), went so far as to represent the pope as a wild man. Thus the wild man's foreboding side persisted well into the sixteenth century. Indeed the wild man as both a mythic and folkloric figure has survived to modern times (Fig. 15).

The myth of the medieval wild man was adopted to preserve the values and order of a declining feudal society. As this society began to dissolve so did the myth that was designed to reinforce it. But with the rise of a new social order, the myth, turning to an individual rather than a collective level, was revived, only to become diffused once more through fictionalization. The varied symbolic functions performed by the wild man throughout the transformations of his mythic nature reveal then not only the changing patterns of society, but the current attitudes toward it as well. As Northrup Frye has observed, myths are designed to challenge the extremes of human possibility, the ideals of freedom or redemption on one hand, and the threat of oppression and damnation on the other other.<sup>46</sup> The wild man in his varied iconographical contexts reflected points of man's response to the inherent tensions between good and evil. More than a literary oddity, a folkloric superstition, or a symbolic hybrid, the wild man is a remarkable mirror of the age in which he flourished.

# NOTES

1. Huizinga, 1924, p. 136.
2. Ibid., p. 140.
3. In Bernheimer, 1952, p. 16.
4. von der Leyen and Spamer, 1910, p. 93; Bernheimer, 1952, no. 34, pp. 191–92.
5. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 45.
6. *Yvain*, lines 288–89, 292–93.
7. von der Leyen and Spamer, 1910, p. 88.
8. *Apokalypse*, lines 20060–63.
9. *Faerie Queene*, bk. VI, canticle 4, stanza xiii.
10. *Yvain*, lines 2825–26.
11. See, e.g., a series of *bas-de-page* illuminations in a Book of Hours, Netherlands, Maestricht(?), 1300–25 (Princeton University, Princeton Art Museum, Ms. 44–18, fols. 41v, 42, 42v).
12. See an engraving, *Encounter of a Hunting Party with a Family of Wild Folk*, Italy, Florence, about 1460 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Ea 24 res); see also *Florentine Engravings*, A.II.4.
13. *Faerie Queene*, bk. VI, canticle 4, stanza xi.
14. *Apokalypse*, lines 20051–53.
15. *Handwörterbuch*, 1941, vol. I, cols. 1184–89.
16. White, 1972, pp. 4–5.
17. *Historia*, bk. VI, 191, p. 395.
18. For a discussion of the transmission of texts concerning the *Marvels of the East*, see Wittkower, 1942, pp. 159–71.
19. Weitzmann, 1947, pp. 137–38.
20. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 89.
21. Monastery of Montecassino, cod. 132, fol. 166; see Wittkower, 1942, fig. 42b.
22. *Etymologiae* XI and IV, p. 33.
23. Neaman, 1978, p. 19.
24. Ibid., p. 16.
25. Doob, 1974, pp. 6–7; Neaman, 1978, pp. 48–51.
26. *Glossa ordinaria*, 3:2164; in Doob, 1974, p. 4.
27. Bucher, 1970, vol. I, p. 25.
28. Tatlock, 1943, pp. 285–86.
29. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 13.
30. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 33.
31. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 94; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, nos. 31–33.
32. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 97.
33. Ibid., p. 97.
34. Ibid., pp. 97–98.
35. *City of God*, vol. V, bk. XVI, chap. 8, pp. 43, 45.
36. *Apokalypse*, lines 20071–74.
37. von der Leyen and Spamer, 1910, pp. 91–92; Bernheimer, 1952, no. 29, pp. 91, 199; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 12.
38. White, 1972, p. 6.
39. Ibid., p. 6.
40. Ibid., p. 7.
41. Ibid., p. 19.
42. Lovejoy and Boas, 1948, pp. 129 ff.; White, 1972, pp. 26–27; Silver, forthcoming, p. 8.
43. White, 1972, p. 27; Silver, forthcoming, p. 8.
44. White, 1972, p. 27.
45. Silver, forthcoming, p. 10.
46. Frye, 1957, pp. 131 ff.

# COLORPLATES

# Colorplates

- Colorplate I** Cannibalistic giant, detail, no. 1. Manuscript illumination from the *Marvels of the East*. England, eleventh century. Tempera and ink on vellum. 34 × 28 cm. average folio overall (13 1/2 × 11 in.). London, The British Library, Cotton Ms. Tiberius B. v., vol i, fol. 81v
- Colorplate II** Monstrous races of Ethiopia, no. 2. Manuscript illumination from *Le livre des merveilles de ce monde*. France (Provence or Anjou), 1450–1500. Tempera on vellum. 28.3 × 21 cm. average folio overall (11 1/8 × 8 1/4 in.). New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 461, fol. 26v
- Colorplate III** Alexander in combat with wild men and beasts, detail, no. 5. Manuscript illumination from *Le livre et la vraie histoire du bon roy Alixandre*. France, early fifteenth century. Tempera and ink on vellum. 28.2 × 20 cm. average folio overall (11 1/8 × 7 7/8 in.). London, The British Library, Royal Ms. 20 B.xx, fol. 51
- Colorplate IV** Wild men storming the Moors' castle and other scenes, detail (left and center sections), no. 14. Tapestry. Germany (Alsace), Strasbourg (?), about 1400. Wool on linen warp (7–8 warps per cm.). 1 × 4.9 m. (3 ft. 3 3/8 in. × 16 ft. 1 in.). Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Charles Potter Kling Fund, 54.1431
- Colorplate V** Wild woman with a unicorn, no. 15. Fragment of a tapestry. Germany (Alsace), Strasbourg (?), about 1500. Wool on linen warp with silk and gold thread (approximately 8 warps per cm.). 76 × 61 cm. (29 15/16 × 24 in.). Basel, Historisches Museum, 1926.40
- Colorplate VI** Two wild men and two pairs of lovers, no. 18. Roundel with the arms of Assmannshausen. Germany (Middle Rhineland), about 1470–80. Glass, enameled and silver-stained. Diam. 34.5 cm. (13 1/2 in.). Frankfurt am Main, Historisches Museum, X 19607
- Colorplate VII** The Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene, no. 21. Drawing by Jörg Schweizer (Augsburg 1470–80–1533–34 Basel). Switzerland, Basel, about 1510–20. Dark brown ink with gray and brown wash on paper. 31 × 21.7 cm. (12 3/16 × 8 1/2 in.). Basel, Öffentlichen Kunstsammlung Basel, Kupferstichkabinett, U.XVI.28.
- Colorplate VIII** Wild man. Carved fragment, possibly from a choir stall, no. 26. Germany, Cologne (?), late fourteenth century, Oak. 31 cm. (12 3/16 in.). Cologne, Schnütgen-Museum, A 47
- Colorplate IX** Wild folk working the land, detail, no. 31. Tapestry. Switzerland, Basel(?), about 1480. Wool on linen warp (approximately 6 warps per cm.). .96 to 1.05 × 6.05 m. (3 ft. 1 3/4 in. to 3 ft. 5 5/16 in. × 19 ft. 10 3/16 in.). Vienna, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, T4940
- Colorplate X** The wild condition from the four conditions of society, no. 32. Loose-leaf illumination attributed to Jean Bourdichon (Tours ca. 1457–1521 Tours). France, about 1500. Tempera on vellum. 17 × 13.5 cm. (6 11/16 × 5 1/4 in.). Paris, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Bibliothèque, Miniature 90
- Colorplate XI, a-d** Marginalia with wild men, no. 38. Four manuscript illuminations from a Book of Hours, use of Rome, by the shop of Jean de Montluçon. France, Bourges, about 1500. Tempera on vellum. 18.8 × 12 cm. (7 3/8 × 4 3/4 in.). New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Ms. 436, fols. 17v, 18r, 21r, 72v
- Colorplate XII** The wild man dance of Charles VI (*Bal des ardents*), no. 39. Manuscript illumination from the *Grands chroniques de France*. France, Paris(?), end of the fifteenth century. Tempera and gold leaf on vellum. 50 × 35 cm. (19 1/4 × 13 3/4 in.). London, The British Library, Harley Ms. 4380
- Colorplate XIII** Musician's badge (*Spielmannsabzeichen*) with the arms of Bern supported by a wild man, no. 41. Switzerland, Bern, about 1500. Silver, silver gilt, and enamel. Diam. 17.5 cm. (6 7/8 in.). Bern, Bernisches Historisches Museum, 489b
- Colorplate XIV** Ewer with wild man heraldic finial, detail, no. 52. Germany, Nuremberg(?), about 1500. Silver, silver gilt, and painted enamel. 63.5 cm. (25 in.). New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 53.20.2
- Colorplate XV** Wild couple supporting the arms of the Grafschaft Kyburg, no. 56. Armorial panel attributed to Lukas Zeiner (Zurich 1454?–1512 or 1513 Zurich). Switzerland, Zurich, about 1490. Glass, flashed, enameled, and silver-stained. 31.1 × 26.1 cm. (12 1/4 × 10 1/4 in.). London, Victoria and Albert Museum, C. 9.1923



*Colorplate 1* Cannibalistic giant, detail, no. 1



Il boit les vapeurs & bouillie esleue en l'air & en hault. Il s'assembleront  
 un abis de quel vent il deuot venir. Et ainsi les anciens rois le  
 ordonnerent & establirent d'un commun accord & assentement quel soit for  
 des vents. la quelle foraulle il seroient agreablement & endemouera  
 saisi jusques a la mort. **Item** dit solin que aucuns appellent  
 celles yles Volcanes ouuies que en aucuns lieux d'icelles yles le  
 feu & la flamme yest tousiours contumelment adant & tousiours  
 ardent & arderont. Come auuellement le feu est en reille et en la  
 montaigne de Ethiope qui tousiours art & flamboie tant que on  
 en voit le feu de bien loing.



**E**thiopie est vne region qui est si tuer vers la partie  
 de mdy ou il y a moult grant multitude de bestes  
 venimeuses come serpens basiliques grans dragons et  
 asors. Et si y a de licornes & de toutes bestes auelles a si grant

Long





Colorplate III Alexander in combat with wild men and beasts, detail, no. 5





Colorplate IV Wild men storming the Moors' castle, detail (left and center sections), no. 14









Colorplate V Wild woman with a unicorn, no. 15





*Colorplate VI* Two wild men and two pairs of lovers, no. 18













Colorplate IX Wild folk working the land, detail, no. 31





Colorplate X The wild condition from the four conditions of society, no. 32





a Fol. 17v



b Fol. 18r



c Fol. 72v



d Fol. 21r





**A**uint assés tost  
apreès celle rete-  
nue que d'ung  
mariage se fist  
a lostel du roy d'un ienne cheualier  
de vermendois et de vne des da-  
moiselles de la royne si en firent  
le roy la royne les seigneurs les  
dames et les damoiselles de tout  
lostel en fust resjouy. Et pour ces-  
te cause le roy vult faire les  
nopees et furent faictes dedens  
lostel de saint pol a parus et y  
eut grant foison de bonnes gées  
et de seigneurs. Et y furent le  
duc d'orlians le duc de berry et  
le duc de bourgogne et leurs  
femmes. **E** tout le iour de

nopees quilz espousèrent on  
dansa et mena grant खेल  
et fist le roy le soupper auv da-  
mes et tint la royne de france  
le estat comme a lui appartenoit.  
Et sen forchoit chascun de ioye  
faire pour la cause de ce quilz  
voient le roy qui sen en somno-  
si auant. La auoit un esquier  
d'honneur en lostel du roy et  
moult prouchain du roy de la  
nation de normandie lequel  
se nommoit hugonn de gensar-  
si s'aduisa de faire quelque es-  
batement pour complaire au  
roy et auv dames qui la esto-  
ient. L'esbatement quel il fit  
se le vous diray. **E** le iour



Colorplate XII The wild man dance of Charles VI (Bal des ardents), no. 39





*Colorplate XIII* Musician's badge (*Spielmannsabzeichen*) with the arms of Bern supported by a wild man, no. 41







Colorplate XV Wild couple supporting the arms of the Grafschaft Kyburg, no. 56

# CATALOGUE





## 1 Cannibalistic giant

### Colorplate 1

Manuscript illumination from the *Marvels of the East* in a compilation of texts, including the *Aratus* of Cicero, extracts of Macrobius and Martianus Capella, and others, folio 81 verso

England

Eleventh century

Tempera and ink on vellum

34.2 × 28 cm. average folio overall (13½ × 11 in.)

London: The British Library, Cotton Ms. Tiberius B. v, vol. i

Two illuminations, surmounting a double column of text, fill the upper half of this folio. The left-hand illumination, framed in a broad green rectangular border, represents a composite creature with a human body and a lion's head. The stooped figure, one arm extended and the other drawn up to his chest, strides along schematic rock formations; his left foot steps out into the frame. The adjoining illumination depicts a buff-skinned giant in a bent posture standing on a rocky ground. Hair grows along his spine from his neck to the small of his back, and his arms are covered with hair indicated by short pen strokes. Clutched in the giant's hands is a diminutive man with arms outstretched and legs dangling, whom the giant is devouring. The parchment is sharply scored for text the full length of each column. The support pages on which the folios are mounted are modern.

Since the earliest times man's imagination has been haunted by endless varieties of monsters. Not only did the Greeks fill their pantheon with satyrs, centaurs, sirens, harpies, and cyclopes, but they also rationalized fears in a "non-religious form by the invention of monstrous races and animals which they imagined to live at a great distance in the East, above all in India."<sup>1</sup> The *Marvels of the East*, of which this text is the finest of the three earliest surviving illustrated examples, is a compilation of descriptions and accounts of such monstrous forms, both zoo- and anthropomorphic. Though purely fictive, these creatures were thought to be real by writers from Herodotus, who gives the earliest known report, through the authors of the late Middle Ages. While details

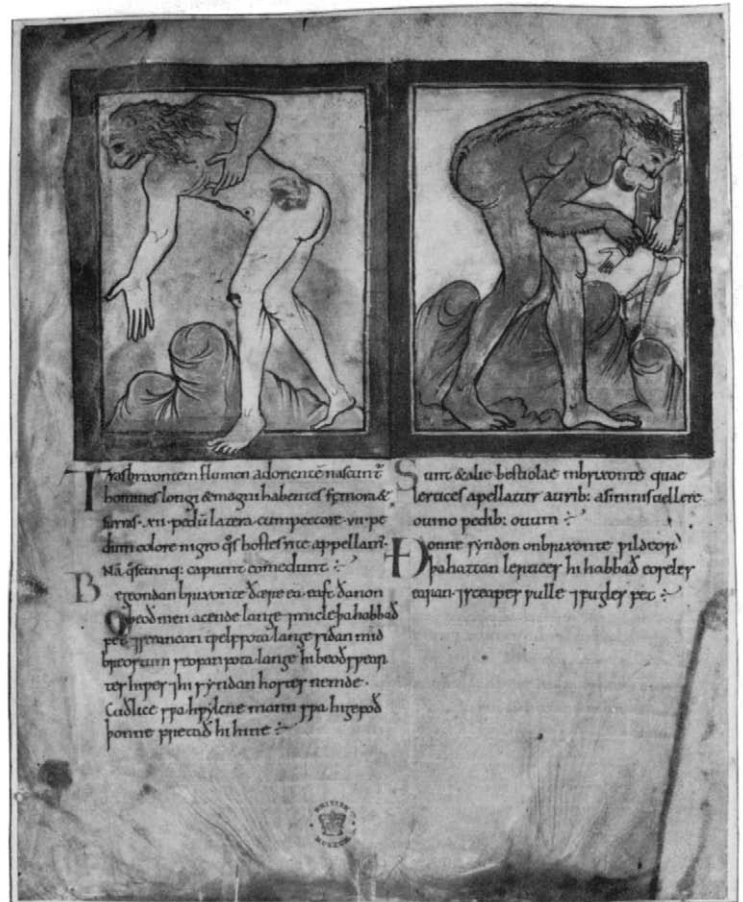


Fig. 16 Lion-headed man and cannibalistic giant, no. 1



Fig. 17 Monstrous races. Manuscript illumination from *Marvels of the East*. Italy, thirteenth century, after a model of the sixth or seventh century. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Ms. C 246 INF, fol. 57r

varied and became increasingly elaborate, the essential concept of the monstrous races remained remarkably unaltered through the centuries, despite the total absence of apodictic evidence, even in accounts by the most “scientific” writers.

The cannibalistic giant illustrated here (Fig. 16) is described in the text, written in both Latin and Anglo-Saxon, as a member of a race of huge men with legs twelve feet long and bodies seven feet wide (“homines longi et magni habentes femora et surras. XII. pedum”). They are black in color and are formidable enemies, for they quickly devour whomever they catch (“colore nigro, q[uo]s hostes rite appellamus na[m] q[uo] scumq[ue] capiunt comedunt”). He is grouped in the text with a variety of aberrational creatures, including the *cynocephalus* (fol. 80), a human with a dog’s head, the *panotier* (fol. 83v), who has ears in the form of snakes, and a variety of other monsters, which became standard components of later *Marvels*.

Large size, black pigmentation, remoteness, cannibalism, and savagery—all common attributes of the later medieval wild man—are seen here. The hairiness that characterizes the wild man, however, is seen only in its beginnings as growth down the giant’s back and along his arms. Although certain members of the monstrous races were described as hirsute, this feature was initially considered secondary to other physical aberrations. Megasthenes, for example, described the *astomi*, a race of people without mouths who survived by ingesting the scents of fruits and flowers, as being covered with hair.<sup>2</sup> In a thirteenth-century Italian manuscript based on Solinus, which probably relies on an archetype of the sixth or seventh century,<sup>3</sup> none of the monstrous races, including the *astomi* in the lower left corner, is hairy (Fig. 17), and few of the monsters in this manuscript are hirsute. Only in the twelfth century did hairiness emerge as a pictorial convention concomitant with primeval wild and bestial behavior. The depiction of the cannibalistic giant here represents an early stage in the development of this convention.

The final illumination of this cycle depicts the soul of the sinner Jannes as he is conjured up from the mouth of Hell by his brother, Mambres (Fig. 18). In the text, Jannes declares he deserves his fate for having resisted the laws of God.<sup>4</sup> In the il-

lumination he is shown covered with tufts of hair. The association of hairiness with ungodliness, perhaps the most vilifying aspect of the wild man's personality in the eyes of medieval man, is fundamental to the convention of hairiness as it emerges in the later Middle Ages.

The text of the present manuscript derives largely from the putative letter of a certain Fernes to the emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117–38). Traveling in the remote East, Fernes reported his attempts to capture specimens of native creatures to send back to Rome for the edification of the emperor and the Roman people. The text, preserved in a ninth-century Latin copy, which is probably based on a Greek original of the fourth or fifth century, contains precise descriptions of the monstrous races.<sup>5</sup> Rendered matter-of-factly, the descriptions lack the religious significance and moralizing interpolations characteristic of later versions of the *Marvels* (see nos. 2, 3). In addition to the present example, two other early copies of the *Marvels* are extant, one from around 1000 (The British Library, London, Cotton Ms. Vitellius A.xv) and the other from the twelfth century (The Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms. Bodley 614). The illuminations of the earlier manuscript are sketchy and poor in quality, while those of the later are copies from the present manuscript.<sup>6</sup> James holds that the illuminations of this manuscript derive from a continental archetype,<sup>7</sup> while Weitzmann suggests a source in the Pseudo-Callisthenes text of the Alexander legend, with which the *Marvels* are closely related (see no. 5).<sup>8</sup>

S.E.T. and T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Wittkower, 1942, p. 159.
2. McCrindle, 1877, p. 80.
3. Wittkower, 1942, p. 171.
4. James, 1929, p. 61.
5. Omont, 1913, pp. 507–15; Wittkower, 1942, p. 172.
6. Rice, 1952, p. 224.
7. James, 1929, preface, n. pag.
8. Weitzmann, 1947, pp. 137–38; idem, 1959, p. 18.

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James, 1929, passim; Wittkower, 1942, p. 172 nn. 6, 7, 173, fig. 43a; Weitzmann, 1947, pp. 137–38; Bernheimer, 1952, p. 91, fig. 20; Rice, 1952, pp. 223–24, pls. 85b, 87, 89; Weitzmann, 1959, p. 18; Devisse, 1979, vol. II, p. 50, fig. 11.



Fig. 18 Soul of Jannes being conjured up from Hell by Mambres. Manuscript illumination from *Marvels of the East* (no. 1), fol. 87v



Fig. 19 The monstrous races of Ethiopia, detail, no. 2

## 2 Monstrous races of Ethiopia

### Colorplate II

Manuscript illumination from *Le livre des merveilles de ce monde*, a compilation of texts translated from the Latin, including *Historia Naturalis* of Pliny the Elder, *Otia imperialia* of Gervase of Tilbury, and *De memorabilibus mundi* of Gaius Julius Solinus; folio 26 verso

France (Provence or Anjou)

1450–1500

Tempera on vellum

28.3 × 21 cm. average folio overall (11 1/8 × 8 1/4 in.)

New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 461

In a deep landscape articulated with hills, peaks, rills, cliffs, and a cave roam a variety of monstrous races and fabulous beasts. At the lower left, a hairy wild man with a club resting over his shoulder wanders alone into this fantastic landscape. Surrounding him, from the upper left, are four dragonlike beasts, a hybrid feathered bird with a phoenix head and ram's horns, and four robed men addressing a crowned dog. To their right, a nude male giant, highlighted with gold strokes, gestures broadly to two nude female giants, one with long hair and a cow tail, the other with cloven feet and a horned head. A giant with curly fur and huge ears stands to the right; two nude men are sprawled full-length on the ground at his feet. Pointing at them is one of two men in hair shirts at the left. Behind them, a king with a scepter gesticulates with his left hand, and, just in front, two naked men sit side by side, gazing into space. At the left are two headless figures with faces on their chests. Before the entrance of a cave in the lower left hand corner, two men in hair shirts eat live green lizards. In the upper left, a mountain erupts in flames, and, in the upper right, a city rises on the horizon.

In this late fifteenth-century *Marvels of the East* the wild man, in his fully developed form, is unequivocally depicted in the company of the monstrous races (Fig. 19). Isolated from the others, who are clustered in small groups, he seems to be an interloper in this fantastic landscape rather than a customary inhabitant of it.

The appearance of the wild man in the later *Marvels* is not usually an arbitrary addition but an interpolation based on one of the monstrous races whose physical or behavioral characteristics he resembles. In this case, the hairy hominoid probably represents a troglodyte, which, according to this text, is a primitive and reclusive creature, who is both large and strange ("corpulante et estrange," fol. 27). According to Pliny the Elder<sup>1</sup> and Isidore of Seville,<sup>2</sup> troglodytes are giants so aggressive that there is no beast on earth that can overpower them. They have no home other than the caves of wild beasts ("cette gens nulles maisons edifices mais habitent des cavernes des bestes sauvages," fol. 27). The alternatively reclusive and violent nature of the troglodyte is so similar to the character of the wild man that the illuminator represented the two creatures as the same.

The text and its accompanying illustration otherwise present a conventional account of the monstrous races of Ethiopia drawn from the writings of Pliny the Elder, Solinus, Isidore of Seville, Josephus, Gervase of Tilbury, and others. The ancient Egyptian city of Heliopolis is shown in the background. According to the text, based here on Pliny, the mountain issuing forth flames in the upper left is "Mount Edithe, which is aflame in all seasons" ("montaigne appellet Edithe qui en toutes saisons est flamboyne," fol. 28). The hybrid bird, called a *tragopa* by both Pliny and Solinus, has the head of a phoenix and the horns of a ram. Feared above all other birds,<sup>3</sup> it was in Christian iconography associated with the omnipotence of Christ.<sup>4</sup> The large hairy creature to the right, with enormous ears, is described as a *panotier* (fol. 30v) and signified any man who had not heard the word of God.<sup>5</sup> This deficiency, shared with the wild man, may have earned the *panotier* his characteristic coat of hair. The large ears were also thought to symbolize those who hear evil.<sup>6</sup> The prone naked men are *compodes* (fol. 31v), who roll around on the ground like eels. In the center are two creatures with no heads but with faces on their chests known as Blemmyes or *acephali*, which appear in many accounts of the East, including those of Pliny, Herodotus, and Strato (see



Fig. 20 The monstrous races of India. Detail of manuscript illumination from *Le livre des merveilles de ce monde* (no. 2), fol. 41v

no. 3). They are described here as quite extraordinary ("de moult merueilleuse creation"), but exceedingly vicious ("plains de moult grant cruaulte"), with bestial habits (fol. 27).

Folio 41 verso (Fig. 20) of the manuscript illustrates further monstrous races among the marvels of India in a similarly conceived landscape. In the upper left a fiery dragon is accompanied by a unicorn, elephant, and red- and blue-spotted boar. In the center background are three *cynocephali*, or dog-headed beasts. Nearby is a four-headed dragon. In the right foreground, four hairy troglodytes, relatives of the ichthyophagi, or aquatic wild men, fish for food (see no. 5; Fig. 26). In the center foreground two *antipodes*, members of a race whose feet face backwards, chase a beast up a rocky incline, as four others stand conversing. Beneath a heavily laden apple tree in the lower left, are two *astomi*, men of a mouthless race who survive by savoring the aromas of fruits and flowers.

While such creatures are totally fantastic to the modern mind, in Greco-Roman times religion provided no clear account of the creation; miscegenation was therefore common, and hybrid creatures proliferated.<sup>7</sup> In addition to invented wild beasts or peoples, real exotic creatures also played a role in the literary development of fantastic species, as in the case of the unicorn, which evolved from observation of the Indian rhinoceros.<sup>8</sup> On this basis Pliny, Solinus, and other intelligent ancients accepted the existence of marvels and strange creatures, even though they often could not be clearly defined as either human or animal. During the Christian Era, however, man, the redeemable descendant of Adam, developed criteria by which he could differentiate himself from beasts and demons: reason distinguished him from beasts and mortality distinguished him from demons.<sup>9</sup> The same criteria were applied to the monstrous races. Even such hybrids as the *cynocephali* were thought to possess reason, because they had knowledge of agriculture and animal husbandry. Saint Augustine therefore concluded that no matter how much they differ

from the norm, the monstrous races must also be true men of Adam's seed. The wild man was subject to the same logic and, although a paradigm of all that was contrary to civilized and godly behavior, was accepted as essentially human. His hairiness became a universal cipher for violence, primitiveness, and remoteness, qualities that were shared with many of the monstrous races. Bernheimer observed that once the conventional wild man was established in the fourteenth century, the fabulous creatures were usually made to conform with it,<sup>10</sup> a tendency demonstrated by the representation of the troglodyte as a wild man.

The arms of Naples-Anjou appearing on folios 15 verso and 79 recto of this manuscript associate it with the court of René of Anjou. Greene and Hansen<sup>11</sup> and Pächt<sup>12</sup> considered the illuminations the work of the young Jean Fouquet, perhaps made before he visited Italy and came into contact with Italian works.<sup>13</sup> Recent opinion has held that the miniature style is not that of Fouquet's youth but of the court of King René.<sup>14</sup>

S.E.T. and T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Pliny, 1855, vol. I, p. 405.
2. Migne, PL 82, vol. II, col. 341.
3. Pliny, 1855, vol. II, p. 530.
4. RDK VI, 1973, col. 805.
5. *Gesta Romanorum*, 1872, p. 575.
6. RDK VI, 1973, col. 795.
7. Janson, 1952, p. 73.
8. Wittkower, 1942, p. 164.
9. *City of God*, vol. 5, bk. XVI, chap. 8, p. 43.
10. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 92, fig. 17.
11. *Morgan Exhibition*, 1934, pp. 52 ff.
12. Pächt, 1940-41, no. 3, p. 87.
13. Durrieu, 1923, p. 24.
14. Nordenfalk, 1955, p. 95; Procher, 1955, p. 131.

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Bouchot, 1890, pp. 257-58; *Ashburnham Sale*, 1901, no. 397; *Morgan Exhibition*, 1934, no. 112, p. 52; Pächt, 1940-41, no. 3, p. 87; Nordenfalk, 1955, p. 95; Procher, 1955, no. 274, p. 131; *Morgan Anniversary*, 1957, no. 29, p. 20, pl. 24.

### 3 Monstrous races and marvelous fountains

Woodcut illustration from *Buch der Natur* of Conrad von Megenberg (ca. 1350), folio 284 verso

Anonymous; published by Johann Bämle

Germany, Augsburg

October 30, 1475

Incunabulum on paper with color

28 × 19.5 cm. average folio overall (11 × 7 3/4 in.)

(Goff C-842; Haebler 4041; Morgan Library Checklist 314; Schreiber X/1, 3778)

New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, PML 135

The full-page woodcut illustration depicts a variety of monstrous races, as well as two marvelous fountains. In the upper left-hand corner are a man with his feet facing backwards and, next to him, a woman who drinks from one of the fountains. A flaming gold sheaf rises from the blue waters of the second fountain. A two-headed creature with a single webbed foot, a creature with no head and a face on his chest, and a dog-headed man occupy the middle register of the summary landscape. At the bottom stride a bearded woman with a leashed hunting beast, a woman with an excrescence hanging from her throat to her abdomen, another woman with six arms, and a cyclops.

The account called the *Marvels of the East* was perpetuated almost unaltered from the time of Herodotus through the late Middle Ages (see no. 1). The legacy of this literary tradition confronted Christian writers with a dilemma of little concern to their classical predecessors: how to reconcile the monstrous races with the divine order. In his *De Civitate Dei*, Augustine (354–430) deduced that such creatures must be the children of Adam and that, therefore, if they truly existed — a point on which he did not commit himself — they would prove that abnormal births among the race of man are not a failing in God's wisdom.<sup>1</sup> Later patristic writers, including Isidore of Seville in his *Originum seu etymologiarum* (written in 622–33), followed Augustine's general thinking but ascribed more portentous significance to the mon-

strous races. The great encyclopedias of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries — including the *Imago mundi* (written ca. 1100), attributed to Honorius Augustodiniensis; Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia imperialia* (ca. 1211); Brunetto Latini's *Livres dou Tresor* (1260–70); and Vincent de Beauvais's *Speculum naturale* (ca. 1250) — continue the tradition of the monstrous races, but increasingly add elements of religious allegory and moralizing. While the descriptions of the races remain unabashedly reliant on earlier sources, cosmological and christological interpretation frequently overshadows details of natural history.

Conrad von Megenberg's *Buch der Natur*, written about 1350 and based primarily on Thomas de Cantimpré's *De natura rerum*, written between 1228 and 1244,<sup>2</sup> exemplifies this tendency. The printed version was the first comprehensive natural history in Germany and the first printed volume to include a bestiary.<sup>3</sup> The twelfth and final book, which is preceded by the woodcut illustration shown here (Fig. 21), opens, not with a discussion of the monstrous races, but with the descriptions of peculiar fountains thought to exist in distant lands, such as India, Boeotia, and Africa. The irrelevant interjection of these fountains functions as a vehicle of religious symbolism and moral implication, to set the tone of the book. In an analogy to the Trinity, for example, the author notes that a stream forms from the fountain and the waters of the two merge so that the waters of the stream and fountain become indistinguishable ("Die pach entspringent von den prunnen und is daz ainig wazzer prunn und pach. iedoch mag man niht gesprechen: der prunn is pach oder der pach is prunn. daz mag ain gleichnüss sein von der götleichen drivaldichait . . .").<sup>4</sup>

The woman at the top of the woodcut may be drinking from any of several fountains mentioned in the text, perhaps one of two in Sicily that make infertile women fertile or fertile women sterile, thus symbolizing the word of God, which results for some in eternal life and causes others to dance in eternal torment ("Ez sint zwên prunnen in dem





land Sicilia, der ainer macht unperhaft frawen perhaft und der ander macht perhaft unperhaft. der prunn bedäut daz gotes wort, wan daz ist etleichen fruchtper in daz ewig leben und etleichen ain abtanz in die ewigen marter").<sup>5</sup> The fountain may be one found in Africa, mentioned by Augustine, which makes the voice clear and fine and signifies the sweet voice of innocence before God ("Ain prunn ist in Africa, sam Augustinus spricht, der macht die stimm hel und guot, und bedäut die zäher der unschuldigen, wan der stimm und klag is gar suez vor got").<sup>6</sup> The second fountain, from which a fiery stalk emerges, probably illustrates the one in Egypt that extinguishes a burning torch and reignites an extinguished one ("dar inn erlescht man prinnent fackeln und enzunt man in im erloschen fackeln").<sup>7</sup> At this fountain, tears of excessive wrath and tears of indignation cease to flow when extinguished by compassion. Related themes concerning fountains, also allegorical or moralistic, recur many times in association with the wild man (see nos. 16, 33).

The rest of Book XII of the *Buch der Natur* discusses the monstrous races, beginning with their position in the divine order. Somewhat at variance with Augustine, Conrad von Megenberg distinguishes those animated with souls from those without ("etleich sint gesëlet und et leich niht").<sup>8</sup> The text discusses the several species of the *Marvels*, including the *antipodes*, whose feet are attached backwards, the two-headed *bicephalus*, and the *sciapods*, whose single webbed foot is so large that in hot weather they lie on their backs in the shade of their feet. The *acephalus*, headless but with a face on its chest, is covered with a rough coat of body hair like a wild animal ("und sint über al rauch mit hertem hâr, sam diu wilden tier"),<sup>9</sup> but is illustrated with a smooth naked body. The interchangeability of woodblocks and the technical limitations of the medium, among other reasons, often gave rise to such discrepancies between

the printed text and its accompanying illustrations. Nevertheless, symbolism clearly took precedence over the physical aspects of the creatures. Thomas de Cantimpré interpreted the *acephalus* as a lawyer who misled clients into unnecessary legal processes and grew fat on inordinate fees.<sup>10</sup> Men without heads have also been read as images of humility.<sup>11</sup> Next, the text describes the *cynocephali*, citing Jerome's description of the shaggy-bodied, dog-headed creatures with sharp, hooked claws ("Jeronimus der hailig lerer sagt von lauten, die habent hundeshaupt und scharpf krumm negel an den lidern und sint rauch an dem leib").<sup>12</sup> The creature, however, is not illustrated. The apparent lack of interest in the accuracy of details and the absence of interpolated wild man imagery in the Johann Bämle edition of Conrad von Megenberg's text contrast sharply with the features of the somewhat later Anton Koberger edition of Hartmann Schedel's encyclopedic *World Chronicle* (no. 4).

S.E.T. and T.H.

#### NOTES

1. *City of God*, vol. 5, bk. XVI, chap. 8, p. 49.
2. Muther, 1922, p. 13; Wittkower, 1942, p. 170 n. 9.
3. Baltrušaitis, 1960, p. 260.
4. Pfeiffer, 1962, p. 482.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 484.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, p. 482.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 486.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 490.
10. Hilka, 1933, p. 15.
11. *Gesta Romanorum*, 1872, p. 574.
12. Pfeiffer, 1962, p. 490.

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Muther, 1922, pp. 13–14; Hilka, 1933, pp. 13, 15, 16; Wittkower, 1942, p. 178, fig. 44b; Baltrušaitis, 1960, pp. 260–63, fig. 22; Pfeiffer, 1962, pp. 482 ff.

#### 4 Monstrous races of the East with a Ptolemaic world map

Woodcut from the *Liber chronicarum ad inica mundi*, or *World Chronicle*, of Hartmann Schedel, folios XII verso and XIII recto

Michael Wolgemut (Nuremberg 1434–1519 Nuremberg) and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff (d. 1494 Nuremberg); published by Anton Koberger

Germany, Nuremberg

July 12, 1493

Incunabulum on paper

47.6 × 33.7 cm. (18 3/4 × 13 1/4 in.)

(Goff S-307; Hain 14508; Schreiber X/2, 5203)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 21.36.145

Spanning a double folio are, to the left, a vertical column with woodcuts illustrating seven different members of the monstrous races and, filling the remainder of the two folios, a large map of the world. From top to bottom the column of figures includes: a man with three pairs of arms; a hairy wild woman; a man with six fingers on each hand; a composite creature with the head and torso of a man, and the trunk, hindquarters, and legs of a horse; a bald, bearded, and one-breasted woman; a man with two pairs of eyes; and a man with the neck and bill of a crane. The map is supported at three corners (the lower left is filled with text) by three half-length figures identified as IAPHET, SEM, and CAM, and is surrounded by a border in which twelve heads, representing winds, are evenly spaced. Inaccurately rendered but recognizable are Europe, North Africa, the Mediterranean Sea, Turkey, the Near East, and India. Rivers and mountains are schematically indicated, and many features are identified with printed names. Below are two columns of text.

The *Liber chronicarum*, or *World Chronicle*, is one of the most celebrated of early printed books, an ambitious compendium of history, geography, and wonders of the world from the Creation to 1493. It contains accounts of the Creation in six days and the sanctification of the seventh day as well as the Eight Ages of the world, from the Creation and the Deluge to the Ultimate Age, the Last Judgment, and the end of the world. The compiler, Hartmann Schedel, a physician as well as historian, also included the ages of man from "Infancy" to "Decrepitude." Compiled in Latin from contemporary sources, including the 1475 edition

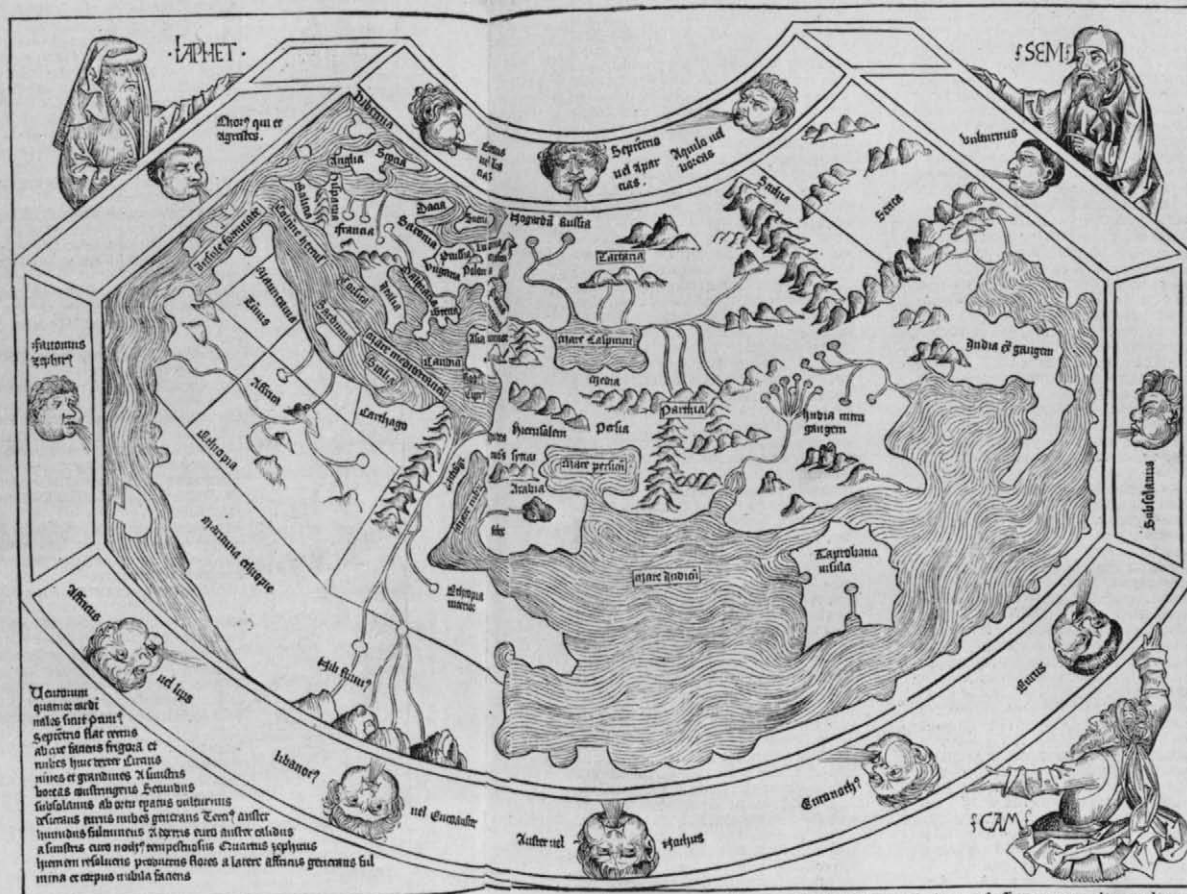
of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini's *Historia Bohemica* and Filippo Foresti's chronicle of 1483,<sup>1</sup> the *Chronicle* was quickly translated into German by a Nuremberg city scribe, George Alt. The appearance of a second edition six months later bears witness to the popularity of the work in the humanist atmosphere of late fifteenth-century Nuremberg.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast to the printed version of the *Buch der Natur* (no. 3), Hartmann Schedel's encyclopedic *Chronicle* attempts to stress facts rather than moral interpretation. The text is profusely illustrated with elaborate and superbly executed woodcuts.

The complex double-page spread of folios XII verso and XIII recto (Fig. 22) is one of fourteen basic page layouts.<sup>3</sup> Here a vertical strip of representatives of fabulous races is coupled with a Ptolemaic world map that was probably modeled on the frontispiece world map from the 1488 edition of Pomponius Mela's *Cosmographica*.<sup>4</sup> The use of this map may indicate that news of Columbus's voyage—made public by letter in Barcelona after March 4, 1493, and in Rome on April 29, 1493—had not yet reached Nuremberg by July of that year.<sup>5</sup> Illustrated in the vertical strip are a six-armed creature;<sup>6</sup> a hairy wild woman, perhaps from the Gorgades in the Ethiopian Sea, the isles once inhabited by the Gorgons, where Pliny records having observed women covered with hair;<sup>7</sup> and a man with six fingers on each hand, a noble creature who refrains from sin all week so that he will be worthy to observe Sunday.<sup>8</sup> Below are a centaur, a hermaphrodite, a four-eyed Ethiopian drawn from Pliny<sup>9</sup> and Solinus,<sup>10</sup> and a crane man.

The wild woman, though possibly an interpolation, is described in the preceding text (fol. XII), which is flanked by two more strips illustrating the monstrous races, as a member of a nude and hairy race who live in rivers ("hoīes nudi et pilosi in flumine morātes") and resemble creatures encountered by Alexander in India (see no. 5). The proximity of these creatures with the world map suggests exotic origins, a notion that is explicit in a world map by Andrea Bianco (Fig. 23), where wild men are depicted in the countries they are thought to inhabit.

The present map is supported by the sons of Noah, who appear in association with their inheritances: Japheth with Europe, Shem with Asia, and Ham with Africa. Below the map, the Latin text describes the extension of the continents and



**O**rbis dicitur a rota et est quilibet figura spherica et rotunda. Et  
ideo mundus orbis dicitur quia rotundus est et de orbis terre vel orbis terra  
nunc dicitur. Et sunt quatuor. scilicet secundum obliquitatem axis. scilicet ab affri  
ci et filij taphet europis. Indis. in ethi. affrici quia orbis divisus est in  
tres partes sicut cognoscitur. Nam Asia a meridie per orientem usque ad septen  
trionem puenit. Europa vero a septentrione usque ad occidentem pertingit.  
Sed affrica ad occidentem per meridies se extendit. Sola quoque Asia

continet unam partem nostre habitabilis. s. medietatem: alie vñ pres. s. affrica: europā: aliam medietates sunt forte. Inter has autem partes ab octuaginta mare magnū quatuorcentis. casq; interfac: quāzpropter se in duas partes orientis & occidentis eodem diuidas in vna citra affrica in alia vñ affrica: tūc autem diuisum possit diluuiū filij Noe inter quos Sem cum posteritate sua asiam. Japhet europam: et ab affri cam possederunt. vt dicit glo. super Gen. x. et super libro Paralippo. primo. Idem dicit Erisofostomus fili domus & Iulinius.

Fig. 22 Monstrous races of the East with a Ptolemaic world map, no. 4

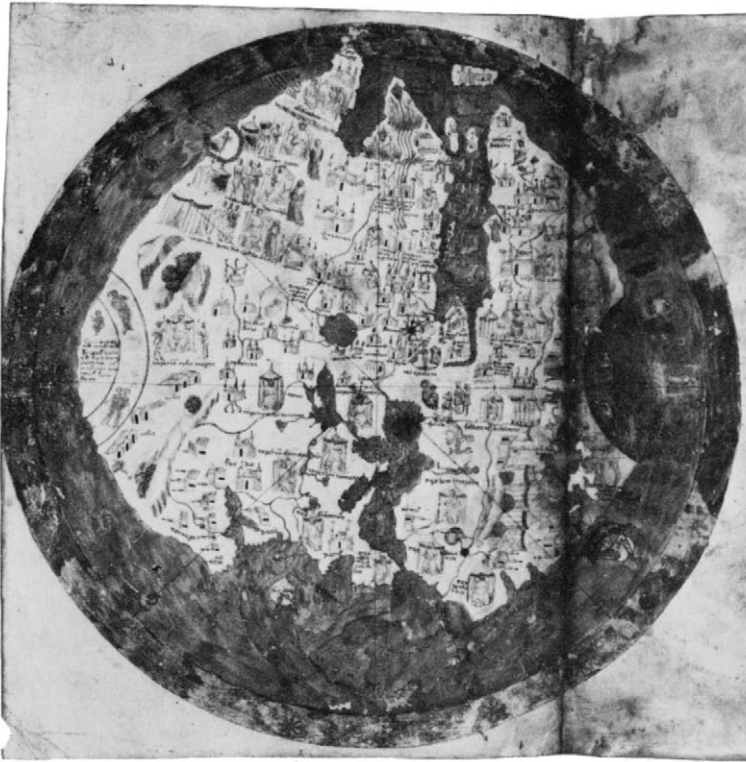


Fig. 23 World map with representations of wild folk. Tempera on vellum from the atlas by Andrea Bianco. Italy, 1436. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, It.Z.76

the seas dividing the world into two parts, Asia in one and Europe and Africa in the other ("Inter has autem partes ab oceano mare magno progreditur eas ob interfecat: quapropter si in duas partes orientis et occidentis orbem diuidas in vna erit asia in alia vo affrica et europa"). Ethiopia, identified with many exotic races (see no. 2), dominates the continent of Africa.

The association of the sons of Noah with the map of the world alludes to a theological question first posed by Saint Augustine. Chapter 8, Book XVI, of *De Civitate Dei* asks "whether certain monstrous races of men are derived from the stock of Adam or Noah's sons" ("An ex propagatione Adam vel filiorum Noe quaedam genera hominum monstrosa prodierint"). Ultimately the monstrous

racés, and all mankind, Augustine concludes, were the sons of Adam, a contention that was never seriously questioned in later medieval thought. According to Genesis, however, the evil races were destroyed with the Deluge and the world was repopulated in the Second Age by the seed of Noah. "These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread" (Genesis 9:19). Evil, it was thought, descended from Noah's youngest son, Ham, who was cursed for revealing his father's nakedness. Ham was credited with siring a breed of "wild men," who had Cain's rebellious spirit and the stature of primitive giants.<sup>11</sup> In this light, the geographical and ethnographical heritage of the wild woman assumes theological sanction.

This copy is one of 800 extant Latin exempla; 408 survive in German.<sup>12</sup> Multiple use of 645 woodblocks by Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, whose individual works blend almost indistinguishably, provides some 1800 illustrations; and 1165 instances of repetition of woodblocks have been found.<sup>13</sup> The book contains two colophons, one announcing the completion, in June 1493, of Schedel's work, which ends with the Sixth Age, and another crediting the three compilers who completed the work.<sup>14</sup>

S.E.T. and T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Schottenloher, 1940, p. 284; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, p. 16.
2. Shaffer, 1950, p. 12.
3. Wilson, 1969, p. 122.
4. Wilson, 1976, p. 115.
5. Rosen, 1970, n. pag.
6. Baltrušaitis, 1955, p. 198, fig. 88b.
7. Pliny, 1855, vol. II, p. 106.
8. *Gesta Romanorum*, 1872, p. 576.
9. Pliny, 1855, vol. II, p. 103.
10. Mommsen, 1895, p. 131.
11. White, 1972, p. 15.
12. Wilson, 1976, p. 238.
13. Shaffer, 1950, p. 14.
14. Duniway, 1941, pp. 23-24; Shaffer, 1950, p. 14.

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*Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 34; Gollub, 1974; *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 185; Wilson, 1976, pl. 6, passim.

## 5 Alexander in combat with wild men and beasts

### Colorplate III

Manuscript illumination from *Le livre et la vraye histoire du bon roy Alixandre*, folio 51

France

Early fifteenth century

Tempera and ink on vellum

28.2 × 20 cm. average folio overall (11 1/8 × 7 7/8 in.)

London: The British Library, Royal Ms. 20 B.xx

Within a rectilinear frame, edged in gold leaf, surmounting two text columns, only one of which is filled, the illumination fills the upper third of the folio. From the left a group of soldiers with full armor and raised lances, some with pennants attached, engage a horde of wild men and women, who brandish swords, spears, arrows, and clubs, and are accompanied by four enormous boars with long protruding tusks. To the center left, Alexander—with a red shield, red tunic over his armor, a gold crown over his sallet, and a red pennant emblazoned with three gold crowns—advances before his forces and drives a lance through a boar's mouth. One soldier, who wears a blue surcoat, attacks with a battle-ax, and another wields a double-handled sword. One of Alexander's men has fallen, and the lead boar appears to be in death throes. The wild people are covered in thick, long wavy hair, varying in shades of brown and gray. One wild man wears a bandanna tied around his head with the loose ends hanging down his back. Another carries a large shield in the shape of a grotesque face, similar to one carried by a soldier in Alexander's company. The battle takes place in an open and hilly landscape punctuated by two isolated trees. The blue sky is scattered with gold stars, apparently intended as pure decoration. Surrounding the illumination is a foliate border picked out in burnished gold.

The facing folio (fol. 50v), similarly composed, is illuminated with a scene of Alexander and his men fighting four white lions within an area surrounded by a burning wattle fence. A serpent, lizard, and dragon accompany the lions.

The literary tradition of Alexander the Great's conquests and adventures is intertwined with that of the *Marvels of the East* (see nos. 1–3), each richly influencing the development of the other. Weitzmann has suggested that the Greek Alexander romance of Pseudo-Callisthenes is the source of the letter of Fermes,<sup>1</sup> on which the *Marvels* is largely based. Both the *Marvels* and certain of the Alexander romances are equally dependent on the putative letter written by Alexander to his tutor, Aristotle (*Epistola ad Aristotelem*). Through these interrelationships the Alexander legends became a principal source of inspiration for the *Marvels*, while they in turn provided the traditional formulas for illustrated cycles of the Alexander legends.<sup>2</sup>

The Alexander legends relate the history of the conqueror's military achievements with liberal additions of related adventures, observations, and anecdotes. Among these are his many encounters with the marvelous races of India, after he divides his forces with Parmenio and sets out after Darius.<sup>3</sup> In this manuscript, much attention is given to these episodes (fols. 48–52, 55–58v, 63, 64, 73–74v, 78–80v), and the accompanying illuminations are generously populated with wild men (see colorplate III, Fig. 24).

The illumination shown here illustrates Chapter XL, in which Alexander and his men encounter a group of wild boars with enormously long tusks. The chapter heading, “Coment le Roy alixandre se combati aux porciz lesquelx auoient dentz dun coute de long xl,” appears at the end of the text of the preceding folio. The text explains that the boars were accompanied by both wild men and women who had six hands each (“Après ce vindrent grants porciz qui auoient dents dun coute de long et estoient avec eulx homes et femes sauuages lesquelx auoient chün vi mains,” fol. 51). The wild people were deadly foes of men (“les homes et les femes a faire moult grant mortalite de gents”), and the boars were likewise excessively dangerous to both men and beasts, whom they loathed equally (“Et les porciz ochient toutes manieres de bestes quilz pouoient atteindre et mesmement grant partie de gents”). As they were





Fig. 24 Alexander ordering wild men thrown into fire. Detail of manuscript illumination from *Le livre et la vraie histoire du bon roy Alixandre* (no. 5), detail, fol. 41v. Reproduced by permission of The British Library

stricken with fear in the face of these fierce foes, Alexander hurled himself into battle first to inspire his men with courage. Eventually they overcame their adversaries ("Pour laquelle chose les gents Alixandre se mistient deuant tous en la bataille et le fist si bien et si vigurieusement que ilz les disconfuent") and continued on their way. The facing illumination describes how Alexander and his men fought the white lions ("Coment le Roy alixandre et son ost se combatuent aux lyons blans").

The appearance of wild men or, more accurately, marvelous races interpreted as wild men, does not reflect the interrelated textual sources so much as the pervasiveness of wild man imagery throughout all aspects of late medieval secular expression. The independence of illustrative cycles from the text, particularly pronounced in the present manuscript, may also account for the freedom with which wild men were interpolated into the legends. The creatures encountered here by Alexander are described by the text as having six hands, a frequently cited deformity (see no. 3). The text is ignored by the illuminator, who illustrates instead conventional wild men. Such disregard for the text in favor of popular imagery was common, particularly in later translated ver-

sions. What are called giants clad in animal pelts in Latin texts ("homines habentes maxima corpora ut gigantes, induti vestimenta pellicia")<sup>4</sup> become wild men in the vernacular. By the end of the twelfth century, hairiness had become a visual shorthand for wild, barbaric, unruly, and unsavory behavior associated with exotic but otherwise human forms. These ungodly and uncivilized denizens are distinguished from the truly aberrational creatures found in the *Marvels* and may simply reflect Western man's view of native barbarian tribesmen.

The symbolic potential of the wild men, destined to flourish in other contexts, was never fully exploited in the Alexandrine romances. Alexander's many conquests of the monstrous races, so frequently interpolated as wild people from the late fourteenth century, seem not to have even the obvious allegorical connotation of the model king overcoming the embodiments of ungodliness. Such interpretations may have been discouraged by the contrast between Alexander's pagan beliefs and his role as the ideal courtly king. Wild men in the Alexander legends must be viewed primarily as conventional images of exotic creatures. The degree to which these notions were subject to imaginative flights of fancy is demonstrated by illustrations of

the ichthyophagi, or “fish eaters,” encountered by Alexander and shown sometimes as hairy river dwellers (Fig. 25) or as underwater wild people (Fig. 26).

The text of this manuscript generally follows that of the Old French prose versions. As Ross has pointed out, it is somewhat aberrant, however, in that the illuminator borrowed directly from a related recension and thus included material that did not properly belong to the original cycle of the Old French prose Alexander.<sup>5</sup> To trace the derivation of this text it is necessary to go back to the oldest Greek Alexander legend, written sometime after 200 B.C. by Pseudo-Callisthenes. The text, long lost, has survived in four recensions, one of which can be ascribed to the archpresbyter Leo of Naples, who, around 950, was sent by Dukes John III and Marinus II of Campania as ambassador to the court at Constantinople. During his stay, Leo transcribed a Greek manuscript of Pseudo-Callisthenes, and at some point after 952 translated it into Latin under the title *Nativitas et victoriae Alexandri magni regis*. This text has survived in a German manuscript (see no. 6) and in three other principal interpolated recensions.<sup>6</sup> Because many printed versions of these recensions are entitled *Historia Alexandri magni regis Macedonie de preliis*, they are known generally as *Historia de preliis*, or *proeliis*.<sup>7</sup> The first of these recensions was the work of an eleventh-century editor who improved on Leo's Latin style and incorporated other texts on India, notably the *Commonitorium Palladii*, *Dindimus de Bragmanibus*, and the *Epistola ad Aristotelem*. The second recension of the *Historia de preliis* reworks the first with further additions, principally from Orosius, and was widely circulated from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. The third recension, derived independently, dates from around 1150, draws primarily on oriental sources, and is thought by some scholars to be of Jewish authorship.<sup>8</sup> As popular as the second recension, it was widely drawn upon, especially in Italy and in Strasbourg, for several incunable editions, which were the first to associate the title *Historia de preliis* with the work of the archpresbyter Leo.

The Old French prose version is related to, but not directly descended from, the second recension and was perhaps the most important of all the vernacular Alexander texts.<sup>9</sup> Known in three redactions, two dating from the thirteenth century and one from the fifteenth century,<sup>10</sup> the French prose

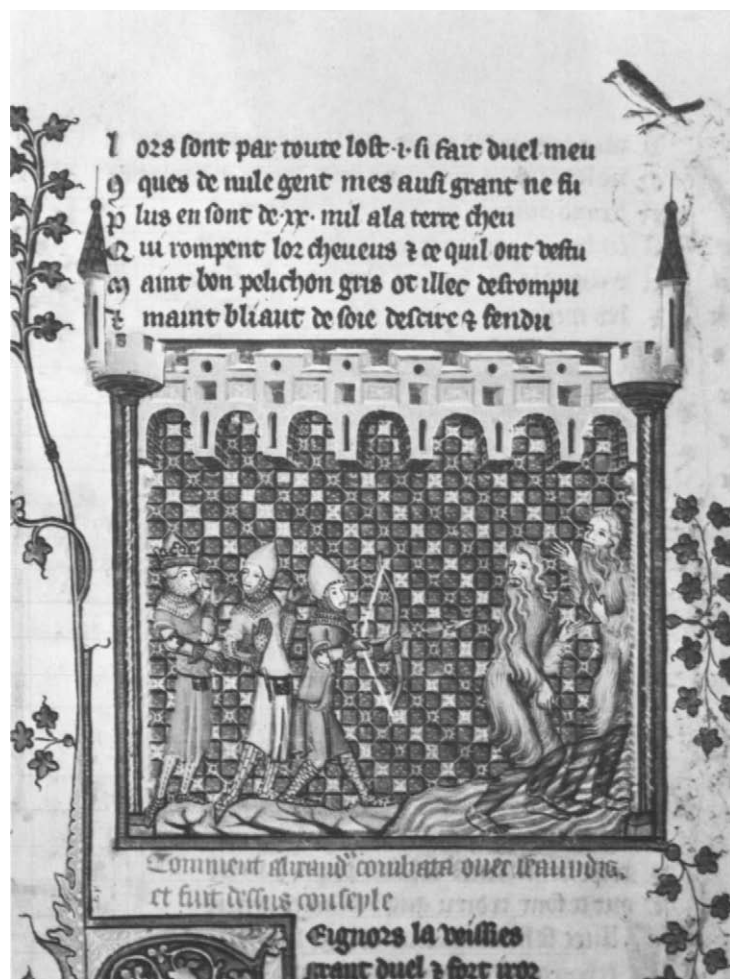


Fig. 25 Alexander pursuing wild river dwellers. Detail of manuscript illumination from *L'histoire du roi Alexandre*. France, 1338–44. Oxford, The Bodleian Library, Ms. Bodley 264, fol. 63v





Fig. 26 Alexander observing the ichthyophagi. Detail of manuscript illumination from *Legende d'Alexandre* by Jean Vauquelin. France, about 1448. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. fr. 9342, fol. 182

Alexander was widely popular, as attested by the large extant number of richly illuminated manuscripts, including the present example, and printed books that preserve the text.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Weitzmann, 1947, pp. 137–38.
2. Wittkower, 1942, pp. 179–80.
3. Ross, 1971, pp. 54–55.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
6. Cary, 1956, pp. 43–58.
7. Ross, 1971, p. 2.
8. Cary, 1956, p. 18.
9. Hilka, 1920, pp. 1 ff.; Cary, 1956, p. 46.
10. Cary, 1956, pp. 46–48.

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Ward, 1883, pp. 128–29; Hilka and Magoun, 1934, pp. 84–86; Ross, 1971, pp. 20, 171.

### 6 Pagan priest takes Alexander to consult with the Trees of the Sun and the Moon

Manuscript illumination from the *Histori von dem grossen Alexander*, or *Alexanderbuch*, based on the text of the archpresbyter Leo and adapted in German by Johann Hartlieb, bound with various texts, including the *Speculum humanae salvationis*, *Von den sieben Tugenden und Lastern*, and *Ars moriendi*, folio 283 verso

Follower of Hector Müllich(?); text copied by  
Völckhardt Landsberger  
Germany, Augsburg  
1455–65

Tempera and ink on paper  
26.2 × 19 cm. (10 1/2 × 7 1/2 in.)

New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 782

Alexander, crowned and turbaned, with hands together in an attitude of prayer, is led toward a stand of trees by a naked and hirsute priest with two large fangs, wearing a bishop's miter and an earring. The priest points toward the woods at the oracular Trees of the Sun and the Moon. Alexander is followed from the left by four courtiers, who are clad in different types of elaborate dress.

The episode of Alexander consulting the hirsute priest of the Trees of the Sun and the Moon heightens, by employing the convention of hairiness, a basic irony in many of the late interpolated versions of the *Historia de preliis* (see no. 5). Drawn primarily from a twelfth-century Latin version (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Ms. nouv. acq. lat. 310), the episode relates how Alexander, hearing of trees that foretell the future, proceeds with a group of his men to a small temple in a forest, where he meets the officiating priest. Tall and black with two large fangs, the priest is naked except for his miter and a gold ring in his ear, is covered with coarse animallike hair, and has a long tongue like a dog's ("Und da wir in das Land kamen, fanden wir einen kleinen Tempel, . . . begund uns grüssen ein langer schwarzer Bischof, der hat einen ungestalten Leib und war fast schwarz, und hatt in seinem Munde gar lange Zähne recht als die Hunde. . . . Er halt in sinen Ohren Längen manch köstlich Ringlein, er halt dein Gewand an seinem Leib, denn von rauhen Fellen und Häuten der Tier").<sup>1</sup> The illumination

wissen vnd erkennen welle Vnd künec sol sein fraug  
 öffentlich tün Da ich nun das erhoert Da besalt ich meine  
 freunden vnd rittersen Das si an allen orten mittel vñ  
 anden des waldes auff lüagten vnd lüfnatten Ob sich  
 niemant verstoßen oder verporgen hatt Vnd das was  
 ment vnder den dicken platten Das laubes vñ holern  
 was In gepalt nichts oder ander dng Da mit die leut  
 betrogen mügen werden Des gleichen erfürchten wir alle  
 pawne ob ists in den höchsten gypfeln wäre Das vñ  
 laichen vermaint wir sunder dungen wald vor aller  
 walpheit vñ hinterfayt frey Da stünden wir all wol  
 berait zu hören die pawne In dem .C. C. lxxvñ



**D**a nam ich mich für in meine gemüet Das  
 ich horen wissen wolt wann ich allen müte  
 vñ künec der welt gar bezwung vñ mit  
 alle künigreich vnderthan vñ gehorsam  
 gemacht Ob ich dem wider künem gen künem gesun  
 der vñ mit allen sollichen oren vñ sigen triumph  
 vñ victorien zu meiner lieben müter Olympiades

in the present manuscript (fol. 280v) renders the text literally. The priest then leads Alexander with his men to the oracular trees, shown in the next miniature (fol. 283v; Fig. 27), and advises him to consult them reverently on his knees ("Da wir nun den Bäumen fast naheten, und wir shier unsere knie sollten gegen sie gebogen haben, da sprach aber der getren Bischof zu mir und zu den andern," fol. 284, lines 5–8).

Although most later medieval versions of the *Historia de preliis* generally treat Alexander historically, as an indomitable warrior, this version retains elements of the courtly interpretation of Alexander as the ideal king.<sup>2</sup> This perspective raised a number of textual problems,<sup>3</sup> not the least of which was how to reconcile the courtly Christian ethic with Alexander's paganism. Weak attempts were made to resolve the paradox. In the Latin texts, upon hearing the prophecy of his imminent death from the oracle trees, Alexander addresses divine power with the words "Jupiter omnipotens"; in the vernacular this became the less pagan "Sire Dieus."<sup>4</sup> In the Old French prose versions an interpolated speech by Alexander comments on God's overseeing of his life. These rationalizations, however, were hardly compelling when countered by such blatantly pagan practices as the consultation with oracles, particularly when the officiating priest is portrayed as a hirsute wild man, the very antithesis of piety. This *Alexanderbuch* emphasizes rather dry historic and scientific "facts," weighed down by many pedantic digressions, in the tradition of the earlier Latin versions of the *Historia de preliis*.<sup>5</sup> By the middle of the fifteenth century, a pagan priest of distant India would likely be perceived as a wild man as a matter of convention.

The text of this manuscript was written by Johann Hartlieb in Munich, a professor of natural history, about 1444, and was dedicated to Duke

Albrecht III of Bavaria. The earliest surviving illustrated manuscript of Hartlieb's *Histori von dem grossen Alexander*, or *Alexanderbuch*, was the work of Hector and Georg Mülch of Augsburg, dated 1455, and now in the Staatsbibliothek, Munich (Ms. c.g.m. 581).<sup>6</sup> The present manuscript was scribed by Völckhardt Landsberger, also of Augsburg, and is usually dated to the late 1450s or early 1460s.<sup>7</sup> The manuscript is a compilation of texts that includes, in addition to the *Histori von dem grossen Alexander*, a *Speculum humanae salvationis*, *Von den sieben Tugenden und Lastern*, and an *Ars moriendi*, all copied by Völckhardt Landsberger. The Alexander text is illustrated by one hand and the other three texts by two others. Like all versions of the *Historia de preliis*, Hartlieb's *Alexanderbuch* derives ultimately from the archpresbyter Leo's Latin translation of the Pseudo-Callisthenes text. Leo's version is best preserved in a manuscript now in Bamberg (Staatliche Bibliothek, Ms. E.iii.14), which dates from around 1000. This manuscript was the source of a redaction represented by two Bavarian manuscripts, one in Munich (Staatsbibliothek, Ms. c.l.m. 23489) and the other from the monastery at Tegernsee, south of Munich, now in Paris and mentioned above. This Paris manuscript, or a nearly identical one, was the source of the present manuscript.<sup>8</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Benz, 1924, pp. 280, lines 4–14.
2. Cary, 1956, p. 233.
3. Hilka, 1920, pp. xii–xiii.
4. Cary, 1956, p. 309 n. 88.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 246.
6. Ross, 1971, p. 131.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 141; Lehmann-Haupt, 1929, pp. 195–97.
8. Pfister, 1913, pp. 12–13; Cary, 1956, p. 42.

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Ross, 1971, pp. 141–52, figs. 233, 234.

## 7 Pagan priest takes Alexander to consult with the Trees of the Sun and the Moon

Woodcut from the *Histori von dem grossen Alexander*, or *Alexanderbuch*, derived from the archpresbyter Leo's translation of the Pseudo-Callisthenes text by Johann Hartlieb, folio 144

Anonymous; published by Johann Bämle

Germany, Augsburg

June 28, 1473

Incunabulum on paper with color

30.8 × 21.6 cm. (12 1/16 × 8 1/2 in.)

(Goff A-403; Haebler 785; Schreiber X/1, 3132)

Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Rosenwald Collection

The priest of the Trees of the Sun and the Moon, naked except for a miter, points toward the woods containing the oracular trees. Alexander, following the priest, wears a crown and armor, and holds his hands in an attitude of prayer. Following him at the right is a group of six courtiers wearing long robes and assorted headdresses. The woods are indicated by one tree and the trunk of another merging into the left border. The woodcut is colored with red, brown, blue, green, yellow, and flesh tones.

Johann Hartlieb's *Histori von dem grossen Alexander*, or *Alexanderbuch*, enjoyed great popularity. At least fourteen manuscripts on paper are known, and some fifteen printed editions were published before 1520.<sup>1</sup>

The dependence of the woodcut illustrations of this incunabulum version on the Morgan manuscript (no. 6) is evident. A comparison of the woodcut illustrated here (fol. 144; Fig. 28) and the corresponding illumination in the Morgan manuscript (fol. 283v; Fig. 27) shows, however, that the image is not only reversed but is also much simplified. In the present Johann Bämle woodcut of the priest leading Alexander to the Trees of the Sun and the Moon, the trees have been reduced to two. Likewise the stones and plants of the foreground, as well as the hillocks of the background,

have been eliminated. The woodcut also increases the number of Alexander's courtiers from four to six. But, more important, details cited in the text, such as the priest's two fangs and earring, are also missing and there are no indications of body hair. While iconographic understanding may have been lacking, abridgment of detail in popular imagery was not uncommon, and, by the second half of the fifteenth century, the implications of hairiness in a familiar context could be assumed.

Although Hirsch cites a 1472 edition of the Hartlieb *Alexanderbuch*,<sup>2</sup> the first edition, represented by the present example, was almost certainly not published by Johann Bämle at Augsburg until 1473.<sup>3</sup> Lehmann-Haupt contends that the Morgan Hartlieb manuscript was the source for many of the printed versions of this work, pointing out that the incunabule illustrations were in many cases essentially mirror images of those in this manuscript.<sup>4</sup> Ross, however, suggests an intermediary or secondary source between the manuscript and the woodcuts, noting that Bämle's first edition includes two scenes not represented in the Morgan manuscript. He concludes that the Mülch manuscript (Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Ms. c.g.m. 581), or one close to it, was copied by the illuminator of the Morgan manuscript and that another Augsburg illuminator, in turn, copied the Morgan manuscript, reversing some images and adding others. This lost manuscript was then copied by the illustrator of the Bämle edition.<sup>5</sup>

T.H.

### NOTES

1. Ross, 1971, p. 131.

2. Hirsch, 1909, pp. 5-9.

3. Schramm, *Bilderschmuck* III, 1925, no. 883a, col. 445.

4. Lehmann-Haupt, 1929, pp. 139-40, pls. 78, 79.

5. Ross, 1971, pp. 147, 150.

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Schramm, *Bilderschmuck* III, 1925, pp. 2-3, figs. 24-54; Lehmann-Haupt, 1929, pp. 139-40, pls. 78, 79; Ross, 1971, pp. 147-52, fig. 263.

zū mir vnd zū den anderñ/ir liebē frew̃nd ich weiß nit vō  
 was ir seyen ye doch so zwinget mich natürlich lieb vñ  
 menschliches gepot das ich euch recht weiß vñ lere dar  
 vmb welcher antwort haben wöl vō den heiligē pāmen  
 der sol all sein frag gar heimlich tūn vnd vast begirlich in  
 seinem herze bedentken das er die sach darumb er dā n fr  
 agen will gar geren wisse vñ erkenē wöllt vñ keiner sol  
 sein frag offēlich tūn Da ich uun dz er hort da bestalt ich  
 meinē frew̃de vñ rittern das sy an allen orten mittel vñ  
 enden des waldes auff lūgten vnd lūfnoten ob sich yem  
 ant vstossen od vporgen hāt /vñ das nyemant vnder  
 dē dickē pleten des laubes vholē wār i gestalt des fuchs  
 oder ander dīng da mit die leūt betrogen mügen w̃rde  
 des gelichen ersuchten wir alle pām ob ichtes in dē ho  
 chen gipfeln were das vns leichen vermeinet /also wir  
 funden den wald vor aller falscheit frey da stunden wir  
 all wol bereit zū hōren die pāme.

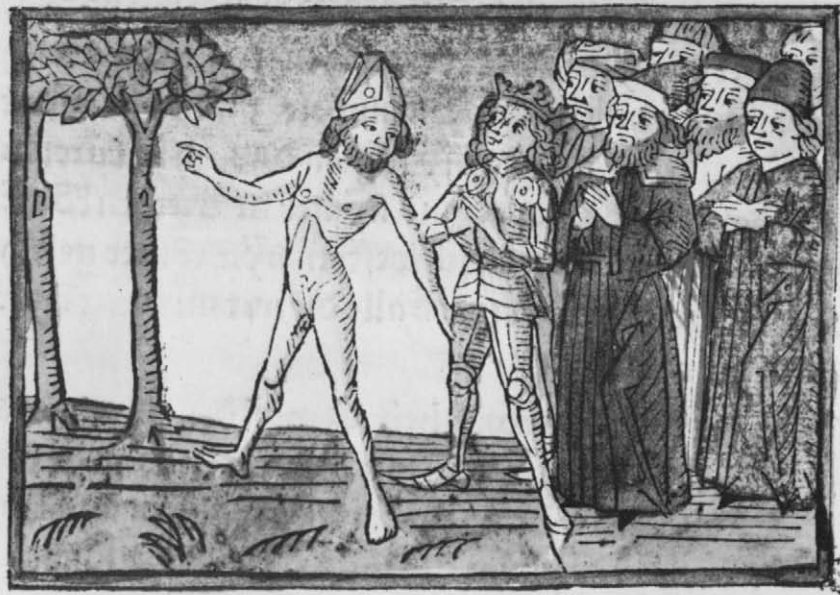


Fig. 28 Pagan priest takes Alexander to consult with the Trees of the Sun and the Moon, no. 7. Photo courtesy  
 Collections of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## 8 Appearance of Merlin as a stag, and Merlin as a wild man brought before King Arthur

Manuscript illuminations from *l'Ystoire du Saint Graal et du Merlin*, folios 259, 261

France, court style of Charles VI (Burgundy?)

Early fifteenth century

Tempera and gold leaf on vellum

43.2 × 33 cm. average folio overall (17 × 13 in.)

New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 207

In a hall with a timbered ceiling, a seigneur sits at a high table covered with a white tablecloth, laid with dishes and various types of food, and set along one wall. Along the adjacent wall, a lady and three lords sit at another table similarly laid with food, dishes, and utensils. A stag has bolted into the center of the hall. In a gesture of surprise, the seigneur's mouth drops open and he raises one hand, palm outward. One lord throws both hands over his head while another twists around in his seat.

In the second illumination, a wild man bound in chains is led by two men before a seigneur seated on a dais and wearing a turbaned headdress and long, fur-collared robe. Two monastics sit to his left side; the near one, gesturing with his hands, counsels the seigneur.

The text of the present manuscript is based on the second poem of a trilogy by the late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century French poet, Robert de Boron, which loosely connects Old Welsh tradition with the Passion of Christ. In the first extended poem it becomes known that the Holy Grail will be carried to the West and eventually discovered by a knight descending from Joseph of Arimathea. The third focuses on Perceval, the quest of the Grail, and Arthurian England in general. Serving as a link between them are the episodes of Merlin of this text.<sup>1</sup> As a centerpiece, the Merlin poem is essential to Boron's overall concept of the trilogy.<sup>2</sup> In the later prose versions, of which this manuscript is an example, the role of Merlin is greatly developed. Here it is Merlin who advises Uther Pendragon to found the Round Table and Merlin's constant advice and intervention that influence the course of events.

In the episode illustrated here, Arthur—or the emperor, as he is called—has a strange dream in which he sees a sow with a circle of gold on its head. Perplexed by its significance, he becomes increasingly preoccupied, to the distress of his barons. Merlin, determined to resolve the problem, magically transforms himself into a large stag and sets out to see the emperor. His appearance causes a sensation, and excited crowds chase him through the city streets. To general dismay, he then bursts into the emperor's dining hall (Fig. 29), and announces that only a wild man can interpret the emperor's dream (“car ia ne troueras ki te die tauision deuant chou ke li homs saluages le certefiera & por noient y penseroies plus”).<sup>3</sup> This is the scene of folio 259. As soon as his message is uttered, the doors fly open and Merlin, the stag, disappears again. Immensely intrigued, the emperor declares he will give his daughter Grisandoles in marriage to any knight who can bring either the stag or the wild man to him. Though many try, none succeeds. Meanwhile, the beautiful Grisandoles has gone to the forest, where Merlin, again as a stag, instructs her how to capture the wild man. In a remote place, she sets out a table laden with bread, milk, honey, as well as a roast over a fire, which he has assured her will attract the wild man (“vien en cest forest el plus destrot lieu ke tu troueras. si metras la table deles le feu & le pain & le lait & le miel. & vous nous quatiens. j. poi. loing. del. feu. & ne doutes mie car li homs sauages y uendra sans faille”).<sup>4</sup> Merlin then transforms himself into a wild man and approaches the lure. After eating he falls asleep, and Grisandoles, in disguise, binds him in chains. As represented in the illumination on folio 261 (Fig. 30), Merlin the wild man is then brought before the emperor. At the sight of Grisandoles he laughs, and on several other occasions he laughs for no comprehensible reason. Before all of the barons, the wild man reveals the meaning of the emperor's dream: that twelve of the empress's maidens are actually young men, an indiscretion for which she is subsequently burned. Later the emperor asks Merlin why he laughed. The wild man sage then explains that Grisandoles is the most beautiful and the finest woman in all the emperor's lands, and that she is a



tournoie plains li  
 samunt devant le  
 pereur & l'agenouille &  
 li dist roys nuls em  
 pereur de royaume aq  
 pantes tu l'asse ester  
 ton paille qui nens  
 netenant quar ia de  
 tampion ne troueras  
 qui te die uerite que  
 l'enche tant q'li l'ons  
 lanuages cetera &  
 pour noiant paille  
 roies plus lors se die  
 ca li cers & voit les hui  
 du pails qui estoient  
 des & il l'ence lo adu  
 temant si que il fet  
 les hui du palas  
 ouer li uideant q'  
 vole l'ois du palas  
 quant li hui sont  
 ouuert li cers l'aut  
 lors & l'autourient  
 finant auai la mie  
 & la chace omanee  
 qui longuement du  
 ra & tant que en la  
 fin l'au issi lors aplai  
 champs & lors l'ene  
 noy que nus ne l'ot a  
 due que il fu deueni  
 & quant l'agent lo  
 rent pdu li l'enretour  
 nent arrieres qui  
 nuls celsar uoit que  
 li cers n'est retenu  
 li enu moult cour  
 rage. Lors fist arer  
 p toute la mie que  
 qui li pouroit lon  
 me l'auuange ame  
 ner ou le cers randre  
 qui li donoit la bel  
 le fille asame & dem  
 son royaume & apres  
 l'amort auoit tout  
 & lors monterent es

cheuaus maint uail  
 lant damouille de ps  
 & le cercherent per  
 mante contree mai  
 ce fu pour noiant  
 quar onques n'au  
 oient nouueles li  
 l'au retournerent ar  
 rieres quant plus  
 ne poient faire mai  
 qui que. Retonna  
 ne qui non grisa  
 doles ne retourna  
 me auz ala tant  
 pmi vne forest vne  
 leure auant & au  
 tir amier & tant q'  
 bien demora. viii. iours  
 tous plains & haui  
 & iours qui fu desan  
 duz desoi. i. chene  
 grant pour puer  
 nre seigneur q' ille  
 conseillass de ce q'  
 il querroit & tandi  
 ome il estoit ances  
 prieres amint que  
 li cers que il auoit  
 chace vint deuant

Luy & li dist aue  
 nable tu chares  
 la folie quar tu  
 ne puez explorer de  
 ta queste antelle  
 maniere mais ge  
 te due que tu feras  
 pourchases char de  
 port salee de nouu  
 & poudre de poure  
 meueuant et  
 miel et let & pmi  
 chant et amam  
 ne. m. compaignons  
 avec toy & le gar  
 con qui l'achar  
 tournoiera quat  
 elle aura & tu ta  
 mens en ceste fo  
 rest ou plus des  
 tourne; heu que  
 tu sauras & feras  
 mettre la table  
 deuant l'en & le  
 pmi & le let et le  
 miel dessus et vo  
 leronz tant quat. vng  
 peu ensus & ne doute  
 mie q' l'auuange uue



virgin ("Grisandoles est la plus bele feme & la plus boine de tout vostre terre & sest pucele").<sup>5</sup> This fair maiden was able to capture the wild man through her own power and cunning, which the emperor with all his men and power could not do ("cou ke feme mauoit pris par sa poissance & par son engin che que nus homs ne pooit faire de tout uostre pooir").<sup>6</sup> For this reason, the wild man explains, he laughed.

This manuscript introduces a rare function of the wild man in medieval lore—as the temporary guise of an otherwise normal figure. Merlin employs this device for the ultimate benefit of the court, but other literary characters are less selfless in their application of similar powers (see no. 9). Merlin's transformation foreshadows the wild man impersonations that became increasingly popular toward the end of the Middle Ages. Such impersonations or charades, unrelated to ritual, are tangible evidence of the demythification of the wild man. As an uncouth and powerful, but otherwise benign forest fiction, the wild man was emulated for convenience, amusement, or other purpose (see no. 39).

On other occasions Merlin becomes a demented, raving wild man out of excessive grief, disillusionment, or frustration, rather than as a ruse. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth, whose *Vita Merlini* of shortly after 1148<sup>7</sup> predates the Robert de Boron version, Merlin did not simply assume the appearance of a wild man but in fact became one, and remained hidden in the woods like a wild animal ("Fit silvester homo quasi siluis deditus esset. . . nulli que repertus/Oblitusque sui cognatorum que suorum/Delituist siluis obductus more ferino").<sup>8</sup>

Insanity themes and the association of insanity with wild man behavior in postclassical literature both appear to be Geoffrey of Monmouth's invention.<sup>9</sup> These notions permeate ensuing romance literature and not only reveal insanity as a fundamental component of the wild man's nature, but also provide a new venue for wild man symbolism.

Merlin's mention of the virginity of his captor and his enchaining echoes contemporary themes



Fig. 30 Merlin as a wild man brought before King Arthur, detail, no. 8, fol. 261

of wild men cast in roles of erotic symbolism.<sup>10</sup> A maiden leading a "tamed" wild man in chains was equated with feminine triumph over man's unrestrained sexuality (see no. 18).

The Robert de Boron text of the present manuscript is written in a Picard dialect and corresponds in most respects with that of the first printed edition, *Histoire de la vie, miracles, enchantements et prophécies de Merlin*, published by Antoine Vérard at Paris in 1498.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Paris and Ulrich, 1886, vol. I, pp. viii-xxii.
2. Micha, 1954, p. 327.
3. *Merlin*, 1908, p. 283, lines 20-21.
4. *Ibid.*, lines 42-43.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 289, lines 16-17.
6. *Ibid.*, lines 14-15.
7. Parry, 1925, p. 13.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 34, lines 80-83.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 286-87.
10. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 142.



**Hie kam die rauch**  
 Elß zu Wolffdietrichen in den  
 wald. do sy lagen bey dem feure.  
 Vnnd bezaubert in mit irem zü  
 gan. vnnnd firt in mit ir. vnnnd bitt  
 in das er bey ir schlaffe. sy wölle  
 im ein ganz künigreich geben.



So bechrug was entschlaffen  
 So kam das rauhe weyb  
 Hyn zu dem feuer gelauffen  
 Sy sach des fürsten leyb  
 Sy gieng auff allen fieren  
 Recht als ein wilder ber  
 Bist du von wylden tieren  
 Wo magst du kommen her.  
 So sprach die rauhe else  
 Ich byn geheüre gar  
 Ach edeler fürst mich helpe  
 Du wirst noch sorgen bar  
 Ich gib dir ein künigreiche  
 Vnd manig weytes land  
 Dreyßig burg wunnigkeiche  
 Die dienen deiner hand.  
 Das ist nit in mein sinnen

## 9 Wolfdietrich with the wild woman Else

Woodcut from the epic of *Wolfdietrich* in *Das Hel-*  
*denbuch mit synen figuren . . .*, folio i6 recto

Anonymous; published by Johann Knoblouch

France, Strasbourg

1509

Incunabulum on paper

27.5 × 19 cm. (10<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.)

New York: The New York Public Library; Spencer  
 Collection; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations

In a woodland setting, a gentleman extends his left hand in greeting toward a shaggy wild woman with long flowing locks of hair. The wild woman, standing before a blazing campfire, in turn extends her right hand. Behind the gentleman at the right is a stand of several trees.

Wild men appear throughout a broad range of medieval literature, but, like the hairy hominoids in the *Marvels of the East* and in the Alexandrine legends, they are variants of the mythic wild man. Born as normal humans, these characters are transformed into a state of wildness by external circumstance or internal conflict. Thus a child abandoned in the wilderness at birth may grow up as a wild man because of his primitive environment (see, e.g., no. 34) or a man frustrated by unrequited love may be driven literally "wild." This state of wildness is never permanent; once the circumstances that provoked the condition are reversed the character returns to normal. Furthermore, these literary wild men are rarely symbolic, allegoric, or moralistic devices, but expediences upon which the plot or broader issues turn.

Such a wild person makes an appearance in the epic *Wolfdietrich*. The story concerns a certain Hugdietrich who has three sons, the youngest of whom, according to an evil counselor, Sabene, is the son of the devil. Hugdietrich orders one of his men, Berchtung von Meran, to kill the boy, but the child is saved by a pack of wolves. Believing him to be protected by God, Berchtung spares him, bringing him up under the name Wolfdietrich. Eventually Wolfdietrich is restored, but after Hugdietrich's death Sabene wages war. Wolfdietrich flees and seeks aid from one of his supporters, Ortnit, who in the interim has been killed by a dragon. To revenge Ortnit's death, Wolfdietrich pursues the dragon, and a series of fabulous adventures ensues.

Fig. 31 Wolfdietrich meets Rauhe Else, no. 9

## **Ido wolffoithrich vñ der rauben Elsen**

Er sprach neyn auff meyn ere  
 Eüch wird der rauff dan geben  
 So wil ich nymmer mere  
 Mit freüden mit eüch leben.

Sarumb so sorg du kleine  
 Vil edeles fürsten kind  
 Ich wirt getöfft reine  
 Wann du sum mit mir sind  
 Du findest noch an mir freüde  
 Sie dir gar wol behagt  
 Wie wol dir hie zü leyde  
 Min schwarzer lyb betagt.

Wir stand hie meine sunne  
 Sprach do der werde man  
 Noch keiner frowen gwinne  
 Wan vmb min dienstman  
 Wo die mir hyn sind kummen  
 So ir mich in dem tan  
 Mit zauber hand genömen  
 Sarumb müß ich trurig stan.

Sy sprach die jungelinge  
 Sind zü dein brüdern kumen  
 Die hand sy verschmid in ringe  
 Vñ hand sy gefangen genömen  
 Sy wolent dein nit vergessen  
 Noch auß dem hertzen lan  
 Das müßent die held vermessen  
 Sört in den ringen gan.  
 Sind ir ein küniginne  
 So sagent mir für war  
 Ob ich eüch wölte gwinne  
 Wie kem ich durch das har  
 Ob ich hie in dem walde  
 Wölt fruntshaft mit eüch han  
 Des antwurt sy gar balde  
 Dem fürsten lobesan.

Wölt ir in fruntshaft leben  
 Eüch wirt ein weytes land  
 Vnd wirt eüch wider geben  
 Eüer güt schwert in die hand  
 Das ich eüch nam zü walde  
 So mit den listen min  
 So wolauff zü huf balde  
 Es sol leicht also sein.

Sy nam in do by der hende  
 Den tugenhasten man  
 Sy firt in an ein ende  
 Vber des möres tran  
 Sy firt in zü troy in  
 Das was ein weytes land  
 Sy sprach wend ir mit freidē sein  
 Das di id eüch alles sand.

Mit freüden wer ich geren  
 Wöcht es mit got gesein  
 Sunst müß ich freud emberen  
 Wann eüch die augen mein  
 Ansehent so verwachsen  
 Das trübet mir mein mit  
 Sy sprach das sölt ir lassen  
 Edelcr fürst hochgmüt.

## **Iye saß die rauch**

Elß in einem juncbbrunnen vnd  
 ginge ir die rauhe hant ab. So be  
 schlief sy wolffdieterich zü stüde.



Sy firt so getrate  
 Den fürsten lobesan  
 In eine kermate  
 Ret sy ein juncbbrunnen stan  
 So was ein seyte kalde  
 Die ander seyt was waren

E ij

Fig. 32 Wolfdietrich and Raue Else in the Fountain of Youth. Woodcut illustration from *Das Heldenbuch mit synen figuren* . . . (no. 9), fol. kii

One such adventure, recounted in the present text, tells of Wolfdietrich's encounter with a frightful wild woman called Raue Else (Fig. 31). The text states that the wild woman came running up to Wolfdietrich's fire and approached him ("So kam das rauhe weyb / Hynzû dem feuer gelauffen / Sy sach des fürsten leyb," fol. i6, col. 1, lines 14–16). She is described as moving on all fours and looking just like a bear ("Sy gieng auff allen fieren / Rechts als ein wilder ber," *ibid.*, lines 17–18), and Wolfdietrich asks if she is an animal and what she wants with him ("Bist du von wilden tieren / Wo magst du kommen her," *ibid.*, lines 19–20). In a related text, the *Dresdener Heldenbuch*, she is described as having a body covered with a thick hairy pelt, slimy and wet, like the bride of the devil overgrown with hair ("Auch hets an irem leib / Ein dicke rauche haute / Was schleimig vnde nas / Was gleich des teuffels praute / Mit har verwachsen was).<sup>1</sup> As the story continues, this hag brazenly demands Wolfdietrich's love. At one point she tries to tempt him, claiming to be highborn and offering him a kingdom and many wide lands, thirty towns, and wonderful creatures who will serve him ("Ich gib dir ein Künigkreiche / Und manig weytes land / Dreyssig burg wunnigkleiche / Die dienten deiner hand," fol. i6, col. 1, lines 25–28). To this overture, Wolfdietrich replies that he does not desire these things ("Das is nit mein sinnen . . .," *ibid.*, line 29). Wolfdietrich's persistent refusals incur her wrath, and she bewitches him, magically turning him into a wild man, gloating as he crawls about in a raving state for a half a year. Only at God's own command does she disenchant him. Then, in a denouement that apparently troubled the medieval mind less than it does the modern, Wolfdietrich says he will marry Raue Else if she becomes baptized. She agrees and embarks on a journey to the kingdom of Troy. After a visit to the Fountain of Youth (fol. kii; Fig. 32), her hairy body becomes smooth and she is returned to her former self, the princess Sigeminne.

The circumstances of Sigeminne's fall are vague. She belongs, however, to a group of literary figures distinguished by their highborn positions, who at one point or another for differing reasons experience a wild state, including the prince in *Der Busant*, Orson, or Namelos (see no. 34), and, in the sixteenth century, Sir Satryane in Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Raue Else's magic power to cast Wolfdietrich into a wild state is generally possessed only by extraordinary sorcerers like Merlin (see no. 8).

*Wolfdietrich* belongs to the *Heldenbuch*, compilations of Middle High German epics derived from remote Germanic tradition, which emphasize romanticized heroism with tragic overtones. Perhaps the most renowned and strikingly composed example is the *Nibelungenlied*. The *Heldenepos*, or epic poems of this sort, flourished during the high Middle Ages, and most versions contain elements of the popular Dietrich von Bern legend, which was in turn based on the historical figure Theodorich of Verona. *Alpharts Tod*, *Dietrichs Flucht*, *Das Eckenlied*, *König Laurin*, *Die Rabenschlacht*, *Sigenot*, *Ortnit*, as well as *Wolfdietrich*, all relate to each other. *Wolfdietrich*, written before 1250, was included in many compilations, including the well-known *Dresdener Heldenbuch*, dated 1472 (cited above), which included condensations of several thirteenth-century poems, as well as original compositions by its compiler, Kaspar von der Roen of Münnerstadt. The extant manuscripts of *Wolfdietrich* fall into four groups, each deriving from a hypothetical source. The original text is best preserved in the *Ambraser Handschrift*, a collection of epic poems compiled for Emperor Maximilian I, known as *Wolfdietrich A*. Missing the ending sections, the poem cycle contains 103 stanzas added later, followed by additional lines completing the text found in the *Dresdener Heldenbuch*, known as *Wolfdietrich K*. *Wolfdietrich B*, or *Wolfdietrich von Salnecke* (Salonica), follows these texts, although many of the adventures and details vary. This version is preserved in three different manuscripts, all of which date from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries but derive from the early thirteenth-century original.<sup>2</sup> Of the remaining, and later, two groups, C is fragmentary and D adds many oriental adventures. The present printed edition follows the *Wolfdietrich B* text.<sup>3</sup> A comparison of the lines cited above with the corresponding lines from the *Wolfdietrich B* manuscript demonstrates, notwithstanding the archaic language, how faithfully the present text adheres to its source:

Als sîn meister do entslief, dô kom daz rûhe wip  
zuo dem fiure gegangen: si sach des fürsten lip.  
si qienc uf allen vieren, reht sam si waere ein ber.  
er sprach bistu gehiure? welher tiuvel brâht dich her?<sup>4</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Fuchs, 1935, p. 106, stanza 197.
2. *Wolfdietrich B*, 1871, pp. v–vi, lvi.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. lv–lxxxii, 167–301.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 213, stanza 308.

## 10 Wild man (Desire), with image of Venus, leading Leriano

Woodcut from the *Cárcel de Amor* of Diego de San Pedro with a continuation by Nicolas Núñez, folio aii verso

Anonymous; published by Fadrique Aleman of Basel Spain, Burgos

1496

Incunabulum on paper

19.7 × 13.5 cm. (7 3/4 × 5 5/16 in.)

(Haebler 606)

London: The British Library, IA 53247

A large hairy wild man with vines entwined around his waist holds a shield in one hand and cradles a statuette of a naked woman encircled by a flaming mandorla in his other arm. He leads a forlorn-looking youth, whose hands are bound behind his back, from a dense woods. A horse follows behind. In the trees to the left, a somewhat alarmed-looking man witnesses the scene. A rocky hillside fills the right background, while the near ground is scattered with several loose stones and clumps of grass.

The little-known *Cárcel de Amor* of Diego de San Pedro, written in metric prose, is considerably shorter than most courtly romances and is probably best described as a sentimental novel.<sup>1</sup> It consists of two parts. The first, which contains the wild man imagery of interest here, is a straightforward allegory pervaded with an excess of emotion characteristic of late fifteenth-century taste. The second part, also heavily sentimental, is a chivalric tale of adventure.<sup>2</sup> The first part opens with the author (*el autor*) or narrator strolling on a sunny morning in a shadowed valley of the Sierra Morena. Suddenly, the story goes, he meets a ferocious knight, who is covered with hair like a wild creature ("vi salir a mi encuëro por entre vnos robredales do mi camino se hazar vn cauallero assi feros de presencia. como espantoso de vista: cubierto tódo de cabello a manera de saluaje . . .," fol. aiii). In his left hand he holds a shield of bright steel and in his right hand a sculptured stone image of a captivatingly beautiful woman ("vna ymagen femenil. entallada en vna piedra muy clara: la quel era de tan estrema hermosura que me turbana la vista," fol. aiii). The image is encircled by fiery rays that inflame the passions of man. Behind the wild man, led in subjugation, is a young man who laments his tortured and pitiful state ("vn hombre quel cauallero forçiblemente leuau tras si el qual con lastimado gemido derato en rato deziaten mi fe se suffre todo.

y. como en parejo comingos: dixo me con mortal angustia," fol. aiii; Fig. 33).

The wild man, it is revealed, is the personification of Desire and his captive is the hero of the saga, Leriano. Beseeched to help, the author follows the pair to a foreboding fortification called the *Cárcel de Amor*, the Prison of Love, which is the creation of Leriano's infatuation (*enamorada condicion*). Ascribing allegorical meaning to every detail, the text relates that the castle's foundations are made of Constant Love; the four sustaining columns are Reason, Understanding, Memory, and Will; and the guards and torturers are Sadness, Anguish, Misfortune, Despair, Passion, Pain, and Suffering.<sup>3</sup>

Leriano suffers imprisonment and torture for his love of Laureola, the daughter of King Gaulo. When the author intercedes with Laureola on Leriano's behalf, she is at first outraged, but eventually agrees to accept Leriano's letter out of pity. The first section concludes with Leriano's release. In the second part Leriano is brought together with his love, but their meeting inspires jealousy among his rivals, who cause Laureola to be condemned for the allegedly guilty nature of her love. After several combats to vindicate Laureola, Leriano lays siege to her father's fortress, where Laureola is imprisoned. Although he succeeds in acquitting Laureola and winning her sympathy, she refuses to see him again in fear for her reputation. When the author reports Laureola's decision to Leriano, Leriano withdraws, refuses food and drink, and eventually dies, as the author says, of unrequited love.

In the *Cárcel de Amor*, the wild man is elevated from a symbol of mere sexuality to a rare, allegorical one of unfulfilled sensual desire. His new position is underscored by his designation not as a "wild man," but, in spite of his appearance, as a "knight." In his usual context the wild man is capable of almost all principal medieval attitudes toward women except the courtly one of restrained adulation and respect. He is thus a natural opponent of the knight, who represents the discipline and civility the wild man lacks (see no. 16).<sup>4</sup> The notion of combat or duel between the opposing attitudes represented by the knight and the wild man is central to the *Cárcel de Amor* and reveals the degree to which this writing was influenced by the courtly tradition.<sup>5</sup> Here, however, the wild man is no longer the protagonist of romantic and courtly ethic, but has become the arbitrator of matters of love, imprisoning unrequited



Fig. 33 Wild man (Desire), with image of Venus, leading Leriano, no. 10

lovers and torturing them with passions.<sup>6</sup> He declares that his name is Desire and that he presides over the Prison of Love. As an emblem of his office, Desire carries a statuette of Venus surrounded by a flaming mandorla. Desire notes that the image of Venus inspires affections that consume those in whom they are nurtured.<sup>7</sup> The wild man here is analogous to the lady who, in a related scene on the casket no. 18, tethers the wild man on a rope. In both cases the captives are either figuratively or literally fettered by love. Venus, the medieval embodiment of sensual love, is a natural ally of the wild man, who is charged with imprisoning those suffering from unfulfilled desire, a condition the wild man is unlikely, at least by reputation, to suffer. When he arrives at the castle, the wild man (Desire) becomes a guardian of love's victims, whose consuming affections he has helped inspire. This sudden change of role from matchmaker to jailer is also characteristic of wild men in carnivals.<sup>8</sup>

The *Cárcel de Amor* seems to have enjoyed considerable popularity in its day. After its first printing at Seville in 1492, it was issued in another thirty Spanish editions, and subsequently translated into French, Italian, English, and German. The present edition, which shares woodcuts with that published by Juan Rosembach at Barcelona in 1493, contains some of the finest examples of Spanish woodcut illustrations of the period.<sup>9</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. *Castle of Love*, 1950, p. 1.
2. Kurth, 1942, p. 238.
3. Whinnom, 1974, p. 96.
4. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 121.
5. Langbehn-Rohland, 1970, pp. 82–83.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 146–51.
7. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 149.
8. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, p. 76.
9. Lyell, 1926, p. 44.

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Lyell, 1926, p. 44, fig. 32; Hind, 1935, vol. II, p. 751, fig. 481; Kurth, 1942, pp. 237–45; Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 18, 149–50, fig. 46; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. I, p. 76; Langbehn-Rohland, 1970, pp. 82–89, 108–10, 115–16, 146–201; *Obras Completas II*, 1974; Whinnom, 1974, pp. 96–118.

### 11 Enyas rescuing the maiden from a wild man, and Galahad capturing the Castle of the Virgins (Château des Pucelles)

Casket with scenes from courtly romances

France, Paris

Mid-fourteenth century

Ivory with iron mounts (front panel and mounts are modern)

11.1 × 25.4 × 15.5 cm. (4 3/8 × 10 × 6 1/8 in.)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.173

Carved in relief of the lid and all sides, this casket is decorated with secular scenes drawn from medieval romances, satires, and allegories. The front and back panels, as well as the lid, are each divided into four equal sections; the inner separating bars support iron mounts. Each section is devoted to a separate scene, save the two center sections of the lid, which combine to form one. The end panels each have two scenes without separating elements. Altogether fifteen subjects are represented. From left to right on the lid are: a knight riding off with a maiden from the Castle of Love, above, with the escape in a boat below; a tournament with ladies watching from a balcony; and the storming of the Castle of Love. On the front panel are: Aristotle instructing the young Alexander; Phyllis ridiculing Aristotle with Alexander watching; the aged setting out for the Fountain of Youth; and bathing in the Fountain of Youth. The back panel shows scenes of: Gawain fighting the phantom lion, whose paw becomes affixed to his shield; Lancelot crossing a raging torrent on the blade of his sword with a shower of swords from above; Gawain sleeping in the Château Merveil, protected by his armor from a shower of swords; and three maidens advancing to greet Gawain, who has freed them from the enchanted castle. On the left end panel Tristram and Yseult see the face of the spying King Mark reflected in the fountain; and the unicorn resting its head in the maiden's lap is killed by a hunter. Finally, on the right panel, Enyas rescues a maiden from a wild man; and Galahad receives the keys to the Castle of the Virgins (Château des Pucelles) from the aged seneschal.



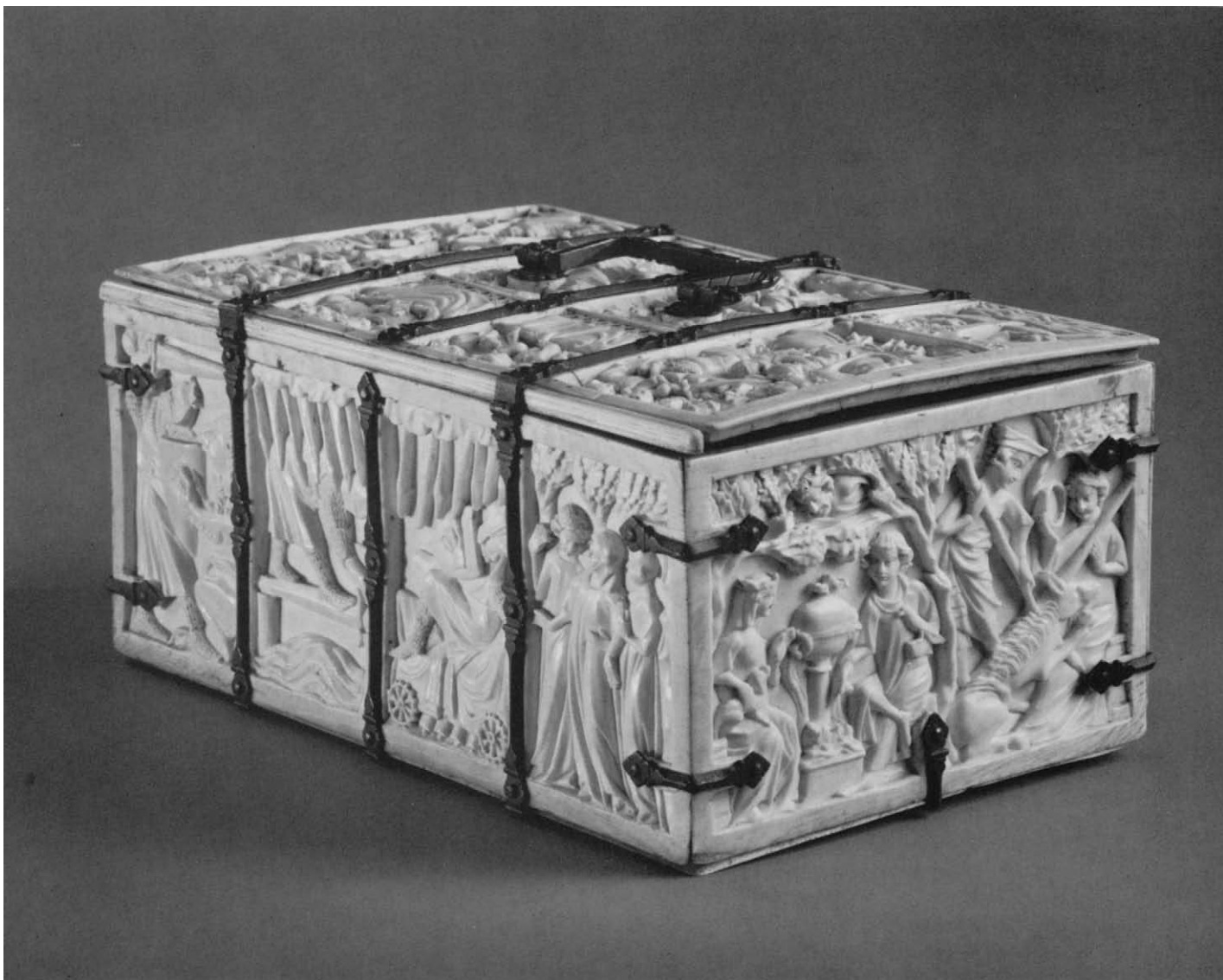


Fig. 34 Ivory casket with scenes from courtly romances, no. 11

The iron mounts and the front panel, the scenes of which seem to be patterned on those of a similar casket in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, are of the nineteenth century.

Of the many ivory caskets generally thought to be betrothal or marriage gifts, this example (Fig. 34) and six others, all produced in Paris or the Lower Rhineland during the first half of the fourteenth century, belong to a group defined by their subject material.<sup>1</sup> Rather than scenes from a particular romance or vignettes of courtly lovers engaged in pleasant diversions, scenes drawn from a variety of popular romances, satires, and allegories decorate these caskets. Of the subjects represented on this example, that at the right end of the right end panel is of particular interest here (Fig. 35).

A large wild man with long wavy body hair holds a beseeching maiden in his grasp. Emerging from the left, a mounted knight in full armor lances the wild man through the mouth. The subject of this scene, which shares the panel with another scene representing Galahad receiving the keys to the Castle of the Virgins, was first accurately identified by Roger Sherman Loomis.<sup>2</sup> His identification was made by comparing this scene to a series of marginal drawings in the *Taymouth Hours* (The British Library, London, Yates Thompson Ms. 13) and the *Smithfield Decretals* (The British Library, London, Royal Ms. 10.E.iv). In the *Taymouth Hours*, these scenes are accompanied by Anglo-Norman inscriptions that explain the story.<sup>3</sup> The scene corresponding to that on the present casket is identified as the old knight Enyas rescuing a maiden ("Ci uient enyas vn viel chiualer et rescout la damoysele"). Although the complete story is not known, Loomis suggests that it relates to a similar episode known as "The Maiden and the Dogs," as well as to more corrupt versions found in the *Chevalier a l'Espee*, the *Vengeance Raguidel*, the prose *Tristram*, and the Dutch *Lancelot*.<sup>4</sup>

In the story, Enyas encounters a wild man assaulting a maiden in the woods. Rushing to her rescue, he attacks and kills the aggressor. As Enyas and the maiden proceed through the woods, they encounter a young knight, who challenges Enyas for the maiden's hand. Under the misapprehension that she will prove loyal to him out of gratitude, Enyas suggests that she be allow-



Fig. 35 Enyas rescuing the maiden from a wild man, and Galahad capturing the Castle of the Virgins, right end panel, no. 11

ed to choose her favorite, but the maiden promptly selects the handsome young knight. The brazen youth then demands Enyas's dog, but unlike the maiden the creature remains faithful to his master. The youth then presses Enyas into a combat from which Enyas emerges victorious, which sends the maiden hastening to his side. Enyas, however, rides off, abandoning her in the woods, where she is subsequently devoured by beasts.

In the Enyas story the wild man makes one of his earliest appearances in a narrative role. Free from civilized moral codes, he pursues his sensual desires, focused here on the maiden. By the chivalric code the knight is obligated to defend the chastity and honor of the lady. Thus the knight and wild man are pitted against each other in an allegorical combat, a theme in wild man imagery that endures throughout the late Middle Ages. As evidenced in this scene, it is a contest that, for the moment, the wild man is destined to lose.

Enyas rescuing the maiden from the wild man appears to have been a popular theme, since it survives on the end panels of four complete caskets, as well as on a separate panel that lacks the maiden.<sup>5</sup> In the 1360-68 inventory of Louis, duke of Anjou, a hanap, a cup, and a basin are all described as having this subject, rendered in enamel.<sup>6</sup> The Enyas scene on the hanap is linked with another inside the lid representing a wild





Fig. 36 Enyas rescuing the maiden from a wild man. Detail of painted ceiling. Spain, 1350–75. Granada, Alhambra, Hall of Justice, southern vault. Photo: Mas

man mounted on a lion that is led on a chain by a maiden (“une dame qui tient en sa main une chayenne dont un lyon est lyez, et sur ledit lyon, a un homme sauvage”). A scene in the southern vault of the painted leather ceiling of the Hall of Justice in the Alhambra, Granada, dating between 1350 and 1375, shows the maiden, rescued by Enyas, holding a lion on a chain (Fig. 36). Loomis and Dodds each interpret this as incongruous blending of the two unrelated scenes such as those described on the lost Anjou hanap.<sup>7</sup>

The Enyas and the wild man scene also seems to play an allegorical role in relation to several of the other scenes represented on this casket, although the depictions have no iconographic unity as a whole. Based on the iconography of the casket lids devoted to the storming of the Castle of Love and a tournament scene, Ross proposed a chronology of type.<sup>8</sup> The archetypes show a close connection between the scenes set in the four compartments of the lid and share the same subjects in the remaining panels.<sup>9</sup> The Metropolitan casket is the earliest major variant; the connecting details of

the lid compartments have been lost, and the scene of Enyas has been added to the right end panel previously given over solely to Galahad receiving the key to the Castle of the Virgins. Along with the maiden and the unicorn, this addition establishes a thematic symmetry with the other end panel, which represents King Mark spying on Tristram and Yseult. Seeing here a contrast between lustful and pure love, Loomis proposed that the artist was attempting iconographic unity.<sup>10</sup> He further suggested that a similar relationship was intended between Lancelot’s guilty love for Guinevere and Gawain’s chaste quest for the Holy Grail, implicit in the scenes of the back panel. Although Ross rejects these ideas, he does admit definite thematic relationships in the Metropolitan type that recur in all later types.<sup>11</sup>

Whatever the intent, the scenes address the follies of youth and age in the pursuit of love. The passion of Tristram and Yseult’s love can certainly be contrasted with the purity symbolized by the maiden and the unicorn. The ironic reality of the maiden’s betrayal of the unicorn is observed by

the hunter, as King Mark witnesses Yseult's faithlessness. In the same way the wild man's lust can be contrasted to the purity of Galahad's quest. Perhaps a parallel is also implied between the wild man's licentiousness and the knightly propensity to adultery. In addition, although Enyas certainly avenges himself in the end, there is a note of comic tension in his competing with youth in the pursuit of love. That theme is repeated on the front panels of other caskets with scenes of Aristotle humiliated by Phyllis, Vergil humiliated in a basket, and the Fountain of Youth.

Interestingly, at a time when scenes of courtly romance were declining in impact and iconographic identity, the wild man emerged as a figure of fresh invention. The back panel scenes of the composite caskets, in which Lancelot's pursuit of Guinevere may originally have been conceived as a foil to Gawain's quest of the Bleeding Lance, become increasingly muddled and diffused in the later types.<sup>12</sup> Conversely, the wild man increasingly commands prominence; in a late type, scenes of the wild man's exploits take over the entire front panel of the casket, replacing the earlier satirical and allegorical scenes.<sup>13</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Koechlin, 1924, vol. II, nos. 1281-87.
2. Loomis, "Phantom Tale," 1917, pp. 175-79.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 177; Warner and Gilson, 1921, vol. I, p. 334.
4. Loomis, "Phantom Tale," p. 175.
5. Koechlin, 1924, vol. II, nos. 1284, 1289.
6. Laborde, 1872, pp. 13, no. 71; 21, no. 110; 96, no. 615.
7. Loomis, "Phantom Tale," p. 176; Dodds, 1979, p. 192.
8. Ross, 1948, pp. 135-39.
9. Koechlin, 1924, vol. II, nos. 1281-83.
10. Loomis, "Ivory Casket," 1917, pp. 24-27.
11. Ross, 1948, p. 140, no. 2.
12. Loomis, 1938, p. 66.
13. Koechlin, 1924, vol. II, no. 1290; vol. III, pl. CCXX.

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Loomis, "Ivory Casket," 1917, pp. 19-27, fig. 3; Loomis, "Phantom Tale," 1917, pp. 175-79; Warner and Gilson, 1921, vol. I, p. 334; Koechlin, 1921, p. 295; Koechlin, 1924, vol. II, no. 1284; Hoopes, 1926, pp. 127-39, figs. 1-6; Loomis, 1938, pp. 70, 72, 76, figs. 122, 137; Scherer, 1945, pp. 42, 54-55, 68-69; Ross, 1948, pp. 136-42, fig. 31c; Bernheimer, 1952, p. 122, fig. 37; *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 10; Wixom, 1979, p. 115, fig. 60.

## 12 Storming the Castle of Love

Mirror back

Germany, Cologne

1350-60

Ivory

Diam. 13 cm. (5 1/8 in.)

London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 9-1872

At the center of this composition stands a castle of masonry walls with a portcullis gate surmounted by a double lancet window, flanked by two peditments and two levels of crenellated ramparts above. Two facing groups of fully armored and mounted knights, holding shields and brandishing swords, combat before the castle. At the left, a mounted knight without a helmet swings a large bludgeon overhead. A group of maidens on the lower rampart hurls roses at the attackers. The fallen roses give the misleading appearance of decorative elements on the armor and caparisons. In the tops of two trees flanking the castle heralds blow bannered trumpets. A winged figure on the upper rampart draws aim with his bow and arrow at a figure below. Four equidistantly placed lions crouch on the outer rim of the mirror back. Those at the upper left and lower right corners were carved from separate pieces of ivory, apparently at a later date.

In the Metropolitan Museum casket (no. 11), the wild man makes an appearance in a single panel and a hesitant allegorical incursion into several others. There the wild man in the Enyas story takes his rightful role as the antagonist. From the beginning of the fourteenth century onward, however, the wild man in certain allegorical scenes increasingly usurps roles originally held only by his human counterparts. At first he supplants his courtly opposite, the knight, but eventually the wild folk are depicted performing all kinds of human acts.

The storming of the Castle of Love is perhaps the most common allegorical scene eventually borrowed by the wild man. This mirror back shows the scene before wild men replaced the knights (Fig. 37). The helmetless knight at the left, whose bludgeon is hardly a characteristic weapon of chivalry, may well herald the wild man's arrival.

The Castle of Love, an enduring late medieval image, is an allegory of conquest in which the win-



Fig. 37 Storming the Castle of Love, no. 12

ning of a lady's heart is depicted as the siege of a castle. Representing the ritualistic but sensual code of courtly love, a cluster of fully armored knights—often on richly caparisoned mounts—arduously attacks the castle, equivocally defended by ladies hurling roses, some of which are slung back with siege catapults. After a decorous show of resistance, the ladies yield their castle—their favors—and elope with the knights of their choice. The entire escapade is frequently abetted by the God of Love firing his fateful arrow from above.

No literary source for the storming of the Castle of Love is known.<sup>1</sup> Resemblances with the allegorical *Roman de la Rose* (ca. 1230–70) and a comparable German poem, *Die Minneburg* (ca. 1325–50) are only superficial. Some scholars have traced the popularity of this subject to pageants and oral tradition. Loomis cites Roland of Padua's description of a festival held in 1214 at Treviso, in which an elaborately constructed castle populated by the town's twelve fairest ladies was besieged by the local gentlemen.<sup>2</sup> Comparable events are recorded in Switzerland, Germany, and England,<sup>3</sup> but Koechlin doubts that such pageants influenced ivory workshops in Paris, though the subject enjoyed much favor there.<sup>4</sup> The pervasiveness of oral tradition, particularly the preoccupation of the minnesänger with the conquest of love, and a possible lost literary source may account for the Castle of Love's frequent representation. The apparent absence of a single source left this subject open to the interpolation of the wild man into the legend.

From a stiff and literal allegory the storming of the Castle of Love evolves to a freer and more sensual escapade to which the wild man's primitive nature is well suited. In the *Peterborough Psalter*, dating from about 1300, the ladies repel the knights with unusual vigor (Fig. 38). Two knights crumple on their ladders under the force of the onslaught; two others are overpowered before the gate. Several ladies clutch their roses as if they were rocks. In the *Luttrell Psalter* of about 1340 (The British Library, London, Ms. Add. 42130), a single flower is propelled with sufficient force to knock the helmet from a knight's head, while mounted knights in another manuscript, *De Nobilitatibus, Sapientiis, et Prudentiis Regum* (1326–27) of Walter de Milemete (Christ Church Library, Oxford, M. 92), lift their visors in dismay at the sight of the bellicose female defenders. In the present ivory, however, the ladies are distinctly less aggressive; they neither



Fig. 38 Storming the Castle of Love. Detail of manuscript illumination from the *Peterborough Psalter*. England (East Anglia), about 1300. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, Ms. 9961, 9962, fol. 91v. Photo copyright Bibliothèque Royale Albert I<sup>er</sup>, Brussels





Fig. 39 Storming the Castle of Love. Lid of an ivory casket with scenes from courtly romances (no. 11). France, mid-fourteenth century. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.173

engage in direct combat with the knights nor hurl their flowers quite so fervently. The God of Love, absent in the earlier manuscript representations, here takes an active part in the defense of the castle, and some of the knights appear to have abandoned their siege to engage in jousts, presumably to win the ladies' favor. The tournament becomes a separate scene on the lid of the Metropolitan casket (no. 11), while the Castle of Love is presented in the two flanking scenes, the right one representing the storming, and the left one, the surrender (Fig. 39). Reducing the scene to a ritualistic charade, the besieging knights have now exchanged their weaponry for a catapult that merely hurls roses. The denouement is explicit in the elopement of the lady with her knight and their escape, locked in an embrace, by boat. No longer an allegory of chastity, the scene has become a frivolous exercise in sensual pleasure. The stage is thus set for the wild man, whose assimilation into the scene can be examined in nos. 13 and 14.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Koechlin, 1924, vol. I, p. 404; Ross, 1948, p. 113.
2. Loomis, 1919, p. 255.
3. Ibid., pp. 256–58.
4. Koechlin, 1924, vol. I, p. 405.

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Koechlin, 1924, vol. II, no. 1092; vol. III, pl. CLXXXVI;  
Ross, 1948, p. 135, fig. 31a.

### 13 Wild men storming the Castle of Love

Roundel with the arms of the Huppe family of Cologne and figural scenes in quatrelobes

Germany, Cologne

About 1530

Glass, enameled and silver-stained

Diam. 34.2 cm. (13 7/16 in.)

Frankfurt am Main: Historisches Museum, X 19608

The quatrelobe roundel bears a central shield emblazoned with a hoopoe standing on a hillock, one claw raised, against a damascened background. In the upper lobe two maidens with garlands in their hair lean over a crenellated rampart between two towers; one empties a vase of blossoms over the walls, and the other prepares to toss a floral garland. In each of the side lobes, a youthful wild man, one with a shield slung over his shoulder and a floral branch in his hand, climbs a ladder in an attempt to scale the castle walls. A bearded wild man in the lower lobe has tumbled to the ground, his ladder having snapped in two. Each of the wild men is set against a background of dense woods. The glass is painted with brown enamel and toned with yellow and amber silver stain; the spandrels between the lobes are filled with red glass.

In this late representation of the storming of the Castle of Love, the substitution of wild men for the courtly knights transforms the character of the allegory. The maidens in the castle are neither the staunch guardians of chastity seen in the *Peterborough Psalter* (Fig. 38), nor the fair ladies merrily indulging in the charade of defense in the Victoria and Albert mirror back (no. 12; Fig. 37), but are winsomely seductive creatures who seem to toss their flowers more to encourage than to repel their attackers (Fig. 40). The young wild men, aware of the true nature of their business, have abandoned weaponry and armor. The wild man's legendary sexual prowess, combined with the willing attitude of the maidens, produces an image of pure wantonness. No longer a bulwark of purity, the castle becomes a seat of sensuality, and the storming of the castle is equated with the satisfaction of physical desire.

Here the wild man, as a symbol of carefree existence, adds an element of humor to a standard scene without making it frivolous, as in a comparable castle storming in an earlier Alsatian tapestry (Fig. 41). Somewhat archaically for its date, the present roundel reflects the late medieval tendency to moralize on almost every subject. Texts like *Cy Nous Dit* attempt, without great success, to give an edifying interpretation as well as a



Fig. 40 Wild men storming the Castle of Love, no. 13



Fig. 41 Wild men storming a castle. Detail of tapestry. Alsace, 1390–1410. Regensburg, Stadt Museum. Photo copyright Wilkin Spitta

religious significance to many popular lay subjects.<sup>1</sup> In this roundel, however, the allegory is entirely secular, a lighthearted satire of courtly morality. While proselytizing a less restricting code of conduct, however, the artist interjects a warning. The wild man in the lower lobe is bearded, signifying age. His ungainly tumble amid pieces of his broken ladder is a reminder that love is a pursuit for the young, a theme found in several composite ivory caskets of the first half of the fourteenth century (see no. 11).

The heraldic device of the hoopoe has been identified with the Cologne patrician family of Huppe, whose most distinguished members were probably the two sons of the juror Johann: Everard, who became keeper of the reliquaries of Saint Laurenz in 1543, and Johann the Younger, mayor of Cologne from 1529 and proprietor of the court *zum Judden* near Saint Pantaleon.<sup>2</sup> The hoopoe (*Wiedehopf* in German) was known, according to the *Physiologus*, for its habit of caring for its parents in their old age, a characteristic that made it acceptable in heraldry. Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179) states in her *Naturkunde*, however, that the hoopoe is unclean and lives in filth,<sup>3</sup> lining its nests with human excrement, feeding off dung, and living in graves. Because of its divergent nature, it was frequently considered to be two different birds, the *epops* and the *upupa*. Although whether an analogy to the hoopoe was intended is a matter of speculation, the wild man was also remarkable for his dualistic nature.

The quatrelle format of this roundel, common in the Middle Rhineland and South Germany during the fifteenth century, and the archaic figure types suggest a reliance on an earlier model.<sup>4</sup> The symmetrical arrangement of the crenellated castle flanked with turrets is particularly reminiscent of that in the Victoria and Albert mirror back (no. 12). Executed about two centuries later, this roundel bears witness to the enduring popularity of the theme of the Castle of Love.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Loomis, 1919, p. 264.
2. Beeh-Lustenberger, 1965, p. 132; Kohlhaussen, 1970, vol. II, no. 63.
3. *Naturkunde*, p. 116.
4. Beeh-Lustenberger, 1965, p. 134.

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von der Leyen and Spamer, 1910, p. 101; Schmitz, 1913, p. 68, fig. 107; Schmitz, 1923, p. 6, fig. 52; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 79; Beeh-Lustenberger, 1965, no. 56; Kohlhaussen, 1970, vol. II, no. 63.

## 14 Wild men storming the Moors' castle and other scenes

### *Colorplate IV*

Tapestry

Germany (Alsace), Strasbourg(?)

About 1400

Wool on linen warp (7–8 warps per cm.)

1 × 4.9 m. (3 ft. 3 3/8 in. × 16 ft. 1 in.)

Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Charles Potter Kling Fund, 54.1431

From left to right, five tall wild men covered with striped woolly body hair and armed with stones, sticks, clubs, and fronds attack a castle peopled with small Moors. Two black defenders in long mantles, one on the near side of the moat and the other on the drawbridge, draw their bows against the aggressors. The Moorish king and queen, both crowned, watch the foray from two windows over the castle gate. Four Moors, one in each turret, brandish weapons or gesticulate, while four others watch from the crenellated wall below. The castle stands in a sparse wooded grove. Emerging from the edge of the grove is a stag. In the central section, several wild men, with garlands in their hair, engage in struggles with various animals. One wild man grapples with a rampant lion, raising his club to deliver a blow; two other wild men, one with a long pole and another with a club, attempt to kill a basilisklike creature, while a fourth engages a unicorn, holding its horn in one hand and a foreleg in the other. In the right-hand section a wild woman and two children, one seated on her lap and the other at her side, sit in front of a rocky outcropping. The group is approached from both sides by three wild men, one on a stag, another with a lion slung over his shoulder, and the third, kneeling before her, offering a leg of meat. At the left, monkeys scamper up one of several trees, with fronds or large leaves, that punctuate the composition. The ground is composed of abstract mounds and a variety of flora. The red tessellated background is formed of squares of linked chains framing rosette patterns. Along the bottom edge are three crested helms, one repeated, and an escutcheon with heraldic bearings. Facial features have been painted, not woven.

The three sections of the tapestry, which at first

glance may appear to be composed of essentially unrelated vignettes of wild-folk lore, combine to form an intricate, but remarkably unified, iconographic program (Fig. 42). The outer two sections representing the opposing values of civilized man and unfettered wild folk are balanced and unified thematically by the central one.

The first of these scenes, the storming of the Moors' castle (colorplate IV, left), depends on fourteenth-century representations of the storming of the Castle of Love, but many iconographic changes have been made, chiefly by the addition of moralizing interpretation and religious allegory. Loomis draws attention to an early fourteenth-century casket in which the castle is surmounted by a church and the battlements are held by nuns.<sup>1</sup> They hurl white pellets (the Eucharist?) upon six richly clad youths representing worldliness. The allegory is extended in a wall painting at Ratisbon, which depicts five pairs of lovers, a queen in the castle with a knight in her lap, a baldachin with another queen at a banquet table attended by four servants, and nine knights attacking the baldachin. A holy device on the shield of one knight indicates that his company represents the virtues and the baldachin they attack — and by implication the castle — is the abode of fleshly vice.

This same symbolism, but in a secular context, is transferred to the wild men storming a castle in two early fifteenth-century Alsatian tapestry fragments now in Nuremberg (Germanisches Nationalmuseum). In the first fragment (Fig. 43), quoting from models of religious allegory, a wild woman queen and her wild man attendants are depicted under a baldachin. In the second fragment the narrative continues (Fig. 44). Brandishing weapons tipped with flowers, a band of wild men mounted on fabulous beasts representing the vices are led by a small wild youth holding a plank shield, who represents the God of Love. The band attacks a castle defended by wild men drawing bows armed with flower-tipped arrows. The sensual symbolism is heightened by the receptacle-shaped flowers of the defenders. The two fragments are linked by inscriptions that reveal greed on the part of the queen, which her forces are eager to satisfy. To the left, the queen ex-



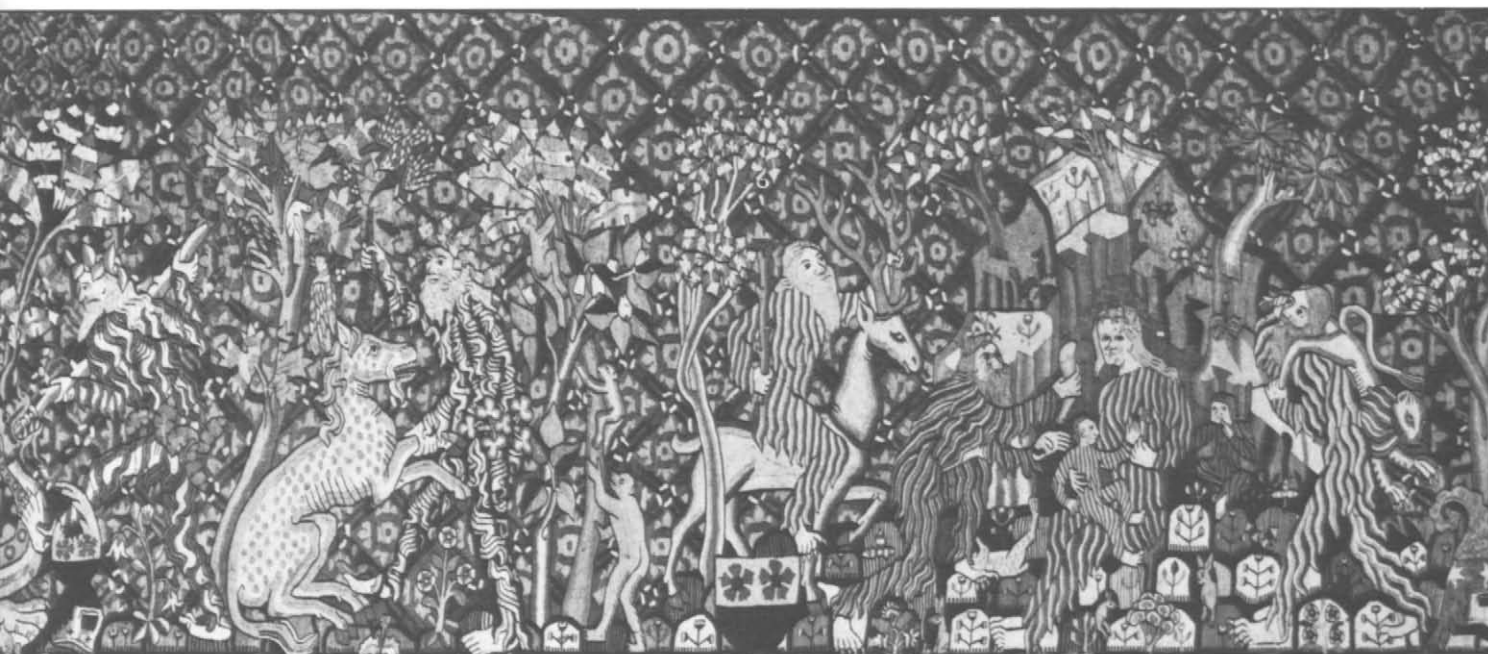


Fig. 42 Wild men storming the Moors' castle and other scenes, no. 14

horts her men to gain her fortresses and castles ("woluf.ale.mine.wilden.man.wir.wellent.festen.und.buirge.ha."). The aggressors are instructed to shoot all, let no one escape, and to capture property as booty ("schiesen.alle.niemen.los.abe.an.bu[i]te.gewinnent.wil.einne.habe."). The defenders declare their castle is well protected by lilies, clover, and roses ("vnser.vesten.die.ist.wol.behu[o]t.mit.gilgen.klew.en.rosenblut.").

The present storming scene recalls that in the Nuremberg tapestry but contains secular and polemical allegory derived from earlier moralizing types. Similarities between the two castles and the two tusked wild men offering a joint of meat to the seated wild ladies, for example, establish a formal correspondence as well. The combat of the wild

men and the fabulous beasts, the central motif of the tapestry, represents the struggle against vice (colorplate IV, right).<sup>2</sup> In the Nuremberg tapestry the wild men and beasts are clearly allied. Here the wild man fights the basilisklike beast, setting the moral tone of the tapestry and acting as the pivotal and unifying iconographic element between the end scenes. To the left a wild man struggles with a snarling lion, usually a symbol of strength and courage, but when in conjunction with a dragon often the embodiment of evil.<sup>3</sup> The theme of the struggle against evil is carried out in the storming of the castle, not only a bastion of vice, but an outmoded social order once glorified in traditional scenes of the storming of the Castle of Love. The unusual presence of the Moors —



black and therefore evil—is not mere whimsy on the part of the designer. As the wild man was frequently thought to be black, “like a Moor” (“er was einen Møre gelich”) says Hartmann von Aue,<sup>4</sup> the black Moors assume some of his negative qualities. The wild man’s ability to overpower the evils of a corrupt social and moral code through the storming of the Moors’ castle parallels his ability to defeat the forces of evil symbolized in his fight with the lion. The combat between virtue and vice recalls the central combat with the basilisklike beast.

To the right of the central motif, in contrast to the scene of struggle at the left, a wild man holds a foreleg of a unicorn, seemingly in a gesture of greeting or affection. As if to absorb the unicorn’s magical powers, he clutches its horn in his other

hand. The unicorn, while a strong and fierce fighter like the lion, mainly symbolized virtue and chastity. Placed opposite the lion the unicorn reinforces the symbolism of the adjacent scene of the wild woman attended by wild men (Fig. 45). Conspicuously absent in this scene is the aggressive activity in the storming of the Moors’ castle. The tranquility of this family or social group is enhanced by a natural setting of rocky outcroppings, trees, shrubs, verdant knolls, and romping rabbits. The lone wild woman is surrounded by adoring men, who offer her food and otherwise eagerly pay her homage, as though she were a matriarchal queen. While the implications are ambiguous, the wild woman is probably given her unique position not to extol her sensuality, as the presence of a



Fig. 43 Wild folk feasting under a baldachin. Fragment of tapestry. Alsace, 1400-1430. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 3806

child and the harmony of the men preclude sexual rivalry, but in recognition of her importance in procreation. This procreative "sensualization" thus returns the wild woman to her mythic identity as Maia, the pagan goddess of the earth and fertility.<sup>5</sup> Idealized here is a primitive sensuality characterized by loyalty and domestic bliss in accord with nature. Nothing could be further from the social order promoted in the other end of the tapestry, which elevated martial exercise in ritualistic competition for courtly and adulterous favors to the level of virtue. The demise of the old order seems underscored by a dead lion, representing the evils of the castle, slung over the back of a wild man, which is apparently brought as tribute to this rustic queen.

It is not only the wild folk and the adaptation of allegory that radically differentiate the siege scene in this tapestry from its models. The bright red background, the strangely shaped and multicolored trees, the variegated patterns of the wild men's hairy coats, the frolicking animals, and the fanciful ground forms create an atmosphere of magic and fantasy. The fabulous beasts with which the wild men associate (see no. 30) do not document the wild man's mythical affinity for the supernatural so much as they enhance a sense of delight in a world in which the restraints and conventions implied by the allegorical content of the courtly model are conspicuously lacking and in which, as Bernheimer says, "the unlikely is the commonplace."<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 44 Wild men storming a castle. Fragment of tapestry. Alsace, 1400–1430. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 3807

The two outermost crested helms and the heraldic shield along the bottom edge of the tapestry have been identified with the family of Zorn von Bulach or Zorn von Plobsheim, both of Strasbourg, and the remaining crested helm with the Blümel (Blümlein) family, also of Strasbourg.<sup>7</sup> The subject matter and the presence of the lion and unicorn, symbolizing courage and chastity as well as fidelity, strongly suggests a marriage alliance between two families. Townsend has argued that the unconventional heraldic arrangements rule out this interpretation, but her suggestion that the links forming part of the background pattern represent the chains binding lovers in faithfulness (see no. 17) gains greater credence in the context of marriage.<sup>8</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Loomis, 1919, pp. 264–65.
2. Heinz, 1963, p. 145.
3. Sachs, Badstübner, and Neumann, 1973, p. 240.
4. *Iwein*, stanza 425, line 288.
5. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 157.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
7. Cavallo, 1967, vol. I, p. 48.
8. Townsend, 1958, pp. 7, 17.

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von der Leyen and Spamer, 1910, pp. 101–2; Kurth, 1926, vol. I, nos. 108–9, pp. 124–28; vol. II, pls. 108, 109; Göbel, 1933, p. 87, pls. 58, 59; Major, n.d., p. 12; Bernheimer, 1952, p. 156 (fig. 45); Townsend, 1958, pp. 5–17; Heinz, 1963, pp. 144–50; Cavallo, 1967, vol. I, no. 1., pp. 47–49; vol. II, pl. 1, 1a–f; Devisse, 1979, vol. II, pp. 14–17; figs. 9, 10.





Fig. 45 Group of wild folk, detail, no. 14

## 15 Wild woman with a unicorn

Colorplate V

Fragment of a tapestry

Germany (Alsace), Strasbourg(?)

About 1500

Wool on linen warp with silk and gold thread  
(approximately 8 warps per cm.)

76 × 61 cm. (29 15/16 × 24 in.)

Basel: Historisches Museum, 1926.40

A wild woman with long flowing golden hair and blue tufted fur covering her body sits on a small green hillock. Seated and resting against her legs is a light brown unicorn. The wild woman strokes the unicorn's mane with one hand and holds its horn with the other. Her hair is adorned with a garland of flowers. Several trees, including a pomegranate, are set in the background. At the left edge of the tapestry a spring issues from a rocky precipice, fills a masonry well, and flows into a small pond, where a pair of ducks swim among the cat-tails. A pair of goldfinches, a woodpecker, and several deer appear among the hillocks and trees of the background. The foreground is richly carpeted with *fragaria*, *primula*, and other flowering plants. A long banderole with an inscription meanders around the central figures.

A number of symbolic traditions merge in this unusually fine tapestry. According to secular legend, the unicorn could be captured only by a virgin. Once he submitted to her, placing his head in her lap, he lost his legendary powers and was easy prey for hunters. As the unicorn was a symbol of virtue and chastity, he became an object of conquest for the wild man. In a tapestry now in Munich (Fig. 46), a wild man hunter, representing sensual desire, indicated by the love knots tied around his head, takes aim at a unicorn, representing pure and virtuous love.<sup>1</sup> Because the unicorn resurrected after his death, he was also seen as a symbol of generative powers. In this regard he may be likened to the wild man, whose virility was legendary. And, like the unicorn, the wild man could be tamed by a fair maiden and is frequently shown being led about on a chain (see Fig. 52). The replacement of the virgin with a handsome wild woman in the present tapestry introduces explicit erotic overtones. Just as the

unicorn loses his powers in the lap of a virgin, so the wild man spends his passions in lovemaking. But both are only to be "reborn content, tame and relaxed, ready to bear the fetters of love."<sup>2</sup> Thus the unicorn and the wild man are bound in faithfulness.

While the unicorn is content in the chains of devotion and fidelity, the wild folk seem less enthusiastic. In the inscription on this tapestry, the wild woman declares, "I have spent my life in worldly ways, now I must live in misery here. Oh how [sad]" ("min.zit. [han ich der] welt.gegeb[e]n. noun . mus . ich . nie . im . Ellenden . Leben . O . wie . d[raurig?]"). Although the wild woman often finds a natural ally for amorous pursuits in the unicorn—in the scene on the lid of the Vienna casket (no. 27), for example, where she rides the beast through a woodland idyll in which amorous instincts run rampant—here she is its victim. Rather than seducing the unicorn she has been ensnared by it, caught by the bonds of faithfulness. This paradoxical reversal of her moral condition explains her otherwise somewhat enigmatic lament.

The idyllic setting with rich flora and abundant wildlife reiterates the wild man's escape to a simple existence in the verdant woodlands. The spring, a symbol of fertility and regeneration, alludes to the recurrent theme of the wild man as the guardian of woodland sources (see nos. 32, 38).

In composition the tapestry relates to the Master ES engraving of a wild woman with a unicorn (no. 46). Whether this earlier engraving was understood in the same iconographic terms or whether the present tapestry represents a later interpretation is unclear.

T.H.

### NOTES

1. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 61, p. 42.
2. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 136.

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Major, n.d., no. 9, pp. 26–27; Kurth, 1926, vol. I, no. 141b, p. 131; vol. II, pl. 141b; van Marle, 1931, vol. II, fig. 472; Göbel, 1933, p. 99, fig. 73; Bernheimer, 1952, p. 192 n. 36; *Spätgotik*, 1970, no. 262; Beer, 1972, fig. 80; Einhorn, 1976, pp. 174–75, 329 (no. 216); Freeman, 1976, pp. 34, 52–53, fig. 13.



Fig. 46 Wild man hunter with virgin and unicorn. Fragment of tapestry. Germany (Franconia), about 1450. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. Photo copyright Bayerisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 47 Maiden crowning knight with a wreath. Left end panel of wooden casket. Germany, 1350–75. Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, 1877.380

## 16 Competition between a wild man and a knight for the favor of a lady

*Minnekästchen* (coffret) with four scenes from an allegory

Germany, Cologne  
1350–75

Oak, lindenwood openwork, with remnants of polychrome; iron mounts and edgings partially gilded  
13 × 31 × 23 cm. (5 1/8 × 12 3/16 × 9 1/16 in.)

Cologne: Kunstgewerbemuseum, A.318

Decorated in polychromed openwork, this casket represents a series of courtship scenes. On the front panel from left to right, a messenger approaches a wild man who sits on a stump, accompanied by a stag, a bird, and an ape. Separated from this scene by a grotesque mask, the right scene shows a wild man riding off on a horse. The

inscription on the banderole above him is illegible. On the right end panel, a wild man seizes a maiden, who struggles and gestures both toward the knight holding out a ring and to the wild man. On the back panel, a mounted knight in armor and a companion burst forth from a castle in pursuit of the abducting wild man and his companion. The mounted wild man in the lead clutches the maiden while looking over his shoulders at his pursuers. In the final scene on the left end panel, the wild man, with a falcon perched on his gloved hand, sits in a courtly pose, playing chess with the lady. Another wild man serving as a watchman swings a club in both hands over his head.

The iconography of this casket can only be fully understood by comparing it to a similar one, now in Hamburg (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe), of





Fig. 48 Wild man seizing a maiden, right end panel, no. 16. Photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv

the same date and technique, and undoubtedly from the same workshop. On the front panel of the Hamburg casket, on the right side, a wild man and a knight kneel on either side of a standing lady seeking her favor. The scene on the left side of this panel has been lost. The lady rejects the wild man, holding up her hand in a sign of disdain. In the next panel, the wild man abducts the lady and rides off with her into a forest pursued by the knight. In the back panel, the knight and the wild man engage in a combat while the lady watches. The knight emerges victorious and rides off with the lady on his horse. In the final scene on the left panel (Fig. 47), the lady rewards the knight's valor by placing a wreath on his head.

In his conventional iconographic context, the wild man appears with ladies either as a symbol of sensual fulfillment in an idyllic setting (see nos.

11, 27) or as the embodiment of lust. Unlike the knight, he cannot restrain his libidinous drives to express only demure admiration, the self-control that was central to the chivalric code.<sup>1</sup> Having abducted or otherwise affronted the lady, the wild man finds himself in confrontation with the knight,<sup>2</sup> a contest he is destined to lose. The scene of Enyas rescuing the maiden (no. 11) is typical of this type of encounter.

The sequence of the wild man's lustful pursuit and combat with a knight reaches the conventional denouement in the Hamburg casket. The chivalric principle is upheld and the knight is rewarded for his valor by the lady, while the two flanking grotesque beasts, seemingly synonymous with the wild man's base drives, posture in defeat.<sup>3</sup> If there is any surprise, it is the relatively civilized fashion in which the wild man initially attempts to

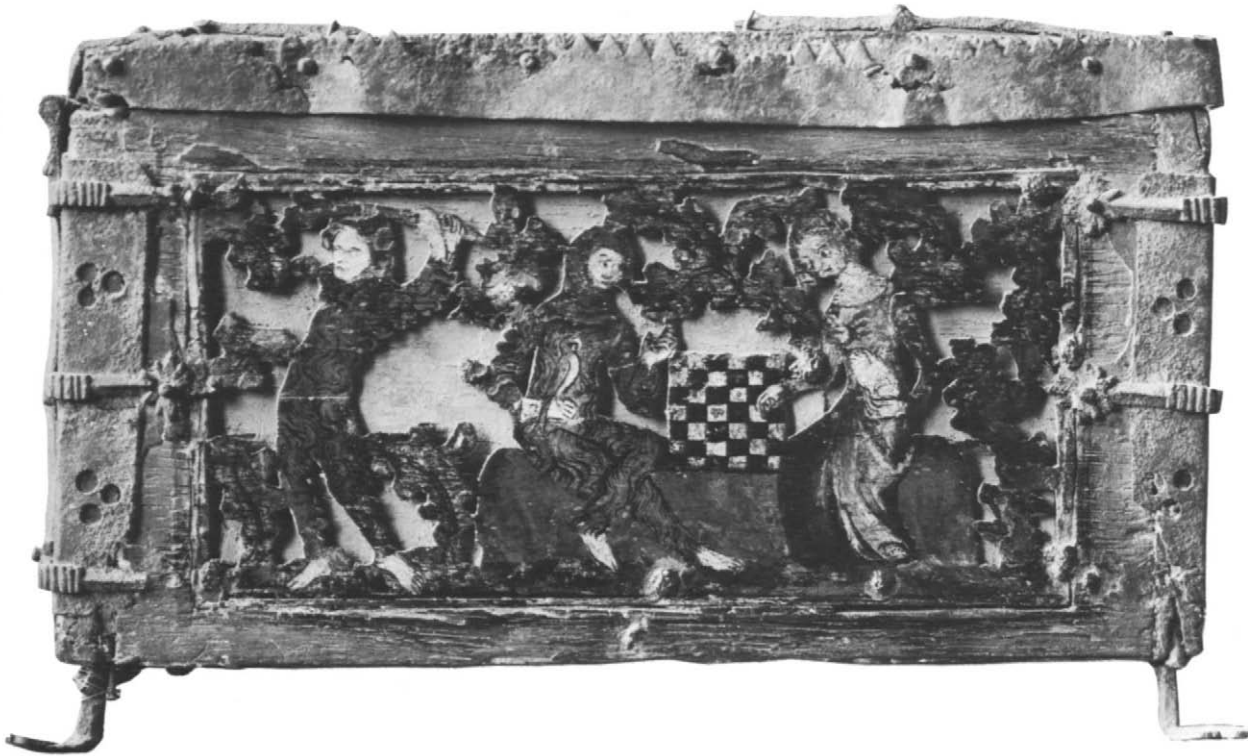


Fig. 49 Wild man and maiden playing chess, left end panel, no. 16. Photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv

gain the ladies' favor. This may be one of the first occasions in medieval art in which the wild man, as a pursuer of a lady, achieves equal status with the knight.

In the present casket, however, a radical turn of events occurs. A wild man sits pensively on a tree stump surrounded by animals of the woods, contemplating a lady. To the right, he rides off after her. In the next scene, the wild man holds the lady struggling in his grasp, while a knight produces not arms in her defense, but a ring held just out of her grasp (Fig. 48). The ring symbolizes the bond of marriage or the civilized and godly union between man and woman, a sacrament from which the wild man is barred. The ring reappears in theatrical images, such as Pieter Brueghel the Elder's *Struggle of Carnival and Lent* (Fig. 103). Here, with the aid of a companion, the knight rides off to rescue the lady,

now being abducted by a wild man on horseback. The knight's efforts are clearly in vain, however, as the final scene shows the wild man calmly enjoying the lady's company over a game of chess, as another wild man, waving a club over his head, apparently stands guard (Fig. 49). Bernheimer interprets this narrative to indicate that the young man who commissioned the casket was expressing his desire for his intended, "while protesting that, once granted his request, he would be a submissive and courteous lover."<sup>4</sup> Female triumph over passion is a recurrent theme in wild man iconography (see no. 17), but it is less explicit here. In the scene on the right end panel the lady in the grasp of the wild man apparently gestures neither in an attempt to reach the ring held by the knight, nor to escape the wild man's clutches. Facing the viewer, with both hands raised, one toward the ring and



Fig. 50 Youth and maiden playing chess. Lid of an ivory casket. Germany, fourteenth century. Cologne, Kunstgewerbemuseum, A 318. Photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv

the other toward the wild man, she seems to be considering her choice. While her decision is apparent in the final scene, the wild man has seemingly submitted on his own without her having to "tame" him.

Here physical love prevails in contradiction to the tradition of courtly romance. The wild man seated over a chess board with his legs elegantly crossed and a nobleman's falcon on his wrist, caricatures his knightly counterpart (Fig. 50). Thus, to a certain degree, the casket parodies the courtly ethic. The commissioner of this casket identified himself with the passions of the wild man but within the bounds of civilized conduct,<sup>5</sup> thus offering his betrothed the best of both worlds.

The theme of the wild man as a participant in a sensual idyll was persistent. The companion shown here brandishing a club can be compared to a similar wild man watching over a blissfully reclining pair of lovers in a stained glass roundel with the arms of Assmannshausen (see no. 18, colorplate VI), dating almost a century later.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 121.
2. Ibid., p. 122.
3. Parler, 1978, vol. III, p. 112.
4. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 124.
5. Parler, 1978, vol. III, p. 112.

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Kohlhaussen, 1928, no. 96, pl. 36; Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 123–26, fig. 32; *Europäischen Kunst*, 1962, no. 487; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 48; Parler, 1978, vol. III, p. 112.

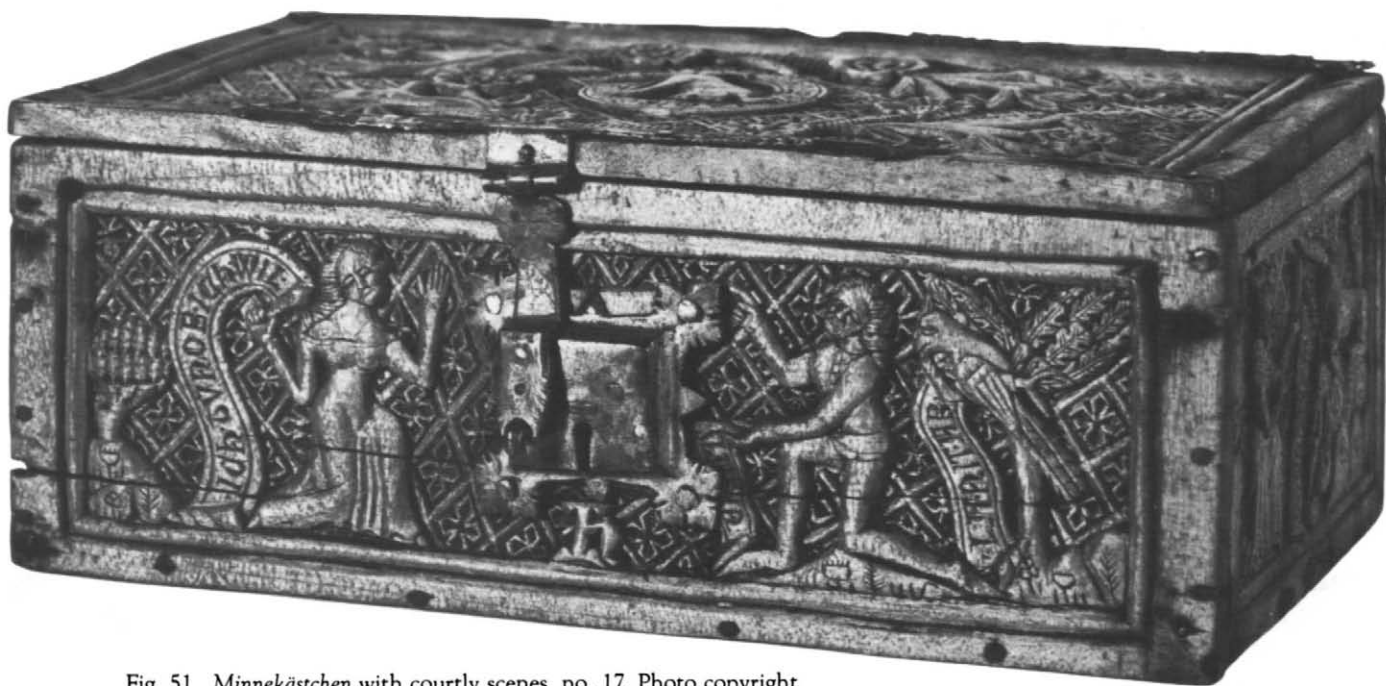


Fig. 51 Minnekästchen with courtly scenes, no. 17. Photo copyright Historisches Museum, Basel

### 17 Lady leading wild man on a rope

Minnekästchen (coffret) with courtly scenes

East Switzerland

1400–50

Lindenwood with iron mounts

8.5 × 22 × 12 cm. (3 3/8 × 8 5/8 × 4 3/4 in.)

Basel: Historisches Museum, 1870.508

Carved in relief against a tessellated background, the lid and four sides of this casket are decorated with amorous scenes. On the lid, foliate ornament surrounds a dog encircled with a banderole, which reads "ICH . DIEN . ALS . MIR . GEBOTE[n] . I[st]" ("I serve as I am commanded"). On the right a courtly youth kneels, and a bird perches in the tree behind him. The youth holds a banderole inscribed "LA . SIN" ("Lass es geschehen," or "Let it come to pass"), and the bird is accompanied with the inscription "LA . NIT . AB" ("Lass nicht ab," or "Don't desist"). A kneeling lady on the left side says, "ICH . TV[on] . OB . ICH . WIL" ("Ich tue es, wenn ich will," or "I'll do it when I want"). On the right side a lady in a woodland setting offers a garland of flowers to a unicorn. The inscription "LV . LE . HA . IC . M . E . G" is

indecipherable. The back panel, from left to right, represents a dog before a seated lady, a tree in the center with a bird, head reversed, at the left and another, wings spread, at the right, while at the left side a bearded gentleman sits with a dog placed on a hillock behind him. The man's inscription reads "S . TR . SE . IC . DIR" ("Stete Treue sende ich dir," or "Always faithful, I will send for you"), and the lady's gives the reply "DIE . HAST . O . V . M ." ("Die hast du auch von mir," or "That you have from me also"). The dog near the lady is accompanied by the words "BELIB . STET" ("Bleibe stetig," or "Remain constant") and the other dog with "ICH . BILL" ("Ich belle," or "I bay"). The fluttering bird on the central panel looks behind it at a pair of clasped hands. The left panel represents a lady leading a wild man by a rope tied around his hands. Separating the two is a double banderole inscribed "ZAM . VND . WILD . MACHT . MICH . AIN . BILD" ("[The image of] a woman makes me tame and wild").

The amorous imagery associated with the wild man takes an explicit turn in this casket (Fig. 51).





Fig. 52 Wild man chained by woman. Tapestry. Switzerland, 1450–75. Copenhagen, Nationalmuseum, 9777. Photo copyright Nationalmuseum, Copenhagen

Popular writings throughout the Middle Ages refer to woman's ability to subdue the wild behavior of men. In a popular ballad of the twelfth-century Alsatian minnesänger Ulrich von Gutenberg, one verse proclaims, "I was wild however much I sang / Her beautiful eyes were the rods with which she first overcame me" ("Ich waz wilde, swie viel ich doch gesanc / ir schoeniu ougen daz wâren die ruote / dâ mite si mich von êrste betwanc").<sup>1</sup> One of the Goliard poets in the *Carmina Burana* confesses, "Your brilliant aspect / has bound me in chains" ("Forma tua fulgida / tunc me catinavit").<sup>2</sup> In a Tirolean poem of about 1300 by Heinrich von Burgus, "Der Seele Rat," a contrite and submissive lover acknowledges, "Sweet Penitence, you shall tame me / I have been wild" ("Suesser Puesse du solt mich zamen / Ich bin gewesen wilde").<sup>3</sup> As Bernheimer notes, woman has the ability to tame man, to transform a "creature living in a state of passion and ferocity into one living in a state of love."<sup>4</sup> Courtly literature acknowledged that the wild man's social behavior could be civilized, and no doubt the taming of his erotic behavior was also possible. In a Dutch poem of the fourteenth century this possibility was realized. The author dreams that he sees a woman dragging a wild man bound in chains, out of the forest. The subdued captive confesses,

I was wild and now I am caught  
And brought into the ties of love;  
A maid has done this to me.  
I was wild, now I am caught;  
And though I could, I would not escape,  
For I gave my good faith as a pledge.  
I was wild, now I am caught  
And brought into the ties of love . . .  
(Ic was wilt, ic ben ghevaen  
ende bracht in mintliken bande;  
dat heeft ene maghet ghedaen;  
Ic was wilt, ic ben ghevaen . . .").<sup>5</sup>

In a fifteenth-century Swiss tapestry (Fig. 52), a lady in a woodland setting holds a chain attached to a wild man's ankle. The wild man proclaims that he has long been wild but now he is tamed by a woman ("ich.wil.iemer.wesen.wild.bis.mich.zemt.ein.frovwen.bild"). The woman replies that she will easily tame him as that is the way she wants him to be ("ich.frvw.ich.wel.dich.zemen.wol.als.ich.billich.sol"). Here the wild man is, like

his earlier human counterparts, brought under the power of a woman, that is "tamed," and becomes bound to her by the ties of faithfulness in love or "chained." A more erotic intention, however, is suggested by the inscription accompanying the parallel scene on the present casket (Fig. 53). Here it reads "ZAM.VND.WILD.MACHT.MICH.AIN.BILD," or "a woman makes me tame and wild." This cannot be explained, as Bernheimer would have it, as simply a compression of the tapestry's inscription to fit the casket.<sup>6</sup> While tameness is the sole concern of the first inscription, both tame and wild states are the concern of the second. Von der Leyen and Spamer observed that tame and wild compare to the philosophical distinctions of spiritual and worldly, and the mundane opposites of faithfulness and faithlessness.<sup>7</sup> Its content may, however, extend further.

In late feudal society, marriages were contractual arrangements of political and economic expediency. The wife's responsibility was to fulfill her conjugal duties, which did not necessarily bring sexual satisfaction. Favors of love, it was thought, must be given freely from the heart and therefore could not issue from a negotiated marriage arrangement. For this reason, the greatest love affairs of courtly literature — Tristram and Yseult, for example — were adulterous. With the establishment of a new middle class in the fifteenth century, however, attitudes changed radically. The ideal marriage was one in which the husband and wife were ideal lovers. In the wild man panel of this casket, the lady controls the wild man by making herself the sole object of his passions, while at the same time firing his desire so that she can fully enjoy his legendary prowess.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 137, 210 n. 29.
2. Ibid., p. 138.
3. Ibid., pp. 137, 211 n. 32.
4. Ibid., p. 136.
5. Ibid., p. 139, 211 n. 36.
6. Ibid., p. 141.
7. von der Leyen and Spamer, 1910, p. 97.

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Fig. 53 Woman leading wild man, left end panel, no. 17. Photo copyright Historisches Museum, Basel

## 18 Two wild men and two pairs of lovers

### Colorplate VI

Roundel with the arms of Assmannshausen

Germany (Middle Rhineland)

About 1470–80

Glass, enameled and silver-stained

Diam. 34.5 cm. (13 1/2 in.)

Frankfurt am Main: Historisches Museum, X 19607

In a quatrelobed roundel centered on a heraldic shield are four scenes of lovers and wild men. In the upper lobe a young man with one hand up-lifted reclines in the lap of a maiden. To the right, a young man in briefs and a scalloped mantle embraces a maiden who is also dressed for bathing. At the bottom a reclining wild youth holds a club in one hand and grasps the hind legs of a struggling rabbit in the other. At the left, a standing wild man with a club in one hand raises his other, returning the greeting of the young man in the top lobe. In the center, the heraldic shield is emblazoned with dimidiated arms composed of a spoked wheel in the dexter half and a cross of two trimmed branches in the other, both against a red background. The left lobe, from the knees of the wild man down, and two sections of the border at the bottom and at the upper right have been restored.

In the four scenes of this roundel young lovers and wild men are drawn together in a relationship of friendly comradery. The standing wild man at the left returns the wave of the reclining youth at the top. The erotic disports of the youthful couples seem to engage the moral support of the wild folk. The wild youth struggling with a hare, an animal of universally recognized procreative powers, may suggest an effort to contain the passions of the flesh, not the usual endeavor of the wild man. The dress of the couple at the right makes reference to the morality of the day. Both figures are clad in bathing gear, which, along with scanty or immodest dress, was considered a sign of loose morals in women. The attitude and arrangement of this couple, however, derives from a Middle Rhenish type frequently associated with *vanitas* themes and other *momento mori*.<sup>1</sup> Such outright revelry in fleshly pursuits was frequently accompanied by inscriptions in which the lady declares, "I am youthful, attractive, and shall live long, free from phantoms" ("ich bin frisch und wolgetan und lebe lange sunder wan"), to which Death, represented or not, replies, "Alas! Poor lump of clay, you must soon become what I am" ("ach du armer sack von erden was ich bin das mustu werden").<sup>2</sup>

The association of the wild man with a bathing

beauty emerged with significant symbolic content in the drolleries of the Wenceslaus Bible (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, cod. 2760). Here wild men appear side by side with ladies of questionable repute dressed as mistresses of baths, tempting and tormenting menfolk. In this context, her deportment, if not her dress, makes such a woman in every way a wild woman. The wild man, constrained in the illuminations by tendrils formed from the queen's initials (see no. 43), becomes the king's alter ego, pursuing physical pleasure that the bathing ladies represent. Thus the wild folk are used to signify passions held in abeyance and soothed by a loving wife.<sup>3</sup> In the present roundel the wild man struggling with the hare may allude to a similar notion of restraint.

The heraldic shield is emblazoned with the arms of Mainz, the wheel, dimidiated with another composed of a cross of branches. The latter device has been incorrectly associated with the Rheingauer Haingericht, or "Woodskeepers of the Rheingau," an organization responsible for upkeep of the woods, hunting preserves, meadows, and forest trails of this region.<sup>4</sup> As the presiding officials were keepers of the wild man's legendary habitat, the association is plausible, but there is no evidence that the woodskeepers were invested with the right to bear a coat-of-arms. Furthermore, the Rheingau officials were associated with Lorsch not Mainz.<sup>5</sup> A more plausible attribution is given by Beeh-Lustenberger: the arms are the same, but reversed, as those appearing on the judicial seal of Assmannshausen and thus must be identified with this town. The cross of branches derives from the patrimony of the *Pfarkirche* consecrated under the title, "*Exaltationes sanctis crucis*." Since Assmannshausen was known into the sixteenth century as Hasemanshusen, there may be an intentional connection between the name of the town and the wild man holding a hare (*Hase*) in the lower lobe.<sup>6</sup>

T.H.

### NOTES

1. Janson, 1939, pp. 244–45, fig. 36c.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 244 n. 8.
3. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 152.
4. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 78.
5. Beeh-Lustenberger, 1965, p. 78.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 78–79.

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## 19 Ornament with lovers and wild folk

Engraving

Israhel van Meckenem (ca. 1450–1503 Bocholt)

Germany (Lower Rhineland), Bocholt

About 1490–1500

Paper

16.4 × 24.2 cm. (6 7/16 × 9 1/2 in.)

(Lehrs IX, 460, no. 619)

Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, B-2725

A leafy vine grows from a bristling flower in the bottom center of the composition. Its branches circle into the quadrants of the print, each terminating in a unique flower. Wild folk, birds, and a dog inhabit this vine. The dog, lean and muscular, eats seeds falling from the flower in the lower left corner. Opposite him, in the right corner, is a monkey-faced wild man who gathers seeds in a shell bowl. In the lower center, another wild man shimmies up the vine stem. Two bearded wild men climb about the upper left quadrant. One, unarmed, shields himself from an attacking bird. In the right section, a wild woman watches a bearded wild man defend himself with a spear from another aggressive bird. Two other birds hold an unfurled banner inscribed with "Israhel.v.M." A young couple sits beneath this banner. The man, wearing a hat over shoulder-length hair and a slit-sleeved tunic over his tight hose, offers the woman a fruit. The woman, wearing a scooped-neck, fur-trimmed gown and a hennin, holds a dog on her lap.

Ornament prints like this one (Fig. 54) were intended as models for craftsmen. The design of Israhel's print, focused on the amorous couple, suggests this print was intended as a pattern for an engagement or marriage casket. Whether the fruit held by the man is an apple<sup>1</sup> or a seed from the flower above the couple's heads, the man's offer and the woman's acceptance symbolize the consummation of their love. The lapdog, a traditional symbol of fidelity, reiterates their pledge to one another. These attributes are familiar to the Garden of Love, a theme popular among early German engravers.<sup>2</sup> Glorification of flirtation and seduction, as reflected in the thirteenth-century *Roman de la Rose*, survived in late medieval love poems and inspired these prints. Israhel ingenious-

ly amplified this theme with the inclusion of wild folk. These diminutive creatures reinforce the fertility symbolism by disporting nude among the fecund flowers and gathering seeds in the rich foliate ground. Springing from a single stalk, the leafy tendriled plant supporting the couple also resembles a family tree. This image is in turn reinforced by the presence of the wild folk, who trace their origins to ancient fertility gods, and may allude to their role as heraldic supports (see nos. 54–58).

This print reflects both the eclecticism and creativity of the artist Israhel van Meckenem. The couple's clothing, in vogue during the 1470s and 1480s,<sup>3</sup> suggests that Israhel used an earlier model. While lovers such as these were represented as early as mid-century, Israhel's lovers are based on a composition by the Housebook Master around 1480.<sup>4</sup>

In 1905, Geisberg suggested that Israhel had not only borrowed motifs but had copied the entire composition from a lost original by the Master PW, active in Cologne between 1490 and 1510.<sup>5</sup> This theory gained some acceptance<sup>6</sup> before Geisberg retracted it in 1930.<sup>7</sup> With the restitution of this print and others as Israhel's own creation, his artistic reputation grew. Among the original designs by Israhel are other large ornament prints from his late period that are similar in composition and form to the *Lovers*. Most similar is the *Ornament with Morris Dancers*, in which six males encircled by thorny vines gyrate around a bare-breasted woman, the iconographic and compositional center of the print.<sup>8</sup>

G.G.-H.

### NOTES

1. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 50.
2. Bliss, 1928, pp. 90–109.
3. Boucher, 1967, pp. 198–201.
4. Hutchinson, 1972, pp. 63–64.
5. Geisberg, 1905, no. 471.
6. Warburg, 1930, pp. 67–72.
7. Geisberg, 1930, p. 236.
8. Lehrs IX, 457, no. 617.

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Geisberg, 1905, no. 471, p. 218; Berliner, 1925–26, vol. II, p. 8; Geisberg, 1930, pp. 221, 234; Warburg, 1930, pl. 29; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 245; Pieper, 1972, pp. 84–85, fig. 113.

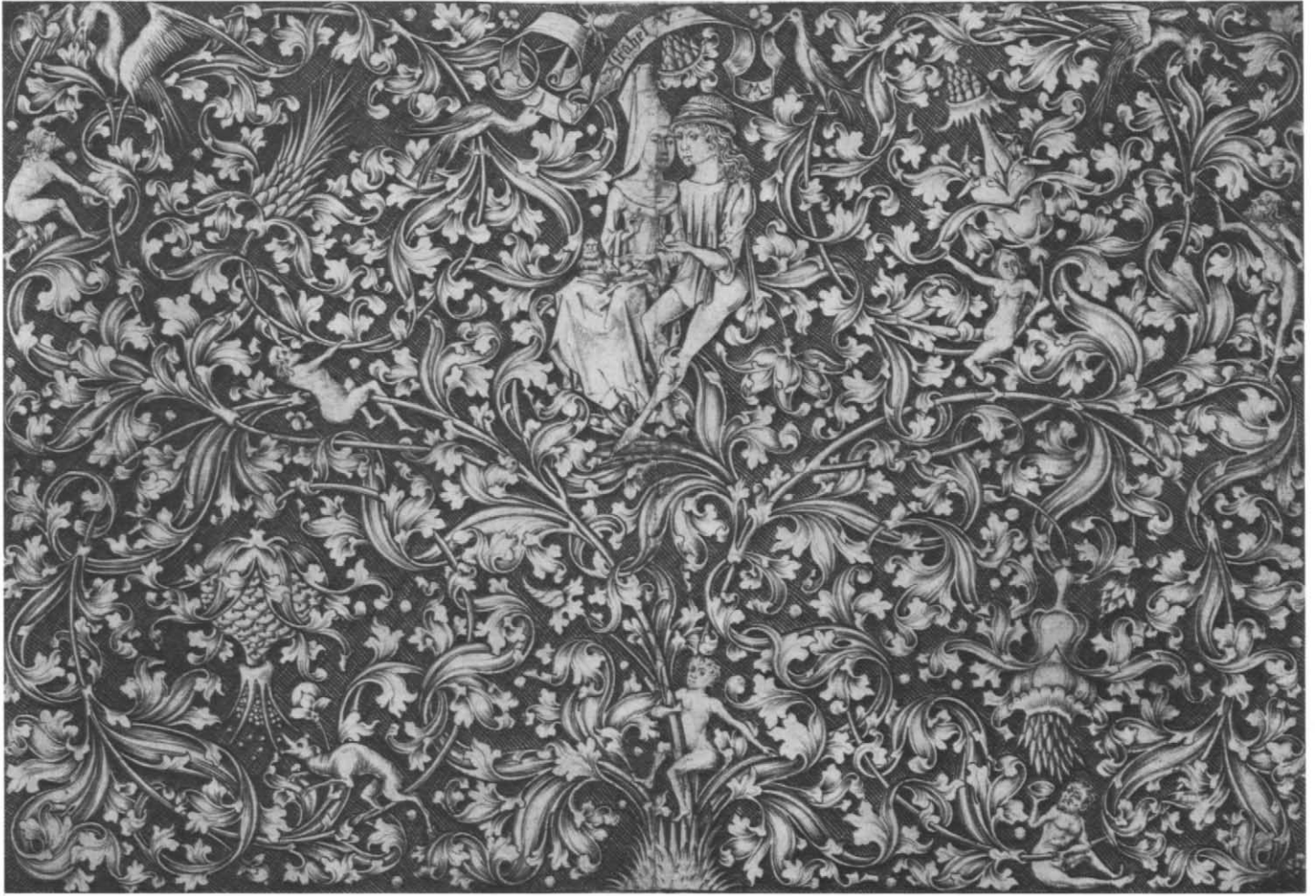


Fig. 54 Ornament with lovers and wild folk, no. 19. Photo courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



## 20 Saint Onuphrius

Single-leaf woodcut

Anonymous

Germany (Upper Rhineland?)

1480–1500

Paper with color

14.6 × 11.4 cm. (5 3/4 × 4 1/2 in.)

(Schreiber VIII, 1640)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Rogers Fund, 18.23.1

The kneeling Saint Onuphrius, crowned and nimbed, holds a patriarchal cross in both hands. He wears a full beard, his long hair falls to his shoulders, and his body is covered — save face, hands, knees, and feet — with hair tinged in blue. A leafy vine is entwined around his loins. Above the saint, emerging from a cloud, an angel offers the Eucharist with both hands. Onuphrius is set in a flat, deeply recessed landscape scattered with rocks. Several hillocks covered with clumps of trees rise from both sides. In the left background are a pinnacled mountain and a castle. Shades of rust, blue, yellow, green, and brown are applied both by stencil and by separate colored woodblocks. The nimbus, crown, cross, and border are silver.

The tradition of the hairy anchorite evolved from a variety of ancient sources, many shared with the wild man, as diverse as the apocalyptic stories of Elijah, the cycle of the Deluge hero, legends of half-man, half-beast fertility gods, Babylonian and Persian mystic beliefs, and different Hellenistic sources, to name a few.<sup>1</sup> Saint Onuphrius, among other eremitic saints, sought

spiritual perfection through a life of deprivation. The self-imposition of a purgative life through the rejection of all worldly comforts was viewed as a form of insanity. The anchorite saints were therefore linked to the irrational behavior of the wild man, as well as to his primitive existence, associations manifested by their common feature of hairiness.

Onuphrius, who lived in the fourth century, is one of the better-known ascetic saints. According to legend, he was the son of a pagan ruler or, by some accounts, of an Abyssinian nomadic chieftain,<sup>2</sup> born while his father was on campaign. The crown in the present representation (Fig. 55) alludes to his noble background; the patriarchal cross, a less common attribute, refers to his Eastern origins.<sup>3</sup> Upon his return, Onuphrius's father determined to test the child's legitimacy by fire; if the child were legitimate he would not be consumed. When the child miraculously survived the test, an angel appeared and ordered the father to baptize the child. Onuphrius was then placed in an Egyptian monastery, where he was raised by a white hind for three years. When he was grown he left the monastery to live an eremitic life in a cave in the wilderness near Thebes. As his clothes wore away, his body became protected by a long growth of body hair. Onuphrius was fed by miraculous bread and the dates of a palm tree. Every Sunday an angel descended to administer communion (Fig. 56). For sixty years Onuphrius lived in this fashion. Toward the end of his life he was visited by a holy man, Paphnutius, who found the saint unrecognizably bestial, but was soon convinced of his true identity and remained to witness the



Fig. 55 Saint Onuphrius, no. 20

saint's death.<sup>4</sup> Certain German legends, however, claim that Onuphrius, mistaken for a wild animal, was brought down by a group of hunters. Here the hunters' chase is likened to the saint's search for a godly life and salvation. Those who follow his example will triumph over evil and receive God's rewards.

The legend of Onuphrius is found in the second part of the so-called *Peregrinatio Paphnutiana* written in Egypt in the first half of the fifth century. Translated into Latin, it was widely circulated in the West. The Onuphrius legend alone also appeared in Latin and was ultimately incorporated into Book I of the *Vitae Patrum*, in the second printed edition of Anton Koberger, Nuremberg, 1478.<sup>5</sup> This text was translated into the vernacular with minor variations. Details of the Onuphrius legend draw upon legends of hairy saints and anchorites as a whole, and parallel or overlapping elements between saints' lives often make one indistinguishable from another. The association of Paphnutius with the date palm (he is sometimes called the Anchorite of the Date Palm) recurs in the legend of Onuphrius, who, according to some accounts, lived his sixty years of penance in its shade (see Fig. 57). Parallels with the penance of Mary Magdalene are also numerous (see no. 21).

The remote and primitive living conditions of the hairy saints relate them, though indirectly, to the *Marvels of the East*. The text of the letter of Fermes, on which the *Marvels* is largely based (see no. 1), establishes the existence of a holy place some 190 *stadia* from Antioch ("Est igitur a finibus



Fig. 56 Communion of Saint Onuphrius and trial by fire. Panel painting by Hans Schüpflein. Germany, Nördlingen, 1515–20. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 1106



Fig. 57 Saint Onuphrius in wilderness. Detail of panel painting, predella from altarpiece in Barcelona Cathedral. Spain, fifteenth century. Photo: Mas

Antiochiae Dirus flumen Stadia CXC<sup>as</sup>, his locus sanctus est"), which may be taken to imply the presence of holy men.<sup>6</sup> In the thirteenth century, Gervase of Tilbury states that holy men did inhabit the remote desert areas in the region of Antioch ("A finibus Antiochiae cui Darius flavius Subiacet deserta sanctis hominibus coprose repleta spatiosa patent"). The legends of the hairy saints are thus implicitly connected to the *Marvels*.<sup>7</sup> The frequent depiction of Onuphrius as a giant, an attribute of the marvelous races, further links these two concepts.

The penitent saints are represented hirsute considerably earlier in the East than in the West. An unidentified standing and nimbed orant with a long flowing beard and hair, as well as dark body hair, appears in a fresco, dated between the sixth and the eighth centuries, in a chapel of the monastery of Apa Jeremias at Saqqara.<sup>8</sup> Another, of about 1100, appears in the monastery of Saint Neophytos (Enkleistra) at Ktima, in Naos, Cyprus (Fig. 58).<sup>9</sup> The type appears in the West under Byzantine influence in a twelfth-century mosaic in the basilica of Monreale. The hairy Onuphrius first emerged in Italy and Spain in the fourteenth century and, transmitted through the international Gothic style, in northern Europe, where the image flourished, in the fifteenth century.

The present single-leaf woodcut is a fine example of the German *Andachtsbilder*, or private devotional image, commonly circulated in the fifteenth century. These inexpensive prints were also sold as souvenirs to pilgrims, frequently with assurances of talismanic value. Since the prints provided large, if perhaps questionable, revenues for the church, as well as popularized and proliferated

apocryphal or noncanonic beliefs, they were a particular target of the Reformation.

In the humanist Germany of the sixteenth century, however, the vogue of hairy saints revived and became popular for a whole new generation of artists (see no. 24). Sebastian Brant, an outstanding polemicist of his day, singled out Onuphrius in a 1494 broadsheet illustrating and praising the ethos of the hairy saints, made him the subject of numerous religious poems, and even named a son after him.<sup>10</sup> This admiration for the hermit's austere, spiritual existence compares with contemporary perceptions of the wild man's existence as superior to the inequitable, corrupt, and morally bankrupt society of man (see no. 33).

The attribution of this woodcut to a South German or Upper Rhenish origin is supported by the particular veneration bestowed on Onuphrius, the patron saint of weavers, in both Munich and Basel.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Williams, 1926, p. 57.
2. Cahier, 1866, p. 213.
3. *Bibliotheca sanctorum* IX, 1967, cols. 1197–1200.
4. Williams, 1926, pp. 82–84.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
6. Omont, 1913, p. 509.
7. James, 1929, p. 41.
8. *LCI* VIII, 1976, col. 84; Levi d'Ancona, 1953, p. 284, fig. 2.
9. Mango and Hawkins, 1966, pp. 155–56.
10. Silver, forthcoming, p. 39.

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Schreiber III, no. 1640; VIII, no. 1640.



Fig. 58 Saint Onuphrius. Detail of fresco. Byzantine, about 1100. Monastery of Saint Neophytos, Ktima, Naos, Cyprus. Photo courtesy Dumbarton Oaks, Center for Byzantine Studies, Washington, D.C.



## 21 The Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene

Colorplate VII

Drawing

Jörg Schweiger (Augsburg 1470–80—1533–34 Basel)  
Switzerland, Basel

About 1510–20

Dark brown ink with gray and brown wash on  
paper

31 × 21.7 cm (12 3/16 × 8 1/2 in.)

Basel: Öffentlichen Kunstsammlung Basel, Kupfer-  
stichkabinett, U.XVI.28

The Magdalene, covered with a thick growth of hair, save for her face, hands, breasts, and feet, wears a long mantle falling in heavy folds to her feet. She is raised by two angels, who support her knees and feet, and two above, who hold her at her shoulders and elbows. Her hair falls in long curls and her head is encircled with rays of light. Her hands are joined in an attitude of prayer. The angels, except one covered with feathers, are wrapped in drapery with large folds billowing out behind them. The inscription at the lower edge reads:

Von Jergen schweigers handt gema[c]ht  
und mir geschenckt word[en] 21 Junis von  
seinem sun durssen vnd onoffrion werlin  
an[no] 1565.

Another eremitic saint who was conventionally depicted as covered with hair like the wild man was Mary Magdalene, one of the holy women present at the Crucifixion. According to the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, Mary Magdalene—along with Saint Maximinus; Saint Adonnis; Mantilla and her siblings; Lazarus; and Martha—was set adrift in a rudderless boat by the infidels. By divine guidance the boat safely washed ashore at Marseilles. Here the Magdalene sought the conversion of the Provençal inhabitants through her zealous preaching. Eventually she took up residence in a grotto in the nearby mountains and lived a penitential eremitic life for thirty years. The mountains were barren and offered no sustenance, but every day at each of the seven canonical hours angels would appear and carry her toward heaven. The chants of the heavenly hosts provided her with spiritual nourishment that obviated any bodily needs. It is this vision of

the Magdalene's ecstasy, experienced seven times daily, that is represented here (colorplate VII).

The apocryphal legends of Mary Magdalene's penance and, indeed, of her entire Provençal life during the apostolate of Lazarus, purportedly the first bishop of Marseilles, originated in the Midi. The basic outline appeared in the tenth century, and by the middle of the eleventh century the monks at Vézelay claimed to possess the remains of Mary Magdalene. In the course of his travels, one brother had recognized her tomb in the crypt of Saint-Maximin and had spirited the body off to his own monastery.<sup>1</sup> By the early twelfth century the legend of the Magdalene's long penance had been established, and at least by the early thirteenth the location of her grotto had been fixed at La Saint-Baume in Provence.

The earliest representations of the ecstasy of Mary Magdalene date to the thirteenth century. (The pier capital from Saint-Lazare at Autun dating to the twelfth century represents the Virgin Mary, not the Magdalene as once thought.)<sup>2</sup> From about 1300, Mary Magdalene appears naked with long flowing hair covering her body, or, rarely, with a hair shirt similar to John the Baptist's.<sup>3</sup> Only toward the middle of the fifteenth century does the Magdalene assume the hirsute appearance of a wild woman. The association of wildness with the saint's hermitic penance originated mostly in Germany, but no specific sources can be traced. The convention came to be applied to a large number of the eremitic saints, however, including Saints Aegidius, Makarius, and Onuphrius (see no. 20). Many details of the legend are interchangeable with that of the Egyptian Mary, who, after years in the wilderness, became covered with hair (Fig. 59), and whose soul at her death was carried to heaven by angels. As a penitent, the Egyptian Mary is often confused with the Magdalene but can be distinguished by her attribute of three loaves of bread, which miraculously sustained her during her years in the wilderness. The ascending of her soul, unlike the Magdalene's daily corporeal elevation, is seldom, if ever, depicted.<sup>4</sup>

Jacobus de Voragine explains the penance of Mary Magdalene etymologically. The name Magdalene means *manens rea*, or remaining in guilt,



Fig. 59 Saint Mary of Egypt. Detail of woodcut illustration from *Leben der Heiligen*, published by Anton Koberger (no. 23). Germany, 1488. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 28.94.18, fol. 3v

armed or unconquered, and magnificent, which describes her state before, during, and after her conversion as related in the Gospels. "Before her conversion she remained in guilt, being laden with debt of eternal punishment; in her conversion she was both armed and unconquered, by means of the armament of penance, because she put on the excellent armour of penance, devising an immolation of herself to atone for each of the pleasures she had enjoyed; after her conversion she was magnificent by the superabundance of grace, because where sin abounded, grace did more abound."<sup>5</sup>

By 1500, Jörg Schweiger, draftsman of this work, was active in the goldsmith shop of Jörg Seld in Augsburg, where he undoubtedly became familiar with the work of the Holbein workshop. By 1507

Schweiger had moved to Basel, where he remained until his death. The *Ecstasy of Mary Magdalene* is considered the keystone of Schweiger's drawings, upon which all other attributions are based.<sup>6</sup> His conservative approach makes dating difficult, but this drawing is generally considered a late work.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Duchesne, 1893, pp. 1-33; Saxer, 1955, pp. 1-19.
2. Réau, 1959, p. 857; Mâle, 1978, p. 216, fig. 173.
3. *LCI* VII, 1974, col. 537.
4. Braun, 1943, col. 495.
5. *Golden Legend*, p. 355.
6. Falk, 1979, p. 102.

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Amerbach, 1962, no. 10; Landolt, 1972, no. 24; Falk, 1979, no. 269.

## 22 The penance of Saint John Chrysostom

Woodcut from *Leben der Heiligen*, (vol. II, *Winterteil*), *Von Sant Johannes Crisostimus*, folio CLXXXVIII verso

Anonymous; published by Günther Zainer

Germany, Augsburg

October 25, 1471

Incunabulum on paper

34.5 × 22.5 average folio overall (13 1/16 × 8 1/2 in.)  
(Goff J-156; Hain 9968\*; Morgan Library Checklist 273; Schreiber X/2, 4298)

New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, PML 27324

Saint John Chrysostom, nimbed and totally naked, crawls on his hands and knees across rough ground. Behind him is a cave in the rocks flanked by two trees; a stream, bridged by a plank, flows by in the foreground. A stand of trees fills the right side of the composition.

Conventional wild man imagery, so widely adapted to spurious legends of eremitic saints in the late fifteenth century, was ultimately, under reformist and humanistic influences, rejected. The literary origins, assimilation of wild man imagery, and ultimate secularization can be traced in the legend of Saint John Chrysostom, perhaps the most widely represented of the hairy saints (nos. 22–24).

In Eastern art, Saint John Chrysostom is usually portrayed as an ascetic hermit or as one of the Church Fathers, wearing an alb and omophorion, often in the company of his peers, Saints Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus. In the West his rare depictions show strong Byzantine influence.<sup>1</sup> In the second half of the fifteenth century, however, an image of Saint John Chrysostom as a wild creature, naked and either smooth-skinned or hirsute, scrambling about on all fours, appears with sudden and remarkable frequency. With no hagiographic precedent the image illustrates an episode in an apochryphal legend of the saint, first recorded in the printed edition of *Leben der Heiligen*, published by Günther Zainer at Augsburg on Oc-

tober 25, 1471 (vol. II, *Winterteil*), shown here (Fig. 60). The text, in the vernacular, follows Jacobus de Voragine's twelfth-century *Golden Legend*.

The story begins when a pope hears the soul of a child named John wailing in the torments of purgatory. He undertakes to educate the child to become a priest so that when John celebrates his sixteenth Mass, the child might be released. After his first Mass, however, the young priest deems himself unworthy because of his youth, and flees to the wilderness, where he lives an austere and pious life in the shelter of a rock. One day, when the emperor's beautiful daughter goes to gather flowers, a strong gust of wind lifts her up and sets her down at John's shelter. Claiming fear of wild animals, she begs to be admitted. The young hermit soon yields, and after valiant resistance to temptation he succumbs and has carnal knowledge of the girl. Fearing he might weaken again, he pushes her from a cliff into a ravine and presumes her dead. Overcome with remorse, John confesses his sins to the pope, who fails to recognize him and sends him away. John returns to the wilderness and vows to crawl about on all fours until he finds favor with God. For fifteen years he lives accordingly, his clothes rotted off, his body unkempt and shaggy. When the emperor's newborn child insists on being baptized by the holy man John, the emperor dispatches a hunter who returns with John bound like a wild animal. As the holy man begins to perform the ceremony, his bodily accretions fall away. Learning John's tale, the emperor goes to the cliff to recover the remains of his daughter. To universal amazement she is found alive, miraculously saved and unaltered by time. At the urging of the pope, John offers the final fifteen Masses for the end of the purgation of his soul. Now a bishop, John returns to the wilderness where he writes holy works.<sup>2</sup>

In documenting John's sobriquet of Chrysostom, or "John of the Golden Mouth," the present edition of *Leben der Heiligen* gives no less than four explanations. In one he uses spittle when he runs

im geredt hett/vnd wie trewlich  
 er in der stat gearbeyt hett durch  
 den namen ihesu cristi. Da fürten  
 in die iunger tzu mariam gottes  
 mütter da ward er fro das er den  
 tag gelebt hett / das er Mariam  
 sehen solt vnd lobten all gott vñ  
 das wunder das cristus mit sant  
 Pauls getan hett/vnd also be Leib  
 Sant Pauls beg in ze Jerusalem  
 vnd prediget den namen ihesu  
 Cristi / vnd disputierten mit den  
 kriegern/dar umb giengen spe im  
 umb sein leben nach vnd wolten  
 in ertöten Da dz die brüder ynne  
 wurden / da fürten spe in auß der  
 stat iherusalem in Cesariam Wir  
 lesen das vnser liebe frow hett ein  
 wunckfrow die hieß Teda/ die het  
 Sant Paulum gar lieb/von der  
 do hett Sant Pauls gar grosse  
 anfechtung/dz er eins mals stünd  
 auff einē grünen wasen/der wirtet  
 vnder im vor grossen leyden das  
 er het da bat er vnsern herren das  
 er im die anfechtung beneme. Da  
 sprach vnser herr Paule paule las  
 dich meynen genad benügen/das  
 leiden leid er gedultidichen Man  
 list ouch sunterlichen von im das  
 er gar gros anfechtung hab ge-  
 habt vñ der vnlueterkeit der sund  
 Darnach ward er in die land ge-  
 sandt/vnd gen Rom/vnd wie er  
 da gemartert sey worden /vnde  
 man in dem sumer teil/also ist heut  
 der tag als Sant Pauls bekeret  
 ward Nun sullen wir in billichen  
 reu vnd in antüssen / das er vns  
 umb gott erwerb / das wir ouch  
 bekert werden von vnsern sunden  
 vnd ouch kummen zu den ewigē  
 freuden Amen

**V**on sant Johannes crisostimus



**E**s was eyn Bapst tzu  
 Rom der reit eins tags  
 vnd vil rittent mit im/  
 Nun het der bapst einē  
 siten das er sich oft vereinet vnd  
 sein gebet sprach das tet er aber/  
 vñ da er an der einigung was da  
 höret er eyn stymme iämerlichen  
 schreyen/da gedacht er im/ O we  
 was ist die clägliche stymme vnd  
 reit fürbas/da schrey es aber cläg-  
 lichen da gedacht er im ich muß  
 pe innen werden was das sey vñ  
 keret sich gegen der stym dpe er  
 hort biß er ir nahent was vñ da  
 er nichtz sach da sprach er wider  
 sich selber wie ist dem das ich hör  
 vnd nichtz sich das dunckt mich  
 wunnderlich vnd sprach da/ Ich  
 gebewt dir bey got das du mir  
 sagest was du sehest/ Da sprach  
 die stym gar iämerlichen ich bin  
 eyn arme sele/ O we mir ymmer  
 wañ ich bin als lang nie on pein  
 gewesen als ein ougbraw tzu der  
 andern möcht kommen als groß  
 ist mein segher/ Da der Bapst  
 dz hort da weint er ser vnd sprach  
 Sag mir arme sel ob ich dir nie  
 gehelfen müg/ Die sel sprach nein  
 Da sprach er dz ist mir von herze  
 leid/ Nun hatt mir doch gott vil  
 gewalts verlihe dz ich die sunder  
 mag binden vnd entbinden / da  
 vñ sag mir ob dir jemāt gehelfen  
 mag/ Da sprach dpe sele mir ist

out of ink and his written words are turned into gold. According to another legend Saint John kissed a statue of the Virgin, which turned his lips to gold. Another tradition explains the name in terms of the saint's "golden" oratory.

The description of Saint John Chrysostom as a wild man bedecked with vegetation, as well as most of the details of Zainer's inventive account, are unprovoked by any previously accepted histories of this prominent Church Father, celebrated orator, and renowned theologian. Several scholars have sought literary sources for the apocryphal legend.<sup>3</sup> The first connection was proposed between the late German Chrysostom legend and a fifteenth-century Tuscan ballad in *ottava rima*.<sup>4</sup> In the ballad a rogue called Schirano repents his wanton past by becoming a hermit in the wilderness. A beautiful princess strays across Schirano, and he immediately succumbs to carnal desire. Panicked, he leads her to a deep cistern and hurls her into it. Assuming the princess dead, Schirano is struck mute with remorse and crawls about on all fours until his body becomes overgrown with hair. For seven years Schirano lives in this condition until, found by a hunter, he is captured and brought before the emperor, whose wife has recently given birth. When the child is seven days old he demands that Schirano be brought to him. Rather than speaking, Schirano writes out his confession, wetting the pen with his spittle, which miraculously turns the script to gold. The emperor immediately seeks his daughter and finds her in the cistern, unharmed and accompanied by the Virgin. Schirano is forgiven and returns to his hermitic life.

Notwithstanding the correspondences there is no indication that the text of the Chrysostom legend relies on the Schirano story. Williams, writing in 1925, does not mention the Schirano ballad and states the legend initially "acquired an individuality" in France during the thirteenth century.<sup>5</sup> The German prose version, in particular, shows a dependence on a traditional French type, in which the story of a penitent hermit follows a

narrative involving a pope and a soul in torment which can only be released by a hermit.<sup>6</sup> *La Vie de Saint Jehan Paulus*, written in the north of France in the first half of the thirteenth century and known in both verse and prose versions, exemplifies this type.<sup>7</sup>

The woodcut illustration of Saint John Chrysostom in the present Zainer edition shows the saint on all fours but naked, at variance with the text, which describes him both as being covered with "herbage and moss" ("vnd zehand fiel das kraut vnd der myess von im dz an seinem leib gewachsen was") and as "shaggy" or "hairy" ("vnd wird rauch tuber al an seinem leib," fol. 190v, col. 1). The woodcut was either conceived independently, or perhaps influenced by another text altogether. Although the German prose version may derive ultimately from French sources, discrepancies in basic details establish a reliance on intermediate texts.<sup>8</sup> Allen suggested the possibility of an earlier German, rhymed version, noting that a textual analysis of *Leben der Heiligen* reveals traces of older verse couplets.<sup>9</sup>

It should also be noted that woodcuts had lost enough specific detail to be employed somewhat randomly in several editions. Schreiber observes that the figures to the Zainer edition, the first illustrated book printed in Augsburg, were added after the text was printed, indicating that the blocks may have been freely circulated.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. *LCI* VII, 1974, col. 99.
2. Williams, 1935, pp. 35-37, 68-74.
3. Schubring, 1913, pp. 110 ff.; Williams, 1935, pp. 18-48.
4. Jameson, 1900, vol. I, pp. 328 ff.
5. Williams, 1925, p. 9 n. 1.
6. Williams, 1935, p. 47.
7. Karl, 1913, pp. 425-45; Williams, 1935, pp. 47-48, 83-140.
8. Williams, 1935, p. 30.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-40.



### 23 Scenes from the legend of Saint John of the Golden Mouth

Woodcut illustration from *Leben der Heiligen, Sant Johans mit dem guldin mund*, folio CCCXXV verso

Anonymous; published by Anton Koberger

Germany, Nuremberg

December 5, 1488

Incunabulum on vellum

36.2 × 22.9 cm. (14 1/4 × 9 in.)

(Copingier III, 6505; Goff J-168; Hain 9981\*; Proctor 2065; Schreiber X/2, 4313)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 28.94.18

Set in a dense forest of stylized trees are three scenes. At the left a couple gesture toward an open pit; in the center a man on horseback, seen frontally, holds a hunting horn; and to the right the saint, nimbed and hirsute, crawls on hands and knees over a hilly landscape. A hut of thatch and wattle stands in the background.

In the Anton Koberger edition of *Leben der Heiligen*, Saint John Chrysostom is depicted as a hairy, rather than as a naked, wild man (Fig. 61; cf. no. 22). As the texts of the Koberger and Zainer versions correspond with only minor variations, it may be assumed that the present woodcut was inspired by a text that was explicit in this detail.

In his discussion of the origins of the German legends of the hairy anchorite, Williams introduced a German rhymed version of the legend, known as the *Meisterlied*, concerning a penitent bishop Chrisostomo.<sup>1</sup> Of fifteenth-century origin, the verse text is preserved in a manuscript copy of about 1516–18. The story generally follows the other versions but differs in several important details. While *Leben der Heiligen* stresses the general bestial aspect of Chrysostom's penitent state, referring to him as an "abominable animal" ("ein greulichs tier," fol. 190v, col. 2), the

*Meisterlied* is specific, describing him as covered with a growth of hair so long that no one could see him:

Der gutte man gieng ann gewandt,  
biss das an im do wüchss zehandt  
har lenger den ain spanne  
hin vber sein leib alsamme,  
das man in sach nit mer. (stanza xiv, lines 13–17)

The woodcut in the Koberger edition addresses three separate scenes from the Chrysostom legend (for the story, see no. 22). The sequence is reversed, suggesting that the woodcut was copied from a model. In addition to the saint in penance, prominence is given to the pit into which the princess was hurled, visited here by an ordinary man and a woman, and to the hunter who brings the saint to the emperor, an important correspondence to the *Meisterlied*. While in the prose version John confesses after he is recognized by the child, in the *Meisterlied* the hunter who brings John back to the emperor beats the holy man, prods him with awls, and otherwise tortures him to elicit his confession:

Sy schlugen vnd stiessen in do;  
ich wayss was sy an im rachen,  
mit pfriemen si in stachen,  
er lit gar grosse nott. (stanza xvi, lines 14–17)

Another group of woodcut illustrations to the prose version, found in the Conrad Fyner (Urach, 1481) and the Hanns Schönsperger (Augsburg, 1489) editions, as examples, show only the scene of the hunter, blowing a horn, accompanied by two hounds coming upon the hirsute saint on all fours.

The *Meisterlied* also states that many people came to the pit to witness the recovery of the princess ("gross volck kam dar begangen," stanza xxi, line 4). The couple in the Koberger woodcut may represent this crowd.

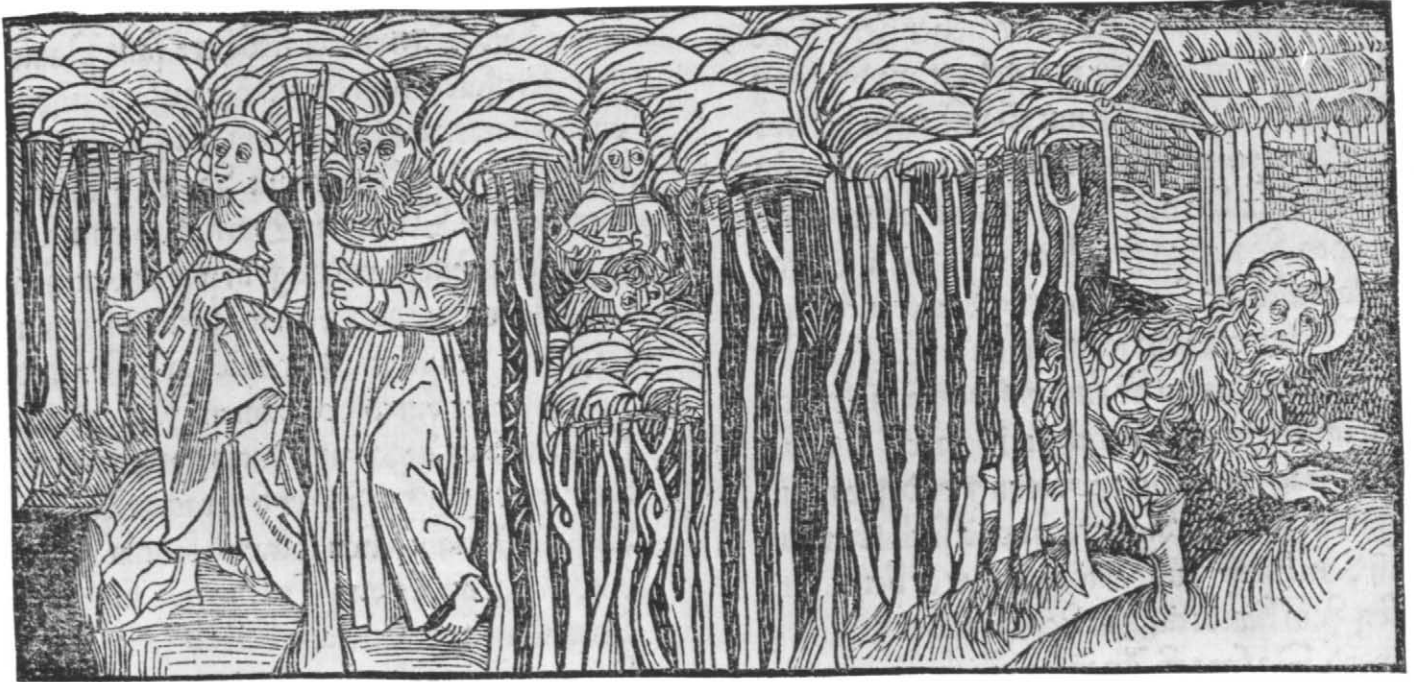


Fig. 61 Scenes from the legend of Saint John of the Golden Mouth, no. 23

Although the Koberger woodcut corresponds in detail more accurately to the *Meisterlied* than to any other known German versions of the Chrysostom legend, the two cannot be directly linked. The elaboration of detail in this woodcut, absent in the Zainer version, may indicate a crystallization of popular belief rather than a dependence on a specific text. The saint's hairiness, his capture by hunters, and the attention drawn to the princess's fate as a result of the saint's carnality all reflect popular perceptions of the wild man.

The abrupt invention of this legend and its links to wild man imagery met with strong resistance among reformist churchmen. In 1537 Martin Luther quoted the legend almost in its entirety from an edition of the *Leben der Heiligen* in a pamphlet entitled, "Die Lügend von S. Johanne Chrysostomo, an die Heiligen Veter jnn dem vermeinten Concilio zu Mantua."<sup>2</sup> Addressing Pope Paul III at the Council of Mantua, Luther used a play of words to discredit the tale: forming the neologism *Lügend* from *Lüg* ("lie") and *Legende* ("legend"), he describes it as a shamelessly evil lie and a piece of fallacious, seductive idolatry ("erstunckene Teuffelische lügen vnd eitel verfurissche abgötterey") and berates the Church for propagating and popularizing baseless fictions. He claims the legend was invented to support doctrines of Mass and purgatory and that the Church would have condemned anyone who dared question it. Luther's attack was countered by Johannes Cochlaeus in a pamphlet issued in the same year, "Bericht der warheit, auff die unwaren Lügend S. Johannis Chrysostomi, welche M. Luther an das Concilium zu Mantua hat lassen aussgehen."<sup>3</sup> Cochlaeus denied that the Church supported that "rotten oafish fable" ("jene faule tölpische Fabel") and stated it bore no resemblance to the history of the saint. He claimed that it was so unknown that he had found it difficult to obtain a copy. On this last point, at least, Cochlaeus must have been mistaken. Many versions of the legend were in wide circulation, and the *Leben der Heiligen*, in particular, was extremely popular. Between 1471 and 1521 alone at least forty-five editions of it were printed.<sup>4</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Williams, 1935, pp. 18–33, 49–67.
2. Williams, 1925, p. 11; idem, 1935, pp. 34–35.
3. Williams, 1935, p. 35.
4. Falk, 1879, pp. 83–85.

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Schramm, *Bilderschmuck* XVII, p. 8, figs. 56–314.

## 24 The penance of Saint John Chrysostom

Engraving

Lucas Cranach the Elder (Kronach 1472–1553 Weimar)

Germany (Saxony)

1509

Paper

25.4 × 19.9 cm. (10 × 7 <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

(Bartsch 1; Heller 1; Hollstein 1; Schuchardt 1)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jacob A. Schiff Fund, 25.35.1

In the center foreground a nude woman with long curly waist-length hair reclines against a sheer outcropping. Her left arm encircles the shoulder of a small child, who, with his head cradled in folded arms, sleeps against her knee as she watches over him protectively. Several types of pine trees grow from the outcropping behind her. The ground is richly textured with plants, rocks, shrubs, and a tree stump. The woman is flanked on her right by a standing stag and on her left by a hind. A pheasant scans the ground before her. In the right background, against a rocky knoll, a naked bearded man with long tousled hair crawls to the right. In the far background stands a castle in a hilly landscape with trees. Two shields in the upper left corner, one hanging from a pine tree, bear the arms of the Electors of Saxony. In the right foreground a plaque with the monogram and winged serpent mark of Lucas Cranach, the initials LC, and the date 1509 rests against the ground.

The iconographic format of Saint John Chrysostom's penance (Fig. 62) departs radically from earlier and comparatively crude representations in the printed editions of the *Leben der Heiligen* (nos. 22, 23). Abandoning the wild man mythology characteristic of late fifteenth-century representations, as well as the hagiographic aspect of the legend, Cranach presents a humanistic interpretation. The figure of the naked saint on his hands and knees is reduced in size and relegated to the background. The composition is dominated by a naked reclining woman watching over her sleeping child. This general type was introduced by Albrecht Dürer's engraving of the same subject dating around 1497 (Fig. 63) and was reinterpreted after the date of Cranach's rendering by Hans Sebald Beham, in his engraved version of 1525–28 (Fig. 64).

Of all the known literary sources for the apocryphal legend of Saint John Chrysostom's penance, only the German rhymed version, the *Meisterlied*, offers an explanation for the naked



Fig. 62 The penance of Saint John Chrysostom, no. 24

woman and her child (see no. 23). In this text, when the long-lost princess is found at the bottom of the ravine, she has born Chrysostom's son, now a young man of thirty. The Cranach engraving represents the princess after the birth of her son and early in Saint John Chrysostom's penitential years.

The pensive expression of the woman and her attitude of resignation as she reclines upon the ground strongly convey the sense of abuse and misfortune she has suffered on the saint's account. The scene is given poignancy in the *Meisterlied* text, which stresses her genuine fondness for the man and her desire to remain with him. Even after her thirty-year ordeal she is still able to say that he was once the handsomest man on earth ("er was der schönest herre, so er auff erden ist," stanza xxvii, lines 16–17). Her sin was motivated by love, while that of the saint was motivated by carnality. Figures 62–64 all comment on this observation. Lest the point escape, Jean Théodore de Bry in his *Emblemata saecularia*, folio 13, accompanied the Beham engraving with an inscription declaring that nothing in the world is more monstrous than an old man who becomes lascivious ("Non sene lascivo monstrum est deformus ullum").<sup>1</sup>

It has been suggested that Cranach's composition may have inspired Martin Luther to write of the impossibility of celibacy in a letter of March 1525.<sup>2</sup> A painting by Cranach, dating to the same year and representing the princess with her child before a landscape, recalls the present engraving.<sup>3</sup>

The composition of Cranach's engraving clearly depends on Dürer's version of the same subject and is also indebted to Dürer's engraving of the sea monster, or *Das Meerwunder* (no. 59). The comparison of Dürer's nude woman to Jacopo de Barbari's drawing of Olympias (frequently misidentified as Cleopatra) may also be extended to Cranach's female nude.<sup>4</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Wind, 1937–38, p. 183.
2. *Cranach*, 1976, vol. II, no. 486.
3. Schade, 1974, p. 61.
4. Panofsky, 1945, vol. II, no. 170; *Cranach*, 1976, vol. II, no. 486.

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Schubring, 1913, pp. 109–12; Wind, 1937–38, p. 183; Panofsky, 1945, vol. II, no. 170, p. 25, fig. 100; Dodgson, 1926, no. 12; Feinblatt, 1964, pp. 15–23, fig. 1; *Cranach*, 1972, no. 1, p. 13, fig. 5; Schade, 1973, p. 540; Schade, 1974, p. 33 nn. 112, 198, p. 61, fig. 67; *Cranach*, 1976, vol. II, no. 486.



Fig. 63 The penance of Saint John Chrysostom. Engraving by Albrecht Dürer, Germany, about 1497. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Isaac D. Fletcher Fund, 19.73.71



Fig. 64 The penance of Saint John Chrysostom. Engraving by Hans Sebald Beham. Germany (Ingolstadt?), 1525–28. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Dr. F. H. Hirschland, 47.96.4



## 25 Cannibal or werewolf

Single-leaf woodcut

Lucas Cranach the Elder (Kronach 1472–1553  
Weimar)

Germany (Saxony)

1510–15

Paper

16.1 × 12.5 cm. (6 5/16 × 4 7/8 in.)

(Bartsch 115; Dodgson 89; Geisberg 619; Hollstein  
107; Schuchardt 122)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Har-  
ris Brisbane Dick Fund, 42.45.1

In the foreground a man with tattered clothing and unruly hair crawls away from a rustic half-timbered house, holding a struggling baby in his teeth. In the left background a woman in the doorway of the house throws up her arms in alarm. One child pulls at her skirts; another with a dog runs about in front of the house. A man watches from behind the wattle fence of a shed attached to the house. Strewn in the foreground around the crawling man are dismembered bodies, limbs, heads, and other carnage. To the right are several tall trees with a tranquil pond beyond. In the background, surmounting a steep, wooded mountain, are a castle and town. The arms of the Electors of Saxony are emblazoned on shields appearing just below the upper left border.

Although the werewolf theme was infrequently represented in works of art, it at times obsessed the imagination of late medieval man. It was believed that a man, through the workings of the darkest evils, could transform himself into a wolf, the animal of the devil. By donning certain apparel endowed with supernatural powers, such as a particular belt or shirt (*Wolfsgürtel*, *Wolfshemd*), a man assumed the bloodthirsty and animalistic behavior, even the physical appearance of this dreaded animal.<sup>1</sup> Although the werewolf in Cranach's woodcut looks human, the child in his

mouth and the surrounding human carnage label him as a werewolf of the most rapacious sort (Fig. 65).

In a series of sermons delivered by Geiler von Kayserberg of Strasbourg and published together in a volume known as *The Ant* (*Die Emeis*), the subject of werewolves is treated directly after that of wild men. Geiler von Kayserberg describes them as devourers of children and men (*Kind- und Mensch Fresser*). Of the several different werewolf manifestations, most are described as wolves or bears driven wild by hunger and "canine madness." Only one is a man transformed into a fearsome cannibal, the product of black magic that could only be the work of the devil.<sup>2</sup>

Several features link the werewolf and the wild man. The wild man was thought by many to abduct children, sometimes to adopt or exchange his own child for a human one, at others for the purpose of cannibalism.<sup>3</sup> The wild man is also associated with abductions perpetrated by fabulous beasts. In some cases he has control of the beast (Fig. 66), and in others he is victimized by it (see no. 27). Bernheimer has pointed out the close relationship between werewolves and wild men and the Wild Hordes that rampaged through the forest in the late Middle Ages, leaving a wake of death and destruction.<sup>4</sup> The forest into which Cranach's terrifying werewolf retreats is seen not as the idyllic paradise of the fifteenth century (see no. 34), but as a hostile, savage environment often abounding with vicious creations and machinations of the devil.<sup>5</sup> In the realm of ritual, the werewolf, like the wild man, was impersonated. Documented reports tell of secret societies in the Baltic countries whose members, having stripped themselves of inhibitions, and usually of clothes, drove themselves into a frenzy and then ravaged the countryside like a pack of werewolves.<sup>6</sup>

Heinrich IX the Younger of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel was viewed not only as a wild man



Fig. 65 Cannibal or werewolf, no. 25



Fig. 66 Wild woman with dragon abducting baby. Detail of antiphonary. Germany, about 1500. New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, M 905, fol. 122

by his subjects (see no. 44), but also as a werewolf. This may have been inspired by the ancient family name, Welf, as much as by his allegedly violent and destructive behavior, but by 1541 he was openly known as the *Welf von Wolfenbüttel* or simply *Der Wolff*, while his city, Wolfenbüttel, was referred to as the *Carnificina Lupi* ("wolf's torment") or the "wolf's blood-kitchen."<sup>7</sup> He was likewise associated with the blood-crazed king of Arcadia, Lycaon, from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, who became a wolf.<sup>8</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Cranach, 1972, p. 39.
2. Bornemann, 1973, pp. 58–72.
3. *Handwörterbuch*, 1941, vol. I, p. 89.
4. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 58.
5. Silver, forthcoming, p. 54.
6. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 58.
7. Stopp, 1970, pp. 229–30.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 230–31.

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Cranach, 1972, no. 80; Bornemann, 1973, pp. 58–72; Schade, 1974, p. 61; Cranach, 1976, vol. II, no. 488; Silver, forthcoming, p. 54.

## 26 Wild man

*Colorplate VIII*

Carved fragment, possibly from a choir stall

Germany, Cologne(?)

Late fourteenth century

Oak

31 cm. (12 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

Cologne: Schnütgen-Museum, A 47

Hunched, apparently seated, with legs crossed, this fragmentary wild man once grappled with a griffin(?), now lost save for one clawed foot, which grasps the wild man's foreleg. The wild man's arms, also lost, once reached out to fend off the upper portion of the attacking beast. The thick wavy body hair of the wild man is deeply and sharply carved. He wears a full beard; his large almond-shaped eyes are deeply set; and his long nose bridges to a broad forehead. The wood has patinated to a lustrous dark brown.

By the second half of the fifteenth century, wild men, often Lilliputian in scale, populated the ornamental foliage of prints and small-scale carvings. In this verdant environment the wild folk pursued the daily activities of courting, raising children, hunting, and fighting—not only natural and fabulous beasts, but each other (see no. 27). The present sculpture is formally related to a composition by the Master of the Nuremberg Passion that depicts a wild man leaping over a broad-

leafed plant in pursuit of a griffin (see no. 27, Fig. 70).<sup>1</sup> Offering a similar view of the threatening side of nature, the wild man here engages in a primordial struggle for survival. This sculpture, said to have come from a choir stall, has been interpreted to symbolize the struggle between the celestial and lower worlds.<sup>2</sup> The wild man's forlorn expression and hirsute body associate him with the hairy penitent saints (nos. 20–24).<sup>3</sup> According to Möller, this wild man is a compassionate representation of a creature, animallike in his body but distinctly human in spirit, born irretrievably beyond the divine order of which many patristic writers asserted him to be a member.<sup>4</sup>

Stylistically the figure may be compared to marginal illuminations of manuscripts of King Wenceslaus's Prague court and other related works,<sup>5</sup> which place it at the end of the fourteenth century.

T.H.

### NOTES

1. Lehrs IV, 163, no. 106.

2. Parler, 1978, vol. III, p. 110.

3. Ibid., p. 111.

4. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, pp. 5–6.

5. Parler, 1978, vol. III, p. 111.

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*Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 9; Parler, 1978, vol. III, pp. 110–11.

## 27 Scenes of wild folk

*Minnekästchen* (coffret)

Germany (Upper or Middle Rhineland)

About 1460–70

Boxwood (with jasper feet probably added in sixteenth century)

12 × 31 × 16 cm. (4 3/4 × 12 3/16 × 6 5/16 in.)

Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, PS no. 118

The scenes carved on the four sides and lid of this coffret depict activities of wild folk in their forest habitat. On the front panel, a wild woman with her child watches in astonishment as a griffin kidnaps another child. A wild man, wielding his club, attempts to thwart the abduction. A second wild couple, to the left, wrestles with a bear. The keyhole over the central wild woman's head has been filled. On the back panel, a wild woman suckles a baby while a child looks over her shoulder. On the left, a pair of wild folk lovers embrace, while a wild man slumbers and another hunts birds with a bow, to the right. On the right end panel, a wild man with a shield and cudgel protects a wild woman and child from a lion. On the left end panel, a wild man with only a cudgel fights a dragon. While the scenes on the sides of the casket are represented in a fantasy ground of dense foliage, the setting on the lid is more realistic, with plants, trees, and sky. Four nude wild men, carrying horns, falcons, and spears, hunt in a field with their dogs. A fifth wild man leads a young nude wild woman riding a haltered unicorn. The lid is unhinged; the faceted jasper feet are additions, probably of the sixteenth century.

The scenes on this richly carved *Minnekästchen* depict two sides of the life of wild folk.<sup>1</sup> The back panel represents the pleasurable activities of lovemaking, sleeping, hunting, and child rearing; the front and side panels represent the perils. The two main underlying themes—the hunt and the family—meet on the lid (Fig. 67). Here the wild men, on a hunt, have captured a beautiful wild woman. Her mount, a unicorn, underscores her

role as the sexual being who gratifies the wild man's pleasures. With her, as seen on the side panels, the wild man's life gains new meaning.

The images, heretofore treated episodically, are drawn into a unified vision of the wild man's existence that reflects the changing attitudes of the rising middle class toward marriage. Abandoning the arrangements of political and material expediency so characteristic of courtly marriages, the burghers of the fifteenth century sought unions of greater commitment and familial significance. While, in the courtly tradition, sensual pleasures were an end in themselves, they were now inextricably linked with marriage, devotion, and procreation. The wild man increasingly became an emblem of these new marital values. Implicit in these scenes is a strong sense of unity, fidelity, and cooperation aimed at child rearing. The wild men drive away threatening beasts, while the wild women protect the children (Fig. 68). Although the wild woman mounted on a unicorn surrounded by wild men suggests sensual symbolism, the scene, as in the Boston tapestry (no. 14), mainly signifies fertility. The wild men are seen to be idealized, unfettered, and beyond the conventions of society,<sup>2</sup> and their marital unions to be parallel to man's only as closely as these qualities allow. Indeed, their social structure appears to be based on clans, rather than on family units. Sensual pleasure, so fully indulged by the wild man, is not denied by the Church, but encouraged within the prescribed marital bounds as a procreative force.<sup>3</sup> The wild men therefore complement this redefined attitude toward marriage, an institution that this coffret celebrates.

While many ornament prints bear vigorous foliage inhabited by wild folk (see nos. 44, 45), the objects for which they served as models rarely survived. In this case, the rich and skillfully carved casket, as well as most of the print models, is extant. Included among the sixteen prints attributed to the Master of the Nuremberg Passion, who was active in Germany around 1455,<sup>4</sup> are two ornament prints. One of these corresponds to the





Fig. 67 Abduction scene, front panel, and scene of wild woman on unicorn, lid, no. 27



Fig. 68 Lovers and family scene, back panel, no. 27

back panel of the casket; the other relates to the right end panel (Figs. 69, 70).<sup>5</sup> The composition in both prints is reversed, suggesting an intermediary between the Master of the Nuremberg Passion and the casket. The Master of the Banderoles, an avid copyist active between 1450 and 1475, apparently provided this function.<sup>6</sup> His mirror image of the Master of the Nuremberg Passion's composition for the back even includes the wild couple lovers, represented on the casket but missing from the Nuremberg print.<sup>7</sup> Another engraving by the Master of the Banderoles, though missing the left end, is identical to the scene carved on the front panel.<sup>8</sup> Although no print by either master sur-

vives with the compositions of the left end panel or the lid, the homogeneity of the end panels — wild folk antics carried out before an ornamental setting — suggests a common source for these scenes. Judging from the surviving prints, the Master of the Nuremberg Passion created the original compositions; the Master of the Banderoles copied, and thereby reversed, these images; and the craftsman who carved the Vienna coffret modeled the scenes after the Banderoles copies. The natural setting distinguishes the lid from the other panels, but does not eliminate the possibility that this, too, was based on a Master of the Nuremberg Passion design. None of several theories



Fig. 69 Wild man defending wild woman and child, right end panel, no. 27

regarding the source of the lid's composition has been substantiated. Similarities, particularly between the two hunters on the right of the lid, connect the composition with a contemporary German tapestry, according to Kohlhaussen.<sup>9</sup> Möller suggested a lost Master ES print as the source of the lid's composition.<sup>10</sup>

In spite of his diverse sources, the carver succeeded in producing a unified, compassionate statement of the "society" of wild men as perceived in the late Middle Ages. The coffret is one of the most elegant and refined works of its kind to have survived.

G.G.-H. and T.H.



Fig. 70 Wild man defending wild woman and child. Engraving by Master of the Nuremberg Passion. Germany, about 1455. Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 156.
2. Ibid., p. 155.
3. Ibid.
4. Hind, 1923, p. 487.
5. Lehrs I, 261-62, nos. 15, 16.
6. *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, text before no. 29.
7. Lehrs IV, 162, no. 105.
8. Ibid., 163, no. 106.
9. Kohlhaussen, 1928, p. 94.
10. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, p. 33.

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Kohlhaussen, 1928, no. 87, pls. 62, 63; Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 38, 156, fig. 36; Rupp, 1953, pp. 107-20; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 53; PK, 1972, no. 348.



Fig. 71 Wild man on horseback, no. 28

## 28 Wild man on horseback

Drawing

Ludwig Schongauer (Augsburg ca. 1440–1493 or 1494 Colmar)

Germany, Ulm or Augsburg

About 1470–90

Gray and black ink on paper

10.5 × 15.3 cm. (4 1/8 × 6 in.)

Basel: Öffentlichen Kunstsammlung Basel, Kupferstichkabinett, U.VIII.96

In an open landscape with a village and forested hills in the background, a wild man, astride a galloping horse, with a few branches as a saddle, brandishes a club over his head. Behind the horse, in the middle ground, another wild man carrying a pole on his shoulder marches on foot in the company of a dog. Light-colored ink has been used for the drawing; the horse and rider, as well as the principal lines of the landscape, are emphasized in black.

Lacking specific iconographic context, this drawing gives the impression of a study from life, and also reveals an emerging trend in late medieval perceptions of the wild man (Fig. 71). Despite any apodictic evidence, the wild man was thought to live in the nearby woodlands, as the distant town indicates, and to exist without the benefits or encumbrances of civilized man. His rapport with animals was legendary: even the women and children of wild folk tamed beasts that man could only hunt (Fig. 72). Here the wild man controls his horse without a bridle and with only a cluster of branches as a saddle. He was a natural hunter, and clubs and sticks were his only weapons. Neither the enemy nor the ally of man, he was thought to be a separate species. The fearsome characteristics of the mythic wild man—cannibalism, abduction, violent aggression (see no. 25)—are absent here, but so are the benign qualities that make contemporary images of the woodland wild folk models of an idealized escapist life (see nos. 30, 31). Schongauer's image foreshadows the sixteenth-century view of the wild man as an idealized "primitive," whose positive valuation elevates him to a condition superior to that of man (see no. 33).

The present drawing is undoubtedly by the same hand as another drawing with two wild men on horseback now in the State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad.<sup>1</sup> The common hand reveals itself not only in the similarity of theme and style, but also in specific details, such as the rendering of the horses, the leafless trees and shrubs, and the parallel lines of the ground shading. The attribution of both drawings to Ludwig Schongauer is strengthened by the correspondence of certain



Fig. 72 Wild woman and children on stag. Engraving by the Housebook Master. Germany, about 1465. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet. Copyright Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

details to those in several engravings bearing the artist's monogram, LS, connected to a cross with a quarter moon descending from the left arm—an insignia comparable to that used by Ludwig's famous brother, Martin Schongauer.

Ludwig Schongauer, the son of Caspar Schongauer, a goldsmith active in Augsburg and Colmar, was a citizen of Ulm from 1479, where he worked as a painter, engraver, and designer of woodcuts. In 1486, he moved to Augsburg, where he lived until 1491, when he took over his brother's workshop in Colmar following Martin's death. Ludwig died in Colmar two or three years later.

T.H.

### NOTE

1. Winzinger, 1974, p. 105, fig. 4.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Winzinger, 1974, pp. 102–8; Falk, 1979, no. 40, pl. 16.





Fig. 73 Wild men hunting, no. 29

## 29 Wild men hunting

Repoussé plate

Portugal

About 1500

Silver gilt

Diam. 22.2 cm. (8 3/4 in.)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Rogers Fund, 12.124.1

Lavish scrollwork fills the center of this plate. In the wide rim, embossed figures of wild men and beasts are grouped in combat. The two wild men whose bodies are covered by locks of shaggy hair fight their adversaries—a griffin and a boar—with shields and sticks. Another wild man with short tufts of body hair and a hood over his head confronts a lion. He defends himself with a heart-shaped shield and a sticklike weapon clutched in his right fist. Opposite him, a fourth figure encounters a bear. This male, nude and hairless, is armed with only a leaf.

The combats of the four groups on the plate appear unrelated and simultaneous (Fig. 73). They establish a decorative pattern, rather than a narrative sequence, and no figure group or vine position dominates. The representations of hairy wild men alternate with those of the unorthodox, less hairy and hairless ones. Hairless wild men were apparently depicted to emphasize the vulnerability or licentiousness of wild folk. Since this figure is not only nude but also without a weapon or protective shield, he seems comical in his defenselessness. His only protection against an attacking bear is the leaf he grabs from the decorative elements in the rim.

The wild man's traditional association with the inhabitants of distant lands (see nos. 1–4) influenced the choice of subject. The popularity of these plates, known as *salvas*, coincides with the great era of Portuguese exploration (see no. 43). By the mid-fifteenth century Prince Henry the Navigator had voyaged down the west coast of Africa almost to the equator. What is implied by wild folk fighting real and imaginary beasts in the present example is confirmed by the *salva* from the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 74), where Portuguese soldiers encounter the ferocious beasts of the wild folk habitat. These explorers have discovered the legendary realm of the wild man.

The decorative motif of this plate was a standard type referred to as “de Besties e de cardos” (“beasts and thistles”) in the Ordinances of King Alfonso V of 1472.<sup>1</sup> Its popularity is reflected in the large



Fig. 74 “Beasts and thistles” motif. Silver repoussé plate. Portugal, about 1550. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, M.513–1956

number of extant examples.<sup>2</sup> Schematic renditions of the late fifteenth century evolved into the rounded, robust forms of the sixteenth century. This stylistic shift is seen in the present object, dated about 1500, and its close relative from the Victoria and Albert Museum, dated about 1550 (Fig. 74), which depicts five armed soldiers warding off lions, bears, and dragons. Vividly represented in Figure 74, the thistle was often only suggested by fantastic leaf forms, and the beasts replaced by wild folk. Decorative prints by German engravers (no. 45) also successfully combined hairy wild folk with spiky thistles. The small size and elaborate working of these luxurious plates by Portuguese silversmiths suggest a purely ornamental or ceremonial use.<sup>3</sup>

G.G.-H.

### NOTES

1. Oman, 1968, p. xix.

2. Ibid., nos. 43–46, 82, figs. 93–97, 160.

3. *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 62; *Medieval Images*, 1978, no. 36.

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*Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 62; *Medieval Images*, 1978, no. 36, cover ill.

### 30 Wild folk with fabulous beasts

Fragment of a tapestry

Switzerland, Lucerne or Basel

About 1450

Wool on wool warp (approximately 5 warps per cm.)

.91 × 2.23 m. (2 ft. 11 13/16 in. × 7 ft. 3 3/4 in.)

London: Victoria and Albert Museum, T 117-1937

Against a blue-black background two wild men and a wild woman alternate with three fabulous beasts. From left to right, on a foreground composed of small mounds, are: the head and foreleg of a beast with a blue body and thick yellow mane; a bearded wild man with shaggy red body hair, a garland on his head, and a massive club in his right hand, holding a tether attached to the collar of a two-footed beast with a yellow, blue, and red mane; a wild woman with long flowing light brown hair and shaggy blue body growth, placing her hand on the neck of a blue-green animal with cloven hooves in front and webbed feet in the back, a red mane, a plumed forelock, and a crown-shaped collar around its neck; and a young beardless wild man with light hair and red body growth gesturing toward the same beast. The dark blue background is decorated with tendriled plants on tall stalks representing delphinium, a grapevine, roses(?), and pomegranates. A bird and several rabbits gambol among the foreground mounds. The tapestry has been cut at an angle along the left edge and is restored in the upper right corner.

A full iconographical explication of the wild man's association with fabulous beasts has never been developed, and there are no known literary connections that might aid in its interpretation.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly inspired by the mythical beasts of the *Physiologus* and bestiaries, these highly imaginative, composite creatures emerge in the late Middle Ages as the secular counterparts of the beasts in christological symbolism, as amorous symbols, and as companions of the wild man in his woodland paradise. The development of this imagery can be traced in a group of fifteenth-century Swiss tapestries culminating in the present example (Fig. 75).

In one early type<sup>2</sup> generally dated between 1420 and 1440, the beasts are on leashes held by elegantly dressed gentlefolk and are understood as symbols of hidden vice.<sup>3</sup> Another type<sup>4</sup> of the same date is similar, but in an apparent extension of the allegory, the wild man is shown astride the phantasmagoric embodiment of vice. The original allegorical focus, however, has now given way to delight in decorative detail and fantasy. Here the beasts are no longer tethered but are ridden by wild folk, who prod them with switches. Losing



Fig. 75 Wild folk with fabulous beasts, no. 30



Fig. 76 Wild folk with fabulous beasts. Tapestry. Switzerland, about 1450. Vienna, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst



the beasts to the wild folk does not appear to disconcert the gentlefolk, however. In this scene, a lady gently strokes the chin of one beast as though it were an exotic pet, and a gentleman, with a falcon perched on one hand, appears more concerned with the pleasures of the hunt than with his curious companions. Neither the beasts, with their colorful and whimsically patterned fur, nor the elegant wild men, whose variegated markings resemble fancy costumes more than coats of hair, present compelling images of evil.

By the middle of the century, the wild folk have altogether replaced the courtly figures, and the wild man has become a symbol of eroticism and of an idyllic natural existence. In other contexts, the wild man was associated with symbolic animals, including the lion (loyalty and strength), unicorn (chastity, virtue, and feminine victory), and stag (faithfulness and honor; see nos. 14, 15). The substitution of wild men for the courtly figures alters the symbolism of the fabulous beasts from vice to eroticism.<sup>5</sup> This point is explicit in a mid-fifteenth-century tapestry in the Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, Vienna, devoted to this subject (Fig. 76), where love knots are scattered over the surface of the foliate background.

In the Vienna tapestry the wild men play an additional role. The forest habitat and carefree life of the wild man were seen as an ideal natural existence far removed from the inequities and uncertainties of urban dwelling. In this escapist view of the woodland idyll, the fabulous beasts represent uncorrupted nature,<sup>6</sup> the companions of the wild folk, who lament the falseness of man's existence (see no. 33). In this tapestry one wild man declares that he will keep to his animals and forsake the society of man ("disse.tierlin.wil.ich.triben.und.wil.on.die.welt.beliben"); another says that they (the wild folk) will go through life with these

animals as the society of man means nothing to them ("mit.disen.dierlin.sun.wier.ÿns.began.die.welt.git.bÿssen.lon"), while another asserts that man kind is completely treacherous and that they are better off with the animals ("die.welt.ist.vntrwen.fol.mit.dissen.dierlin.ist.uns.wol"). The misanthropic commentary of these elegantly turned-out wild folk and the fantastical appearance of their companions give the impression of playful whim. As with many examples of late medieval wild man imagery, the borderline between seriously intended symbolism and sardonic masquerade is ambiguous.<sup>7</sup>

In the present tapestry the wild folk and fabulous beasts, now distorted by imagination, perpetuate the same theme of the world's faithlessness. The lack of inscriptions may indicate that familiarity with the imagery by the middle of the fifteenth century obviated explanation. Modeled after an earlier tapestry,<sup>8</sup> the present example emphasizes the decorative qualities of the composition. The flora are reduced to a simple, airy pattern, while the beasts and wild folk are boldly silhouetted against a dark background. The tapestry originally came from the Saint Anna Kloster at Bruch, near Lucerne.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Kurth, 1926, vol. I, p. 85.
2. Ibid., vol. II, pls. 27-29.
3. Ibid., vol. I, p. 85.
4. Ibid., vol. II, pls. 30, 31.
5. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 161.
6. *Spätgotik*, 1970, no. 255.
7. Heinz, 1963, p. 130.
8. Kurth, 1926, vol. II, pl. 49a.

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Burckhardt, 1923, pp. 7-10, 25 n. 6; Kurth, 1926, vol. I, no. 49b, p. 92; vol. II, pl. 49b.



### 31 Wild folk working the land

*Colorplate IX*

Tapestry

Switzerland, Basel(?)

About 1480

Wool on linen warp (approximately 6 warps per cm.)

.96 to 1.05 × 6.05 m. (3 ft. 1 3/4 in. to 3 ft. 5 5/16 in. × 19 ft. 10 3/16 in.)

Vienna: Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst, T4940

Beginning at the left (Fig. 77) a wild man on a checked horse waves a quirt and looks over his shoulder as he leads a team of oxen harnessed to a double-wheeled plow. Another wild man guides the plow from behind, holding a forked timber set behind the plowshare. Next a wild man with a seed bag over his shoulder sows with a sweep of his hand. He is followed by a wild man holding a turnip and riding a horse pulling a harrow. Just behind the harrow two wild men with sickles cut through a high stand of ripe wheat, while behind them another two wild men and a wild woman gather the cut wheat and bind it into sheaves. These workers are followed by a wild woman with a basket of food balanced on her head and another carrying a barrel-shaped flask of drink in each hand. A wild youth follows, carrying a sack, and another, sitting on a stool, pokes a fire beneath two cauldrons suspended from the cross poles of a stave hut. Behind the hut a wild couple sit in a horse-drawn cart filled with sheaves of wheat, as a wild man alongside lifts another sheaf over his head to load it onto the cart. A wild man leading the harnessed horse tips his head back to drink from a small flask. Along the length of the near foreground a short wattle fence marks the boundary between the worked land and a vineyard. Wild flowers sprout here and there, and a crow in the field feeds on the newly sown seed. The wild folk, most with garlands in their hair and some with caps, are covered in thick tufts of red or blue hair. A number of banderoles with inscrip-

tions loop about the figures. The entire scene is set against a blue background of hops tendrils. The tapestry has been joined at a cut just behind the second wild man with a sickle.

At the end of the Middle Ages the popular theme of the wild man's idyllic life developed into a fanciful vision of escapism. Once viewed as a demonic figure to be eschewed as readily as the inhospitable forests he inhabited, the wild man came to be perceived as a benign creature dwelling harmoniously in a woodland paradise. These wild folk enjoyed an apparently carefree, uncorrupted existence, gathering food and rearing children, as well as avidly pursuing the pleasures of lovemaking, simple games, and sports. A particularly favorite subject of Swiss and German tapestry weavers, this enviable pattern of life, when contrasted to man's so-called civilized society, became all the more desirable. In these tapestries, the childlike simplicity of the wild folk is conveyed by the absence of beards on the men and a sense of youthful innocence in their activities (Fig. 78). The wild folk are no longer covered with heavy coats of body hair but with brightly colored tufts, at times blue for males and red for females, and, at others, striped or gaily variegated. Clearly delineated "sleeves," "legs," and "necklines" give the appearance of a woolly body stocking, and neat, even elaborate coiffures, many adorned with garlands of flowers and entwined branches, replace unkempt hairstyles. In some cases, wild folk emulate courtly fashion, wearing hunting horns hung from elaborately worked shoulder straps, as well as girdles, dirks, and other aristocratic accouterments.<sup>1</sup>

The present tapestry shows wild folk at work rather than play. Though not without its comical aspects, this and other representations of the wild man's existence as an escapist ideal were intended to be taken seriously.<sup>2</sup> Abandoning their woodland occupations, the wild folk, cast as spritely counterparts of rustic farmers, work the land in an uncharacteristic display of organized productivity.

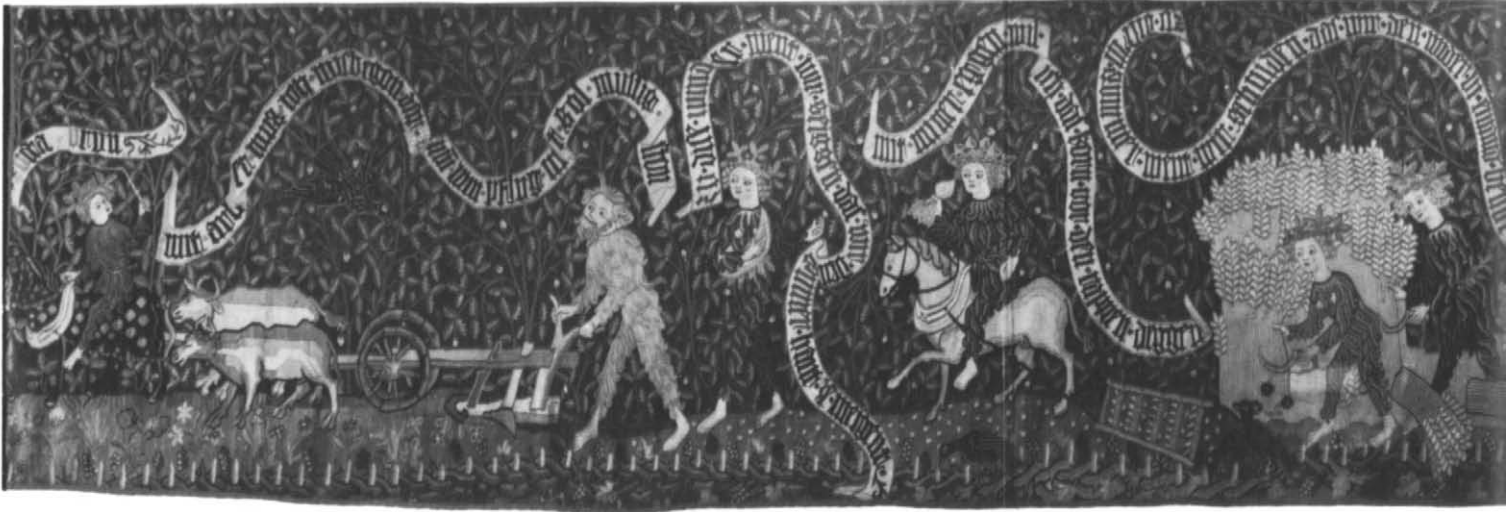
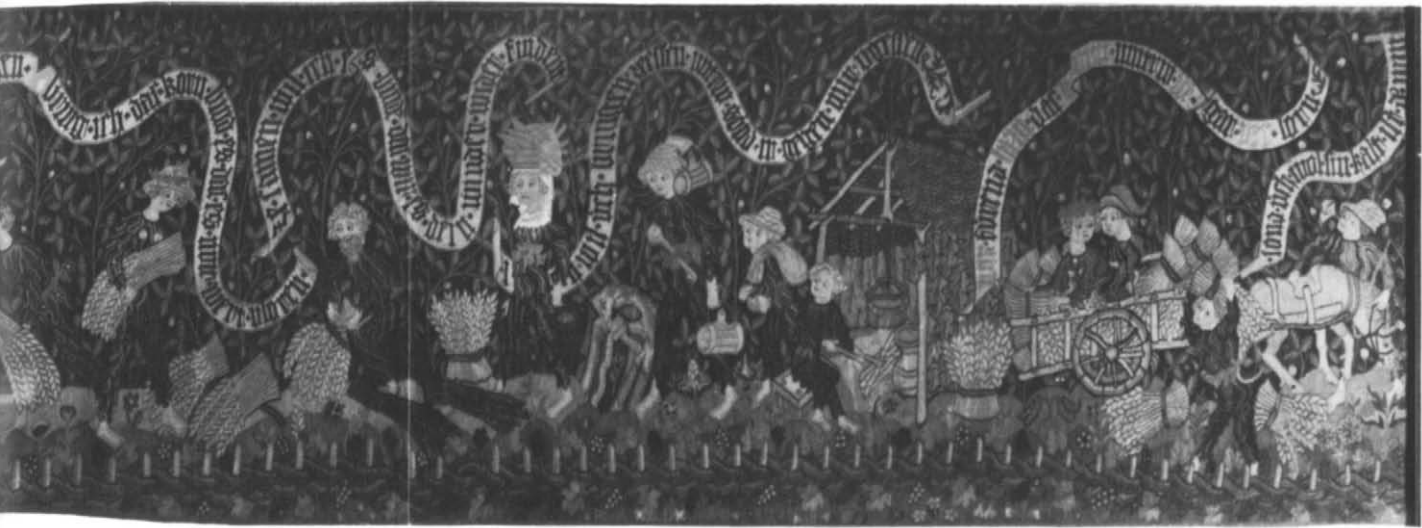


Fig. 77 Wild folk working the land, no. 31



Fig. 78 Wild folk frolicking. Detail of tapestry. Alsace, 1390–1410. Regensburg, Stadt Museum. Photo copyright Wilkin Spitta

This rare theme appears in an earlier Alsatian tapestry, which depicts wild folk and peasants together in agricultural labor (Fig. 79); the merry prattle recorded there is replaced here by slightly more somber conversation. As written in the banderoles, the lead wild man urges his steed to move along (“usta.brun”). The plowman states that it is his lot to toil and drudge and therefore his plow should never be idle (“mit.arbet.mus.uch.muhegon.darum . min . pflug . nit . sol . müssig . ston”). The sower notes that one must sow in winter to harvest in the summer (“zu . dise . winder . went . wir . seiggen . das . wir . den . sumer . hant . ze . meiggent”). The wild man on a horse pulling a harrow declares that his harrow will cover over the seeds so the crows can’t eat them (“mit . miner . eggen . wil . ich . das . korn . vor . den . rappen . deggen”). Next the wild men cutting wheat say they want to harvest in the summer so that they can stay together in the winter (“zu . disem . summer . went . wir . schniden . das . wir . den . wider . bi . einand . beliben”). One of the wild folk binding sheaves says that he carefully gathers the grain and binds it together so that there is no loss (“mit . truwen . bring . ich . das . korn . bind . es . das . es . nuit . vloren”), while another says he will bind it together so that they can find it again in winter (“ze . samen . wil . ich . es . bindē . das . wir . es . dem . winder . wider”). With the wild couple bringing food and drink to the workers while their children tend the fire in the hut, the tone of the dialogue shifts from the industrious to the moralistic. “As I am bringing you food,” says one, “I would that any mistrust you have for me you will put out of your mind” (“ich . wil . uch . bringen . zeessen . untrw . sond . ir . gegen . mir . vgessen”). As if



to reassure them, the couple in the cart declare that they are carrying the grain homeward and disloyalty simply does not exist ("wir . führend . hem . das . korn . umtrw . ist . gar . verlor'n"). And, as an optimistic punctuation to the series, the cart driver draining a flask into his mouth says, "Let it go well for them all, the wine is cool!" ("lond . uch . wol . sin . kalt . ist . d' . win .").

Cooperative agricultural pursuits bind these wild folk into a successful and, with the dismissal of guile and suspicion, cheerful social unit. The realistic approach, expressed by the accuracy of pastoral details, is counterbalanced by the decorative backdrop.<sup>3</sup> The wild folk are apt players in this scene, since they relate to fertility gods and to the fecundity and bounty of the earth.<sup>4</sup> The image is a captivating but naive characterization of rural peasant life. As Bernheimer notes, the tapestry serves "as a framework for the acting out of one of the idyllic pastorals then so much in vogue among those who could afford to treat agricultural labor as a game."<sup>5</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Kurth, 1926, vol. II, pl. 56.
2. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 159.
3. *Spätgotik*, 1970, p. 292.
4. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 160.
5. *Ibid.*

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Kurth, 1926, vol. I, nos. 59–63, pp. 99, 100, 219; vol. II, pls. 59–63; Göbel, 1933, pp. 40 ff., figs. 21, 22; Bernheimer, 1952, p. 160, fig. 41; Heinz, 1963, p. 135, fig. 88; *Spätgotik*, 1970, no. 260, pl. VII, fig. 235.



Fig. 79 Haymaking. Detail of tapestry. Alsace, 1400–25. Glasgow, The Burrell Collection

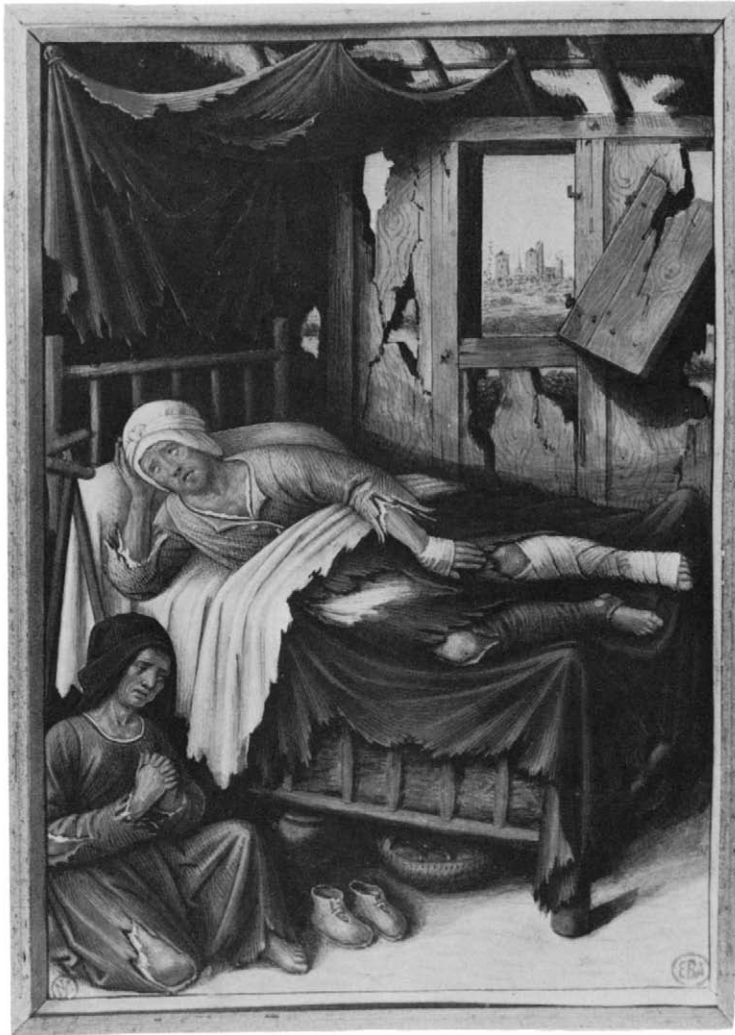


Fig. 80 The poor from the four conditions of society, no. 32

### 32 Four conditions of society

*Colorplate X*

Four loose-leaf illuminations

Attributed to Jean Bourdichon (Tours ca. 1457-1521 Tours)

France

About 1500

Tempera on vellum

17 × 13.5 cm. each (6 11/16 × 5 1/4 in.)

Paris: Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Bibliothèque, Miniatures 90-93

In a group of four loose-leaf miniatures, one represents a wild couple before a cave in a verdant landscape (colorplate X). The wild man, with thick grayish body hair, stands to the right of the cave entrance holding a long club in his right hand and pointing to his right with his left hand. A golden-haired wild woman sits on a patch of grass in front of the cave, nursing a child in her arms. To the right a spring issues from a rock, filling a pool that empties into a small stream. In the background, perched on hilltops, two castles catch the light of the rising sun. In the next miniature (Fig. 80), a red-eyed woman with a tattered dress squats on the floor with her hands clasped. At her side a man in ragged clothes lies in bed, head propped up in one hand. His head, other hand, and a leg are bandaged. A pair of crutches leans against the bedstead. A tattered cloth hangs overhead. The scene is set in a ramshackle hovel. Through the window a town is visible in the background. The next miniature depicts a neatly dressed craftsman with a plane in his hands laboring at a woodworker's table that is scattered with tools (Fig. 81). Other tools hang on the wall behind. To the right a woman winds yarn on a distaff and a child, at her feet, gathers wood shavings in a basket. In the final miniature a richly dressed couple sit on a carved bench before a fireplace in a masonry-

walled room (Fig. 82). A girl and a small boy stand by the woman while a servant peers into the chamber from behind a credenza laden with metalwork flasks, ewers, and table service.

These miniatures, attributed to the Touraine painter Jean Bourdichon,<sup>1</sup> are called the Four Conditions of Society (*les quatre états de la société*): the wild condition (*état de sauvage*), the poor (*la pauvreté*), the working (*le travail*), and the noble (*la noblesse*). Since they are loose-leaf, their original context and therefore their precise symbolic meaning have long been a matter of speculation. They may have been cut from a manuscript, but, since the backs are not inscribed, they may also have been separate paintings.

With the discovery of a fragmentary manuscript dating from around 1500 and comprising only four folios (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Ms. fr. 2374), however, these miniatures can now be placed in a precise iconographic context. In the opening folio (1 verso) is a pen-and-ink drawing of the craftsman at his woodworking bench that corresponds, except for minor variations in detail, to the Bourdichon miniature of the same subject. The drawing is accompanied by a twenty-eight-line poem entitled "le travail." Another pen-and-ink drawing on folio 3 verso likewise closely corresponds to the illumination of wild folk, except that the composition is reversed (Fig. 83). It also differs from the illumination in the addition of a second child and the elimination of the pool and stream. This drawing is accompanied by a ballade as well, composed of four stanzas of eight lines each, followed by a stanza of four lines, and concluded with a tag couplet. The same wild folk ballade, with some orthographic variations, along with a pen-and-ink drawing of a wild man standing in a large niche in a tree trunk, appears under the title, "Ballade d' une home sauvage," in an-



Fig. 81 The working from the four conditions of society, no. 32





Fig. 82 The noble from the four conditions of society, no. 32

other manuscript, also preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Ms. fr. 2366; Fig. 1). The drawings and corresponding ballades of the noble and poor conditions are unfortunately missing in both manuscripts. (The texts of the craftsman and wild folk ballades are published in Appendix A.)

A certain bittersweet flavor characterizes both the craftsman and wild folk ballades. The craftsman devotes his opening stanzas not to the positive aspects of his life but to the negative aspects of the rich and the poor. Though claiming to be content in his work and grateful for his modest means, the craftsman gives the impression that he is resigned to a tolerable state in a very imperfect world. The wild man is more outspoken. He dismisses the grand castles, which loom behind him, as contrary to natural law, and rejects excesses of any sort. He notes with pointed irony that in the end a shroud is all the worldly goods that men will need.

The missing texts notwithstanding, the miniatures must be viewed as a statement of social disillusionment. The wild man's unusual role adds particular poignancy to the commentary. In a lush natural setting with a fresh spring before his cave, the wild man enjoys health and satisfaction of his needs. Numbered among his many blessings are a golden-haired mate and child. More than the craftsman, the wild man seems content with his lot in life, while the poor man, bandaged and red-eyed, living in a squalid hut, decidedly does not. Thus, not only is the wild man viewed as human and—judging from the references in his ballade—God-fearing, but he is also portrayed as a member of a class superior to any of man's society. In contrast to the Germanic treatment of the idealized primitive theme, the French view, less didactic, empathizes with the wild man's harmonic ex-

istence with idealized nature. As Hatzfeld states, "Nature, appealing in its primeval immediateness to Germanic and Anglo-Saxon pantheism, is acceptable to the Latin sensibility of the French only in a form refined by art and cultivated by man."<sup>2</sup>

The ballades recall the poetry of Henri Baude (ca. 1430–ca. 1496), a follower of François Villon and author of satirical *moralité*, suggesting that the social commentary may have been more deliberate than the incomplete supporting text might at first suggest. Another manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Ms. fr. 24461) contains a number of shorter moralistic and satirical works of Henri Baude, including "Les trois états" (fol. 49), a satirical strophe much shorter than the wild man ballade.<sup>3</sup> Some of the pen-and-ink illustrations in this manuscript appear virtually identical to those in Ms. fr. 2366.<sup>4</sup> The Baude manuscript, a compendium of subjects intended for tapestry designs, bears the opening inscription, "Dits pour mettre en tapisserie."<sup>5</sup> It is conceivable that Baude wrote "Les trois états" as a pendant to "Ballade d'un home sauvage," "le travail," and the two missing ballades. Whether these ballades and their accompanying drawings were intended as tapestry designs is a matter of speculation.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Ring, 1949, no. 321a; Limousin, 1954, p. 39.
2. Hatzfeld, 1952, p. 48.
3. *Dictz moraulx*, no. 15, p. 99.
4. Champion, 1923, pp. 280–81, pl. xvii.
5. *Vers de Maître Henri Baude*, 1856, pp. 95–108; Champion, 1923, pp. 299–300.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ring, 1949, no. 321a; Limousin, 1954, p. 39, figs. 28–31; PK, 1972, p. 186, pl. 46.



Fig. 83 Ballade of a wild man from the four conditions of society. Drawing. France, about 1500. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. fr. 2374, fol. 3v



Fig. 84 Wild folk couple, no. 33

### 33 Wild folk family

Single-leaf woodcut illustrating the "Klag der wilden Holtzleüt vber die vngetrewen Welt" of Hans Sachs  
Hans Schäußelein (Nuremberg? ca. 1480-1540  
Nördlingen); published by Hans Guldenmundt  
Germany, Nuremberg

1545

Paper

25.7 × 38.5 cm. (10 1/8 × 15 3/16 in.)

(Dodgson 237a; Geisberg 1106; Passavant iii, 283, 169, 170)

London: The British Museum, E.8-1

To the left a wild man stands, facing front, torso turned slightly to the right, his head in right profile. He wears a garland of leafy branches on his head and vines entwined around his loins. In his right hand he holds a tall, slender tree trunk with several leafy branches; his left hand rests on the head of a child who holds a dog by a leash. Standing to the right is a hairy wild woman in the reverse posture, her head turned to look at the wild man. She wears a garland of leafy branches in her hair and has grapevines entwined around her waist and groin. Her left hand holds a branch with a fruit, and her right hand rests on the head of another child standing in profile holding a leafy stem surmounted by two blossoms. The ground is pebbled and shrubs grow at the outer sides. To the right of the wild folk under the title in bold letters, "Klag der wilden Holtzleüt / vber die vngetrewen Welt," is a double column of verse in rhymed couplets. The right column, four lines shorter than the left, ends with an inscription citing the publisher, Hans Guldenmundt of Nuremberg ("Gedruckt zü Nürnberg durch Hans Guldenmundt") and the date 1545. The impression of the wild folk is made from two blocks. Closely trimmed on all but the left side, the impression has been colored green on the ground and the branches entwined about or held by the wild folk, a thin yellowish color over the fur of the adults, brown on the dog, highlights of flesh tones on the children as well as on the bare areas of the adults, and ochre on the hair of all but the wild man, whose beard is gray.

The wild man's emerging position as an articulate critic of man's corrupt and degenerated social order could not be more pointedly expressed than in Hans Sachs's verse, "Klag der wilden Holtzleüt vber die vngetrewen Welt," or "Lament of the Wild Forest Folk over the Perfidious World," first published on June 2, 1530, and here illustrated by a woodcut by Hans Schäußelein (Fig. 84). In a somewhat monotonous but comprehensive fashion, Sachs in the persona of the wild man rails for

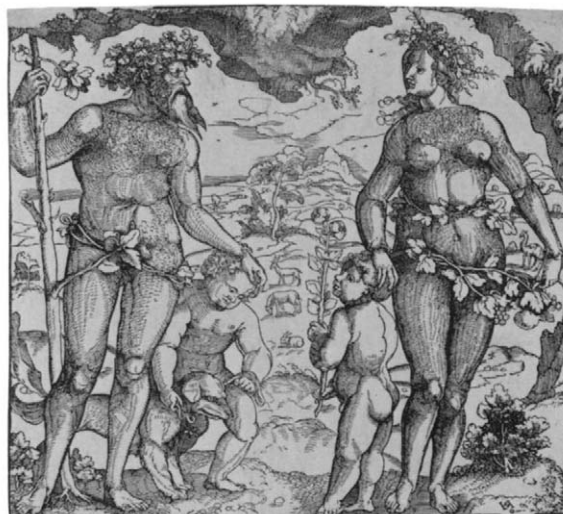


Fig. 85 Wild folk couple. Woodcut by Hans Schäußelein. Germany, about 1530. Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett. Photo: Jörg P. Anders, courtesy Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett

eighty-five verses against the many evils of man's ways. No longer merely the passive representatives of idyllic existence (nos. 30, 31), the wild folk here act as eloquent spokesmen against the corrupt human society and in favor of their own. The natural settings, common in fifteenth-century representations of this theme, and present in impressions of the Schäußelein image without the Sachs verse (Fig. 85), are in this example obviated by the printed word. The wild man evolves from a dark, aggressive, savage, cannibalistic creature to a paragon of virtue, righteousness, and enlightenment. This metamorphosis, which occurred gradually over a century of evolving artistic imagery, is well expressed in Bernheimer's paraphrase of Rousseau: "This revamping of [the wild] man's personality is not due to any inner process of purification, but merely to change in his social environment, a return to the natural life, which, through a strange and inexplicable alchemy, proves capable of transmuting [the wild] man's soul and wiping out evil."<sup>1</sup>

The original text of Sachs's poem with an English translation is published in Appendix B.

T.H.

#### NOTE

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 115.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 113-16, 208 n. 85; *Deutsche Holzschnitt*, 1959, no. 69; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 76; White, 1972, p. 27; Silver, forthcoming, pp. 8-10.

### 34 Wild man in combat with knight (the combat of Valentine and Namelos)

Drawing

Hans Burgkmair (Augsburg 1473–1531 Augsburg)

Germany, Augsburg

About 1503

Black ink on paper

21 × 28.5 (8 1/4 × 11 3/16 in.)

Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, B-30.554

In a forest setting a knight in full armor lunges with a double-handed sword lifted overhead. The wild man, half again as large as his opponent, stands with legs spread, ready to defend himself with a long uprooted tree trunk raised in front of him in both hands. The naked wild man is covered with a shaggy growth of hair and wears a long beard as well as a headdress of plants. He tramples a shrub with his left foot. In the middle ground lie three male figures, one in armor with a broken sword at his feet, presumably the wild man's victims. The background is composed of a large boulder, to the left, a wooded glade and a steep hill behind it.

The image of the wild man presented by Hans Burgkmair in this extraordinary drawing (Fig. 86), conceived at the dawn of humanism in northern Europe, departs radically from late medieval concepts. Although the subject was probably inspired by an episode in a German version of a Carolingian epic, *Valentin und Namelos*, it is more than literary illustration.

Hans Burgkmair's drawing foreshadows the attitudes and aesthetics of the sixteenth-century Danube School of painting, best known in the works of such artists as Albrecht Altdorfer and Wolf Huber. In this drawing the concepts of both the wild man and the forest he inhabits are dramatically altered. The duel between the knight and the wild man perpetuates a theme common in wild man imagery of the fourteenth century (see no. 11). The contest, however, is no longer an allegorical combat between civilized order and primitive chaos; the traditional formula is projected into the sentiments of a new age. Beyond his late fifteenth-century and early sixteenth-century metamorphic state as an idealized primitive or "noble savage" (see nos. 32, 33), the wild man is here viewed as a glorified ancestral type from an ancient, romanticized past.<sup>1</sup> Suggesting the current notion of "archaism," these remote forebears, either real or legendary, became idealized whether

they were "wild" or civilized.<sup>2</sup> Unlike the wild man in Hans Sachs's lament (no. 33), a noble primitive who has risen above the corruption of man around him, Burgkmair's wild man represents a distant golden age before the world sank into corruption. The forest, with its rugged outcroppings and gnarled trees, is no longer the sylvan paradise of the fifteenth-century wild man or of the later primitives, but suggests, like Cranach's (no. 25), the raw, primeval forces of nature. The massive proportions of the wild man refer not to his mythical aggressiveness or evil nature but to his inherent abilities to survive in a primordial environment. Against such a paragon of fortitude, the embodiment of ancestral Germanic indomitability, man's courage is truly tested. The knight in armor here, notwithstanding the literary allusion, subjects himself to this ultimate challenge.

Recent literature has incorrectly associated this drawing with *Valentine and Orson*,<sup>3</sup> a French version that may share a common source with the earlier *Valentin und Namelos*. The French version was written between about 1475 and 1489, when the first printed edition (Jacques Maillet, Lyons) appeared, and is based on a lost poem of the fourteenth century.<sup>4</sup> It was translated into English by Henry Watson and was printed at London by Wynkyn de Worde about 1503–5. In these versions of the epic, twin boys are separated at birth from their royal mother and from each other: Orson is raised by a bear in the forest and becomes a wild man; Valentine is found by King Pepin, who rears him as a son in his household. When the two reach adulthood, Valentine is sent to rid Rome of Saracens, while Orson has become so legendary a fierce wild man that Pepin and his men set out to drive him from the forest. They are unsuccessful and one knight is killed. Eventually, Valentine returns, is slandered by his jealous half-brothers, and offers to prove himself by riding into the forest to defeat the wild man. After a battle that neither wins, Valentine suggests a truce and leads the bound wild man from the forest, still not realizing that they are brothers.

Although the Burgkmair drawing corresponds in general to the description of the forest fight, several details are either missing or unaccounted for. There is no trace of Valentine's horse, for example, whose threatened welfare draws the aghast hero into combat. The bodies, one in armor, strewn about the ground behind the wild man, are not mentioned in the French-English version. The wild man's only victim before Valentine's combat





Fig. 86 Wild man in combat with knight, no. 34. Photo courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

is a valiant knight who comes to Pepin's aid in the first encounter, and his body should be shown torn limb from limb.

A more credible source for the drawing has been proposed by Robison, who suggests that the drawing follows a German rather than French version of the epic.<sup>5</sup> The version that corresponds in detail to the Burgkmair drawing is the Low Middle German version, *Valentines Bók* (Royal Library, Stockholm, Vitterhet Tysk no. 29), a derivative of

Swedish versions. Here the king with a company of twelve knights sets out after the wild man ("do rêr jagen de konink/unde nam mit sik twelf riddere stolt"). When the party encounters the wild man, one of the company points him out to the king, describing the beast as an astounding animal the likes of which he has never seen ("er ên sprak do 'her konink, seit, / wo wunderliken lopet dar ein dêr, / sinesgelike hebbe wi ni sên êr!"). Two knights from this troop of men had already begun

to hunt the beast ("do reden twe riddere út der schare / unde begunden jagen dat dêr al dare"). Then another of the knights with a spear as a weapon closes in on the forest beast ("do quam ein her mit sime spere / unde rêt to deme sulven dere"). But the wild man attacks, snatching the knight from his horse and killing him in a single blow from his sharp claws ("it tóch van deme rosse den ridder fin / mit den klawen, de scarp weren, sîn / unde knêp ene dôt"). The rest of the company, filled with fright, wanted only to flee ("men mochte dar blôt vleten sên"),<sup>6</sup> which they presently do with their king.

Valentine soon hears of the danger the king has faced and immediately sets out after the wild man. The court intrigue that slights his honor and compels him to action in the French version is lacking here. Having found the wild man in the forest surrounded by the aftermath of the king's encounter, Valentine draws his sword and engages him in a heroic struggle. The dead knight(s?) in this version may explain the corpses in the middle ground of the Burgkmair drawing.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Silver, forthcoming, pp. 10, 25.
2. White, 1972, p. 25.
3. Hirsch, 1978, no. 23.
4. Dickson, 1929, p. 7; *Valentine and Orson*, 1937, pp. ix-x.
5. Robison, 1979, p. 3.
6. *Namnlös och Valentin*, 1934, p. 67, lines 1055-77.

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*Burgkmair*, 1931, no. 35 add.; Burkhard, 1935, no. 17; Halm, 1962, pp. 118-19, fig. 51; Falk, 1968, pp. 26, 37-38, 41-44; Hirsch, 1978, no. 23; Robison, 1979, *passim*.

### 35 Combat of Two Wild Men

Engraving

Israhel van Meckenem (ca. 1450-1503 Bocholt)

Germany (Lower Rhineland), Bocholt

About 1480

Paper

15.2 × 22 cm. (6 × 8 5/8 in.)

(Lehrs IX, 383, no. 491)

Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Potter Palmer, 22.348

Two shaggy-haired wild men, mounted on rearing steeds, confront one another. Riders and horses are encased in leafy scrolls. The wild man on the left wears a bunch of radishes on his head; the one on the right is capped with garlic. Both riders use saplings as lances. Rocks are scattered on the barren ground, and the monogram 'IM' has been placed in the center.

Bernheimer interprets the *Combat of Two Wild Men* (Fig. 87) as the confrontation of demonic Hellekins, who, according to legend, ripped trees out by the roots for combat.<sup>1</sup> The wild men in the print, however, do not share the extraordinary ugliness associated with the Hellekins and the Wild Hordes (cf. no. 40). This combat is better interpreted as a parody of the joust and, by extension, of the code of chivalry.<sup>2</sup> The armor of the wild man, though as extensive as that of knights, is completely ineffectual. Exposed feet and hands contrast with the excessive "armor." Particularly florid leaves replace the knights' helmets, which are mounted with lowly vegetables instead of heraldic crests. Even the caparisons are represented as unruly leaf forms. As a result, both rider and mount are encumbered and their vision impaired. In place

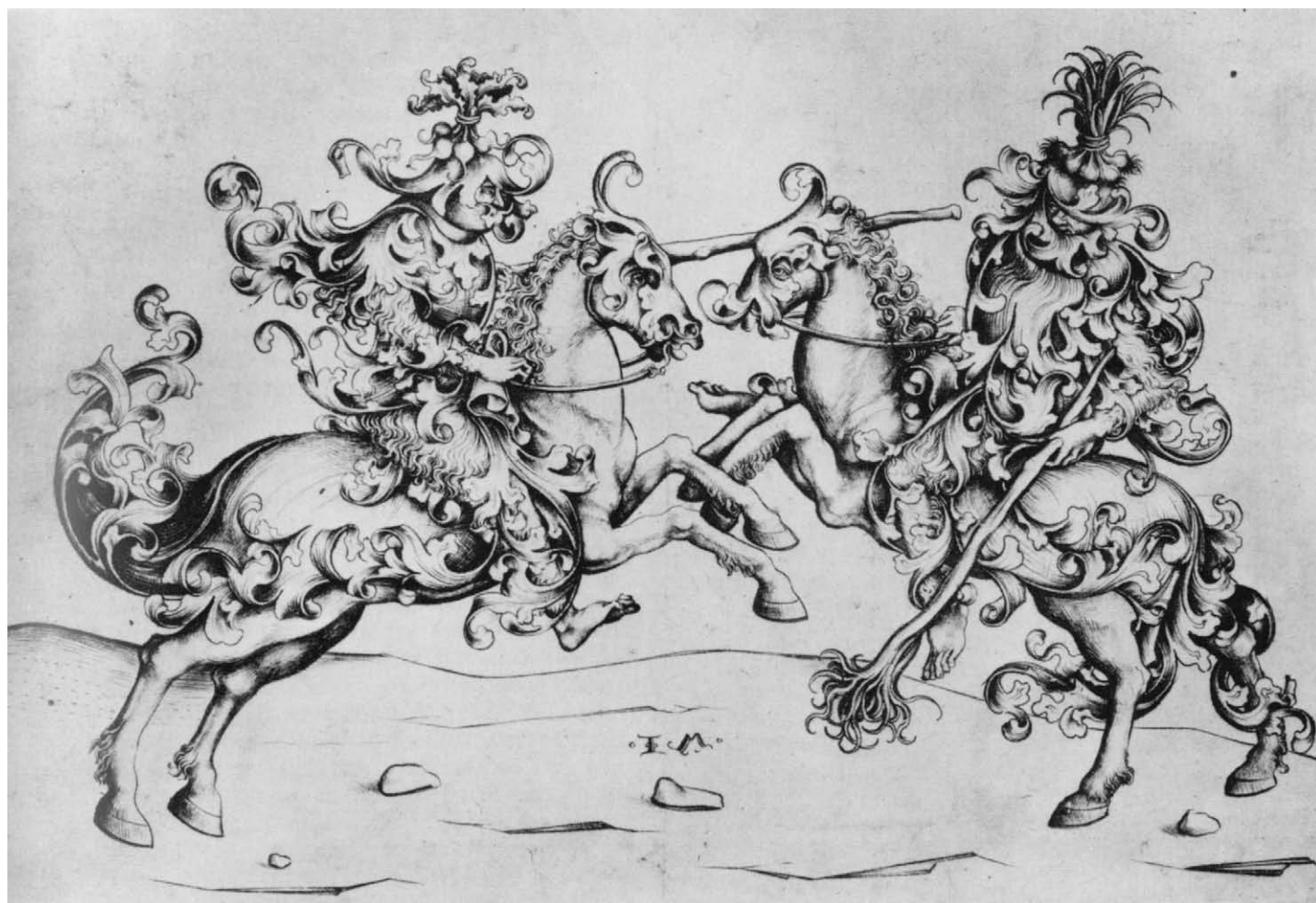


Fig. 87 Combat of Two Wild Men, no. 35. Photo courtesy Art Institute of Chicago



Fig. 88 Combat of two wild men. Detail of tapestry, Alsace, 1390–1410. Regensburg, Stadt Museum. Photo copyright Wilkin Spitta

of finely tooled weapons, the wild men charge with saplings, the roots still untrimmed. Ironically, while the wild man on the right must have had superior strength to tear his sapling from the earth, he can no longer even raise it in his defense.

Wild men, the antithesis of the Christian knight, were the logical choice for these parodies. From the late fourteenth century through the early sixteenth century, such parodic joust scenes were popular (Fig. 88). A *bas-de-page* illumination from the Vanderbilt Hours of about 1500 (Fig. 89, no. 38) shows an apparently inebriated wild man tilting at quintains astride a wine cask on a sledge dragged by two other wild men. The mounted wild man attempts to hit a target with his lance, while his arm is steadied by another, helpful wild man.

The present work copies a composition by the Housebook Master. Despite extensive literature concerning this artist, his identity and origins remain elusive. He worked primarily in the Middle Rhine region between about 1465 and 1500. His *Combat of Two Wild Men*<sup>3</sup> is traditionally dated five years before Israhel's copy.<sup>4</sup> Two satirical coats-of-arms by the Housebook Master, the *Lady with Radishes in her Escutcheon* and the *Youth with the Garlic in his Escutcheon*,<sup>5</sup> dated between 1465 and 1475, are related to the *Combat* scene. The crests of radishes and garlic, variously identified as

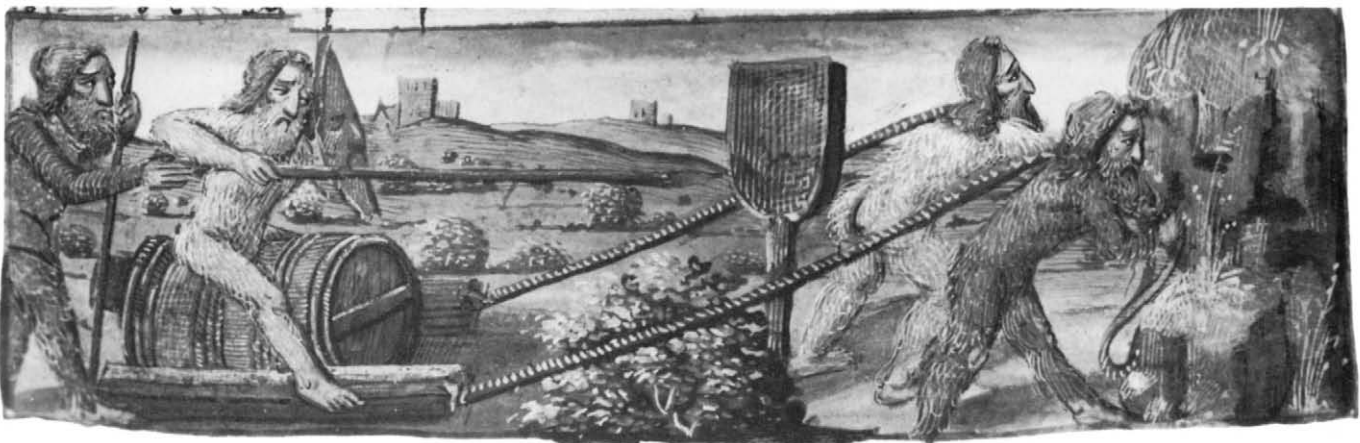


Fig. 89 Wild men tilting at quintains. Detail of manuscript illumination from a Book of Hours (no. 38). France, about 1500. New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Ms. 436, fol. 65v

onions or leeks,<sup>6</sup> are the same as those worn by the "knights."

Around 1480, Israhel van Meckenem copied the Housebook Master's print. Israhel's version is a mirror image of the Housebook Master's composition with several deletions:<sup>7</sup> not only did he omit the dog and grass tufts, but also the shading beneath the horses' rear hooves, which makes the horses appear to be suspended above the ground. The only addition made by Israhel is his monogram, 'IM'.

Israhel van Meckenem was apparently fascinated by the wild man's satirical potential. He not only copied examples from other artists, but also created his own (no. 37). Israhel is known as the most prolific of all fifteenth-century engravers. By the time of his death in 1503, he and his shop had produced over six hundred engravings. Unlike his contemporaries, whose prints often survive in unique copies, most of Israhel's exist in many impressions. For example, the Housebook Master's *Combat of Two Wild Men* has survived in two prints; Israhel's copy exists in over forty.<sup>8</sup> His rendition was also copied by the miniature painter Robinet Tesard in a *bas-de-page* illumination of the *Hours of Charles of Angoulême* (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Ms. lat. 1173, fol. 3).<sup>9</sup> While the number of prints is characteristic of Israhel's production, it may also reflect the popularity of chivalric spoofs during the late Middle Ages.

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 65.
2. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 69; Möller, 1964, p. 263; Hutchinson, 1972, p. 50.
3. Lehrs VIII, 132, no. 56; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 69; Bernheimer, 1952, fig. 11.
4. Hutchinson, 1972, p. 50.
5. Lehrs VIII, 160, nos. 86, 87; Hutchinson, 1972, pp. 69-70, figs. 84, 85.
6. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 48; Hutchinson, 1972, p. 50.
7. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 4.
8. Lehrs IX, 383, no. 491.
9. Blum, 1911, p. 360, fig. 8; Hutchinson, 1972, p. 50.

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Geisberg, 1905, no. 438; Warburg, 1930, pp. 66-67; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 4.

### 36 Wild couple jousting

Engraving

Master ES (ca. 1430-1467 or 1468)

Germany (region of Lake Constance)

About 1450

Paper

6.7 × 8.2 cm. (2 5/8 × 3 1/4 in.)

(Lehrs II, 380, no. 307)

London: The British Museum, 1842.8.6.38

A wild man, mounted on a unicorn, and a wild woman, riding a doe(?), approach one another, prepared to joust. Instead of lances, he attacks with a rake and she with a distaff. Neither rider uses a saddle, bridle, or protective equipment. Their bodies are covered only by fine, short hairs. The tournament is staged before a decorative leaf. Two birds roost and a third flies in the foliage above the figures.

Like no. 35, this print is a parody of the chivalric joust (Fig. 90). Instead of knighthood, however, the contest pits male against female in the classic theme of the battle of the sexes. The wild man rides a unicorn, a standard symbol of female virginity. Instead of conventional lances, these jousters bear weapons symbolic of traditional domestic roles: she attacks with a distaff, the implement used to hold raw wool or flax for spinning. In fifteenth-century prints, the distaff was often the symbol of the domineering housewife (Fig. 91). The wild man's weapon is the rake, a parallel symbol referring to man's domestication from hunter to farmer.

On a second level of symbolism, the distaff corroborates the darker side of the wild woman's personality. While she played an important role in literature throughout the Middle Ages, the wild woman was rarely depicted in art until the fifteenth century, when she appeared only as the wild man's companion.<sup>1</sup> The literary wild woman is a formidable, ugly hag, the opposite of this demure, virginal damsel. According to Bernheimer, "it would seem entirely appropriate to apply to her the term used for centuries to designate creatures of her kind by calling her a witch."<sup>2</sup> By the late Middle Ages, the distaff was frequently





Fig. 90 Wild couple jousting, no. 36. Reproduced by permission of The British Museum

associated with witches. Many examples of this iconography exist in northern art of the first half of the sixteenth century, as in a work by Albrecht Dürer (see Fig. 92). The rake, when paired with the distaff in this context, can be associated with death's harvesting tool.

The identity of Master ES, though extensively examined, remains unsolved.<sup>3</sup> He apparently worked as a goldsmith in southern Germany and Switzerland between about 1450 and his death in 1467 or 1468. Not only goldsmiths, woodcarvers, and stained-glass designers, but also other en-

gravers used ES designs. Conspicuous among these is Israhel van Meckenem (see no. 35), who was apparently a student in ES's shop at the time of the Master's death.<sup>4</sup> Israhel owned and reworked more than forty ES plates; approximately one-third of Israhel's printed oeuvre was copied from ES. Among Israhel's earliest prints is his copy of ES's *Wild Couple Jousting* to which he added an inscription and date.<sup>5</sup> Based on this inscription, Israhel apparently copied the print in Cleves, the Netherlands, in 1465, before his apprenticeship to the Master.



Fig. 91 *The Jealous Wife*. Engraving by Israhel van Meckenem. Germany, 1495–1503. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection, B-2715. Photo courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

The style and boldness of Israhel's copy recalls the spirit of the engraving on the Ingolstadt beaker (see no. 51).<sup>6</sup> Wild folk and humans, mythological and real beasts confront one another in a setting of luxuriant foliage. Both on paper and in metal, the figures interact before a black, crosshatched backdrop. Both the original *Wild Couple Jousting* by ES and Israhel van Meckenem's copy were probably intended as models for craftsmen working in other media (see nos. 45, 46).

G.G.-H.



Fig. 92 *Witch holding distaff and riding a goat*. Engraving by Albrecht Dürer. Germany, about 1500. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Isaac D. Fletcher Fund, 19.73.75

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 38–39.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
3. *Master E.S.*, 1967, n. pag.
4. Geisberg, 1930, p. 224.
5. Lehrs IX, 451, no. 605; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, text before no. 154.
6. Rorimer, 1951, pp. 255–58.

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Geisberg, 1905, no. 454; Berliner, 1925–26, vol. II, p. 3; Pieper, 1972, pp. 22–23.

### 37 *Flore Pulchro* (ornament with flower and eight wild folk)

Engraving

Israhel van Meckenem (ca. 1450–1503 Bocholt)

Germany (Lower Rhineland), Bocholt

About 1490–1500

Paper with watermark: Gothic P and flower

20 × 13.1 cm. (7 7/8 × 5 1/8 in.)

(Lehrs IX, 464, no. 624)

Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, B-2728

A flower of capped stamens nestles in opulent foliage. The flower's woody stem, severed from the plant, provides a footrest for one wild man. Other wild folk, nude with hairless skin, inhabit the foliage beneath the flower. The bare buttocks of one wild man are the target of another's arrow. A third wild man climbs from the lower stem onto a higher leaf. Above him, another male wearing a brief garment poises his club, ready to strike. A man and a woman, on either side of the main stem, boost their respective partners onto their backs. The man on the woman's back points to the bee at the top of the flower and in his other hand holds a banderole that states in Latin, "*Flore pulchro nobili apes mella colligunt*" ("The noble bees draw honey from the beautiful flower"). On the other side, the woman on the man's back points to the spider and grasps a banderole with the inscription "*Ex hoc verme frivoli virus forte hauriunt*" ("From this one, however, the frivolous vermin extract a stronger potion"). The print is signed in the top margin with the initials 'IM'.

The influence of Master ES on Israhel van Meckenem discussed in no. 36 is also found in *Flore Pulchro* (Fig. 93). Although the composition and satire are Israhel's creation, the formal inspiration appears to derive from the Master ES compositions *New Year's Greeting*<sup>1</sup> and *Christ Child in the Heart*.<sup>2</sup>

While ES's formulas appear to have influenced the overall form of Israhel's *Flore Pulchro*, the theme is a comic satire of the Castle of Love, known from the poem *Die Minneburg* (see nos. 12, 13). Many late medieval works exploit the satirical potential of this theme, but few rival the impact of Israhel's image.

Recent interpretations of the *Flore Pulchro* agree with the Castle of Love satire but do not elaborate upon it. Bernheimer interprets this print as "another version of the conquest of the castle of

love, only that, with the courtly technique of amorous delay excluded, men and women may now assist each other in achieving the consummation."<sup>3</sup> Shestack defines it as "an allegory on the attainment of pleasure," where men and women climb toward the honey-filled blossom, symbolizing sensual pleasures, the goal of desire.<sup>4</sup>

Wild folk are ideal creatures to carry out such a parody. Their spirit and penchant for aggression and humor are well suited to Israhel's purpose. While the knights, armored and following proper decorum, storm the castle, their wild folk counterparts, physically vulnerable and unorthodox, scramble toward their goal. As a symbol of sexual fulfillment, the roses tossed to the knights by the ladies are romantic and demure compared to the erect, exposed stamens of the wild folk's quest. Knights use ladders or climb trees to gain access (see no. 12), while Israhel's wild men climb oversize leaves or boost one another onto their backs. The knightly combat at the castle gate is echoed by the aggressive wild men on the lower branches. Instead of swords, the wild men fight with clubs and with bows, the chosen weapon of both knights and Cupid in the conventional storming of the castle scenes. In Israhel's composition, the prominence of the arrow, the suggestive straddling of the wild man aiming it, and the nature of his target establish an ambiguity between the knights and Cupid, thereby strengthening the satire.

The wild men's antics are made more humorous by their small scale, particularly notable in comparison with the insects, who bear the engraving's message. The noble bee, like the knight, draws honey — sanctified pleasure — from the beautiful flower — his lady. In contrast, frivolous vermin, whether the spider or wild folk, extract from it a stronger potion — sensual pleasure.

G.G.H.

#### NOTES

1. Lehrs II, 104, no. 50.

2. Ibid., 107, no. 51.

3. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 149.

4. *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 249.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Geisberg, 1905, no. 475; Berliner, 1925–26, vol. II, p. 7; Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 47, 148–49, fig. 38; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 72; Möller, 1964, pp. 261–62, fig. 9; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 249.



Fig. 93 *Flore Pulchro* (ornament with flower and eight wild folk), no. 37. Photo courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Fig. 94 Wild man leading a maiden on a unicorn to his cave, detail, no. 38, fol. 86r

### 38 Marginalia with wild men

*Colorplate XI, a-d*

Manuscript illuminations from a Book of Hours, use of Rome

Jean de Montluçon shop

France, Bourges

About 1500

Tempera on vellum, i + 109 folios

18.8 × 12 cm. (7 3/8 × 4 3/4 in.)

New Haven: Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Ms. 436

This Book of Hours is lavishly illustrated. The calendar (fols. 1–6) features the labors of the months and the signs of the zodiac in the outer margins, and scenes from the Genesis cycle in the lower margins. Eleven half-page miniatures illustrate the Hours of the Virgin, the Seven Penitential Psalms and Litany, the Short Hours of the Cross, the Short Hours of the Holy Spirit, and the Office of the Dead. Twenty-three small miniatures, placed in the text columns, illustrate the Gospel Sequences, the Prayers to the Virgin, and the Suffrages to Saints. A common decorative format standardizes the text pages. All have a column at the inner margin; panels with masks, shields, garlands, or wings in the upper margin; rinceaux in the outer margin; and scenes of wild folk, knights, and fabulous creatures in the bottom margin. In some cases, the wild folk antics also fill the outer margin. In 133 scenes over 300 wild men are illustrated, most of them involved in aggressive activities: in combat with fabulous beasts (29

scenes) or with real animals (15 scenes); with fellow wild men (29 scenes) or with humans (11 scenes). Several scenes, and their variations, are the standard illustration of the aggressive theme. One much repeated scene is the battle between wild men and knights in which one group, protected behind castle walls (fols. 35, 49v, 53), stockades (fol. 23), or barrels (fol. 35), is attacked by the other. One-to-one combat (fols. 22v, 27v), hunting (fols. 13v, 14v, 19, 21v, 22, 25), and jousting (fols. 10, 27v, 46, 74) are also repeated with endless variation. Rare scenes that are not repeated are especially fascinating. In one, wild men prepare to behead a kneeling, bound human (fol. 76), while in another, human archers execute two wild men captives (fol. 42). Other dimensions of the wild man's personality are portrayed. He is shown enjoying music and dance (fols. 2, 55, 88; colorplate XI, d), as well as the sport of jousting (fols. 48, 61, 65v). He practices with a stationary target that he approaches from a boat (fol. 48) or sled pulled by other wild men (fols. 61, 65v; Fig. 89). The wild man is also depicted at work. He fishes (fol. 83v), butchers (fol. 14), and cooks (fol. 72v; colorplate XI, c), as well as oversees the transportation of goods (fols. 15, 62, 84v). Wild women and children are rarely drawn; their inclusion alludes to the social and domestic aspects of the wild man's personality.

This cycle provides us with an unusually full glimpse into the wild man's world. The series begins on folio 10 with two wild men, mounted on fabulous beasts, jousting, and ends on folio 100





Fig. 95 Wild man as the Knight of the Swan, crossing the moat, detail, no. 38, fol. 81

verso with wild men watching a hunter lance a fantastic creature. The cycle appears to be independent from the text. The only scene that seems directly related is on a page with text from the Psalms, folio 21 (colorplate XI, d). Here two wild men and a wild woman dance to the music of a wild man harpist, a reference to King David, the reputed author of the Psalms. The cycle does not follow a logical progression or illustrate a story. Occasionally scenes appear to be serial, but inconsistencies contradict the impression. For example, a white-haired wild man lords over six other wild men (brown and white), who row him across a lake on folio 16. The scene on folio 18 (colorplate XI, b) could be interpreted as the procession after the boat has landed, except that the wild man whose presence is heralded is a brown-haired creature.

Both white- and brown-haired wild men appear, seemingly without reference to social rank or biological differences. The wild folk live in a fabulous realm, separate from the human world, but one in which man plays a role. The separation of these environments is not geographic, as in the *Marvels* from antiquity (see nos. 1–3), but the result of different concepts of life.

A key to interpretation of this complex cycle is found in the type of humans that enter the wild man's world. With few exceptions, only knights and damsels are portrayed. In many cases the activity of a knight is countered directly by that of a wild man. The wild man who shoots a heron (fol. 67v) is faced on the opposite folio by a knight who

kills a stag (fol. 68r). Two wild men spirit away a captive knight, while his elaborately caparisoned, mountless horse, led by a third wild man, ends the procession (fol. 17v; colorplate XI, a). Opposite this scene a wild man heralds a procession of a wild man "lord" who proudly rides an unadorned goat (fol. 18; colorplate XI, b). In other scenes, wild men enthusiastically portray the spirit and activities associated with medieval knights.

An obsession with the joust recalls the humorous parodies on chivalric "sport" of the wild folk joust prints (nos. 35, 36). Jousts are not only practiced, but also performed, in many scenes of the cycle. Wild men most often ride fabulous, but awkward, beasts; instead of rearing with spirit, these mounts lumber with effort.

Another theme used to lampoon chivalry in the late Middle Ages was the storming of the Castle of Love (see no. 37). In one example here, wild men storm a castle whose walls are protected by knights rather than damsels (fol. 53). In another instance, two wild men, in a crenellated turret, defend themselves from fellow wild men. The wild man's "castle," represented as a howdah mounted on an elephant's back, adds a further note of absurdity and exoticism.

Some of the principal players in the Castle of Love scene, the sought-after damsels, are not represented. This omission disguises the subject while increasing its satirical impact. In other miniatures, damsels, both human and wild, are represented as objects of sexual desire. On folio 86 recto (Fig. 94), a brown-haired wild man leads a



Fig. 96 Elias, Knight of the Swan, crossing the moat to rescue Beatrice of Cleves. Manuscript illumination by the Master of Mary of Burgundy from the *Chronicles of the Prince of Cleves*. Flanders, about 1485. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Gall 19, fol. 1

clothed woman riding a unicorn to his cave. Behind her walks a white-haired wild man whose costume suggests that this ungodly creature wishes to identify himself as a Christian knight. Countering this scene on folio 75, a wild woman riding a unicorn leads a mounted, submissive knight toward the woods.

One of the most unusual scenes in the cycle is also one of the clearest substitutions of a wild man for a knight. A large white swan pulls a boat and its wild man occupant across a moat toward a castle (Fig. 95), where a young woman watches from a window. This image is based on an old and popular legend. As early as 1180 William of Tyre documented the Knight of the Swan tale, and the legend has survived in many forms.<sup>1</sup> The best known of these, thanks to the fame of Richard Wagner's opera, is *Lohengrin*. The son of Perceval and a knight of the Holy Grail, Lohengrin traveled to Antwerp in a swan-drawn boat to defend the princess Elsa of Brabant against Frederick of Telramund, an undesirable suitor. Lohengrin, bound by chivalric vows not to reveal his true lineage or office, adopted the title Knight of the Swan. Another version of the legend is illustrated by the Master of Mary of Burgundy in the *Chronicles of the Prince of Cleves* (Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Cod. Gall. 19, fol. 1; Fig. 96).<sup>2</sup> In this story Helias, or Elias, son of King Oriant and Beatrice of Cleves, survives an ordeal in which his six siblings are turned into white swans. By his efforts the children are restored, except for one, who remains a swan and pulls Helias's boat during his travels as Knight of the Swan. While the miniature does not illustrate a specific scene from this story, it alludes to the illustrious, albeit legendary, ancestors of the house of Cleves, Beatrice and her son Helias. Which variant of the Knight of the Swan legend was the source of the scene in folio 81 of the present manuscript is not known.

Such whimsical scenes often appeared in devotional books throughout the Middle Ages,<sup>3</sup> to the delight of those who commissioned them. The extensive wild man cycles in Beinecke Ms. 436 may have had special meaning for the original owner, like the mock jousts especially included for the commissioner of the *Hours of Engelbert of Nassau* (The Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms. Douce 219–20).<sup>4</sup> The existence of a second Book of Hours

with an extensive wild man cycle and in the style of Beinecke Ms. 436, however (Bibliothèque Municipale, Grenoble, Ms. 1011),<sup>5</sup> suggests that the wild man was the champion of the atelier rather than the owner. A third, related manuscript, known as the *Monypenny Breviary* (ex coll. Major J. R. Abbey, London, Ms. 5574) also includes wild folk.<sup>6</sup> In this manuscript, however, they function primarily as armorial supports. Three styles have been isolated in the *Monypenny Breviary*. Those identified as Group A have been associated by Van de Put with Jean de Montluçon, an artist active in Bourges between 1477 and 1492.<sup>7</sup> This group painted the scene of the emperor Augustus and the Tiburtine Sibyl (fol. 37), which Reynaud related to Beinecke Ms. 436.<sup>8</sup> She assigned the half-page miniatures in both manuscripts to a Bourges artist, but, apparently unaware of Van de Put's attribution, simply called him the "Master of the *Monypenny Breviary*." Group B is associated with Jacquelin de Montluçon, an artist active in Bourges between 1487 and 1504.<sup>9</sup> According to Claude Schaefer (C.S. to G.G.-H., February, 1980), Jean de Montluçon and his son, Jacquelin, contemporaries of Jean Colombe, lived in the house "at the sign of the Wild Man" in Bourges.

The evidence suggests that Beinecke Ms. 436 was painted in the Montluçon shop in Bourges. The original owner of this splendid book is not known. The arms appearing in the manuscript are those of Gian Francesco di Montegnacco, a later, sixteenth-century owner.<sup>10</sup>

G.G.-H. and S.E.T.

#### NOTES

1. Baring-Gould, 1904, pp. 438-53.
2. Pächt, 1948, p. 66.
3. Randall, 1966, pp. 3-20.
4. Alexander, 1970, n. pag.
5. Schaefer, forthcoming.
6. Van de Put, 1922, pp. 72-114, figs. 2, 6; Beck, 1929, pp. 272-77.
7. Van de Put, 1922, pp. 108-9.
8. Reynaud, 1977, figs. 37, 38.
9. Van de Put, 1922, pp. 109-10.
10. *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, 1978, p. 260.

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Reynaud, 1977, pp. 49, 53, fig. 37; *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, 1978, no. 77.

### 39 The wild man dance of Charles VI ("Bal des ardents")

#### Colorplate XII

Manuscript illumination from the *Grands chroniques de France* of Jean Froissart, folio 1 recto

France, Paris(?)

End of the fifteenth century

Tempera and gold leaf on vellum

50 × 35 cm. (19 1/4 × 13 3/4 in.)

London: The British Library, Harley Ms. 4380

In a large hall draped with rich textiles, four courtiers dressed as wild men thrash about in panic as their costumes burn. A fifth, also aflame, plunges his head in a tub of water in the far right corner. Another participant crouching at the far left watches, unharmed, as a noble lady wraps him in a mantle to protect him from the flames. Several pages with torches run around the walls of the hall, while a group of noble ladies and gentlemen seated on a raised dais at the left witness the scene, some with hands raised in horror. In the lower left corner two seated ladies of the court wring their hands in despair. Three musicians in a gallery at the upper right continue playing their shawms while the drama unfolds below. Several large clubs are scattered about the tiled floor; a small white dog in the foreground barks at the masqueraders. Against the near wall stands a draped credenza laden with elaborate metalwork.

On the occasion of the marriage of a young Norman knight to a lady-in-waiting to the queen of Charles VI in January, 1392, a *fête* was held at the Hôtel Saint-Pol at which the king and many nobles were in attendance. At the suggestion of Hugonin de Guisay, a nobleman, a wild man dance was performed for the entertainment of the guests. The king, who had a weakness for such diversions, joined the count of Joigny; Charles of Poitiers, son of the count of Valentinois; Yvain de Galles, the illegitimate son of Gaston, count of Foix; the son of the lord of Nantouillet; and Hugonin de Guisay, in dressing as wild men in costumes made of linen and dyed, tufted flax. Because of the flammability of their costumes, the king had ordered that torches be prohibited in the dance chamber. During the dance, however, the duke of Orléans entered the hall and became overcome with curiosity about the identity of the



Fig. 97 Wild man masquerade and ball. Tapestry. France, fifteenth century. Saumur, Musée du Château

dancers. Grabbing a torch, he held it to one of the wild men's faces, and immediately ignited the costume. As all but the king were chained together, they were soon consumed in flames. Only Nantouillet, who leapt into a barrel of water used to cool wine and rinse glasses, managed to escape, though he suffered severe burns. Two of the others died in the hall and the other two died in great pain several days later. Fortunately, the king had separated himself from the group, and the duchess of Berry, suspecting his identity, threw her ermine mantle over his body to protect him.<sup>1</sup> Unable to douse the flames, the spectators looked on in horror. As a result of this experience, Charles VI lost his already tenuous hold on emotional stability. According to medieval interpretation, it was not the shock of witnessing this dreadful scene, but, in a parallel to certain hairy saints (see nos. 21–24), Charles's sin of "young, wanton idleness" that incurred his insanity.<sup>2</sup>

This wild man dance was the second in which Charles VI is known to have participated; the first occurred in 1389. Such dances were common by the end of the fourteenth century. That the French nobility, the mainstays of the declining courtly order, should find it appropriate, or at least amusing, to masquerade as their social opposites underscores the degree to which the myth of the wild man had lost its psychological impact. Rather than a creature evoking fears of savagery and evil, the wild man had become a harmless fiction to be adapted and reinvented for courtly diversion.

Far from discouraging such practices, the disaster at the Hôtel Saint-Pol marked the beginning of a rash of wild man escapades, which increased in excess despite secular and ecclesiastical prohibition. In a Burgundian tapestry of the fifteenth century, now in the Musée du Château at Saumur (Fig. 97), an entire courtly throng—men, women, and children—masquerade in what appears to be an outdoor wild man convocation. Here the tufted costumes are elaborated with mantles and headdresses. The musicians, processions of courtiers in both wild man and normal dress, are

drawn toward the couple standing in a decorated tent, perhaps the central participants in a bizarre marriage ceremony. Musicians in normal dress play conventional shawms, while their wild man counterparts blow large curling rams' horns; two groups, again in contrasting dress, issue from two caves; and monkeys act as spectators. Masquerades of this type were closely associated with the French *charivaris*, raucous revelries performed at weddings. The unpleasant nature of these events, intended to humiliate the couple, expressed the disapproval or censure of unpopular unions. *Charivaris* were also employed to discourage the second marriages of widows, a practice considered an impropriety; it is to this type of *charivari* that the *Bal des ardents* belongs.<sup>3</sup>

The present manuscript is an example of the fourth redaction of Jean Froissart's *Grands chroniques de France*, executed under the patronage of Albrecht, duke of Bavaria, count of Hainaut, and his son Wilhelm of Austria between 1396 and 1399(?). Froissart acknowledges his indebtedness to Albrecht by praising his accomplishments, particularly his knightly exploits in Nicopolis, which brought him greater power.<sup>4</sup> Book IV of this redaction of Froissart's *Chroniques* contains the famed story of the *Bal des ardents*. The coats-of-arms have been identified as those of the Commines (*gules* with chevron *d'or* and three *coquilles*) and of the Armuyden (*sable* with a clef *gules* charged with three *alérions d'or*). The manuscript belonged to Philippe de Commines.<sup>5</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. de Lettenhove, 1873, pp. 63–64; *Chroniques de Jean Froissart*, 1881, pp. 801–8; *Chronicles*, 1924, p. 419.
2. Doob, 1974, p. 48 n. 75.
3. Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 166–67.
4. de Lettenhove, 1873, p. 124.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 323–25.

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Humphreys, 1844, pp. 62 ff., pl. xxxii; de Lettenhove, 1873, pp. 122 ff., 323–25; Doob, 1974, pp. 45–53, pl. 7.



#### 40 The storming of Hölle, 1539

Manuscript illumination from an account of the Nuremberg *Schembartlauf*, 1449–1539, folio II recto (double folio)

Germany, Nuremberg

1575–1600

Ink and watercolor on paper

Nuremberg: Stadtbibliothek, Ms. Nor.K.444

Set in a town square, the scene depicted in this double folio illumination represents the storming of the *Schembart* festival float, or *Hölle*, as it was enacted in the year 1539 (Fig. 98). In the form of a single-masted ship mounted on four wheels, the *Hölle* is manned with figures in grotesque guises of hairy-bodied, demon-headed creatures, grimacing and wielding a variety of weapons. A dozen or more men pull the *Hölle* through the square. The festival participants storming the *Hölle* by siege ladders are dressed in stylish, though exaggerated, costumes. The attackers are armed with spears and artichoke-shaped objects in which fireworks are concealed. To the right the main body of attackers marches under a large flying banner. Several fools in jester's costume frolic in the foreground. Also participating are four large wild men, wearing beards, shaggy suits, and garlands around their loins, and brandishing large cudgels. A row of domestic buildings, a civic building, and the choir of a Gothic cathedral fill the background.

As the last opportunity for merrymaking before Lent, the Nuremberg Schrovettide carnival, or *Schembart* festival, featured a public dance, masquerades (Fig. 99), costumed processions, and other festivities celebrated with wild — often violent — enthusiasm by a large but select group. The festival originated as a privilege granted in 1348 to the butchers' guild of Nuremberg by the Holy Roman emperor, Charles IV, as a reward for their loyalty to the patrician council during a revolt of

the city's artisans. It was not actually celebrated, however, until 1449, and then only intermittently, until it was prohibited in 1539. Sixty-three festivals in all were held, each recorded in the present manuscript. Years were skipped for reasons of war, plague, or political upheaval, but many lapses, including a gap from 1524 to 1539, were apparently caused by civic proscriptions against the unruly festival and its attendant mayhem. In the sixteenth century, the moralist Hans Sachs, the first to turn literary attention to the festival, called it a "mirror of bygone revolt, to remind the common people never to participate in such rebellious madness" ("Ein verborgener spiegel, / Der gmain zu eynem sigel / Fürsichtig sich zu hüten / Vor auf-früischem wüten").<sup>1</sup> Ironically, the *Schembart* festival was outlawed for fear the raucous behavior it encouraged might produce a seditious atmosphere.

The two main events of the *Schembart* festival provide a logical setting for wild man impersonation. One was a traditional dance based on pagan fertility rites and publicly performed by members of the butchers' guild. In Munich a similar version of the dance, known as the Butchers' Jump, was performed. As harbingers of spring the leaping dancers expressed their joy at the returning sun after a long winter. The height of their jumps was considered fortuitous — the higher the leaps, the higher the year's crops would grow.<sup>2</sup> Related to wild men in both appearance and association with fertility gods, demon protectors of the dancers wore masks and shaggy costumes made of flax, hair, and other materials.

The other event was a procession through the city streets, known as the *Schembartlauf*, which culminated in a ritualistic attack on a *Hölle*, or float. As the festival was a civic function sponsored by the Nuremberg council, the *Schembartlauf* soon eclipsed the butchers' dance in importance. While city fathers still paid a fee to the butchers' guild for



Fig. 98 The storming of *Hölle*, no. 40. Photo: Armin Schmidt



Fig. 99 Carnival figure. Manuscript illumination from a *Schembart* book. Germany, sixteenth century. Oxford, The Bodleian Library, Ms. Douce 346, fol. 262r

the right of participation, the *Schembart* festival developed independently under the leadership of some of Nuremberg's most distinguished patrician families, including the Tuchers, Hallers, and Kresses. The dancers were heralded by a number of fools who shouted, beat boys who chased them, and generally aroused the spectators. After the dancers came the mounted heralds throwing nuts to the children and eggshells filled with rose water at the ladies. The heralds were followed by men disguised as demons, the original protectors of the butchers' dance, arrayed in shaggy costumes (*raue Kleider*) and stork, pig, goat, and other animal masks, throwing fire and ash, and generally terrifying the crowds. Behind them came the remaining participants, the *Schembartläufer*, dressed in bright, elaborate, fashionable and uniform costumes, marching to the strains of fife and tabor. The festival culminated in the storming of a man-drawn float or *Hölle* in a different form of a castle, tower, ship, or grotesque beast. Manned by the "demons," the *Hölle* was attacked by the *Schembartläufer* wielding siege ladders, spears, and leafy objects concealing fireworks. The *Hölle*, also fitted with fireworks, which were ignited during the storming, was inevitably consumed by flames, while the demon inhabitants fled in defeat.

Despite its name, the *Hölle* was viewed as a symbol of folly and evil, rather than Hell and its torments. As harbingers of the fecund season the *Läufer* expelled the grotesque fools and demons. The castle, a particularly popular form of the *Hölle*, may have referred not just to the winter season, but to the demise of the old feudal and aristocratic orders, recalling the storming of castles in fourteenth-century imagery. Castles in passion plays represented Hell or Limbo, and, in allegories, the prison of tortured souls (see the *Cárcel de Amor*, no. 10). These ideas may in turn refer to the bowers in which ancient fertility rites were enacted.

The *Schembartlauf* derives from the pagan Germanic legend of the Wild Horde, a spectral host of relentless demons who marauded the countryside

on certain winter nights, at the same time of year as the carnival celebrations, rampaging through forests and valleys, destroying everything in their path. The wild man and the Wild Horde were associated by Geiler von Kayserberg, in his book of sermons *Die Emeis* (*The Ant*), where he denounces them as being beyond the realm of Christian society. The leader of the Wild Horde, Hellekin, from whom the tragicomic figure Harlequin derives, was thought to be large, powerful, ugly, covered with hair, and to wield a large club. Unlike many wild man plays (see no. 42), where the wild man is roused out, "killed," and then brought to life again, the *Schembartlauf* features the wild man as a personification of the festival itself.<sup>3</sup>

In disguise, the participants felt free to indulge themselves, which frequently resulted in violence, threatening public safety. Traditionally, the *Läufer* had the right to beat spectators, a practice thought beneficial as it "assisted the growth of life."<sup>4</sup> This aspect of the *Schembart* festival brought it under constant criticism and was in large part responsible for its eventual prohibition. A number of writs issued by the Nuremberg police warn the wild men impersonators, in particular, to eschew violent behavior and specifically charge them with a responsibility to maintain order.<sup>5</sup> It is thought that their staffs and firework weapons were used to control the crowds. The present illumination indicates that only the largest and most powerful of men were chosen as wild man impersonators. Four wild men are depicted amidst the foray, although accounts for this year state there were thirty-one. Although they hardly give the appearance of zealous guardians of law and order, the wild men were present in sufficient numbers to contribute to this end.

A related incident, alluded to in this illumination, also contributed to the ban. On the deck of the *Hölle* is a figure wearing theological robes, holding a large key in one hand and a backgammon board in the other. This figure is dressed as the Protestant zealot Dr. Andreas Osiander, who

made enemies among the fun-loving citizens by preaching against the heathen festivals. The key alludes to the doctrine of the *Schlüsselamt*, the power of absolution vested in the Catholic priesthood, and the backgammon board to gaming in general, both equally anathema to the doctor. Not satisfied with this public mockery, the *Läufer* in the 1539 festival stormed off to Osiander's house, showering it with fireworks and threatening to plunder it. Osiander's subsequent protest before the city council, along with a fear of the growing power of the guilds and changing attitudes brought on by the Reformation, contributed significantly to the prohibition of the *Schembart* festival.<sup>6</sup>

The question of date and authorship of this and the many other surviving *Schembart* manuscripts is difficult. No contemporary pictorial account has survived, and the extant copies generally appear to be compilations by several hands. The name Pankraz Bernhaupt appears in a number of manuscripts, perhaps in reference to Pankraz Bernhaupt Schwenter, a Nuremberg chronicler (d. 1555), who was also master of ceremonies for the city council from 1522(?) to 1539.<sup>7</sup> As a number of entries in several manuscripts are given in the first person, it is likely that the manuscripts were copied from contemporary sources. The present manuscript, the most completely illustrated example, is generally dated to the middle or latter part of the sixteenth century.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Sumberg, 1941, p. 31 n. 26.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
3. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 56.
4. Sumberg, 1941, p. 85.
5. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 61.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-79.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

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Sumberg, 1930, pp. 863-78; Brüggemann, 1936, *passim*; Sumberg, 1941, *passim*; Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 60-62, fig. 15; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 40.



Fig. 100 Dance of the butchers. Manuscript illumination from the Nuremberg *Schembartlauf* (no. 40). Germany, 1575–1600. Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Ms.Nor.K.444



**41 Musician's badge  
(*Spielmannsabzeichen*) with the arms  
of Bern supported by a wild man**

*Colorplate XIII*

Switzerland, Bern

About 1500

Silver, silver gilt, and enamel

Diam. 17.5 cm. (6 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

Bern: Bernisches Historisches Museum, 489b

In the center of this large six-lobed silver-gilt badge is a shield bearing the arms, in relief, of the city of Bern. The armorial shield is supported by a kneeling wild man in the bottom lobe and at the sides by two rampant lions. In the upper lobe surmounting the shield is an angel holding a crown. The back of the badge is mounted with a large, tongued clasp.

Identified as a musician's badge,<sup>1</sup> this object is one of four identical examples preserved in Bern. By the fifteenth century, music had become increasingly important not only in private entertainments, but also in royal, civil, and military ceremony. At the Council of Basel, official musicians were included in the entourages of the German emperor, the king of Hungary, numerous dukes and lesser nobles, archbishops, bishops, as well as those of thirty-three cities.<sup>2</sup> The number of official musicians engaged by a city varied, but the surviving badges in this case suggest that Bern retained four. The assumption is strengthened by a 1527 account that states that Bern had four musicians in its employ in that year.<sup>3</sup> A cornetist and three trombonists are specified. The back of one of the Bern badges has been engraved with the names of several of these musicians, along with dates, presumably of their appointments. The musicians were named by the city, one of whom was designated as the head (*Spielmann*) of the others (*Spielleute*), and their city-owned badges could be worn only on special occasions. The size and elegance of the badges reflected the wealth and importance of the city. Official musicians played not only at civic ceremonies, but also in entertainments and festivals. In an illustration of the butchers' dance performed during the Nuremberg *Schembart* festival (see no.40), three musicians can be seen playing a sackbut and two shawms (Fig. 100). An engraving by Heinrich Aldegrever, from his series "The Wedding Dancers" depicts three sackbut players, one with a large badge on his mantle similar to the present example (Fig. 101).

Since the wild man played a central role in many carnivals and festivities, such as the *Schembartlauf* in Nuremberg held under the aegis of the civic authorities (cf. no. 40), his image is an apt heraldic



Fig. 101 *Three Musicians*. Reproduction of engraving by Heinrich Aldegrever. Germany, 1538. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Robert Hartshorne, 18.48.4332

support for a musician's badge. The lions are associated with the arms of the dukes of Zähringen, founders of Bern, and are traditional supports of the arms of that city. The hierarchal arrangement of the figures may also relate to contemporary views of the divine order, explaining the presence of the angel. At the bottom is the wild man, a creature apart from mankind in his ignorance of God. In the middle ranks the lions symbolize the secular authority of the noble and military ranks, and, at the top, the angel, emissary of divine authority, sanctions secular authority represented by the crown in his hands.

T.H.

NOTES

1. Nissen, 1969, p. 12.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

3. Niklaus Manuel, 1979, p. 146.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Nissen, 1969, pp. 12–13, figs. 4, 5; Niklaus Manuel, 1979, no. 5.



Fig. 102 Play of the wild man hunt, no. 42

## 42 Play of the wild man hunt

Single-leaf woodcut

Anonymous, after Pieter Brueghel the Elder  
Netherlands (Brabant)

Dated 1566

Paper

27.5 × 41.4 cm. (10 <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 16 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

(Bastelaer 215; Hollstein 215)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 26.72.45

Wandering in a cobbled street before a rustic public building is a man disguised as a wild man. He wears a scaly suit, vine tendrils tied around his waist and head, a full beard, and carries a massive spiked club on his shoulder. At the far left a man representing an emperor holds an orb in one hand and grips the hilt of his sword in the other. Before him a soldier wearing a full-brimmed hat and a sword at his side, points a crossbow at the wild man. To the right a woman wearing a mantle and a bowl-shaped hat, holds out a ring in her hand. In the background two figures, each with an alms box in hand, solicit money from the viewers in the public house. A large tree and dense woods fill the background to the left of the house. In the foreground a stone and a bone lie on the ground at the edge of a patch of grass. In the lower right corner, engraved in the plate, are the date, 1566, and beneath it: BRVEGEL.

The scene in this woodcut, frequently misidentified as the *Masquerade of Valentine and Orson*, represents a dramatization of the wild man hunt (Fig. 102). The general scenario of these plays involves a wild man roused out of a cave or nearby forest, and, amid much grunting and bellowing, caught and bound in chains. His display arouses much tension and anxiety among the witnesses. He is usually then dragged off for a ritual execution. Known in many variations, plays of this sort were enacted in many parts of Europe, and the tradition survives in certain areas of south Germany and Switzerland to this day. The present composition is based on a detail in Pieter Brueghel the Elder's allegorical painting *The Struggle of Carnival and Lent* (Fig. 103), and probably records a Flemish variant performed in the pre-Lenten season.

Plays of the wild man hunt were usually performed early in the year, in February before Lent; in this context the wild man represents the end of winter and the fertility rites of the coming spring. Sometimes such plays were staged as late as June or September and, in regions where the wild man had lost his mythological functions or his fear-



Fig. 103 Play of the wild man hunt. Detail from *The Struggle of Carnival and Lent* by Pieter Brueghel the Elder. Netherlands (Brabant), 1553. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

some qualities, at any time of year, apparently for no other reason than entertainment.<sup>1</sup> The two figures soliciting contributions in the background of this representation suggest the drama was presented by an itinerant troupe and performed repeatedly.

The ritualistic nature of the Brueghel play is complex. The presence of the emperor indicates that the wild man is to be judged by a higher authority before he dies at the hands of the soldier with the crossbow. The significance of the woman holding a ring is clearer in Figure 103. There the woman (or man impersonating a woman) wears a white mask, and the wild man focuses his attention on the ring she holds. Symbolizing union with a woman, the ring tempts the wild man with the holy and legal bond of matrimony from which he is barred (see no. 16). The soldier and emperor, with his sword drawn in the painting, stalk the wild man, ready to strike him down for his transgression against man's civilized order. The wild man is the subliminal incarnation of man's evil nature, which is cathartically expunged by his ritual death.

T.H.

### NOTE

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 50.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 53–54, 136, fig. 16; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 42.

### 43 Wild folk disporting

Repoussé plate

Portugal

Before 1510

Silver gilt

Diam. 26 cm. (10 1/4 in.)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.837

In the center of this embossed plate, a lush foliate vine enframes a crowned, bearded man, who is seated on a bench holding an upright sword. On the wide plate rim, wild folk, humans, and mythological and real animals are portrayed in frenzied activity. Counterclockwise from the top: two men, one with a conical hat, carry stocks; two men, one holding a stick, bully a wild man; a wild man with a shield and club attacks a fleeing, armed man; another man, dressed as a soldier, confronts the running man and a diminutive wild man or child, suspended head downward; a woman riding a leopard(?) attacks a man who has fallen off his mount; a man falling off a composite creature is confronted by a woman riding an ibex and a small wild man or child who brandishes a stick behind her; a bearded wild man with leafy body covering is mounted on a seated lion in front of a suspended lion cub; a man, mounted on a boar(?), wrestles it to the ground; a pair of wild folk lovers caress one another; a wild man chases a nude woman. Lush plant forms separate these groups and fill in space around the figures. The plate is in fair condition. Several areas in the rim and the central figures are worn through.

Of these groups on the rim, several appear to relate to each other. The wild man being spirited away by the two men, for example, looks over his shoulder to those carrying the stocks. The wild man chasing the nude woman looks back toward the amorous couple. Without a clear sequence of events, however, no narrative can be established. The scenes depicted with spirited animation are either aggressive or erotic. Aggression occurs be-

tween wild men and human men or between human couples, but not between the wild folk themselves. Erotic activities occur between a wild man and a wild woman; between a wild man and a human woman; and between humans. The erotic theme is reinforced by the dense foliage of the rim, explicit in the erect leaf that penetrates a circular one at the top of Figure 104, in front of the man carrying the stocks.

The crowned, bearded figure in the center of the plate is most likely Manuel I, King of Portugal. During his reign, from 1495 until 1521, Portugal was transformed from one of the smallest and poorest countries in Europe to a great power, whose influence was felt around the world and coveted by other European rulers. With Manuel's support, Vasco da Gama reached India (1498), Pedro Alvares Cabral discovered Brazil (1500), Ferdinand Magellan's fleet circumnavigated the globe (1519–22), and new expeditions claimed territories in Africa. Manuel, the king of Portugal and the Algarves and lord of Guinea, also titled himself Lord of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of Ethiopia, Persia, and India.

The wild folk and mythological animals in the *salva* rim may refer to Portugal's expansion (cf. no. 29). Travel literature predating the Portuguese and Spanish explorations described inhabitants from foreign lands as evolving from exotic and monstrous races (see nos. 1–4). World maps, such as that in the atlas of Andrea Bianco, made in 1436 (Fig. 23) represent inhabitants of foreign lands as shaggy-haired wild people. Although descriptions of distant inhabitants brought back by Portuguese explorers eventually dispelled these beliefs, the wild man's exoticism appealed to artists, who continued to use the convention. The humans on the rim, imaginatively dressed as sailors and soldiers, appear to be the Portuguese exploring unknown territory.

When compared with interpretations of similar iconography, details on the rim appear to relate directly to King Manuel. Enlightening parallels



Fig. 104 Wild folk disporting, no. 43



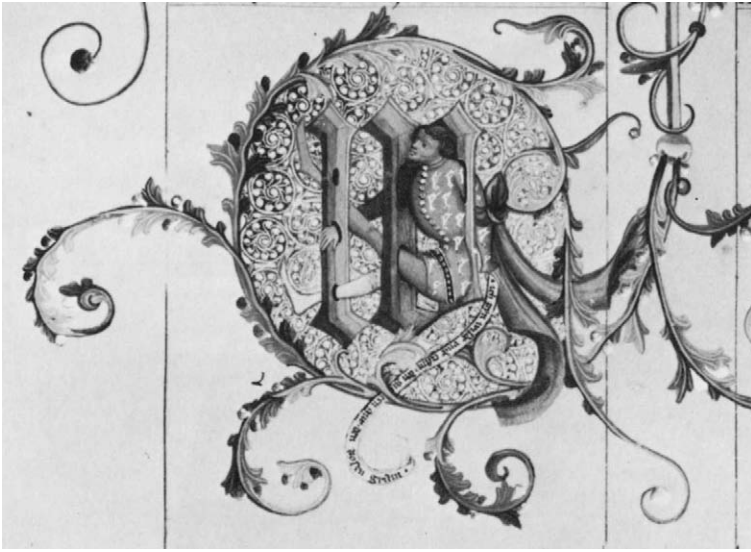


Fig. 105 King Wenceslaus I in stocks. Detail of manuscript illumination from the Wenceslaus Bible. Bohemia, about 1400. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 2760, fol. 27

can be drawn from books illuminated for King Wenceslaus of Bohemia during the late fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup> In the margins of these books teem wild folk engaged in various types of frivolous pursuits. Wild men—sometimes as representatives of Wenceslaus—are joined by wild women, damsels, and men. Wenceslaus, or his wild man surrogates, are frequently shown caught in the stocks of the initial *W* (see Fig. 105), symbolizing the power of woman over man, and, specifically, the binding strength of the queen's love.<sup>2</sup>

One hundred years later a similar metaphor, using the same visual motif, was incorporated into this Portuguese plate. In the most prominent, top section of the rim, the artist has combined an amorous wild couple, a wild man chasing a nude woman, men carrying a stocks, and a wild man held captive by two men. These four vignettes combine to suggest the power of woman to entrap and hold man. This theme of female dominance continues in the bottom section of the rim, where two women, riding mythological beasts, dislodge their respective male partners. One man, hardly visible, falls behind his mount; the other sprawls gracelessly in front of his. Although Manuel is not shown participating in these wild man scenes, as Wenceslaus was, the figure of the king is formally related to the rim activities. He sits on a rustic throne, out-of-doors, and presides over the creatures that romp around him.

Women played a significant role in Manuel's life. This plate may have been made at the time Manuel was beginning the second of his three marriages. His first wife, Queen Isabella, eldest daughter of Ferdinand II and Isabella of Castile and Aragon, died in childbirth less than a year after their marriage in 1497. In 1500, Manuel married Isabella's younger sister Maria, who died in 1517. A year later he married the wife who would outlive him, Leonora, sister of Charles V. Since there are no reports of illegitimate children or scandal, Manuel was apparently satisfied with his conjugal bonds,<sup>3</sup> a state that may be illustrated by the combination of stocks with amorous play. Beginning in the fourteenth century, love and compatibility became important goals in marriage, a changing attitude reflected in the books of King Wenceslaus and in this plate (see also nos. 16, 17, 27).

An even more personal reference to King Manuel—and to political events in Portugal—can be inferred from the inclusion of the stocks in the rim. Before Manuel could marry Isabella in 1497, his future in-laws insisted on the expulsion of Jews from Portugal. Ferdinand and Isabella had expelled all "enemies of the True Faith," Jews and Moors, from their own kingdoms of Aragon and Castile and used the marriage of their daughter to pressure Portugal into doing the same.<sup>4</sup> Jewish children under fourteen years were adopted into Christian homes; Jewish adults were baptized as Christians; and those not cooperating were banished. The peculiar, conical hat worn by the man carrying the stocks appears to be a variety of Phrygian cap worn by Jews in the Middle Ages to identify them.<sup>5</sup> If this figure is meant to be a Jew, the stock he carries refers to his captivity, which he suffered so that the king might also be a prisoner, but of love.

Elaborately worked *salvas* of this sort, as well as larger objects, such as basins and ewers, were widely made and highly valued.<sup>6</sup> When King Manuel presented gifts to the king of India, he included a gilded silver basin and ewer set "worked with many figures in relief."<sup>7</sup>

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. Krása, 1971, *passim*.
2. Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 150–52, figs. 39, 40.
3. Welch, 1946, p. 7; Sanceau, 1969, p. 9.
4. Sanceau, 1969, pp. 18–20.
5. Kraus, 1967, pp. 148–49, fig. 109.
6. Oman, 1968, nos. 43–48, 81–84; *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 62.
7. *Letter of the King of Portugal*, p. 7.

#### 44 Two talers of Heinrich IX the Younger (1514–68)

Germany (Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel)

1547 (A) and 1554 (B)

Silver

Diam. 4 cm. (1 9/16 in.) each taler; 28.5 g. (A) and 29 g. (B)

(Fiala 50 [A] and 71 [B]; Welter 387 [A] and 391 [B]  
New York: The American Numismatic Society

(A) On the obverse (Fig. 106, above, left), a bust-length portrait of Heinrich IX the Younger of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel is encircled with the inscription: HENRICVS.D.GRA.BRVNS.ET.LVNEB.DV. On the reverse (Fig. 106, below, left) a bearded, hairy wild man holds in both hands a tree trunk with a rootlike formation at the end. He is flanked by the date 15. . . 47. A double band of inscription running along the outer edge between four evenly spaced shields emblazoned with the arms of Lüneburg, Hamburg, Eberstein, and Braunschweig reads from the outer band inwards: IN.GOTS.GEWA.H.A.I. M.S.G.STALT and DER.HATS.GEFV.DAS.MIR.GENV.

(B) On the obverse (Fig. 106, above, right) is a similar bust-length portrait of Heinrich IX the Younger of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel. Along the outer edge an inscription between four shields emblazoned with the same arms reads: HENRI.D.G.D.B.RVN.E.LVNEB. On the reverse (Fig. 106, below, right), a hairy bearded wild man holds in his right hand a tree trunk with a tridentlike root at the upper end. His left hand is raised in a fist. Above his right shoulder is a minter's mark and an unidentified object. The enlarged figure runs into the outer inscription bands and reaches to the edge of the coin. The double inscription reads from the outer band inwards: IN.GOTS.GWALT.HAB.I.GSTAL. and DE.H.GFDAM.GN. Between the wild man's feet is the date (15)54.

Heinrich IX the Younger, who became known as a wild man, was the son of Heinrich the Elder, the first duke of the middle line of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel. He succeeded to the ducal title in 1514 at the age of twenty-five. During his rule, which endured for fifty-four years, Heinrich the Younger emerged as one of the most prominent German princes, playing an influential role both in internal politics of the empire and in public consciousness during the Reformation. Heinrich was deeply conservative, unswerving in his belief in the Roman Church, while most of the ducal states around him turned their loyalties to the Protestant Reformation, consolidating their power in a consortium known as the Schmalkaldic League.

Eventually, Heinrich of Wolfenbüttel was the sole remaining Catholic power in northern Germany, surrounded by hostile Protestant forces. In addition, Heinrich faced problems within his own territories. The city of Braunschweig and the city of Goslar, which was surrounded by Braunschweig lands, became Protestant between 1527 and 1528, and both joined the Schmalkaldic League between 1536 and 1537. From 1538 until his death in 1568, Heinrich was embroiled in irreconcilable hostilities with all of his neighbors, as well as with a large portion of his own population.

Although this single-minded and inflexible behavior lends some insight into Heinrich's intractable character, it does not fully explain the sobriquet *Wilder Mann von Wolfenbüttel*, widely ascribed to him by 1542. In a detailed analysis, Stopp focuses on two other incidents, one public and the other private, which shaped his public image.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1540 a number of fires broke out, including one in Einbeck, which completely destroyed the town and caused the deaths of some 350 citizens, as well as others in Nordhausen, Pasua, Triptis, and the Thuringian forests. Although he could have had little motive, Heinrich was blamed for these conflagrations and was publicly branded an incendiary (*Mordtbrenner*). The hot, dry summer and poor fire precautions were the more probable causes, but Heinrich was, in the public mind at least, convicted. He was vituperatively attacked in a number of pamphlets. The gifted polemicist Thomas Kirchmeyr wrote several titles on the subject, including *Incendia* or *Der Mordtbrand*,<sup>2</sup> which accuses Heinrich's agents of marking cryptic signs (*Mordtbrennerzeichen*) on buildings, which would magically cause fires to break out after the incendiaries had left the scene. Another incident that inspired supernatural explanations concerned the purported apparition of a small child. Before the destruction of Einbeck, a young boy had appeared in the town's council with a lighted torch, which he threw into the assembled group.<sup>3</sup>

Another polemical writing, important not so much in the role it may have played in influencing the attitudes of its readers, but as a reflection of the beliefs that inspired it, was a poem written by Burkard Waldis in 1542, after the Schmalkaldic League took the town of Wolfenbüttel. Heinrich, overpowered by hostile troops, fortified his defenses and left for Bavaria to seek assistance. A passage describes how Heinrich fled into the wilds "just like he had depicted himself" ("vnd laufft der man dahin ins wild, / Wie er jm selb hat gmalt eyn



Fig. 106 Two talers of Heinrich IX the Younger (1514–68). Left to right: no. 44A, obverse, reverse; no. 44B, obverse, reverse

bild”) and how he had placed beneath his image the motto “the just man is not abandoned” (“Setzt auch den schönen spruch dafür: / lustus non derelinquitur”).<sup>4</sup> In this reference to Heinrich’s wild man talers and the motto that appeared on them, the poem establishes the public perception of Heinrich’s behavior as unrestrained, aggressive, and destructive. It also suggests that Heinrich perceived of himself as a wild man, though — in light of the motto, which is taken from Psalm 35 — as a “good” wild man. That his subjects connected him with the wild man’s darker aspects is underscored by public reaction to his affair with Eva von Trott.<sup>5</sup> During this extended relationship several nefarious incidents came to light, including her secret incarcerations in various castles, a staged death and funeral charade, and the arrival of more than a few illegitimate children, which scandalized the public. This behavior was likened to the wild man’s amorality and earned Heinrich the additional sobriquet of woman ravisher (*Jungfrau-schänder*).

While popular negative association of Heinrich with a wild man is understandable, Heinrich’s own use of the wild man on his coinage had polemical intention. Part of Heinrich’s fortunes rested on the development of the silver-mining areas in the Harz Mountains, a region that had a deeply ingrained folkloric tradition of wild man legend. Indeed, one of the new mining sites was called *Wilder Mann*. Apart from a recognition of the economic importance of silver mining, Heinrich was using the more recent interpretation of

wild men as a uncorrupted race to set himself apart from the faithlessness of the world around him (see nos. 30, 31, 33). The altering of his motto to “I have never seen the just man abandoned” (*Non vidi justum derelictum*) underscores this interpretation. Heinrich must also have been aware of the wild man’s duality, at once aggressive and withdrawn, benign and malevolent. By placing the wild man on his coins, Heinrich showed his good side and threatened his bad. Such calculated intimidation may be seen in a detail of Heinrich’s later wild man talers. In these, over the wild man’s extended left hand is an obscure object interpreted by Fiala as a piece of silver ore (*Silberstufe*)<sup>6</sup> but by Stopp as a flame like the one that appears clearly in coinage of Heinrich’s successor, Julius.<sup>7</sup> If Stopp’s interpretation is correct, given the conflagrations of 1540, Heinrich’s threat is less than veiled.

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Stopp, 1970, pp. 200–234.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 206–9.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 209–10.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 210.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 220–24.
6. Fiala, 1906, no. 40, p. 49.
7. Stopp, 1970, p. 216.

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Fiala, 1906, nos. 50, 71, pp. 60, 63; Duve, 1966, *passim*; Welter, 1971, nos. 387, 391; Stopp, 1970, pp. 211–19, fig. 27a, b; Davenport, 1979, nos. 9044, 9046.

#### 45 Wild man climbing a thistle

Engraving

Master ES (ca. 1430–1467 or 1468)

Germany (region of Lake Constance)

About 1466

Paper

9.8 × 6.8 cm. (3 7/8 × 2 11/16 in.)

(Lehrs II, 384, no. 312)

Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Mrs. Potter Palmer, 1954.1141

A wild man stands astride a woody stem, with his left hand resting on a thistle blossom and his right clutching a club held above his head. His body is covered by short, downlike hairs. A deeply cut leaf, with coarse veins and woody stem, dominates the composition. The wild man, twice the size of the thistle blossom, is dwarfed by the leaf which rises above him.

Most depictions of wild men in medieval art relate directly to oral tradition and literature, either as illustration of myths and legends or as satire of them. In the late fourteenth century, wild folk began to be used as decorative elements without reference to literature, as exemplified by this print. While these wild folk retain the variety of characteristics of their species, they are almost always represented with the conventional body hair, with elbows, knees, feet, hands, and female breasts exposed. Hair ranges from short, soft down, as seen here, to long, curly tufts (no. 46, Fig. 112). In a few cases, body hair is replaced by leaves (Fig. 113); or, rarely, it is completely absent (no. 19, Fig. 54; no. 38, Fig. 93). The type of body cover often reflects artistic function. The downlike hair of the wild man in this print (Fig. 107) relates him to the thistle down and its prickly character. The wild folk with tufted hair, the usual type, are physically protected and, consequently, more aggressive, while the hairless variety is completely vulnerable. Their nakedness also emphasizes their insatiable sexual appetite. Wild folk covered by leaves conjure up a fairyland image of a peaceful existence in wooded glades.

Like other folkloric figures, wild folk could be shown as either dwarfs or giants. In art, the distinction between wild man giants and wild man dwarfs depends mainly upon their representational contexts.<sup>1</sup> In ornamental prints, towering foliage usually makes the wild man appear to be diminutive.

With the development of plate engraving in the second half of the fifteenth century, the wild folk became popular as decorative ornament.<sup>2</sup> Their



Fig. 107 Wild man climbing a thistle, no. 45



Fig. 108 Wild man with duck climbing a thistle. Engraving by Master bxx. Germany, 1470–90. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale

charm, combined with their dwarfed size and untamed character, made them favorite decorative elements for prints, which in turn were copied on luxurious objects (nos. 27, 51). Many principal printmakers of the day employed the wild man in their work, especially Master ES (active ca. 1450–1467 or 1468; nos. 36, 45–48) and Israhel van Meckenem (ca. 1445–1503; nos. 19, 35, 37), and, to a lesser extent, the Housebook Master (no. 35) and the Master of the Playing Cards (no. 47).

The engraving here is one of a series of five made by Master ES around 1466.<sup>3</sup> All the prints feature decorative, sinuous leaves; two of them include flowers and one, a heron. The leaves on the one with the heron are complex, the tips encircling the stem and curling in space, producing a vivid three-

dimensional effect. This modeled quality supports the theory that ES was trained as a goldsmith and that these prints were used by wood and metal craftsmen as decorative motifs,<sup>4</sup> as well as copied by other engravers. A somewhat crude reverse copy of the wild man print by the Master of the Dutuitschen Olbergs exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.<sup>5</sup>

Approximately twelve years after ES engraved his series, the Master bxx, inspired by Housebook Master originals,<sup>6</sup> combined these same motifs in a set of pendent prints. In one print (Fig. 108),<sup>7</sup> the vine grows from the right corner, the lower foliage has coarse veins and prickly tips, and the ends of the upper plant terminate in composite flowers or thistle heads. In the midst of this branching thistle climbs a bearded wild man, grasping a duck. In the pendant,<sup>8</sup> a woody stem in the lower left grows into a dense foliage cup from which a flowering stem branches to cover the entire page. Two long-necked, sharp-beaked birds, possibly herons, inhabit this composite plant.

This combination of wild man, thistles, and aquatic birds appears to be more than coincidence (cf. no. 29). All can be associated with evil. The thistle, associated with the devil, has been referred to as the devil's grain or vegetable.<sup>9</sup> Plucking fish from the waters in which he wades, the heron has also been associated with the devil, who passes among men fishing for Christians.<sup>10</sup> Such parallel symbolism affirms the consideration the artists gave to their choice of subject matter.

G.G.H.

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 44–47.
2. Berliner, 1925–26, vol. II, pp. 2–4, 7.
3. Lehrs II, 382–86, nos. 309–13.
4. *Master E.S.*, 1967, introduction, n. pag.
5. Lehrs II, 385, no. 312a.
6. Hutchinson, 1972, p. 79.
7. Lehrs VIII, 217, no. 42.
8. *Ibid.*, 218, no. 43.
9. Jobes, 1961, vol. II, p. 1560.
10. Charbonneau-Lassay, 1940, pp. 581–82.

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*Master E.S.*, 1967, no. 65.



## 46 Two designs for ornaments

### Ornament with wild folk (A)

Engraving

School of Master ES

Germany (Upper Rhineland)

About 1460–65

Paper

9.3 × 6.8 cm. (3 5/8 × 2 11/16 in.)

Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art,  
Rosenwald Collection, B-8316

### Study sheet with wild folk (B)

Engraving

Israhel van Meckenem (ca. 1450–1503 Bocholt)

Germany (Lower Rhineland), Bocholt

1475–1500

Paper

6.3 × 8.8 cm. (2 1/2 × 3 7/16 in.)

(Lehrs IX, 363, no. 460)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 29.16.7b

(A) A leafy vine, emerging from the lower left corner, circles to fill the space. Decorative flowers, from buds to full blossoms, are represented. The vine is inhabited by two birds and wild folk. The bird in the upper part of the print, with its crown and extended neck, resembles a heron. The second bird, though less defined, has the long neck characteristic of aquatic birds. Two wild men climb about on the vine; a wild woman steadies herself by the stem as she sits on a blossom.

(B) A wild man and wild woman turn toward one another in the upper left quadrant of the print. Their bodies are covered by tufted hair; their heads by long, flowing tresses. With their elongated, supple arms, they gesticulate toward one another. A bugler, whose striding posture echoes that of a wild man, is represented below him. A young human couple stands beside the wild folk. Both are scantily clad. She covers herself with a veil; he wears a brief garment. Between them is a crouched squirrel, eating an acorn. Four different fantastic flowers line the lower border.

Both of these small prints feature wild folk as ornament design. The first (Fig. 109) combines a



Fig. 109 Design for ornament with wild folk, no. 46A

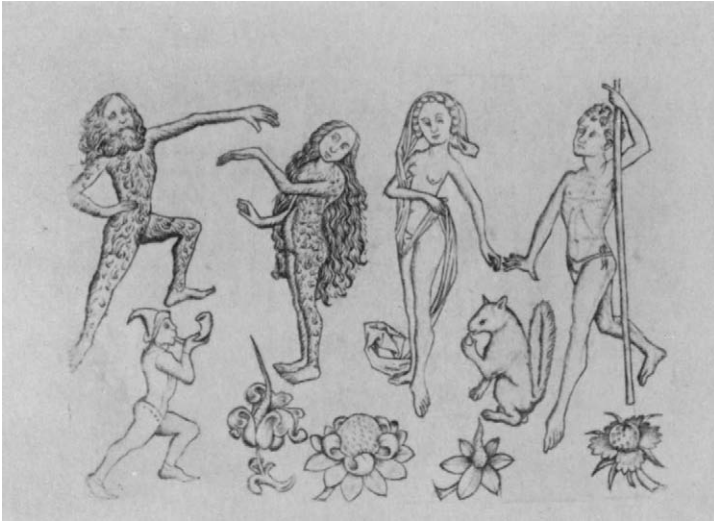


Fig. 110 Design for ornament study sheet with wild folk, no. 46B

vigorous flowering vine with acrobatic wild folk and long-necked birds. This densely illustrated image follows the tradition of whimsical decorative prints established by such artists as Master ES and Master bxg (see no. 45).

In contrast to this self-contained image, the study sheet with wild man ornament (Fig. 110) offers a loose compilation of decorative elements gathered by Israhel van Meckenem from several Master ES designs.<sup>1</sup> The squirrel is a reversed image from the Six of Animals in the Small Playing Cards.<sup>2</sup> The bugler is derived from the Queen of Men in his Large Playing Cards.<sup>3</sup> The flowers may have been copied from the suit of Flowers of the Small Playing Cards<sup>4</sup> or decorative prints. The human couple, described as armorial supports for the city of Baden, were apparently derived from the ES print discovered in a private English collection in 1930.<sup>5</sup> No source for the wild folk couple has been found. Based on the above evidence, they were probably also derived from a Master ES original, perhaps even wild folk as depicted in the Animal suit of the Small Playing Cards by Master ES. Only four cards from this suit have survived; two of them (no. 47) include wild folk who are strikingly similar to those in this print. There is no evidence that the images combined on this study sheet were selected for iconographic reasons. Nevertheless, Israhel van Meckenem exploited the erotic connotations of wild folk in other prints (cf. nos. 19, 37), and his juxtaposition here of wild folk with nude humans is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

As noted in no. 36, Israhel was the principal follower of Master ES. The ornament with wild folk here has been ascribed to another, anonymous follower of the Master.<sup>6</sup>

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. Lehrs IX, 363, no. 460.
2. Ibid. II, 316, no. 227.
3. Ibid., 334, no. 250.
4. Ibid., 324-27, nos. 237-40.
5. Lehrs IX, 363, no. 460.
6. Master E.S., 1967, no. 63; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 17.

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Master E.S., 1967, no. 63; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 17.

**47 Wild woman with a unicorn (Queen of Animals from the Small Playing Cards)**

Engraving

Master ES (ca. 1430–1467 or 1468)

Germany (region of Lake Constance)

About 1461

Paper

10.4 × 7.4 cm. (4 1/8 × 2 15/16 in.)

(Lehrs II, 317, no. 229)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 22.83.16

A wild woman sits cross-legged on a rock, which is surrounded by grass and leafy plants. Her body, except for her breasts, hands, feet, and head, is covered with long tufts of hair. The hair of her head flows to her waist in thick, wavy strands. Her expressionless face is tilted to her right. She embraces the neck of a unicorn with her left arm and holds the animal's right foreleg on her lap with her right hand.

This wild woman represents the Queen of Animals in one of the earliest western European card decks (Fig. 111).<sup>1</sup> Card games, long popular in the Orient, were probably introduced in Europe by returning Crusaders, and playing cards are documented by German archives as early as 1372.<sup>2</sup> Most playing cards were made from woodcuts, but special deluxe sets might be hand painted or engraved. Only nine decks of engraved playing cards have survived. The deck to which the Queen of Animals belongs is one of two sets engraved by Master ES in the 1460s.

Most fifteenth-century German decks had four suits, but the signs were not yet standardized to the clubs, spades, hearts, and diamonds of modern-day decks, and patrons and artists chose plant, animal, and heraldic symbols. Each suit usually contained nine number cards and four court cards, which included a low and high knave, a queen, and a king. Bernheimer suggested that such face cards showed a graded hierarchy of townsman, knight, queen, and king.<sup>3</sup> The suit symbols were repeated in varied forms and postures against a plain background on the number cards. As seen in the Queen of Animals, court cards were represented on islands of land set against the same background.



Fig. 111 Queen of Animals from the Small Playing Cards, no. 47



Fig. 112 Low Knave of Animals from the Small Playing Cards. Engraving by Master ES (retouched by Israhel van Meckenem). Germany, about 1461. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, PA 1306. Photo copyright Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

This card is one of four survivors of the Animal suit of Small Playing Cards by Master ES.<sup>4</sup> A second court card, the low Knave, also exists (Fig. 112). Among the most forceful of wild folk images, the wild man of the low Knave is shown taming a bear with mace and cudgel, a reiteration of the theme of the wild man's mastery over animals (see no. 30). This he achieves sometimes through physical violence, which is reinforced by the animals' instinctive awareness of the wild folk's superiority and kinship. In the ES playing cards, the unicorn and bear acknowledge the rulers of the wild kingdom.

In 1463 Master ES engraved a second, larger set of cards.<sup>5</sup> Wild men in this deck represent the court figures in the Bird suit. In the low Knave of Birds, the wild man, without bridle or saddle, controls his unicorn mount by its mane and tail.<sup>6</sup> The unicorn accommodates its overlord by serving as his steed, a service wild folk frequently demanded from their "subjects" (see nos. 35, 36).

Before Master ES designed his cards, the Master of the Playing Cards, active from about 1435 to 1455 in the Upper Rhine, engraved a handsome set of five suits: men, flowers, birds, deer, and beasts of prey.<sup>7</sup> In this set leafy creatures join conventional hirsute wild folk. Closely related to wood nymphs, the leafy folk manifest neither the attributes nor personality of the traditional hirsute wild man. On the Wild Five (Fig. 113), for example, the leafy sprite in the lower left of the card strums a musical instrument, while the hirsute wild men surround and threaten his relative in the upper left corner. Interestingly, humans, the wild folk's superiors, are represented on the court cards of the Master of the Playing Card's suit of men. Based on this deck, Bernheimer's theory that subhuman creatures are displayed on suit cards and secular society on court cards seems correct.<sup>8</sup>

The copper plates for both the Queen and low Knave of Animals were owned sometime during the fifteenth century by followers of Master ES. One engraver, known only by his monogram,<sup>9</sup> re-touched sixteen Master ES plates, including the two from which the playing cards (Figs. 111, 112) were made. In addition, the low Knave of Animals was reworked by Israhel van Meckenem.

Because they were available in multiple copies and easily transportable, playing cards served not only for games, but as models for artists in other media. The image of the wild woman taming the unicorn was particularly popular as such a model. Master ES's composition seems to have been the source for the image as it was represented on a silver beaker now in The British Museum, London, and on an oven tile preserved in the Landesmuseum, Zurich.<sup>10</sup> In these copies, a blank banderole surrounding the wild woman's head may have been intended for an inscription similar to that found in the magnificent Basel tapestry no. 15, which identifies the scene as a symbol for sexual conquest.

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. Rumpf, 1923, pp. 77-91.
2. Hargrave, 1930, p. 88; Geisberg, 1918, p. 8.
3. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 6.
4. Lehrs II, 315-27, nos. 226-40.
5. Ibid., 328-55, nos. 241-82.
6. Ibid., 344, no. 269; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 80; Möller, 1964, fig. 1.
7. Lehrs I, 97-148, nos. 42-106; Geisberg, *Alteste gestochene*, 1905, p. 8.
8. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 6.
9. Lehrs, 1895, pp. 23-24; Hind, 1923, p. 33.
10. Einhorn, 1976, pp. 174-75, 329, figs. 75, 76.

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Rumpf, 1923, pp. 80-81, fig. 4; *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 227; Einhorn, 1976, pp. 174-75, 328, fig. 74.



Fig. 113 Five of Wild Folk from playing cards. Engraving by the Master of the Playing Cards. Germany about 1450. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale



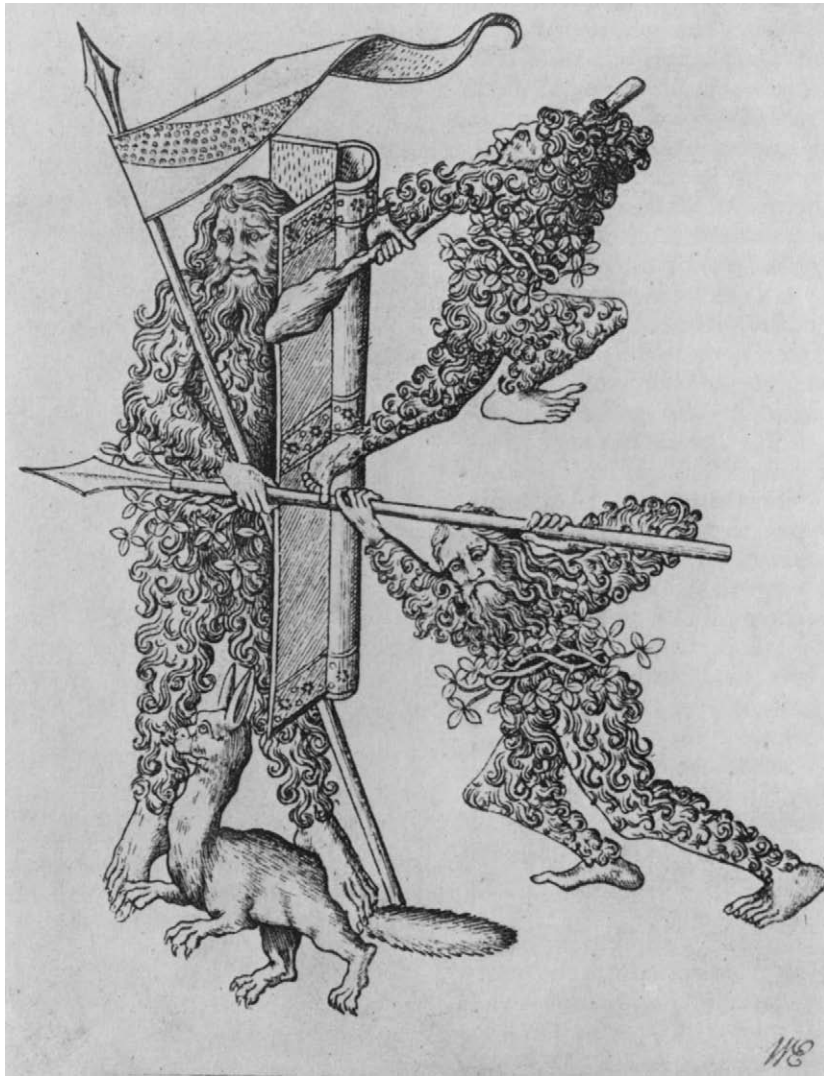


Fig. 114 Wild men forming the letter k, no. 48. Photo courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

## 48 Wild men forming the letter k

Engraving

Master ES (ca. 1430–1467 or 1468)

Germany (region of Lake Constance)

About 1466–67

Paper

14.4 × 11 cm. (5 <sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 4 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

(Lehrs II, 363, no. 292)

Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art,  
Rosenwald Collection, B-2750

A wild man stands with his left foot on the rump of a long-eared, foxlike creature and his right foot hanging in space. A lance displaying a banner rests diagonally across his body. A second lance is thrust at him by a smaller wild man in the lower right corner of the print. Another diminutive wild man, in the upper right corner, strikes his cudgel against the hingelike shield of the tall wild man. All three wild men have full, flowing locks of facial and body hair; each wears a leafy, intertwined vine belt.

Wild men joined humans, and real and imaginary animals, in the decorative mode of the grotesque alphabet popular in the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The present example represents the letter *k* from an alphabet engraved by Master ES during the last years of his career (Fig. 114).<sup>2</sup> The themes of predatory aggression and unabashed cupidity combine disparate elements in each letter and provide continuity to this twenty-three letter series (lacking *j*, *v*, and *w*). Aggression is well conveyed by the lunging wild man. Whether a fox, rendered with considerable artistic license, or a hybrid combining a fox's body with a rabbit's head, the animal supporting the tall wild man should be read as a symbol of licentiousness. The lascivious nature of foxes and the fecundity of rabbits share the same iconographic intent.

Historical allusions in ES's alphabet have been suggested by Bühler, who read the images as a



Fig. 115 The letter *k* from a grotesque alphabet. Detail of manuscript illumination from a sketchbook of Giovannino dei Grassi. Italy, about 1390. Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica, Ms. Δ VII, fol. 29v



Fig. 116 The letter *a* from a grotesque alphabet. Detail of manuscript illumination from a sketchbook of Giovannino dei Grassi. Italy, about 1390. Bergamo; Biblioteca Civica, Ms. Δ VII, fol. 27

satire of the Swiss War of the late fifteenth century.<sup>3</sup> The letter *k*, with its armed and warlike wild men, he regarded as a commentary on Emperor Maximilian's effort to recruit troops after his defeat at Dornach in 1499. Since Master ES's career ended twenty-three years before the Swiss War, and the model ES followed was created more than a century before that, this interpretation has been dismissed.

An alphabet with many letters identical to those in the Master ES series is found in the sketchbook of Giovannino dei Grassi (Biblioteca Civica, Bergamo, Ms. Δ VII, fols. 26v–30v). While this alphabet appears to be the work of several artists, the letter *k* (Fig. 115) has been ascribed to Giovannino.<sup>4</sup> This splendid artist, active in Milan until his death in 1398, was an architect, sculptor, painter, as well as a miniaturist. Giovannino's version of the letter *k* is very close to that by Master ES. In place of the hybrid fox, Giovannino's tall wild man stands solidly on the back of a swan, whose sinuous neck rises suggestively between the wild man's legs. Other differences by ES include the shield and the banner, which has been identified as that of Magrave-Baden.<sup>5</sup> In ES's letter the unconventional shield—two flat planes connected by a rounded spine—suggests a bookbinding and may simply be a reference to the use of an alphabet. There are enough variants between these two alphabets to suggest a common model, possibly a Bohemian series from about 1370.<sup>6</sup> This theory would provide an explanation for the inclusion of wild men, a transalpine motif, in the Italian sketchbook.

Master ES represented wild men only once in his alphabet, while Giovannino and his shop also incorporated them in the letter *a*. In the sketchbook's rendition (Fig. 116), one wild man is compressed between the head of a lion and the tail of another. His companion, straddling a swanlike creature (with a reptilian tail) shields his head from

a hungry lion. The letter *a* from Master ES's alphabet follows the form of the letter in the sketchbook, but a seated man, attacked by a small dog and a large owl, replaces the crouched wild man. The lion bites the tail of a dog who teeters precariously on the rump of a doe who has fallen into the grip of a predatory bird.

No one is sure of the purpose of these bizarre alphabets, but they were used, and probably intended, as models for other artisans. An inscription on the tombstone of Wilhelm I von Thannhausen dated 1452, in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, copies the letter *a* in Giovannino's sketchbook.<sup>7</sup> Master ES's version was copied twice in the *Hours of Charles of Angoulême* (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Ms. lat. 1173, fol. 52).<sup>8</sup> On this folio, sixteen grotesque letters form the words AVE MARIA GRACIA PLE(na). Only the *a* from Master ES's alphabet is used, appearing as the A of AVE and the second A in MARIA. Since these imaginative, incongruous figure groups were evidently intended to amuse the viewer, the inclusion of the wild man in these antics makes good use of his traditional iconography.

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. Kämmerer, 1897, pp. 216-22; Lehrs, 1895, pp. 371-79.
2. Lehrs II, 355-78, nos. 283-305; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 15; *Master E.S.*, 1967, no. 74.
3. Bühler, 1934, pp. 15-16.
4. Cadei, 1970, p. 24.
5. Lehrs II, 363, no. 292.
6. Alexander, 1978, p. 111.
7. Bühler, 1934, pl. II.
8. *Ibid.*, pl. XXIII.

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Bühler, 1934, pp. 14-16, pl. XII; *Printmaking*, 1941, no. 71; Möller, 1964, pp. 261-62, fig. 5; *Master E.S.*, 1967, no. 74; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 15.

## 49 Wild man

Candleholder

Germany, Nuremberg(?)

About 1525-50

Bronze (with modern candleholder)

H. with base 26.6 cm. (10 1/2 in.); without base 21.5 cm. (8 1/2 in.)

Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, Busch-Reisinger Museum, 1962.79

A wild man stands astride a two-pronged support fixed to a raised, circular base. Both hands are clenched in fists. The left hand probably supported a shield; the right grasps a candleholder (modern replacement). His upturned face is carefully detailed with a furrowed brow and a thick, long mustache. The wild man wears a turban; a sash, knotted at his waist, serves as a loincloth. Comma-shaped incisions define the hair that covers his body.

Lamps and candleholders have been fashioned in whimsical forms since antiquity. In the thirteenth century, such strong creatures as elephants and centaurs<sup>1</sup> were common supports for candles. In the fifteenth century, figurative candle bearers began to be produced for domestic use, and wild folk joined the roster of the vicious beasts and imaginary creatures. They held prickets<sup>2</sup> as well as candle sockets. The present piece (Fig. 117) closely resembles a socket type included in an exhibition in Hamburg in 1963.<sup>3</sup> Although the other example has a small mustache and a hirsute garment instead of body hair, the scale and posture are similar. Both figures stand above a circular base, molded to catch wax. The fanciful character of the wild men candleholders was paralleled by other images, such as the jester (Fig. 118). This gyrating figure is one of five brass candleholders by the lower Rhenish master Aert van Tricht.<sup>4</sup> The jester holds an open-sided socket, so as to facilitate the removal of valued wax ends.





The wild man not only epitomized the whimsy and strength traditionally associated with candleholder figures, but served another function, not shared by other candle supports. Based on other complete examples the present candleholder must originally have grasped a heraldic shield in his left hand.<sup>5</sup> The wild man's superhuman power and virility alluded to the guardianship and continuity of the family whose arms were so displayed (see nos. 50–58).

With the revival of classical centaurs and satyrs as candle supports in the Renaissance,<sup>6</sup> the wild man's popularity in this function declined.

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. *Bronzes*, 1876, p. 90.
2. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 27.
3. *Ibid.*, no. 26.
4. Meyer, 1961, pp. 177–79; *Medieval Art*, 1968, nos. 126, 127.
5. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 27.
6. Wixom, 1975, nos. 78, 106.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kuhn, 1965, no. 37, pl. xxxvi.



Fig. 118 Jester candleholder by Aert van Tricht. Flanders, about 1500. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Irwin Untermyer Collection, 64.101.1535

## 50 Wild man

Fragment of a chandelier or vessel support

Germany

1450–1500

Bronze

13.3 cm. (5 1/4 in.)

Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, Norman O. Stone and Ella A. Stone Memorial Fund and James Parmelee Fund, 65.21

This kneeling wild man rests his weight on his left toes and right heel. Above his head he holds a club, broken at the end. In his lost left hand, he probably grasped the top of a shield. His face is characterized by a full beard, mustache, long nose, and bulging eyes. He wears a ropelike headband; a belt, of similar composition, is knotted in front. Hair represented as wavy indentations covers his body.

Like the candleholder (no. 49), this wild man once grasped an armorial shield, now lost, which was fastened to the flat surface of his left knee (Fig. 119). Another kneeling wild man, formerly in the Figdor collection,<sup>1</sup> is so similar that the two appear to be from the same shop, if not from the same object. Both measure 13.3 centimeters tall and are stylistically close. The Figdor figure is described as part of a brass chandelier,<sup>2</sup> suggesting that the present figure had a similar function. Many other examples, related by posture and scale, were represented in a Hamburg exhibition of 1963;<sup>3</sup> others are found in collections in Nuremberg<sup>4</sup> and London (Victoria and Albert Museum, M. 168–1937). Each figure has a vertical hole drilled through the back by which it would have been secured to the chandelier. Such a hole, now partially filled, runs through the body of the present figure. The small figures, including the Cleveland

and Figdor wild men, were probably decorative appliqué, similar to the watchmen and angels on the early fifteenth-century brass chandelier today in the parish church of Stans, Germany.<sup>5</sup> The larger examples, such as the London wild man (21 cm.), were at the top of spindle chandeliers with the chain mount passing through a hole in their heads.<sup>6</sup>

Although the evidence suggests that the kneeling wild man was part of a chandelier, another interpretation has been proposed.<sup>7</sup> Vessels such as the Ingolstadt beaker (no. 51) and the Saint George reliquary now in Hamburg<sup>8</sup> were supported by feet in the form of wild men. These wild men, also acting as armorial supports, kneel in a posture similar to that of the bronze figures. Although wild men are admirably suited for these Herculean jobs, their function as vessel supports has only been documented in these smaller silver vessels.

Based on this evidence, the Cleveland and Figdor wild men most likely stood on a blazing chandelier. So displayed, heraldic arms would have had maximum dramatic impact.

G.G.-H.

### NOTES

1. *Figdor*, 1930, no. 481, pl. CLXXIV.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, nos. 13–14, 16–18.

4. "Neuerwerbungen," 1964, fig. 8.

5. Meyer, 1961, pp. 151–58.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 158, figs. 6–10; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, nos. 15, 21.

7. Wixom, 1969, p. 329; *idem*, 1975, no. 10.

8. *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 82.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Wixom, 1969, pp. 328–31; Wixom, 1975, no. 10.



Fig. 119 Wild man from a chandelier or vessel, no. 50



## 51 Covered beaker with wild man supports

Hans Greiff

Germany, Ingolstadt

About 1470

Engraved silver, silver gilt, and enamel

H. 39.4 cm. (15 1/2 in.)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 50.7.1a, b

The silver beaker and cover are highlighted by gilt vines and decorative openwork that encircle the vessel. A silver finial of leaf forms in which a gold, star-studded acorn is embedded, rises from a hexagonal stem. Three wild men, crouching on trilobed pierced pedestals, support the vessel. Each figure holds a blank shield in his left hand. Their clenched right fists are held in front of their bodies as if they once grasped spears. All hair, body and facial, is parcel-gilt, in contrast to the silver of the face, hands, and feet. The cover and body of the vessel is engraved with hunting scenes, including a confrontation between a wild woman and hunter, along with the chase and hunt of stags, unicorn, and bear. Inside the cover is an enameled shield representing a rampant panther, blue on silver with tongues of red flame. Remnants of grape clusters, represented by colored glass beads, remain on the bottom vine.

Wild men simultaneously guard and support this elaborate beaker (Figs. 120, 121). Their spears, once held vertically, would have underscored their guardian role. Their shields, the emblems of which were either never finished or completely lost, would have announced to all viewers the owner of this handsome piece.

The engraving on the beaker expands on themes implied by the use of wild men as supports. Against a decorative ground of dense, encircling leaves, human hunters chase and corner their prey. On the lid, one hunter, sounding his horn, chases a unicorn and bear, while his companion aims a crossbow at a fleeing stag. On the vessel itself, a fox observes a wood sprite, who plays a flute. A perched bird appears to watch over an ape, who admires a flower. The only wild folk included in the engraving is a wild woman who wards off the attack of a hunter with a lance. Though sought along with the other beasts, she is more sophisticated, countering the hunter's attack with a weapon.



Fig. 121 Wild man support of beaker, detail, no. 51

This combination of figures surrounded by ornamental foliage is clearly patterned after decorative prints like those by Master ES (no. 36) and Israhel van Meckenem (no. 35). The coarser line and uneven ground of the beaker's design seem related to the engraving of a complex image onto a three-dimensional surface. A similar effect is seen in another engraved beaker, possibly of German





Fig. 122 Jester support. Detail of covered beaker. Germany, about 1470. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.615 a,b

origin and dated to the last quarter of the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

During this period, Ingolstadt, a town on the Danube eighty kilometers north of Munich, manufactured beakers like this one. Two other ingolstadt beakers are in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. One, a companion piece to the present example, has a plain vessel supported by feet in the form of knights. Each of these figures, with bare head and full armor, kneels in the same position as the wild men, holding a mace in the right hand and a shield in the left. The bearded portrait the knights display has been identified as the arms of Hans Glätzle, a burgomaster of Ingolstadt.<sup>2</sup> The substitution of wild men for knights occurs in all media during late medieval times (nos. 13, 35, 38) and invariably parodies chivalric ideals.

The whimsical note provided by wild folk is even more overt in the third Ingolstadt beaker, where the feet are jesters in caps and bells, playing flutes (Fig. 122). As with the other Ingolstadt beakers, this display object would have been used only on special occasions, such as festive meetings or dinners. They may have functioned either as wine serving vessels or common cups. According to contemporary accounts, certain guilds concluded their meetings with music and frolic.<sup>3</sup>

Both beakers from The Cloisters collection have been associated stylistically to a reliquary of Saint Anne in the Musée de Cluny.<sup>4</sup> This object is unusual in that it is both signed and dated. Hans Greiff, the leading goldsmith in Ingolstadt, made this reliquary in 1472. This date coincides with the civic activities of Hans Glätzle and with the graphic production of wild folk decorative prints.

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. *Medieval Art*, 1968, no. 120.
2. Rorimer, 1951, p. 255.
3. *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 159.
4. Rorimer, 1951, pp. 255, 258.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rorimer, 1951, pp. 253–59; *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 158.

## 52 Pair of ewers with wild man heraldic finials

Colorplate XIV

Germany, Nuremberg(?)

About 1500

Silver, silver gilt, and painted enamel

63.5 cm. (25 in.)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 53.20.1, 2

These footed, globular vessels of silver gilt have raised dome lids that echo the form of the vessel's bowl. Openwork leaves and tendrils enliven the surface. The bulbous covers are surmounted by hexagonal bastions with crenellated walls, grilled windows, and pinnacled buttresses complete with statue columns. A wild man with green body hair kneels upon a field of strawberries that surmounts this architectural platform. His left hand supports a shield; his right arm, raised above his head, wields a brown club. The wild man's hair and beard are brown; his face is tan with finely painted facial details. In both examples, the wild man wears a belt of entwined branches and a wreath on his head. The dragon, forming the handle, arches its back so that its hind legs rest above the circumference of the vessel's bowl, and its front paws stand beneath the lid's lip. The beast has a knobby spine, serpentine tail, and red enameled ears and mouth.

The kneeling wild man had wide appeal in the three-dimensional arts at the end of the Middle Ages, since the posture could be adapted for several functions. Often found at the base of a vessel as a support (no. 51), the kneeling wild man also commonly appears, as he does here, as a type of figurative finial (Fig. 123, colorplate XIV). With the traditional attributes of a cudgel and the armorial shield that once displayed the heraldry of the owner, the wild man announced the ewer's ownership and his protection of it. In most cases the kneeling wild man's defense is only symbolic, but here the dragons, with claws and teeth, represent a tangible threat. The wild men pivot toward the rising challenge, using as protective devices the

very nameplates whose honor they are supposed to guard.

All details are meticulously painted. The wild men kneel on grass cushions covered with a profusion of strawberry plants, simultaneously blossoming and bearing fruit. The strawberry, an erotic symbol,<sup>1</sup> recalls the storming of the Castle of Love scenes in which the ladies' favors were symbolized as flowers (nos. 11, 12).

The Order of the Knights of the Hospital of Saint Mary of the Teutons in Jerusalem had been, along with the Templars and Hospitalers, one of the most important military and religious orders of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These German knights, who took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, originally set out to protect German pilgrims. In the thirteenth century, they turned to the conquest of Prussia and ruled the territory between Mermel on the Baltic Sea and the Vistula River in Poland. In 1410 the order was defeated by Christian forces of Polish and Lithuanian nationalities at Tannenburg. The headquarters of the order, which had changed sites over the years, moved to Königsberg, north of Bamberg, in 1457, and remained there while Hartmann von Stockheim was German Master (1499–1510). Because an inventory of the Teutonic Order's Treasury taken in 1585 lists "two silver presentation ewers with the coat-of-arms of Stockheim," scholars have considered The Cloisters ewers to have been owned by Stockheim.<sup>2</sup> The coats-of-arms, originally attached to the wild men's shields, whether Stockheim's or the Order's, have been missing since the inventory of 1606. At that time, the Treasury had become part of the Hapsburg collection, under the archduke Maximilian of Austria, a later Grand Master of the Order. An inventory taken in 1619, four years after Maximilian's death, mentions "two silver, highly gilt, ewers, on each of these a wild man." The ewers remained in the Treasury of the Order of the Teutonic Knights of Saint Mary's Hospital in Jerusalem in Vienna until about 1937.

The closest comparable vessel to these exceptional ewers is found in the background of a painting, *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, by the



Fig. 123 Ewer with wild man heraldic finials,  
one of a pair, no. 52

Master of Saint Severin (ca. 1490).<sup>3</sup> In the painting, however, a purely architectural finial takes the place of the wild man in the present examples. A ewer in the City Hall of Goslar, dated 1477, is one of the few ewers with a dragon handle,<sup>4</sup> but its detailing is achieved through decorative appliqué. Other examples of ceremonial vessels with wild men finials include two vessels from Nuremberg. A knobby goblet, *Buckelpokal*, now in Vienna,<sup>5</sup> has a standing wild man, and a covered beaker, *Deckelbecher*, now in London,<sup>6</sup> has a kneeling wild man finial. Both vessels are silver gilt; both wild men are shield supports. Based on such comparisons, the present ewers have been attributed to Nuremberg.<sup>7</sup> This theory is strengthened by Stockheim's origins in the region around Nuremberg, apparently a production center for these decorative vessels.

While any speculation about the owner's intention cannot be proven, it is tempting to suggest

that Hartmann von Stockheim chose wild men to adorn these ewers for their connotations of virility at a time when his order was weak.

Vessels such as these, prized as part of the Teutonic Knights Treasury, would have been used as gold bullion if necessary. We are fortunate that these handsome ewers survived.

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. Freeman, 1976, p. 118.
2. *Middle Ages*, 1970, p. 226.
3. Stange, 1952, fig. 216.
4. Kohlhaussen, 1968, no. 353.
5. *Ibid.*, no. 381.
6. *Ibid.*, no. 265.
7. *Ibid.*, nos. 261, 262.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rorimer, 1953, pp. 270-76; Kohlhaussen, 1968, nos. 261, 262; *Middle Ages*, 1970, no. 107; *Secular Spirit*, 1975, no. 264.



Fig. 124 Landskeeper's badge, no. 53.  
Photo copyright Historisches Museum, Basel



**53 Landskeeper's badge (Bannwartschild) with the arms of Basel supported by a wild couple**

Switzerland, Basel

1490–1500

Silver, silver gilt, and enamel

Diam. 15 cm. (5 7/8 in.)

Basel: Historisches Museum, 1875.78

In the center of this six-lobed silver and silver-gilt landskeeper's badge is a shield bearing the arms of the city of Basel. A standing wild man and a standing wild woman, filling the side lobes, support the coat-of-arms. The upper and lower lobes are filled with decorative foliate metalwork.

This badge made for the city of Basel (Fig. 124) was worn, like the *Spielmannsabzeichen* (no.41), by an appointed official of the city. In this instance the badge was the insignia of an official responsible for overseeing all lands that fell under the jurisdiction of greater Basel. Judging from the wear marks on the badge, it was worn over the left breast. Although the number of officials is not documented, an additional two badges were made in 1561 after the original,<sup>1</sup> suggesting that there were at least three. The size and ornamentation of the badge reflected not only the significance of the official but the city's prestige. The wild man and woman, as dwellers of the forests and woodlands, are particularly appropriate supports for the heraldic shield on this badge, sharing a common domain with the official. Viewed as protectors of the land and promulgators of fertility, the wild couple's association with the landskeeper was largely talismanic.

T.H.

NOTE

1. *Spätgotik*, 1970, p. 274.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Spätgotik*, 1970, no. 245.

**54 Wild woman supporting emblazoned shield**

Engraving

Martin Schongauer (Colmar ca. 1445–1491

Breisach)

Germany, Colmar

About 1480–90

Paper

Diam. 7.7 cm. (3 in.)

(Lehrs V, 99, no. 347)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 28.26.9

A wild woman, her body covered with a hairy growth, sits with her legs crossed on a jagged outcropping, suckling a hairy child who stands on her left thigh, supported by her embracing arm. Her long wavy hair flows out behind the child; she wears a leafy garland around her head. Her right hand supports a large heraldic shield emblazoned in the dexter chief with the head of a lion. The ground is carpeted in thick grass that sprouts two large leafy plants. At the bottom is the artist's monogram.

In his heraldic context the wild man, stripped of complex mythology and shifting imagery, was forced into the narrow confines of a rigid, formal system. As Bernheimer notes, the wild man in this role "is deprived of much of his aura of ambivalence and allowed free play only in the fields of semantic combination and artistic design."<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to determine what inspired the adoption of the wild man as a heraldic support. The name *Zum wilden Mann* given to many inns may refer to celebrations or festivals once held locally or to traditions and folklore of the surrounding regions. The two hundred or more European families who incorporated the wild man in their coats-of-arms may also have wished to indicate their participation in such festivals or to display their hardiness, strength, and fecundity.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 125 Wild woman supporting emblazoned shield,  
no. 54

The reasons for the wild man's frequent assimilation into the heraldry of the nobility and royalty may be more complex, as the case of Heinrich IX the Younger of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel demonstrates (see no. 44). On one hand, the individual or house may have identified with certain characteristics of the mythical wild man; on the other, the wild man, serving a talismanic purpose, functioned merely as the protector or guardian of the coat-of-arms, without reference to the owner.<sup>3</sup>

The wild man appears as a heraldic support in the latter part of the fourteenth century. Bernheimer has suggested that his use in supporting armorial bearings may derive from the custom at tournaments of dressing up the servants who guarded the shield in the challenge preceding the actual combat.<sup>4</sup> By the fifteenth century the wild man was widely cast in a heraldic role.

Although, in this engraving (Fig. 125), the wild woman's role is essentially emblematic, the suckling child, the leafy garland in the woman's hair, and the verdant foreground link her with the wild man's idyllic woodland existence. Compositional similarities, including the wild woman's rocky seat, her flowing hair, and crossed legs, strongly suggest that Schongauer was familiar with the Master ES engraving of the wild woman with a unicorn (no. 47). Another marked similarity exists

between this engraving and Ludwig Schongauer's drawing of the same subject (no. 55).

Schongauer made a set of ten heraldic roundels, two with two shields, and the rest with one. The shields are supported by an angel, elegant ladies, a farmer, a Turk, three by wild men (Fig. 126), and the present one by a wild woman. Lehrs suggested these engraved roundels were intended as goldsmiths' models, but they also may be related to heraldic silver-stained roundels, which follow a similar compositional format. Others have suggested they were executed for members of the wealthy middle class in emulation of the heraldic devices of the nobility.<sup>5</sup> Since the emblazonings of the shield are schematic and decorative, they were no doubt intended to be substituted by the commissioner's coat-of-arms.<sup>6</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 176.
2. Ibid., p. 177.
3. Ibid., p. 178.
4. Ibid., p. 63.
5. *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, text before nos. 90-97.
6. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 180.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baum, 1948, p. 43; *Fifteenth Century Engravings*, 1967, no. 94.



Fig. 126 Wild man supporting emblazoned shield. Engraving by Martin Schongauer. Germany, 1480-90. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 28.26.7



Fig. 127 Wild woman with coat-of-arms and helm, no. 55.

## 55 Wild woman with coat-of-arms and helm

Drawing

Attributed to Ludwig Schongauer (Augsburg ca. 1400–1493 or 1494 Colmar)

South Germany, Augsburg or Colmar

Late fifteenth century

Dark brown ink on paper

14.9 × 10.4 cm. (5 7/8 × 4 1/8 in.)

Basel: Öffentlichen Kunstsammlung Basel, Kupferstichkabinett, U.VII.95

A kneeling wild woman with a garland of branches in her hair and tresses billowing down her back rests on one knee (Fig. 127). With her right hand she holds a shield emblazoned with the profile bust of a man in a capuchine. Balanced on her left knee is a helm surmounted by foliate mantling and a crest composed of an eagle's or a griffin's head.

The use of wild women as heraldic bearers postdated that of their male counterparts and is relatively rarer.<sup>1</sup> While wild men represent virility and strength, wild women suggest fecundity and fertility. Wild folk as supporters or adjunct figures to heraldic devices imply, by the association of

their legendary procreative abilities, an enduring family line and thus serve a talismanic purpose. The gender of the owner of the coat-of-arms probably did not determine the sex of the wild folk supporters. Wild women make one of their earliest appearances as heraldic supports in the *Hours of Etienne de Chevalier*, illuminated by Jean Fouquet from about 1452 to 1456. Of the four illuminations in which wild folk play a heraldic role, two depict wild women holding shields with the initials or name of Chevalier, treasurer of France under Charles VII.<sup>2</sup>

The attribution of this drawing to Ludwig Schongauer is accepted by both Falk and Winzinger.<sup>3</sup> It resembles closely the composition of Martin Schongauer's engraved roundel of a wild woman supporting a coat-of-arms (no. 54).

T.H.

### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 179.

2. *Hours of Etienne de Chevalier*, 1971, pls. 32, 45.

3. Falk, 1979, nos. 46, 47.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Falk, 1979, no. 46.



## 56 Wild couple supporting the arms of the Grafschaft Kyburg

Colorplate XV

Armorial panel

Attributed to Lukas Zeiner (Zurich 1454?–1512 or 1513 Zurich)

Switzerland, Zurich

About 1490

Glass, flashed, enameled, and silver-stained

31.1 × 26.1 cm. (12 1/4 × 10 1/4 in.)

London: Victoria and Albert Museum, C.9.1923

A wild man and wild woman, each with a floral garland in long flowing hair, a girdle of branches around the waist, and a stave resting in the crook of the arm, flank a large heraldic shield. Both have thick curly hair covering their bodies, except for the face, hands, feet, and the wild woman's breasts. The wild man wears a full beard. The wild woman rests one hand on the top edge of the emblazoned shield, red *à bend* white, with two gold rampant lions. The blue background is damascened in a rich foliate pattern. Elements of field in the lower part of the coat-of-arms, as well as in the bottom and upper corners of the background, have been replaced.

The wild man in a heraldic context, particularly as an external support rather than as an element within the armorial bearing, is generally reduced to a purely formal role. Because of his extraordinary strength, he was seen as a defender of the shield, while his potency assured the continuance of the family line. In this panel, however, allusion is made to his mythical character normally revealed in broader iconographic contexts.

The floral garlands in their hair identify this wild folk couple with the amorous woodland types so frequently represented in Swiss and German

tapestries of the fifteenth century. The wild woman wears a garland of roses, which in its secular context is the symbol of love. Peter of Mora states that there are three roses representing good and one representing bad, "and this rose is of certain for sensual pleasure."<sup>1</sup> In *Le Roman de la Rose*, the rose is the symbol of love and the focus of the Dreamers' consuming desires ("choisi rosiers chargez de roses / qui estoient en un destor," lines 1614–15). The wild man wears a garland of medlar, although the intended symbolism is that of hawthorn, with which it was frequently confused, since both were called *mespilus*.<sup>2</sup> The hawthorn was considered the flower of lovers, and its strong smell was associated with sex. A disappointed lover in a fifteenth-century poem, *L'Amant rendu cordelier*, attributed to Martial d'Auvergne, retires to a monastery, where the prior admonishes him never to sleep under a hawthorn lest he again experience the torments of love.<sup>3</sup>

The coats-of-arms on this panel have been identified as those of the *Grafschaft*, or county, of Kyburg, Canton Zurich.<sup>4</sup> It has been suggested that the panel originally came from the parish church of nearby Pfäffikon;<sup>5</sup> its attribution to the Zurich glass painter Lukas Zeiner is generally accepted.<sup>6</sup>

T.H.

### NOTES

1. Freeman, 1976, p. 122.
2. Fischer, 1929, p. 209.
3. Freeman, 1976, p. 130.
4. *Lexikon der Schweiz* IV, 1927, p. 482.
5. Gubler, 1978, p. 39.
6. Lehmann, 1926, p. 31; Rackham, 1929, pp. 55 ff.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Lehmann, 1926, pp. 31–33, pl. 1; Rackham, 1929, pp. 55 ff.

**57 Study for a heraldic panel  
(Scheibenriss) with wild folk**

Drawing

Niklaus Manuel Deutsch (Bern 1484–1530 Bern)

Switzerland, Bern

About 1506

Black ink on paper

44 × 32 cm. (17 5/16 × 12 5/8 in.)

Bern: Bernisches Historisches Museum, 20036.7

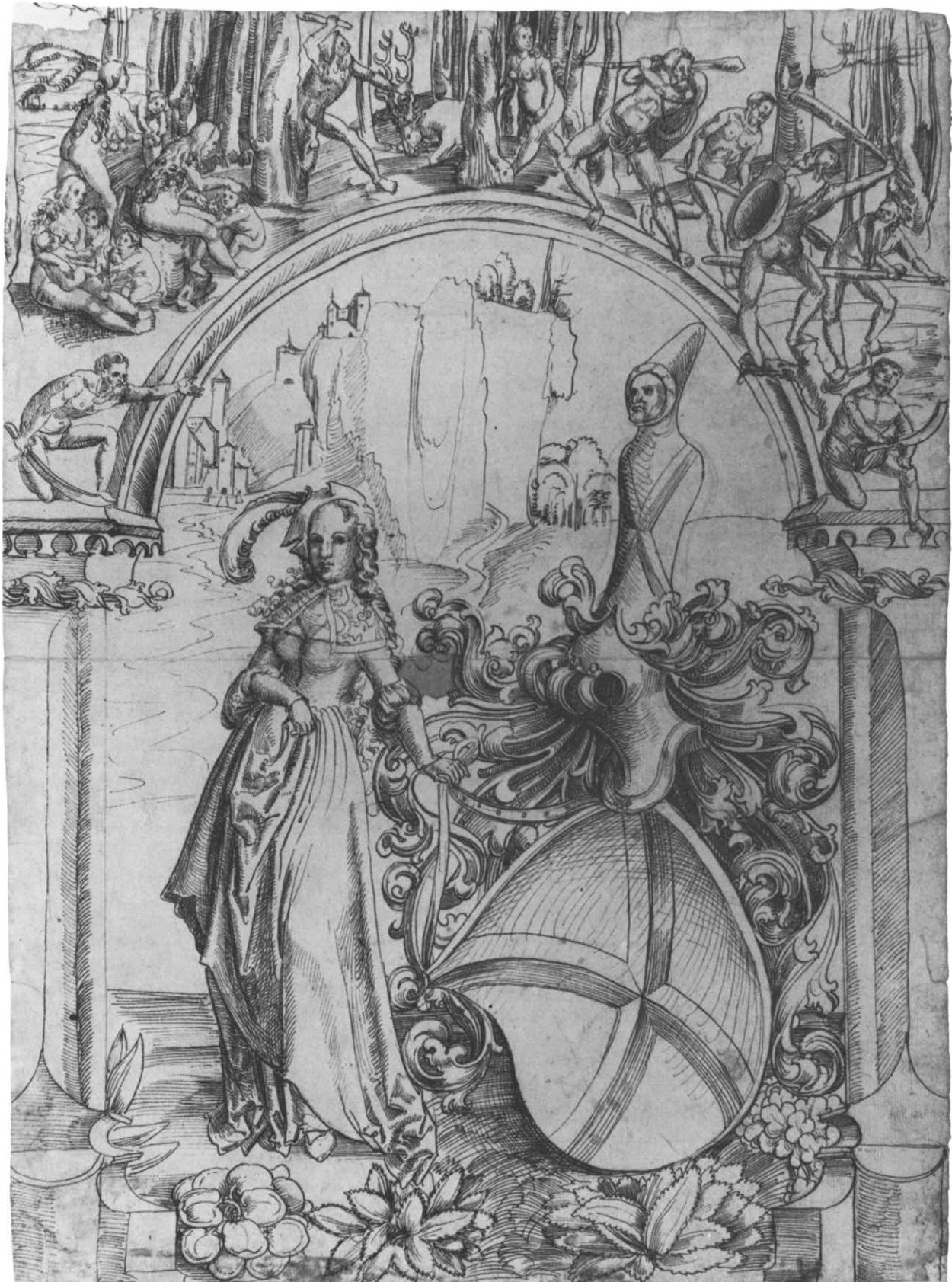
Standing in an arcade is a young woman wearing a long dress with a low-cut bodice, a patterned capelet, and a beret with a long side plume. In her left hand she holds the strap of a large shield *à saltire* helmed and crested with a male torso wearing a capuchine. Mantling cascades from the helm to the ground. Several large leafy plants fill the foreground, and a group of imposing buildings against a sheer cliff, a stream, and a cluster of trees fill the background. In the spandrels of the arch above, from left to right, a group of three wild women tend their children, a wild man clubs a fallen stag, and a naked wild woman flees a group of four wild men, naked, except for one wearing a loincloth, and wielding clubs in combat. Above each impost is a kneeling figure, each briefly clad and holding a curved-blade sword.

The scenes of wild people in the spandrel in this study for a stained-glass armorial panel (*Wappenscheibe*; Fig. 128) relate directly to the central heraldic device with its female support. Through the female figure, as Koepplin points out, the symbolism of the shield connects to the fight of the wild men above.<sup>1</sup> Although the woman wears an elegant dress suggestive of courtly attire, her ruffish plumed beret identifies her as a consort of the soldier whose shield she attends. The emblazoned shield not only recalls the order of nobility, but

also suggests ritualistic combats in the courtly tradition. Just as the beret reveals the true nature of the woman, however, the battle of the wild men returns the shield to its true function as an implement of war. The woman's protective custody of the shield signifies the power she holds to control her soldier's passions and aggressions. In reference to the woman's role in perpetuating the family line, she watches over its coat-of-arms, as the wild women above nurture their children. Further interpreting the imagery, Koepplin suggests that the association of wild people with coats-of-arms of families identified with specific regions indicated places inhabited by wild folk.<sup>2</sup> The present coat-of-arms has been identified as that of the Hattstatt family of Schöftland in the Aargau.<sup>3</sup>

The association of the fighting wild men with tournaments and knightly combats has none of the parodic elements common in fifteenth-century imagery (cf. nos. 35, 36, 38), while the benign, maternal behavior of the wild women only faintly echoes the wild man's sylvan idyllic existence seen in tapestries and graphics of the same period (nos. 27, 31). The savagery and aggressiveness that dominate this view of the wild man's existence supplant the harmony and intimacy characteristic of late medieval idealized imagery. But, unlike Hans Burgkmair's drawing (no. 34), which extols an archaic view of idealized Germanic ancestry, that of Niklaus Manuel is heavily influenced by Renaissance imagery.

The wild man as a primitive hunter, here shown clubbing a stag, coincides closely with descriptions of primitives given by Vergil and Prudentius. Servius's commentaries on the *Aeneid* likewise present an image strikingly close to that of the mythic wild man.<sup>4</sup> The Florentine Renaissance painter Piero di Cosimo (1462–1521), apparently relying on such ancient authority, presented a like view of



nature. Piero, as a true product of the Renaissance, saw man's progress as a long evolution which eventually carried him from unredeemed savagery to a highly civilized state.<sup>5</sup> Based on Hesiod, Lucas Cranach, however, saw man in terms of a fall from a primeval state of goodness to one of corruption and violence. According to Hesiod, the first age, or Age of Gold, was characterized by childish happiness in a paradisaal world. As man deteriorated during the Age of Silver, however, innocent abandon devolved into savagery, conflict, and brutality.<sup>6</sup> Whether paralleling Piero's or Cranach's view, Niklaus Manuel depicts man's primitive and pagan state, interweaving the mythology of the medieval wild man with that of his classical forebears.

While there is no specific indication that Niklaus Manuel relied on a model for the wild man combat in this drawing, it shows affinities to Pollaiuolo's *Ten Nudes in Combat*, a work known to Manuel's contemporary Albrecht Dürer. The refined drawing of the male figures contrasts with the relatively heavy and awkward rendering of the females, which, according to von Tavel, is evidence of an Italian model.<sup>7</sup>

T.H.

#### NOTES

1. *Cranach*, 1976, no. 496.
2. *Ibid.*, no. 496, pp. 597-98.
3. *Niklaus Manuel*, 1979, pp. 299-300.
4. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 117.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
7. *Niklaus Manuel*, 1979, p. 302.

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*Cranach*, 1976, no. 496; *Niklaus Manuel*, 1979, no. 136.

## 58 Coat-of-arms with skull, woman, and wild man

Engraving

Albrecht Dürer (Nuremberg 1471-1528

Nuremberg)

Germany, Nuremberg

Dated 1503

Paper

22 × 15.6 cm. (8 5/8 × 6 1/8 in.)

(Bartsch 101; Dodgson 36; Meder 98; Panofsky 208)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Isaac D. Fletcher Fund, 19.73.113

An escutcheon displaying an enormous human skull is surmounted by a winged helmet and florid streamers. A leather strap held in the crotch of a wild man's staff supports these arms. The full-bearded, shaggy-haired wild man stands directly behind a young woman wearing a bridal crown and ball dress. She glances coyly at the wild man, whose face leans close to hers. The dressed stone on which the shield rests is inscribed 1503, and holds a small tablet with Albrecht Dürer's monogram.

The wild man in Albrecht Dürer's print (Fig. 129) belongs in part to the legions of hairy folk, who, in the late Middle Ages, guarded and upheld family dynasties, as symbolized by their coats-of-arms. When associated with heraldic shields, the wild men were either emblematic, as on the Ingolstadt beaker (no. 51), or active, as represented by the wild men guarding the Teutonic ewers (no. 52). When animated, the wild men dramatize physical protection or procreation. Dürer's wild man, who simultaneously guards a shield while caressing a young woman, conveys both meanings.



Fig. 129 Coat-of-arms with skull, woman, and wild man, no. 58

In addition to the standard interpretations, this wild man has often been considered a personification of Death, based on the morbid nature of the arms he holds.<sup>1</sup> The powerful wings on the helm may possibly refer to the swiftness of death. The wild man himself bears a haunting resemblance to contemporary images of Death, such as the partially dressed skeleton in Dürer's *The Promenade* (Bartsch 94), of about 1498, and the emaciated elderly man depicted in Dürer's *The Ravisher* (Bartsch 92), of about 1495 (Fig. 130). Other German artists, such as Niklaus Manuel Deutsch, depicted a lecherous Death pushing his attentions, often rebuffed, onto a maiden.<sup>2</sup> Popular in Germanic art of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the theme conveyed two meanings: a reminder that life should not be devoted to earthly pleasures alone and that death remains the equalizer of all persons. Love, as man's principal pleasure, is death's opposite.

A further dimension to the traditional "Love and Death" theme is added by the young woman's costume in this print. According to Dürer's own inscription on his study, the woman wears a "festive" dress.<sup>3</sup> Her crown, comparable to those represented in wedding feasts, such as Pieter Brueghel the Elder's *Peasant Wedding Feast* in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, clearly identifies her as a bride. In addition, Dürer's composition was later followed in a sixteenth-century Italian engraving on ivory made for the marriage of Isabella Gonzaga.<sup>4</sup> Dürer's wild man, in this context, seems also to refer to the young villagers, dressed as wild men, who amicably mocked the groom at Germanic weddings. As part of their role, the masqueraders made satirical allusions to the groom's bachelor days.<sup>5</sup>

These layers of meaning, merged into a succinct,

timeless image by Dürer, may also refer to contemporary historical events. Strauss suggests a connection between Dürer's print and the War of Bavarian Succession. When Duke George the Rich died in 1503 without a male heir, he willed his lands to his daughter. According to imperial law, an estate could not pass to a woman, and, in the war that followed, the young duchess lost her father's holdings. This print, according to Strauss, is an "allegory of this war, which ended badly for the ill-advised titled lady."<sup>6</sup> While the evidence for this theory is not compelling, the spirit of Dürer's image reflects the political agitation of the period. The year 1503 was marked by several ominous events, including a comet, described by Dürer as "the greatest portent I have ever seen" and a "blood rain" that stained clothing with crucifixes. Such aberrations were compounded by the onset of a plague to which many persons, including Dürer, ultimately fell victim.<sup>7</sup> These sinister happenings were considered the embodiment of the chiliastic prophecies that abounded at the turn of the sixteenth century.

From all of these factors, Dürer created one of the most complex armorial supports in the history of art. His intellectual genius is here matched by his technical verve. Earlier, Dürer had engraved a traditional heraldic image of a coat-of-arms with a lion and castle (Bartsch 100). Although this print hints at three-dimensionality and textured distinctions, it does not reach the heights achieved in the coat-of-arms with skull where "the soft flesh of the girl and the shaggy limbs of the savage are keenly observed and tangibly rendered."<sup>8</sup>

Inspired by historic events and folkloric customs, Dürer created an image of the wild man that successfully blends his sexual allusiveness and protective guardianship, while hinting at the





Fig. 130 *The Ravisher*. Engraving by Albrecht Dürer. Germany, about 1495. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Isaac D. Fletcher Fund, 19.73.104

demonic aspect of his personality. He portrayed the consummate wild man, embodying the complexity and contradiction of the creature.

G.G.-H.

#### NOTES

1. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 183; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 89; *Europe in Torment*, 1974, p. 106; *Love and Death*, 1975, p. 79.
2. *Niklaus Manuel*, 1979, no. 78.
3. Panofsky, 1945, vol. II, no. 1284, p. 126.
4. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 184.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 167–68.
6. Strauss, 1972, p. 82.
7. Panofsky, 1945, vol. I, p. 90.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

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Panofsky, 1945, vol. I, no. 208, p. 150; Bernheimer, 1952, pp. 182–85, fig. 50; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 89; Strauss, 1972, no. 40; *Europe in Torment*, 1974, no. 40; *Love and Death*, 1975, no. 39.

## 59 The Sea Monster (Das Meerwunder)

Engraving

Albrecht Dürer (Nuremberg 1471–1528  
Nuremberg)

Germany, Nuremberg

About 1498

Paper

24.6 × 18.4 cm. (9 5/8 × 7 1/4 in.)

(Bartsch 71; Dodgson 30; Meder 66; Panofsky 178)

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Isaac D. Fletcher Fund, 19.73.80

A young woman bathing in a lake is abducted by a male creature. The kidnapper, half man and half fish, has an antler and a shaggy beard. A tortoise-shell shield and jawbone weapon are roped around his neck. His victim, reclined on his fish body, nonchalantly points to Dürer's monogram at the bottom of the print, while gazing, with some anguish, over her shoulder toward her companions. Nude except for a swath of drapery and an elaborate headdress, the woman displays her body without inhibition. Two guardians wring their hands and gesticulate in frenzied astonishment, while her three bathing companions scramble towards the safety of land. Dwarfing these figures is a fantastic landscape, which includes a fortified town and castle on a towering bluff. A boat with billowing sails makes its way along the shore.

Because of Albrecht Dürer's interest in classical mythology, many early twentieth-century scholars searched for a literary source for *Das Meerwunder* (Fig. 131) in classical texts. Among those suggested were the Ovidian tale of Achelous and Perimele,<sup>1</sup> the rape of Theolinda,<sup>2</sup> and the abduction of Amymon.<sup>3</sup> No source, however, agrees with the print's details.

The subject seems to be one of the "anonymous atrocity stories which, though ultimately of classical origin, were currently reported as having taken place in recent times and in familiar environments."<sup>4</sup> Such a story is related by Poggio Bracciolini as having occurred on the Dalmatian coast in the fifteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Supposedly, a half-human, half-fish monster, with small horns and long beard, had abducted children and girls as they played near the beach until five washerwomen overpowered and killed it. To add credence to this tale, Poggio reported having seen the monster's body when it was displayed in Ferrara.<sup>6</sup> While this story seems to explain the narrative



Fig. 131 *The Sea Monster (Das Meerwunder)*, no. 59

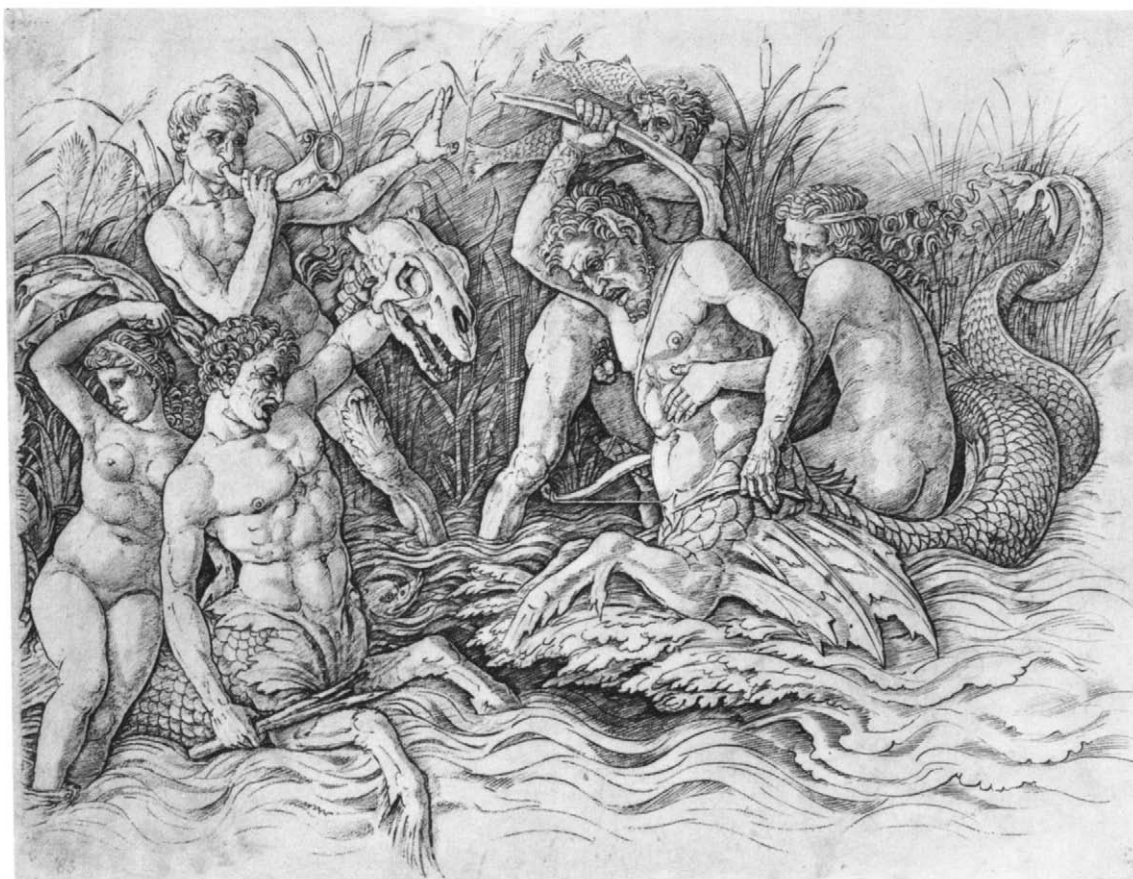


Fig. 132 *Battle of the Sea Gods*. Detail, engraving by Andrea Mantegna. Italy, about 1485–88. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 20.88.1

background of Dürer's *Meerwunder*, the iconography is more complex.

Elements in the image reflect the repertory acquired by Dürer during his first Italian trip of 1494–95. Approximately four years before making *Das Meerwunder*, Dürer copied several mythological engravings by Andrea Mantegna, including *Battle of the Sea Gods* (Fig. 132).<sup>7</sup> Sea monsters, with the torsos of men, forelegs of horses, and tails of serpentine monsters, battle with bone weapons and shields. Mounted on their backs are nude women. In her nonchalant attitude, profiled face, solid body forms, and flowing drapery, the woman riding the sea god on the left is strikingly similar to the woman abducted by Dürer's *Meerwunder*.

North of the Alps a different, less sophisticated tradition of "sea monsters" had developed, as represented by the half-knight, half-fish creature depicted in a Tournai tapestry manufactured

about 1515 (Fig. 133).<sup>8</sup> Here the sea monster abducts one of a group of young wild women bathing in a spring, as wild men armed with clubs and bows and arrows leap to her defense. The way in which the wild woman and her companions either wring their hands or raise them in alarm resembles the reactions of the friends of the abducted woman in Dürer's print, but there the abductor encounters no opposition. In the tapestry, the scene focuses on a more traditional theme, the sexual rivalry between knights and wild men (see nos. 11,12). In both tapestry and engraving the women's loose drapery identifies them as promiscuous.

The aquatic wild man was often described in literature, but rarely illustrated. The term *Das Meerwunder*, translated as "sea monster," is a close variant of *Merewonder*, the Old German name of aquatic wild men.<sup>9</sup> According to accounts of the

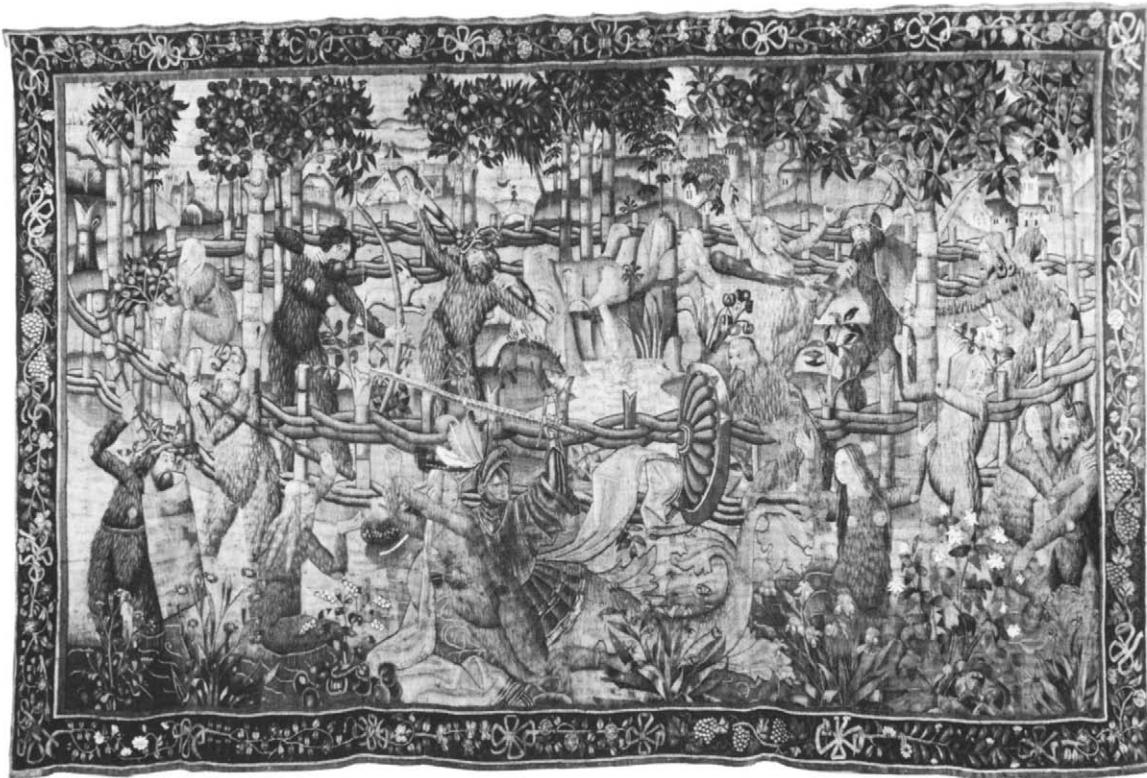


Fig. 133 Sea monster abducting a wild woman. Tapestry. Tournai, about 1515. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 814

*Meerwunder*, their habitats ranged from stagnant ponds to turbulent oceans. Their personalities and habits were the same as those of their terrestrial cousins, but physical anomalies were common. An aquatic wild man reportedly caught off the English shore in 1161 was described as hairy but, paradoxically, bald,<sup>10</sup> and the “*wilde Wazzer-man*” in *Diu Cròne* was described as an ugly creature crawling with snakes.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, when depicted in art, aquatic wild folk look much like their terrestrial counterparts. In a *Book of Hours* at Yale (no. 38), wild men cross rivers in boats (fol. 48v) and wear waders when they fish (fol. 83v). Only one wild man—aiming an arrow at a beseeching figure emerging from the mouth of a fish—appears at home in the water (Fig. 134). Though hairy like a wild man he has the tail of a fish, and thereby qualifies as a sea monster.

Like wild folk, Dürer’s *Meerwunder* enjoys an af-

finity with nature, sporting stag’s antlers and protecting himself with a tortoise shell. Indeed, nature is such an active force in this print that it practically overwhelms the human inhabitants. Cliffs tower over the ant-size figures of men near the left margin, and the wind kicks up the billowing cumulus cloud behind the castle and fills the sails of the ship near the right margin. This special treatment of landscape, characteristic of Dürer’s work, influenced the Danube School.<sup>12</sup>

Under Renaissance influence, the imagery of the medieval wild man was progressively penetrated by that of his classical forebears. Reflecting the striking parallels between the wild man and the ancient savage, increasingly evident to humanist thinkers, the imagery of both became so intertwined that distinctions inevitably dissolved. Thus the dichotomous nature of the wild man, both peaceful and savage, corresponds so closely to Hesiod’s



Fig. 134 Sea monster, with wild man body, aiming arrow at a wild man. Manuscript illumination from a Book of Hours (no. 38). France, about 1500. New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Ms. 436, fol. 86v

Age of Gold and Age of Silver that the two themes can no longer be distinguished. Niklaus Manuel's hairless savages (no. 57), as an example, relate as closely to wild men in their woodland habitat (nos. 29, 37; Fig. 70) as they do to Cranach's ancient primitives (Fig. 13). Dürer was perhaps the last of the northern artists to successfully fuse ancient and medieval mythologies, emphasizing their common aspects, to reinforce the image as a whole. Although clearly indebted to classical sources, Dürer, in using the title *Das Meerwunder*, unequivocally sets his subject in the context of late medieval legend and tradition. The mythology of the medieval wild man thus receives his last compelling image at the dawn of a postmedieval world.

G.G.-H. and T.H.

#### NOTES

1. Tietze-Conrat, 1915-16, p. 265.
2. Lange, 1900, pp. 195-204.
3. Bartsch, 1808, no. 71.
4. Panofsky, 1945, vol. I, p. 73.
5. Lange, 1900, pp. 195-204.
6. Panofsky, 1945, vol. I, p. 73.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32, fig. 47.
8. Göbel, 1923, vol. I, p. 284; Bernheimer, 1952, p. 49, fig. 30; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 65.
9. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 40; *Bildteppiche*, 1953, no. 17.
10. Bernheimer, 1952, p. 40.
11. *Diu Crone*, verses 9210-555.
12. *Danube School*, 1969, no. 5.

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Lange, 1900, pp. 195-204; Tietze-Conrat, 1915-16, pp. 263-65; Panofsky, 1945, vol. I, pp. 68, 72-73; vol. II, fig. 107; *Wilden Leute*, 1963, no. 6; *Danube School*, 1969, no. 5; Strauss, 1972, no. 23.



## Appendix A

### le travail

Jay regardé que cest que de fortune  
qui donne aux gens richesse ou povreté  
Jay veu les huns en triomphe opportune  
en heur mondain plain de prospérité  
Jay veu ausy en grant malheureté  
Laits ungs vivre sans une seule joye  
Mais quant jay bien tout exsperimanté  
Il nest cy bon que la moyenne voye.

Jay veu des gens vivre sans deffortune  
avoir le bruit l'honneur loctorité  
Jehan ay veu maints sans puissance nesune  
Pres de venir jusque a mandicité  
Jai veu saineurs de maints grande cyté  
Jai veu ausy ceulx que regret convoye  
Mais pour parler selon la vérité  
Il n'est cy bon que la moyenne voye.

Quant est de moy sans a(n)vye ou rancune  
De mon mestier quiers ma félicité  
De grans maisons nay fort seullement une  
De riche avoir ne suis fort hérité  
Je travaille fuyant nécessité  
Ma femme fille, aincy Dieu nous pourvoye  
Par se moyen vivons sans fauceté  
Il n'est cy bon qte la moyenne voye.

Saineurs noctez ce que j'ay recyté  
Qui plus dépent plus ce trort e pourvoye  
Et pour vivre celon vraye equite  
Il n'est cy bon que la moyenne voye.

...

Je viz cellon que ma aprins nature  
sans soucy nul tousjours joyeusement  
De fors chasteaulx de grant palays nay cure  
En (ce) croux ci fois moy ébergement  
Quant a viandes soueves nullement  
ne en fort breuvages nen prand point deplesance  
De froiz fruitage me repes seullement  
Et ainsy ai, Dieu mercy, souffisance.

Je boy de leau clere necte et pure  
Quant jay grant souef et non pas autrement  
De jours m'esbas et puis la nuie obscure  
Prans mon repas bien convenablement  
Aussy nay doubte que resonnablement  
Mal me soit faict car je ne fois nuisance  
à nul qui vive dessoubz le fiermament  
Et pour ce ay, Dieu mercy, souffisance.

### Of Work

I have seen what fortune is  
Which gives men riches or poverty.  
I have seen some in timely triumph,  
In worldly happiness and prosperity,  
I have also seen men in great misery,  
Those who live without a single joy;  
But as I have come to know it all,  
There is none better than the middle way.

I have seen men live without misfortune  
Respected, honored, and acclaimed.  
I have also seen men without power  
Fall to dependence on charity.  
I have seen the overlords of great cities,  
I have also seen those plagued by distress.  
But, to tell the truth,  
There is none better than the middle way.

As for me I have no envy and bear no grudge,  
I find my happiness in my trade.  
Great houses I have not a single one,  
No riches have I inherited.  
I work out of necessity,  
My wife spins, and so God provides for us  
and by these means we live an honest life.  
There is none better than the middle way.

So, lords, take heed of what I say,  
The more one spends, the more one needs.  
And so, to live truly equitably,  
There is none better than the middle way.

...

I live according to what Nature has taught me—  
Free from worry, always joyously.  
For mighty castles, grand palaces I do not care.  
In a hollow tree I make my home.  
I do not delight in fancy food  
Or in strong drink.  
I live upon fresh fruit alone,  
And so I have, thank God, enough.

I drink clear water, fresh and pure,  
Just when I'm thirsty, never otherwise.  
I amuse myself by day and when night falls  
I quite wisely eat my evening meal.  
So I have no cause to fear  
That anyone would do me harm, since I have wronged  
Not a single creature under heaven.  
And because of that, I have, thank God, enough.



Je nay besoing de porter frant vesteure  
 Moy poil couvre assex suffisamant  
 Pour ce ne craint ne trop chault ne froidure  
 Ne a dormir sur cousté mollemant  
 pas ne convouette car jamais autremant  
 Je nay apprins de toute monne enfance  
 Que sur l'erbette moy coucher simplement  
 Et ainsy ay, Dieu mercy, souffisance.

Quant le temps a ploye à leidure  
 bien fort soubsmis et qu'il vante formant  
 Je panse adonc qu'il na povoir qu'il dure  
 en ce point là lors guieres longuemant  
 Et par aincy voir souverainement  
 Je prans confort et vis en espérance  
 Que le soleil luira après briemant  
 Et pour ce ay, Dieu mercy, souffisance.

Prince que vault vivre orgueilleusement  
 Et rapiner pour mener grant bobance  
 Quand nul n'emporte à son trespasement  
 Qu'un seul linceul pour toute souffisance

Nature gero modum respice  
 paucis (...?) nes que contentata est

I have no need for fancy clothes.  
 My hairy coat protects me well enough  
 So that I fear neither heat nor cold.  
 I don't want to sleep in a soft bed,  
 Because I learned all during childhood  
 To lie down simply in a patch of grass.  
 And so I have, thank God, enough.

When the weather turns to rain  
 And the wind blows hard  
 I tell myself it can't go on  
 Too long like this,  
 And thus I rise above it.  
 I comfort myself and live in hope  
 That soon the sun will shine again,  
 And because of that, I have, thank God, enough.

Prince, what good is it to live so proudly  
 And to plunder just to lead a pompous life,  
 When at the moment of one's death  
 A shroud alone will be enough.

Nature gero modum respice  
 paucis (...?) nes que contentata est

## Appendix B

### Klag der wilden Holtzleüt vber die vngetrewen Welt

Ach Got wie ist verderbt all Welt  
 Wie starck leyt die Untrew zû felcht  
 Wie hart ist Grechtigkeyt gefangen  
 Wie hoch thût Vngerechtigkeyt prangen  
 Wie sitzt der Wücher yetzt in ehren  
 Wie hart kann Arbeyt sick ernehen  
 Wie ist Gemeyner nutz so thewr  
 Wie fült der Eygen nutz sein schewr  
 Wie nimbt vberhandt die Finantz  
 Wie spitzig ist der Altfantz  
 Wie vnverschampt geht Gewalt für Recht  
 Wie hart wirdt die Wahrheytt durchecht  
 Wie wirdt Vnschuld mit füßen treten  
 Wie weng thût man laster auss jetten  
 Wie ring wigt man des Menschen blût  
 Wie gar helt man kein straff für güt  
 Wie fürt Reichtumb so grossen pracht  
 Wie ist Armût so gar veracht  
 Wie steht Weyssheit hinder der thür  
 Wie dringt Reichtumb vnd Gwalt herfür  
 Wie ist Barmhertzigkeyt so kranck  
 Wie hat die Lûg so weyten ganck

### Lament of the Wild Forest Folk over the Perfidious World

Alas! Society corrupts  
 And rampant perfidy erupts  
 As justice suffers out of sight  
 Injustice prospers in the light  
 The loan shark sits in Honor's seat  
 While honest workers cannot eat  
 Of common wood a thought is rare  
 What they can get is all they care  
 The money changers run the show  
 You may be sure their rates aren't low  
 Shamelessly might makes the right  
 And Truth is harried through the night  
 Innocence is kicked about  
 And vices can't be weeded out  
 Human blood is too soon shed  
 When murderers have naught to dread  
 The splendid rich display no shame  
 "The poor have but themselves to blame"  
 And wisdom hides behind the door  
 While might and riches hold the floor  
 Human caring's hardly heard  
 When lies are found in every word

Wie regirt der Neyd mit gewalt  
 Wie ist Brüderlich lieb erkalt  
 Wie ist die Trew so gar erloschen  
 Wie hat Mileigkeyt aussdroschen  
 Wie ist Demüt so gar verschwunden  
 Wie hat der Glaub so vil der wunden  
 Wie ist Gedult so gar rewichen  
 Wie ist Frumkeyt so gar erplichen  
 Wie ist die zucht so gar ein spot  
 Wie ist Keuscheyt so ellend todt  
 Wie ist die Einfalt so verdorben  
 Wie gar ist all Freundtschafft gestorben  
 Wie ist Leybes wolluts so mechtig  
 Wie ist Hoffart so gross vnd prechtig  
 Wie herscht Schmeychlerey so gwaltig  
 Wie ist Nachred so manigfaltig  
 Wie gern hört man New meerlin bringen  
 Wie ist Betrug in allen dingen  
 Wie ist die Kunst so gar vnwerdt  
 Wie gross ist die Torheytt auff erdt  
 Wie findt man Messigkeyt so selten  
 Wie vil ist Fällery yetz selten  
 Wie hart müß sich der Fridsam schmiegen  
 Wie löblich ist Mörden vnd Kriegen  
 Wie ist die Eygen Ehr so gross  
 Wie ist der Geytz so gar grundtloss  
 Wie ist das Spil so eygennützig  
 Wie geschicht die Rauberey so drützig  
 Wie ist der Diebstal also grob  
 Wie schwebt die Ligstigbeyt stets ob  
 Wie ist Gots schweren so gemeyn  
 Wie rechnet man Meinayd so kleyn  
 Wie gar ist Eebruch mer kein schandt  
 Wie fleyschlich ist der Beystlich standt  
 Wie ist so blindt die Gleyssnerey  
 Wie wütig ist die Tyranny  
 Wie vngezogen ist die Jugent  
 Wie gar das Alter lebt on tugent  
 Wie vnverschampt ist Weyblich bild  
 Wie ist Mänlich person so wild  
 Wie ist Geselschafft so vntrew  
 Wie hat borgen so vil rachrew  
 Wie sind die Wahr so gar vertrogen  
 Wie sind die Schuldt so gar verzogen  
 Wie gar ist Nachparschafft gebessig  
 Wie sind die Wirtscht gar vnmessig  
 Wie rho ist der Menschen gewissen  
 Wie ist alls vnglück eingerissen  
 Wie thum ist yetz die Christenheytt  
 Wie seltzam ist die Heyligkeyt  
 Wie wenig helt man Gottes Gepot  
 Wie vnbereyt ist man zum Todt  
 Wie klein hat man auff ewigs acht  
 Wie gar man auff das zeytlich tracht  
 Wie vnwürdig hört man Gots wort  
 Wie weng lebt man darnach fort  
 Wie ist all Welt so gar verpittert  
 Mit trug vnd schalckheytt vberqirtet  
 Vnd in kurtz Summa summarum

Where envy rules, and with the sword  
 Brotherhood can strike no chord  
 These times snuff out true loyalty  
 Destroying even sympathy  
 Humility has disappeared  
 And Faith survives but deeply seared  
 Forbearance has been forced to yield  
 As Righteousness fades from the field  
 Propriety's a joke, 'tis said  
 And modesty is sadly dead  
 Simplicity is lost in scheming  
 Friendliness beyond redeeming  
 The pleasures of the flesh hold sway  
 And courtly manners show the way  
 Most powerful is flattery  
 But backstabbing is done with glee  
 Gossip's always in demand  
 Intrigue's always close at hand  
 Art can't be of any worth  
 As foolishness now rules the earth  
 It's hard to find a man of measure  
 When excess counts alone as pleasure  
 The peaceable must hide their ways  
 When war and killing get all praise  
 This pushing forward wouldn't gall  
 If merit were the ground at all  
 When all that counts is one's own gain  
 It's robbery—to call it plain  
 Thieves they are, and to the core  
 It's trickery brings them to the fore  
 An oath to God one quickly swears  
 What's perjury if no one cares  
 Adultery's no cause for shame  
 When priests themselves will do the same  
 And all this blind hypocrisy  
 Is ruled by raging tyranny  
 The young learn nothing to respect  
 Their elders don't know what's correct  
 The women act the harlot's way  
 The men are less than beasts of prey  
 Cooperation's just a sham  
 When Trust ain't worth a tinker's dam  
 From every group the Good are driven  
 Though Evil is so soon forgiven  
 Love of Neighbor's in short ration  
 Households know no moderation  
 They've no conscience it is plain  
 Who profit from another's pain  
 Christianity through this stands mute  
 Piety's in ill repute  
 God's Laws are paid so little heed  
 And unprepared for death indeed  
 Are those whose thoughts not on the next  
 But this world's cares are firmly fixed  
 They hear God's word, unworthily  
 But never live accordingly  
 The world's in such a sorry state  
 With lies, and knavery, and hate  
 And so to sum it up in short

Was in der Welt ist schlecht vnd frum̃  
 Muss von der Welt durchachtet werden  
 Was aber listig ist auff erden  
 Verschalckt/vertrogen auff all pan  
 Heyst die Welt ein geschickten Man  
 Seyd nun die Welt ist so vertrogen  
 Mit vntrew/list/gantz vberzogen  
 So seyen wir gangen darauss  
 Halten in wildem walde hauss  
 Mit vnsern vnerzogen kinden  
 Das was die falsch Welt nit mög finden  
 Da wir der wilden frucht vns neren  
 Von den wurtzlein der erden zeren  
 Vnd trincken ein lautern prunnen  
 Vns thut erwermen die liecht Sonnen  
 Miess/laub vnd grass ist vnser gwandt  
 Davon wir beth vnd deck auch handt  
 Ein steyne hól ist vnser Hauss  
 Da treybt keines das ander auss  
 Vnser Gselschafft vnd Jubilien  
 Ist im holtz bey den wilden Thiern  
 So wir den selben nichts nit thon  
 Lassens vns auch mit friden gon  
 Also wir in der wüsten sind  
 Geperen kind vnd kindes kind  
 Eynig vnd brüderlich wir leben  
 Kein zanck ist sich bey vn begeben  
 Ein yedes thut als es dann wolt  
 Als im von ihm geschehen solt  
 Vmb kein zeytlichs thün wir nit sorgen  
 Vnser speyss findt wir alle morgen  
 Nemen wir zu notturfft vnd nit mer  
 Vnd sagen Got darumb lob vnd eer  
 Felt vns zu kranckheyt oder todt  
 Wiss wir das es vns kumbt von Got  
 Der alle ding im besten thut  
 Also on einfeltigem mü̃t  
 Vertreyben wir hie vnser zeyt  
 Biss ein verenderung sich begeyt  
 In weyter welt vmb vnd umb  
 Das yederman werdt trew vnd frumb  
 Das stat hat Armüt vnd Einfalt  
 Denn wol wir wider auss dem walde  
 Vnd wonen bey der menschen schar  
 Wir haben hie gewart vil Jar  
 Wenn tugent/redligkeyt/auff wachs  
 Das bald geschee wünscht vns Hans sachs

Dedruckt zu Nürnberg durch  
 Hans Guldenmundt  
 1545

We find the things of evil sort  
 Embraced by all society  
 While all the best variety  
 Is driven out or just destroyed  
 A man who would be well employed  
 And finds the world in such a mess  
 Must forsake this faithlessness  
 And so we left our worldly goods  
 To make our home in these deep woods  
 With our little ones protected  
 From that falsehood we rejected  
 We feed ourselves on native fruits  
 And from the earth dig tender roots  
 For drink pure springs are plentiful  
 For warmth sunlight is bountiful  
 For garments grass and leaves we take  
 And from the same our beds we make  
 Our homes are made in caves of stone  
 And no one takes what's not his own  
 The wild beasts which most men fear  
 We find are good companions here  
 Since we never do them harm  
 They give us no cause for alarm  
 And thus removed from civilization's  
 Shams we've lived for generations  
 United in our simple life  
 Where never could be cause for strife  
 Since none would call another "fool"  
 For following the Golden Rule  
 And worldly treasure's paid no heed  
 We gather daily what we need  
 For that day and don't have to hoard  
 For all these gifts we thank the Lord  
 If death should come or one fall ill  
 We know that this is just God's will  
 Which always sets things for the best  
 And so our minds remain at rest  
 As we await within our border  
 That great change in the civil order  
 When all the world will see the light  
 And everyman live true, upright,  
 In equal, unconniving good  
 It's then we'll gladly leave the wood  
 And rejoin mankind in tears  
 Of joy; We've waited for years and years.  
 This turn to virtue Man now mocks,  
 Will soon occur, hopes friend Hans Sachs.

Translated by Fred A. Childs

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