

THE WILD MAN: IMAGES OF LIMINALITY.
PROLEGOMENA TO A STUDY OF
GILGAMESH AND MONTAIGNE'S "DES CANNIBALES."

by

Diane Susan Beckman

A Dissertation submitted to the faculty of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Curriculum of Comparative Literature.

Chapel Hill

1993

Approved by:

<u>Lorraine R. Finsel</u>	Advisor
<u>Donna B. Tamm</u>	Reader
<u>Barbara Fields</u>	Reader
<u>Bruce A. Kennedy</u>	Reader
<u>Malvina May</u>	Reader

©1993
Diane Susan Beckman
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

DIANE SUSAN BECKMAN. The Wild Man: Images of Liminality. Prolegomena to a Study of Gilgamesh and Montaigne's "Des cannibales."

(Under the direction of Lilian R. Furst)

ABSTRACT

The Wild Man persists as a shared cultural symbol throughout the Western tradition of representation in a rich history of successive embodiments in the verbal and visual arts. This fictional creation is defined as a recognizable human being, who lives outside of society and whose appearance and behavior reveal a closeness to the non-human world of nature. The enduring fascination of the Wild Man and the complexity of his history relies on a paradox: he has a dual identity, as both noble and ignoble savage. His tradition is governed by the myth of the noble savage, which holds that humans were unspoiled before the coming of civilization, and the myth of ignoble savage, where civilization brings everything good to humans and transforms human nature.

The Wild Man is best understood as a liminal figure. He is a personification, or figural representation, of the boundary that is created when human beings try to account for their place in a natural order. As artifacts, wild-man figures function within larger systems of representation. Intertextuality and its associated imagery of net, mosaic, and palimpsest provides the perspective for viewing the wild man's role in the human story, from prehistory through the Renaissance.

The first significant text of the Western tradition, the Epic of Gilgamesh, features Enkidu, literary history's first wild man. Major wild-man themes are already in evidence, such as the implications of travel and the interplay of the human, divine, and natural realms. The most important encounter of the Renaissance, between the Old World and the New, is colored by the myths of noble and ignoble savages, as Michel de Montaigne reveals in his essay "Des

cannibales." Montaigne employs a variety of textual strategies associated with liminality and intertextuality to involve and challenge the reader. In both form and theme he explores the nature of passage and the boundaries of knowledge and judgment. He sets up and then overturns the reader's expectations about noble and ignoble savages.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although the writing of a dissertation is a solitary undertaking, I have benefited greatly from the support and assistance of many people during the long gestation and completion of this project. First, I would like to thank my parents, Norman and Harriet Beckman, who supplied me from birth with all the books I ever wanted to read, encouraged my curiosity, and modeled high intellectual and personal standards.

As this work took final form, I was struck by the extent to which it continued my undergraduate interests at Beloit College. Special thanks to Classics and Comparative Literature professors Art Robson and John Wyatt, who introduced me to Gilgamesh, Cicero, Ovid, and Vergil. French professors Hank Bova and Jack Street provided my first encounters with Montaigne and interdisciplinary studies.

I am indebted to Dr. Eugene Falk of the University of North Carolina who gave me the grounding in literary theory without which I could not have ventured into the liminal zones where the wild man beckons. Thanks to Dr. Jerry Mills for suggesting the topic of noble and ignoble savages. Dr. Lilian Furst took on the direction of this dissertation in a most timely and generous manner. I will always be grateful for her intellectual acuity and her unstinting kindness. A special thanks is due to the rest of my committee: Drs. Jaroslav Folda, George Kennedy, Norris Johnson, Mallary Masters, for their demonstration of collegiality. I wish to dedicate the intense and lively experience of my final oral exam to the memory of Dr. Edouard Morot-Sir, who encouraged me to ask unlimited questions and to marvel about language.

And while the Graduate School insisted that my dissertation be completed, the Goddess willed that I discover motherhood. I have always known

that teaching is my vocation, and I am grateful to my children Selena and Max for the most challenging and rewarding teaching assignment of my life. I do not know if I have taught them nearly as much as they have taught me. This work exists as proof that a dissertation can be written in three-hour blocks, and that intellectual and emotional growth are not mutually incompatible. I was able to complete this dissertation without compromising Max and Selena's well-being with the assistance of Jean and Eleanor Harned, Suzanne Tyler, and the wonderful staff of Raleigh Preschool. I am grateful for the encouragement of Hazel Boucher and the Women's Literary Exchange, which resulted in my traveling slide show of wild-men images. In addition, if I were to write my own version of Cicero or Montaigne's essay on friendship, it would feature my remarkable friends John and Ginger Sall for their help beyond measure.

Finally, this work would never have achieved completion without the midwifery at every stage of my invaluable husband, Doug Harned. He read every word, helped with every figure, and above all continues to find joy in my relentless intellectual adventures. It has been worth everything for the pleasure of the sharing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. PROLOGUE	1
Friend or Foe?	1
The Power of Speech: Cicero and the Humanists	4
Cicero's <u>De inventione</u>	5
The Origins of Civilization	6
The Process of Civilization	8
Language: The Most Important of the Civilizing Tools	10
Representation: The Mimetic Model	16
II. THE WILD MAN DEFINED	22
The Liminal Wild Man	22
Definition of the Wild Man	28
Models of Liminality	42
1. The Great Chain of Being	42
2. The Wild Man Out There and the Wild Man Within.....	48
3. The Rites of Passage and the Liminal State	62
The Initiate (Victor Turner).....	64
The Hero, the Guide, The Guardian, the Obstacle (Joseph Campbell)	67
The Traveler (Eric Leed)	69
III. THE INTERTEXTUALITY OF THE WILD MAN	72
What is Intertextuality?	72
The Intertextual Significance of the Wild Man	76
Human Evolution and the Wild Man	79
A Brief View of Human History. <i>Dramatis Personae</i> :	
Hominid to <i>Homo</i>	81
The Upper Paleolithic Strata: The Creative Explosion	87
The Art of the Caves	92
Who is the Wild Man of Les Trois Frères?	96

IV. THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH	109
1. Enkidu's Journey to Uruk	118
2. The Adventures of Enkidu and Gilgamesh.....	131
Humbaba	131
Ishtar and the Bull of Heaven.....	143
3. The Death of Enkidu	156
V. MONTAIGNE'S <u>ESSAIS</u> AND "DES CANNIBALES"	165
Montaigne and his Time	165
The Work	174
1. Essai, Experience, Passage	175
2. The Intertextuality of the <u>Essais</u>	189
3. Form, Formlessness and Liminality	192
4. The Self-portrait.....	202
The Essay: "Des cannibales"	212
Movement 1, Excursions 1, 2	216
Excursion 3	227
Excursion 4	230
Excursion 5, 6	231
Excursion 7	232
Excursion 8	237
Movement 2, Excursion 9	246
Excursion 10	253
Excursions 11, 12	254
Excursion 13	257
Excursion 14, 15	258
Excursion 16	260
Excursion 17, 18	262
Movement 3, Excursions 19, 20	264
VI. EPILOGUE (UPON REREADING)	273
WORKS CITED	275

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Images of the Wild Man: Hominid to New World Savage	2
2. The Mimetic Model	17
3. The Mimetic Model Applied	18
4. The Continuum of Wild-Man Images	29
5. Hybrids and Combinations	31
6. Selections from Vecellio's Renaissance Costume Book	51
7. The Structural Model of the Rites of Passage.....	63
8. Ignoble Savages: Cranach, Topsell, Goya	66
9. The Wild Man of Les Trois Frères Cave.....	95
10. Cernunnos: Detail from the Gundestrup Cauldron	98
11. The Scene from the Shaft, Lascaux	104
12. Images of Actaeon	149
13. Sample pages from 1582 Edition of "Des cannibales"	195
14. Sample page from the Bordeaux Copy	198
15. Eyquem Tours. S/S "Des Cannibales"	215
16. Engravings from André Thevet's <u>Cosmographie Universelle</u>	242
17. Title page from 1588 edition of the <u>Essais</u>	272



CHAPTER I: PROLOGUE

Friend or Foe?

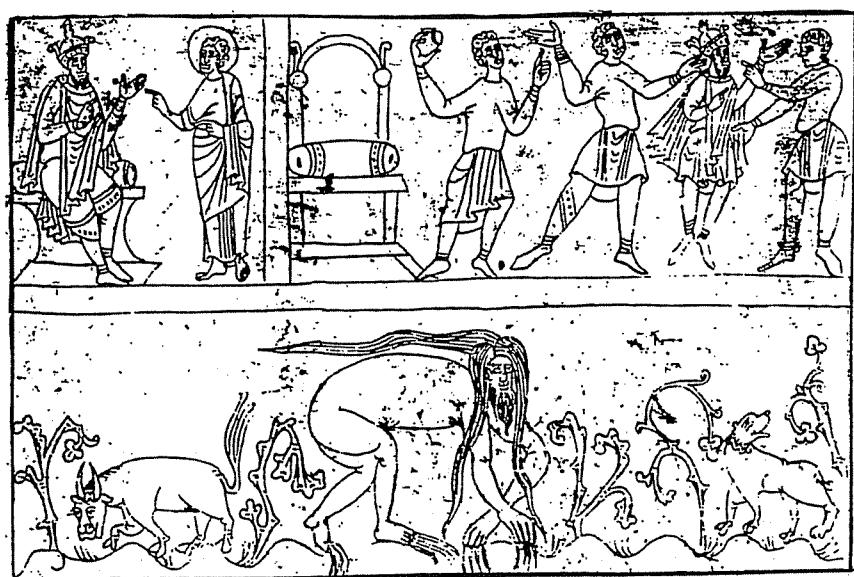
Demon or Savior? Healer or Destroyer? Stranger or Brother? When a reader encounters the figure of the Wild Man, any or all of these seemingly contradictory attributes may apply. The Wild Man persists as a figure throughout the Western tradition of representation. The tradition encompasses a rich variety of images, from modern representations of our human ancestors to the engravings of the New World inhabitants encountered in the Voyages of Discovery. (See Figure 1).¹ Currently the Wild Man is known by different names in different disciplines. Philosophers, historians and anthropologists speak of primitives, barbarians and savages, and more recently, native inhabitants and aborigines.² Science has its hominids and science fiction, its humanoids. Mythology and folklore tell stories of primordial

¹ Sources for illustrations in Figure 1 follow: A. "Hominid" from David Lambert and the Diagram Group, The Field Guide to Early Man (New York: Facts on File, 1987) 7; B. "Nebuchadnezzar" from the Bible of San Pedro de Roda, about 1000, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Ms. lat. 6111 fol. 65v. Rpt. in Timothy Husband, The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980) 8; C. "Silvanus" from British Museum, rpt. in New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology, trans. and rev. ed. (1959; London: Hamlyn, 1968) 216. D. "Woman with hair down to her heels and oxen's feet" from Wonders of the East, Cotton Tiberius Bv, Part 1, Folio 85r (British Museum), rpt. in Mary Campbell, The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing 400-1000 (1988; Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991) 58; E. "Home sauvage" from "Ballade d'une home sauvage," about 1500, Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, Ms. fr. 2366, fol. 3v, rpt. in Husband, fig. 1; F. "Wild-folk family," Engraving by Master bxg, 1470-90, Vienna, Albertina, rpt. in Husband 11; G. "New World Savages at War," from "Contenance des Sauvages devant que venir au combat," André Thevet, Cosmographe Universelle, t. II, f. 943r, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, rpt. in Frank Lestringant, "Les Représentations du sauvage dans l'iconographie relative aux ouvrages du cosmographe André Thevet," Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et de Renaissance, vol. 40 (1978) 586.

² See discussion below page 7 and in Chapter 2. See also Andrew Sinclair, The Savage: A History of Misunderstanding (London: Weiderfeld and Nicolson, 1977).



A. Hominid



B. Nebuchadnezzar



C. Silvanus



D. Monstrous Races: Woman with hair down to her heels and oxen's feet

Figure 1-A. Images of the Wild Man: Hominid to New World Savage.



E. Home sauvage



F. Wild-folk Family



G. New World Savages at War

Figure 1-A continued. Images of the Wild Man: Hominid to New World Savage. (Sources given in 1n1.)

humans, Green Men, and a variety of divinities and ogres which bear wild-man characteristics.³ The term “Wild Man” is current in art history, particularly in reference to the medieval period.⁴ I propose that “Wild Man” be expanded to encompass a wider variety of images and historical periods, because there are common traits beneath the diversity of images that constitute an essential, archetypal Wild Man figure.

Questions about an interdisciplinary figure are best explored in an interdisciplinary manner. For example, the friend/foe paradox at the core of the schematic wild-man figure is illuminated by the anthropological concept of liminality.⁵ Since the different images of the Wild Man are artifacts which function within larger systems of representation, including poems and essays, the mimetic theory of representation is an essential point of departure.⁶ Because the wild-men images and the works of art in which they are embedded are also interrelated, our exploration will also benefit from a concept from contemporary literary criticism—intertextuality.⁷ Having established a more capacious definition of the term “Wild Man,” we will examine how wild-men figures participate in the story of the humankind, from prehistory to the Renaissance. Selecting from the riches of the wild-man intertext, our exploration will focus on Paleolithic cave art before turning to two significant literary examples, the Epic of Gilgamesh (?2000-1250 BCE) and the Essais of Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), with special attention to the essay “Des cannibales.”

The Power of Speech: Cicero and the Humanists

A study of the Wild Man’s appeal for the literature of Western Europe might begin with Cicero, who defined humanitas for the later humanists. His reputation as the preeminent orator of Republican Rome was matched by his

³ See, for example, the works of Joseph Campbell and William Anderson, Green Man: The Archetype of our Oneness with the Earth (London: HarperCollins, 1991).

⁴ See Husband and Richard Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1952).

⁵ This term will be explained and the concept explored in Chapter 2.

⁶ See page 16 below.

⁷ Intertextuality is the focus of the first part of Chapter 3.

standing as stylist and thinker. He was responsible for transmitting much of Greek thought and Roman values to the European Renaissance. We shall begin with a passage from the opening of one of his earliest works, De inventione.

Cicero's De inventione

Nam fuit quoddam tempus cum in agris homines passim bestiarum modo vagabantur et sibi victu fero vitam propagabant, nec ratione animi quicquam, sed pleraque viribus corporis administrabant; nondum divinae religionis, non humani offici ratio colebatur, nemo nuptias viderat legitimas, non certos quisquam aspicerat liberos, non, ius aequabile quid utilitatis haberet, acceperat. Ita propter errorem atque inscientiam caeca ac temeraria dominatrix animi cupiditas ad se explendam viribus corporis abutebatur, perniciosissimis satellitibus.

Quo tempore quidam magnus videlicet vir et sapiens cognovit quae materia esset et quanta ad maximas res opportunitas in animis inesset hominum, si quis eam posset elicere et praecipiendo meliorem reddere; qui dispersos homines in agros et in tectis silvestribus abditos ratione quadam compulit unum in locum et congregavit et eos in unam quamque rem inducens utilem atque honestam primo propter insolentiam reclamantes, deinde propter rationem atque orationem studiosius audientes ex feris et immanibus mites reddit et mansuetos.⁸

For there was a time when men wandered at large in the fields like animals and lived on wild fare; they did nothing by the guidance of reason, but relied chiefly on physical strength; there was as yet no ordered system of religious worship nor of social duties; no one had seen legitimate marriage nor had anyone looked upon children whom he knew to be his own; nor had they learned the advantages of an equitable code of law. And so through their ignorance and error blind and unreasoning

⁸ Latin text and English translation from Cicero, De inventione. De optimo genere oratorum. Topica, trans., H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1949) I.ii.1-2. It is revealing both Cicero and the translator omit women and children from consideration here. The wild-man intertext as I define it contains examples of both genders and a variety of ages, as well as characters who are only part-human. See Chapter 2. On the wild woman in particular, see Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Women Who Run With the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype (New York: Ballantine, 1992).

passion satisfied itself by misuse of bodily strength, which is a very dangerous servant.

At this juncture a man—great and wise I am sure—became aware of the power latent in man and the wide field offered by his mind for great achievements if one could develop this power and improve it by instruction. Men were scattered in the fields and hidden in sylvan retreats when he assembled and gathered them in accordance with a plan; he introduced them to every useful and honorable occupation, though they cried out against it at first because of its novelty, and then when through reason and eloquence they had listened with greater attention, he transformed them from wild savages to a kind and gentle folk.

What the translator refers to as “ordered systems” and “useful and honorable occupations,” corresponds to what is conventionally referred to as “civilization.” This particular version of the origins of civilization appealed so much to the concerns of the humanists that it became a commonplace in Renaissance thought.⁹ The passage demands a thorough analysis which, like Gaul, we can divide into three parts: Cicero's portrayal of primitive man, that is, man before civilization, the process of civilization itself, and finally, Cicero's assessment of ratio and oratio, which make this process possible.

The Origins of Civilization

In De inventione, Cicero defines early man from the outset by where and how he lived. He begins the passage with an expression, Nam fuit quoddam tempus, that takes us far back in the past, like the “once upon a time” of a fairy tale. In this long lost time, humans wandered the fields, nomadically, in the manner of beasts: bestiarum modo vagabantur. It is unfortunate that English has no simple way to render the force of that imperfect, which makes early man's wandering endless and aimless. The key word in the clause is bestiarum, which compares humans to beasts. The nature of this relationship is essential to our understanding of the Wild Man. Early man was not only living an unsettled life like that of the beasts, but he

⁹ Hubbell makes the interesting point that the ideas expressed in this passage were a commonplace already in Cicero's time, dating back at least to Isocrates, 12^{na}. On the *topos* as a Renaissance commonplace, see S.K. Heninger, Jr., Sidney and Spenser: The Poet as Maker (University Park: The Pennsylvania State UP, 1989) 162-167 and O.B. Hardison, “The Orator and the Poet: The Dilemma of Humanist Literature,” Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies 1 (1971) 35-38.

kept himself alive by feeding on them: sibi victu fero vitam propagabant. At the very end of this selection from De inventione the adjective ferus appears for the second time: ex feris et immanibus. In the first instance, however, the adjective describes man's food, and in the second, early man himself. Indeed, these words describe and define ignoble wild savages—ferus (wild, untamed, uncultivated, uncivilized) and immanis (monstrous, savage, horrible, inhuman).

Cicero expresses an interest in the primitive man as the *chronological antecedent* of civilized man, and he in no way glorifies or romanticizes the *hard life* of those early times. In current usage, primitivism is exemplified by "a person who prefers a way of life which, when judged by one or more of the standards prevailing in his own society would be considered less 'advanced' or 'civilized'"...¹⁰ Since this is a study of Renaissance literature, it will more helpful to consider primitivism in a context which is more suited to the humanist tradition. In a study whose title plays with words from the Wild Man's semantic constellation, Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives, Marianna Torgovnick explores the evolution of meanings of the word *primitive* up through its current problematic status. She begins, "The word *primitive* first appeared in English in the fifteenth century to signify the 'original or ancestor' of animals, perhaps of men. In its dominant meanings through the eighteenth century, it referred to the 'first, earliest age, period, or stage' usually of church history, later of biological tissue..."¹¹ This is the sense of the word "primitive" which is appropriate to our analysis of Cicero, for his interest here is to portray the early or primitive stages of civilization, not to praise them.

The rest of the opening paragraph defines humans deemed "primitive" in a characteristic manner. Traditionally we expect a definition to consist in positive terms which delineate the features of a given subject. Portrayals of the Wild Man consistently defy this expectation. This is exemplified as Cicero begins his description with an account of a feature which is lacking in early man: nec ratione animi quicquam... administrabant ("they did

¹⁰ "Primitivism," Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, enlarged edition, 1974.

¹¹ Marianna Torgovnick, Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1990) 18-19.

nothing by the guidance of reason"). This crucial assessment is juxtaposed with the attribution of a positive element, primitive man's physical strength, which guides him in reason's stead. However, Cicero undercuts this positive feature, asserting that the power of the body can be a most destructive accomplice (perniciosissimis satellitibus), when, as is the case for early man, the animus, man's rational soul or intellect, is dominated by blind and thoughtless passion rather than reason.

The absence of reason is fundamental to Cicero's portrayal of primitive man. Without the guidance of reason (ratione animi), the elements of civilization (humani offici ratio) could not develop. Cicero is explicit about these. Early man had no organized religious worship or social responsibilities. There was no awareness of legitimate marriage or offspring and no appreciation for an impartial legal code. In short, the major constituents of Roman custom and law were unknown to early man, who is in error because of his wandering (errorem) and ignorance. Given the manner in which Cicero details these elements, it is clear that he is much more interested in what early man did *not* have than in what he did have. This emphasis reveals the value Cicero places on the faculty of reason and the institutions derived by means of reason, values shared by the humanists. It is also indicative of the way in which wild men are typically defined.

The "Golden Age" is another tradition which shares the manner of definition by negatives with primitivism. In The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance, Harry Levin borrows the term "the negative formula" from Howard Patch to describe a recurring feature in descriptions of that Other World from the days of Sumerian clay tablets through the Renaissance.¹² Cicero invokes the negative formula (nondum, non, nemo non, non) here to highlight the absences which define his primitives.

The Process of Civilization

Cicero identifies the process of civilization as a process of education. Early man's ignorance and wandering does not continue forever. A great and wise man (magnus...vir et sapiens) appeared on the scene and transformed it dramatically. He recognized (cognovit, note the switch to the perfect tense)

¹² Harry Levin, The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance (1969; New York: Oxford UP, 1972) 11.

the inherent abilities of the human mind (animus again).¹³ Once this latent power is observed, the wise man must then devise a way to lure it out (elicere, cf. Hubbell's weaker "develop"). For the great civilizer is above all a great teacher. Man's innate rationality is brought out and then improved through instruction: praecipiendo meliorem reddere.

Bringing education to these isolated early men was no easy task. The great and wise man had to locate his prospective pupils in scattered fields (dispersos agros) and hidden in woodland shelters (in tectis silvestribus abditos). These details are particularly important because location is one of the few positive elements used to define early man. The adjective silvestribus is especially pertinent because it gives us the Latin name for the Wild Man: homo silvester. The other adjectives, dispersos and abditos, are significant as well in our appreciation of Cicero's textual strategies. We see the same device used here that we observed earlier in Cicero's portrayal of early man's physical strength: a positive attribute is delineated, then promptly undercut. Early man's habitat was field and woodland. Dispersions and abditos stress the isolation of this habitat. Early man must leave this isolation in order to attain civilized status.

Early man does not remain wild for long once the great and wise man is able to put his plan (ratio again) into action. He brings his future students together, assembles them in a congregation, and then literally leads them into civilization (rem inducens utilem atque honestam). Through this introduction to "every useful and honest occupation," the building blocks of society detailed above—marriage, family life, the law—are set in place. But even after this initial lesson, civilization does not proceed entirely without struggle. At first, the men of the fields and forest do not want to listen to their teacher. His proposal is too unusual, contrary to custom (insolentiam). But, finally, given the powerful combination of reason and eloquence (propter rationem atque orationem), they begin to listen eagerly, as students should (studiosius). The final transformation is achieved and the teacher has triumphed. Those who once were feris et immanibus are now mites ("mild,

¹³ The twentieth century reader cannot help but notice the capitalist flavor in Cicero's description of these abilities: quanta ad maximas res opportunitas. The Roman zeal for money was legendary cf. Horace's portrayal of math lesson in Ars Poetica, 1. 323-332. This is another fashion shared by the Renaissance, customarily viewed as the birthplace of capitalism.

soft, ripe") et mansuetos ("tame, gentle"). Ratio and oratio together have successfully domesticated early man.

Language: The Most Important of Civilizing Tools

For Cicero, as for the humanists who so admired him, language is essential to the process of domestication and education which allows humankind to realize its civilized potential. As Cicero continues in De inventione, "To me, at least, it does not seem possible that a mute and voiceless wisdom (nec tacita nec inops dicendi sapientia) could have turned men suddenly from their habits and introduced them to different patterns of life" (I.3). The power of language is essential not only for the founding of civilization, but for its maintenance as well. The proper use of speech, "eloquentia," is at the core of what it is to be human, and is the basis of shared human experience or humanitas. A few pages later in De inventione, Cicero explains:

(Eloquence) renders life safe, honorable, glorious, and even agreeable. For from eloquence the state receives many benefits, provided only it is accompanied by wisdom, the guide of all human affairs. From eloquence those who have acquired it obtain glory and honour and high esteem. From eloquence comes the surest and safest protection for one's friends. Furthermore, I think that men, although lower and weaker than animals in many respects, excel them most by having the power of speech. Therefore that man appears to me to have won a splendid possession who excels men themselves in that ability by which men excel beasts (I. 5).

The distinction between man and beast is crucial for the Wild Man. Cicero takes the position here that the power of speech separates humans from beasts. According to Cicero, speech is also one of the few domains in which man's strength is greater than that of the beasts. Furthermore, just as speech lifts man above the animals, so one man can set himself above other men and improve his own life by exercising this same ability. But the value of eloquence is not limited to its benefits to the individual. Cicero, statesman and social philosopher, stresses the value of eloquence to one's circle of friends and to the state itself. It is a social bond and one which benefits the various levels of human society.

The humanist program of re-forming man in line with classical and Christian values was based on these very tenets. Hardison characterizes the Renaissance as follows: "Men spoke and behaved and organized their schools

as though the ideal [of an order in which beauty was sustained by power and power fulfilled by beauty] was valid or could be if only enough speeches were made and enough grammar schools founded."¹⁴ To the classical tradition of eloquence, the humanists added the Christian dimension of the New Dispensation, wherein the powers of speech and reason are gifts of God, granted so that man can regain that portion of paradise which he lost in the Fall.¹⁵ We hear echoes of Cicero's praise of ratio et oratio ringing in harmony with Christian piety in the following passage from La Primaudaye's Second Part of the French Academy:

We ought to acknowledge the great nobility and dignity of speech, with which God hath indued & honored man above al other creatures. For he hath not given it to any of them, but to him only, & by that he hath put a difference betweene him & the beasts, as also by reason and understanding, whereof he hath made him partaker, & in respect wherof he hath given him speech, which is as naturall unto him as reason, which is the spring head thereof, and from whence it proceedeth, as a river from his fountaine.¹⁶

La Primaudaye singles out speech and reason here as man's most precious abilities, in the tradition of De inventione. In this context, however, they are additionally sanctified as gifts which ennoble and dignify man by revealing that in him which is divine. La Primaudaye's water imagery is especially appropriate here in a passage which exemplifies the Renaissance penchant for blending Christian and classical traditions in a common stream.

The humanist program depended on language in many different ways. The early humanists such as Erasmus were above all philologists, and they reveal their love of letters in their intense studies of Biblical texts, as well as the rediscovery and reevaluation of classical texts. The great Renaissance flowering of dictionaries and translations points to another aspect of a renewal fueled by language. And of course, education was facilitated by the printing press. This is illustrated by the following excerpt from Pantagruel.

¹⁴ Hardison 44. The interpolated clause comes from an earlier sentence in the same paragraph.

¹⁵ See Heninger 119-120 and Hardison 35. Both discuss Thomas Wilson's The Arte of Rhetorique as a contemporary illustration of this argument.

¹⁶ La Primaudaye, Second Part of the French Academy, trans. Thomas Bowes, London, 1594 in Heninger 537n217.

Roy des Dipsodes (1532) by François Rabelais. In this passage, from a letter written by one giant, Gargantua, to another, his son Pantagruel, Rabelais treats the important social and philosophical ideas of his day.

Le temps estoit encores tenebreux et sentant l'infelicité et calamité des Gothz qui avoient mis à destruction toute bonne litterature; mais, par la bonté divine, la lumiere et dignité a esté de mon eage rendue es lettres... Maintenant toutes disciplines sont restituées, les langues instaureés: Grecque, sans laquelle c'est honte que une personne se die scavant, Hebraïcque, Caldaïcque, Latine—les impressions tant elegantes et correctes en usance, qui ont esté inventées de mon eage par inspiration divine, comme, à contre-fil l'artillerie par suggestion diabolique. Tout le monde est plein de gens savans, de precepteurs très doctes, de libraries très amples, qu'il m'est avis que, ny au temps de Platon, ny de Ciceron, ny de Papinian, n'estoit telle commodité d'estude qu'on y veoit maintenant, et ne se fauldra plus doresnavant trouver en place ny en compagnie, qui ne sera bien expoly en l'officine de Minerve.¹⁷

Indeed the times were still dark, and mankind was perpetually reminded of the miseries and disasters wrought by the Goths who had destroyed all sound scholarship. But, thanks be to God, learning has been restored in my age to its former dignity and enlightenment... Now every method of learning has been restored, and the study of languages has been revived: of Greek, without which it is disgraceful for a man to call himself a scholar, and of Hebrew, Chaldean, and Latin. The elegant and accurate art of printing, which is now in use, was invented in my time, by divine inspiration; as, by contrast, artillery was inspired by diabolical suggestion. The whole world is full of learned men, of very erudite tutors, and of most extensive libraries, and it is in my opinion that neither in the time of Plato, of Cicero, nor of Papinian were there such facilities for study as one finds today. No one, in future, will risk appearing in public or in any company, who is not well polished in Minerva's workshop.¹⁸

¹⁷ François Rabelais, Oeuvres Complètes, ed. Pierre Jourda, vol. 1 (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1962) 258-259.

¹⁸ François Rabelais, Gargantua and Pantagruel, trans., J.M. Cohen (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955) 194.

The selection provides an apt summary of the aspects of language of concern to the humanists. While writing in a dignified vernacular, Gargantua carefully praises the four most important classical and biblical languages. He points out the significance of printing, and specifically mentions its contributions of elegance and accuracy. His focus is the importance of education, both in terms of institutions (les disciplines) and the vision of a society where everyone has been "well polished in Minerva's workshop." Gargantua emphasizes throughout the divine sanction of these accomplishments, and his Christian piety is comfortably juxtaposed with the name of the pagan goddess of wisdom. The excerpt opens with one of the favorite images of the Renaissance, that of the passage from darkness to light, where God's goodness is associated with the light of learning and literature. Rabelais provides a characteristically French portrayal of the medieval period personified by the Goths as a dark and barbarous age. The selection closes with a reminder of a second favorite image of the Renaissance. When Gargantua compares the educational opportunities of Pantagruel's day favorably with those available in the time of Plato and Cicero, he implies that the Golden Age is surely within his son's grasp.

Writers such as Montaigne owe a great deal to the earlier humanists. The vast range of sources which inform Les Essais attests to the educational opportunities available to the late Renaissance. But the fruits which grew in the fifteenth and sixteenth century were not always what the sowers of those seeds anticipated. Wild-men figures were used to symbolize this very gap between the ideals of a civilization and the reality which writers saw around them. Erasmus provides a concrete example of these ideals as they pertain to language:

I strongly dissent from those who are unwilling to have the Scriptures translated into the vernacular and read by the ignorant, as if Christ taught so complicated a doctrine that it can hardly be understood even by a handful of theologians or as if the arcanum of the Christian religion consists in its being not known. It is perhaps reasonable to conceal the mysteries of kings, but Christ seeks to divulge his mysteries as much as possible.¹⁹

¹⁹ Erasmus, "The Philosophy of Christ," in The Renaissance: Maker of Modern Man (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society Book Service, 1970) 300.

There is an inevitable poignancy in realizing that the value Erasmus places here on the accessibility and intelligibility of the Holy Texts led not only to the humanist reform he desired, but also to the Protestant Reformation. The printing press permitted the dissemination of old and new ideas throughout Europe with previously unimagined rapidity, and social change moved swiftly as well. The early humanists anticipated a restoration of the Age of Gold when they broke with medieval traditions, and they are certainly not at fault for being unable to predict the impact of their contributions. The world in which Montaigne matured was far more complex than anything provided for by the *topos* of the Golden Age.

The Renaissance was equally conversant with a related tradition which held that the initiators of civilization were poets. Horace's *Ars Poetica* serves as a classical text of great significance to writers of the sixteenth century as well as to the history of literary criticism.

silvestris homines sacer interpresque deorum
caedibus et victu foedo deterruit Orpheus
dictus ob hoc lenire tigres rapidosque leones;
dictus et Amphion, Thebanae conditor urbis,
saxa movere sono testudinis et prece blanda
ducere quo vellet. fuit haec sapientia quondam,
publica privatis secernere, sacra profanis,
concubitu prohibere vago, dare iura maritis,
oppida moliri, leges incidere ligno.
sic honor et nomen divinis vatibus atque
carminibus venit...²⁰

Orpheus, seer and bard in one, weaned savage forest-tribes from murder and foul living; whence the legend that he tamed tigers and fierce lions. It was said, too, that Amphion, founder of Thebes, moved stones by the sound of his lyre and drew them where he would by the magic of his entreaty. This was the poets' wisdom of old--to draw a line between the Man and the State, the sacred and the common; to build cities, to check promiscuous lust, to assign rights to the married, to engrave laws on wood. Thus did praise and honour come to divine poets and their lays.²¹

²⁰ Horace, *Opera*, ed. Edward C. Wickham (1901; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1967) I. 391-401.

²¹ Horace, *Ars Poetica*, trans. Edward Henry Blakeney in *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden*, ed. Allan H. Gilbert (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1962) 140-141.

The selection parallels the passage from De inventione on several significant points. The distant past of the oral tradition is invoked by the anaphora dictus...dictus. The featured players include the silvestris homines. As in Cicero's model, these wild men are transformed from creatures who both live like and feed on wild beasts to civilized beings who enjoy social, religious and legal institutions. Although the move towards civilization comes in much the same way, here the great civilizers are not orators nor are they nameless. In fact, their names are quite well known. They are the prisci poetae of Boccaccian tradition, magical performers of the mythological past: Orpheus and Amphion. The holy nature of their calling is repeatedly emphasized: sacer, interpres deorum, prece blanda, divinis vatibus atque carminibus. The idea of the poet as the divinely inspired transmitter of heavenly beauty appealed greatly to Renaissance poets.

The belief in the power of poetry leads us in the direction of a more metalinguistic tack in our examination of the importance of language as a civilizing force in the Renaissance. Heninger points to the increased interest in language theory and synthesis achieved by diverse religious and philosophical strains: "Neoplatonist, Protestant, Hermeticist, Cabalist—all bent words to their purpose and used them in the same way" (123). This similarity was possible because of a common belief in the didactic purpose of language, but more profoundly because the philosophical underpinnings of these various theories were all in harmony with contemporary cosmology:

What [the Platonic, Hebraic-Christian, Hermetic, Cabalist theories of language] all have in common is an allegiance to a dualistic cosmology, comprising a realm of conceptual entities and a corresponding region of experiential actualities, and words mediate between these two mutually exclusive orders of existence, binding them together (122).

This insight brings us full circle. The poet has special access to the divine, and makes his own use of God's gifts of ratio et oratio. Poetry is a form of language uniquely suited to perform this mediating function between the sensible and the ideal.

It is no surprise that when we wish to study the embodiments of the Wild Man in the sixteenth century, we inevitably turn to literary works. In the Renaissance, the creation of literary works was an integral part of the acquisition of culture, part and parcel of the ideal of a gentleman well

polished in Minerva's workshop. This perspective is revealed in the many educational manuals of the time, such as Elyot's Booke of the Gouvernour (1530) and courtesy or conduct books, including Castiglione's The Courtier (1528). The Renaissance man of letters had practical as well as theoretical or philosophical considerations when he took up the pen. In order to endure, the accomplishments of life, love, and war, had to be recorded in a literary form. Literary representation was the key to contemporary fame. It was also the key to immortality as well, as Horace's Exegi monumentum aere perennius had long attested.²² This desire for honor and glory through literature pertained not only to writers, but also to the patrons of the arts who inspired what one literary history refers to as "le trafic des dédicaces,"²³ amply illustrated in the Spenserian corpus.

Cicero transmitted Greek thought and Roman values to the European Renaissance. Varied embodiments of the wild-man figure were vehicles of this humanist transmission. Cicero portrayed wild men as beings without reason or social institutions, and insisted on the importance of language and education in domesticating these beasts. This emphasis on the value and kinship of reason and language, ratio et oratio, was shared by the humanists, extended by Christian thought, and expressed in an explosion of learning and literature. The Wild Man captured the imagination of sixteenth-century Europeans because he served as a point of departure from which the Renaissance believed that it had taken flight. Friend or foe? The literature of the Renaissance is filled with seemingly contradictory figures of wild men. To encompass this variety of contradictions, the basic figure outlined by Cicero must be expanded.

Representation: The Mimetic Model

The theory of art as imitation provides an appropriate model for the study and expansion of the essential figure of the Wild Man in literature, due to its historical predominance and significance in Renaissance poetics. Despite the challenges to the notion of representation which have characterized aes-

²² "I have built a monument longer lasting than bronze." 3.30.1.

²³ Antoine Adam, Georges Lerminier, Edouard Morot-Sir, eds., Littérature Française, vol. 1 (Paris: Larousse, 1967) 76.

thetic theories since the Romantic movement, the mimetic model still effectively delimits the essential elements of the literary system.

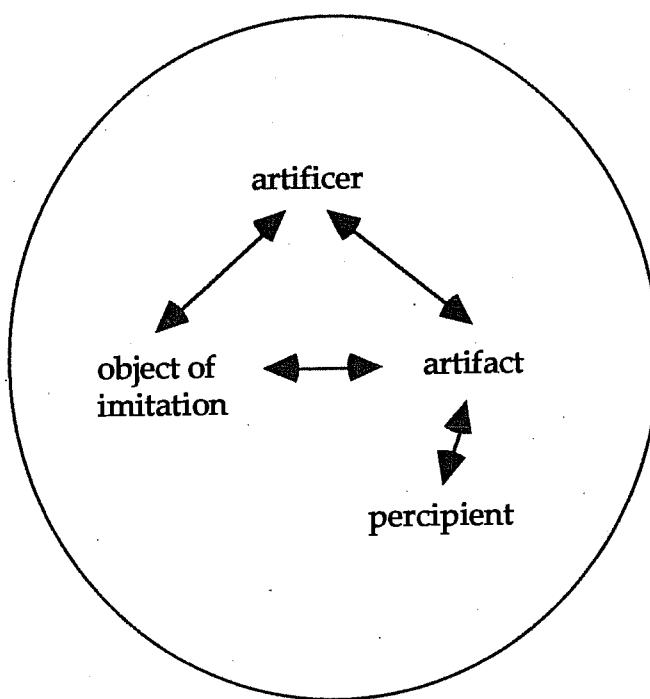


Figure 2. The Mimetic Model.

A diagram outlining the mimetic model is shown in Figure 2.²⁴ This model of the theory of art as imitation sets out a circumscribed system of four elements: the artificer, the artifact, the object of imitation and the percipient. The system is a dynamic one, with each of the elements affecting and being affected by other elements. The system is set into motion by the artificer's selection of an object of imitation and is completed by the percipient's understanding of the artifact. In addition, the percipient may also undertake the role of critic which necessitates stepping outside the circle which defines the artistic system, and relating it to the world as he or she knows it.

It is characteristic of each aesthetic theory to emphasize one particular element of the artistic system or one relationship of elements. The study of the shifting emphases of these different elements makes a fascinating

²⁴ Adapted from Heninger 21. My discussion of the mimetic model is indebted to his.

approach to the history of literary criticism.²⁵ In the Renaissance, aesthetic theory was dominated by the concept of mimesis, as it was variously interpreted from philosophic works of Plato, Aristotle, and Neoplatonists. Simply put, mimesis holds that art is a representation or imitation of the Universe. This doctrine places great emphasis on the object of imitation, variously described as Nature, Reality, or Life. The doctrine of imitation requires that the artifact reflect the form of the universe as well, so that the current cosmology has a decisive impact on poetics, determining in large part the form and the content of the artifact.

The critic must choose which elements of the artistic system to emphasize. By definition, critical analysis requires a process of separation and focus. Each choice made drives subsequent choices, such as the selection of the tools to be used to evaluate a given element of the representational system. Despite the critic's need to focus on specific elements of the system, the interactions of these elements with the rest of the system is essential to an understanding of the whole system.

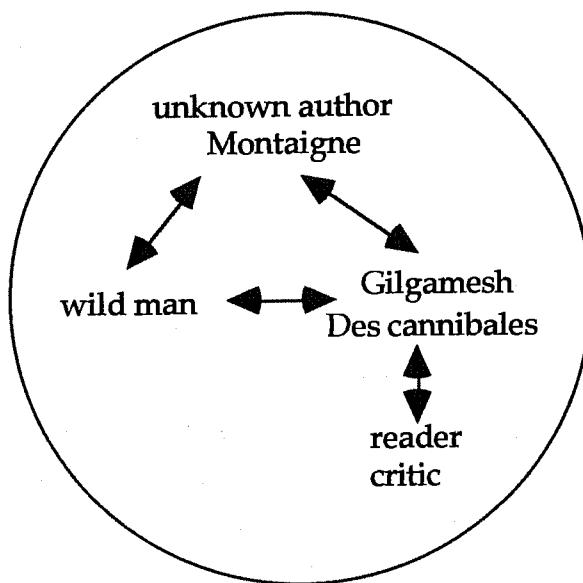


Figure 3. The Mimetic Model Applied.

²⁵ See, for example, M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp*, (1953; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979); Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis*, (1946; Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968); Heninger Chaps. 2-4.

A diagram showing the application of the mimetic model to the examination of wild man figures in two literary works is shown in Figure 3. In this case, the means of imitation in a literary system is language. The artificers or authors are the unknown author of the Epic of Gilgamesh and Montaigne. The artifacts or texts are Gilgamesh and the Essais. I have taken on the role of percipient, reader and critic. My initial choice has been to focus on the wild man as an object of imitation in the Gilgamesh and "Des cannibales." In mimetic theory, the wild man is one object within a larger world reflected in the literary artifact. The critic must show how the wild man fits into the world of nature that is reflected in the literary work. Since the world of nature is to be reflected in the world presented by the text, it is also important to show where the wild man fits into this second reality projected by the artifact. The underlying doctrine of imitation requires a correspondence between these two worlds. Contemporary anthropology and the insights of an additional four hundred years of literary theory highlight important interactions within the worlds of the wild man.

The first step of this process is an understanding of the object of imitation. Although this object is central to a poetics based on mimesis, it can be a rather alien idea to the twentieth century reader, more familiar with the governing assumptions about literature of the last hundred years. The history of literary criticism shows us decreasing emphasis on the object of imitation for the other elements in the literary system, a trend which has reached its peak in post-realist expressive theories, for example, where writing is simply about writing.

In general, the object of imitation is the most problematic of the elements in the system, because it is the least determinate. The author and percipient are both people and the literary artifact is determined by language. However, the object of imitation can range from a phenomenon in physical nature to an idea or another written text (Heninger 37). In the twentieth century, as part of our empirical heritage, if we accept the idea of imitation at all, we are most comfortable with the idea of physical objects or individuals as proper objects of imitation. The Renaissance, a period of transition to the empirical view of reality, still was very much governed by a world view which held that ideas have a greater and even superior reality.

While we recognize the wild man as a character, we also sense that he belongs to a different category of character than those in conventional realistic

fiction. We do not expect to meet a wild man on the street. Should we categorize him as a *topos*, an archetype, a stock figure? There is clearly an idea behind the wild man. We can think of the various wild men in literature as types on the continuum of objects of imitation which range from concept to concrete (Heninger 32). It is helpful to see the concept of the wild man itself as an artifact, a symbolic creation, not the work of one individual but as a shared cultural symbol. The wild man is a schematic figure defined by a few essential traits.²⁶ Some of these traits were defined by Cicero's homines silvestres.

When the object of imitation is itself an artifact, as in this case, several important consequences follow for the literary system. First, the schematic nature of the wild man as artifact has important consequences for the writer. The writer has to present certain aspects of the figure in order for the presented object to be recognized as a wild man, but only a limited number of traits need be introduced. This enables the author to have a wide latitude in his ability to modify the object of imitation. In particular, the schematic nature of the wild man figure permits the author to flesh out his individual examples in diverse ways. This freedom has an impact on the relationship between artificer and percipient, author and reader.

This freedom can be very useful when the poetic tradition places great importance on the moral imperative of the artist. This was the case in the Renaissance, where concerns about the relation of art and truth were felt strongly in literary theory and attention was given to both Platonic concerns about moral implications of representation, and rhetorical considerations about pleasing, delighting, and moving one's audience. The author's latitude with an object of imitation such as the wild man allows the author to direct the reader by providing details which will determine the way the reader apprehends the figure. The reader is expected to follow these directives. On the other hand, current theories of representation encourage readers to view the author as a spokesman or as a vehicle for ideologies. Such a perspective requires that the critic be especially attentive to textual directives, and con-

²⁶ My understanding of the term "schema" comes from the work of Roman Ingarden. For the importance of schema in the literary work see Eugene Falk, The Poetics of Roman Ingarden (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1981)

sider them not only choices made by an author, but as choices made for the author by his or her governing assumptions.

The wild man has a rich history created by the successive embodiments of its essential concept. This history constitutes a tradition which each new savage figure must accommodate. Since the schematic nature of the concept permits great variation, the intertextuality of the wild man tradition is particularly significant. Finally, it is important to note that the history of the wild man as artifact is by no means limited to the literature. The history of the wild man extends back to prehistoric humans who included what modern percipients interpret as wild men in their myths and paintings. We find the concept of the wild man concretized throughout history in different media and within a linguistic medium in different modes of discourse. In particular, wild-men figures pervade historical, geographical and anthropological texts, as a means to understand people of other cultures. The wild man occupies a zone of interplay between art and reality, fact and fiction, between "savage" as concept and "savage" as empirical reality.

The theory of art as imitation allows the expansion of the essential schematic figure of the Wild Man into an artifact which is a shared cultural symbol. Wild-men figures can serve, in traditional mimetic fashion, as a means by which the author illuminates ideas and values. From a twentieth-century perspective, we can also see wild men portrayed as expressions of dominant ideologies. The full panorama of wild-men figures incorporates a rich history of interrelated reincarnations of the object of imitation, a simple skeletal artifact.

CHAPTER II: THE WILD MAN DEFINED

The Liminal Wild Man

Images of the wild man have cultural, geographical, biological, historical, political, social, psychological and religious dimensions; for the wild man figure is an exaggerated version of the ambiguous place of human beings in nature. The wild man is the mediator of the imaginary and the real, the self and the other, the world of history and the world of fantasy. The wild man has implications for every field of human existence.

The wild man as an artifact lays the foundation for our understanding of his cultural function. The wild man has his origins in the representational system which precedes and in fact founds the artistic system we have just examined: the system of signs by which human beings order and comprehend the world in which they find themselves.¹ In this sense, a human being is not only an organism in an environment, but also and uniquely a creature who creates a world which is named by language and who imposes this world on the environment.

There are many important features of this naming or symbolizing process, which clarify my theory of the wild man. First, let us explore the distinction made between "environment" and "world". Organisms respond to those elements in the environment which affect them significantly, according to needs of survival and reproduction. We can say that there are gaps in the environment because there are many elements and actions in the environment that do not affect the organism. As Walker Percy writes, "Nectar is part of the environment of the bee. Cabbages and kings and Buicks are not" (Signposts 289). However, when we impose a system of names on the environment we create a *world* which is a totality and is continuous. All

¹ I am indebted in my presentation of semiotics to Walker Percy's Lost in the Cosmos (New York: Farrar, 1983) and Signposts in a Strange Land (New York: Farrar, 1991). Percy, in turn, bases his work on the semiotic studies of Charles Peirce and also invokes Langer, Cassirer, and Chomsky.

perceived objects and actions and qualities are named and even the gaps themselves are named, whether we choose to call them gaps, the unknown, or points of indeterminacy. Even objects which do not exist in the environment are named and make up part of the continuous world. These non-existing objects are of particular interest to our study of the wild man, for they include many examples of wild men figures, such as two that Percy mentions: centaurs and Big Foot (Lost 100-101).

Secondly, this continuous world is ordered and segmented. This arbitrary ordering is characterized by patterns. We readily see these patterns in our artifacts, especially the geometrical patterns revealed in the structures of our dwellings, our gardens,² or even our poetry. A consequence of the continuous nature of our symbolic world is that it must be segmented and bounded. We tend to focus on the segments themselves and the relationship between segments and categories, since that is how meaning in a system works. However, these segments are defined by boundaries, and in a continuous world, boundaries are absolutely necessary.

One of most important things we learn from structural anthropology is the nature of these boundaries.³ An example is a map with a boundary line drawn between two countries. In principle such a boundary line is abstract and has no dimension. But when we want to mark this boundary on the ground, it must take up space. The boundary space tends to become a source of anxiety and contention. In political terms, the abstract imaginary line is often transformed into a three dimensional contested zone. Consider the anxiety associated with terms from the front page of daily newspapers such as "no man's land," DMZ, or "self-proclaimed security zone." The intense emotions invested in both the erection and destruction of the Berlin wall testifies to the significance of boundaries.

² A recent study of architecture and formal gardens along these lines is Vincent Scully, The Manmade and the Artificial (New York: St. Martin's, 1991). "It follows, therefore, that the first fact of architecture is the topography of a place and the way human beings respond to it with their own constructed forms. Do they attempt, for example, to echo the shapes of the landscape or to contrast them? In a rather too large generalization, it might be said that all pre-Greek or non-Greek cultures chose the first alternative and the Greeks more or less invented the second" (1).

³ I am indebted for my discussion of boundaries to Edmund Leach, Culture and Communication: An Introduction to the Use of Structural Analysis in Social Anthropology (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976).

The same qualities that apply to the boundaries we establish in physical space apply to the boundaries of any continuous field, including time and space. The process of segmentation creates a difference between the two categories which are actually continuous. For this reason, the difference often has to be exaggerated. Exaggeration is a natural part of the ordering process, for the very simplest pattern we can impose is one composed of two contrasting parts, the antithesis or binary opposition. In Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo, Mary Douglas relates these principles to the system by which we order our experience of the world:

[I]deas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without, above and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created.⁴

Such exaggeration gives the boundary its special values, extending even to a religious status of sacred or taboo.

We can recognize the sacred and taboo status of the boundary when it is applied to social time and space. We mark segments in our lives by dividing them into different stages, such as birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Arnold van Gennep's Rites de passage established the tripartite structure of transitional rites such as those which permit us to move from one of these life-stages to the next. These rites are composed of three phases: separation, margin (or limen) and aggregation. Van Gennep pointed to the dangerousness of marginal states. He compared society to a house with rooms and corridors where the passageways from one to the other are risky (Douglas 12). The central liminal phase is of particular interest to us, because it represents a boundary between two life-stages or two categories. It has been explored most notably in Victor Turner's essay "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage."⁵ In human rites of passage, each life stage is governed by

⁴ Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo (1966; London: Ark, 1984) 4.

⁵ Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage," The Forest of Symbols (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1967). Rpt. in Betwixt and Between: Patterns of Masculine and Feminine Initiation, eds. Louise Mahdi , Stephen Foster, and Meredith Little (La Salle, IL.: Open Court, 1987) 3-19.

a normal continuous flow of time. In contrast, the transitional periods are characterized by discontinuity. During this transitional interval, one is not governed by the rules and categories of either the past or coming stage. The liminal figure becomes "structurally, if not physically 'invisible'...at once no longer classified and not yet classified" (6). Finally, the boundaries and the transitional periods are marked with special symbols. In our modern secular culture, we observe the special nature of the boundaries between life stages in the clothing we wear to mark various rites of passage: the white of the bride, the black of the widow, the cap and gown of the graduate. These clothes set off the special time of the transitional rite or ceremony from normal life stages. While we are wearing these clothes, we take on a new culturally defined transitional identity.

Another example which illuminates the special features of the boundary comes from the Latin word limen's most common meaning: threshold or door. Although "door" is a very common word, "threshold" is unusual enough to retain special meanings, as in psychology and anthropology. In our every day life, we speak of the custom of the groom carrying the bride across the threshold into their new home. The home itself is not new. It has become new social space because of the changed social status of the married couple. The act of crossing the threshold has figural rather than literal force. The threshold remains an effective symbol of emergence into a new social status.

The threshold's symbolic importance is not limited to marriage. In a home, the threshold always marks the boundary between inside and outside. We have definite rules about who or what may cross the threshold. For example, Mary Douglas cites the proverb that "Dirt is matter out of place." Outside the home, earth is just earth, but when it crosses the threshold into the home it becomes dirt. The boundary transforms "good" dirt into "bad" dirt. Good and bad are not inherent qualities, but functions of the way in which order is established. As Douglas remarks, "Dirt, then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt, there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter..." (35).

The role of the limen in the ordering process endows it with both danger and power. The boundary is a source of power because as a *limit*, it keeps things apart. The limit makes purity, cleanliness, and order possible. For example, Douglas uses her theory to explain the dietary laws of the Old Testament. The clean animals of Leviticus are those which conform wholly

to their class, according to the laws of contemporary taxonomy. "Holiness means keeping distinct the categories of creation"(53). On the other hand, many animals were considered abominable because they combined characteristics of different species.⁶ In current events, the "ethnic cleansing" operations being carried out in the former Yugoslav republics demonstrate that purity and pollution are vital notions which threaten human lives even today. Pollution is also a prominent term in contemporary scientific discourse. Its religious etymology is pertinent to the ecological problems "pollution" now denotes.⁷ These are some of the ways in which the boundary remains a source of danger. In the boundary zone things are formless, unclear, ambiguous, mixed, or contaminated.

The zone of transformation, where objects, ideas, and even beings undergo change can be seen as a threat to the ordering system. Yet the limen is also the door, the channel by which elements communicate and move from one state to the next. While the transition may be dangerous, the door remains the proper way to get from one state or stage to the other. Limen and limit share the Latin root limo, meaning oblique. The meanings of both words come together in another word of Latin origin which was originally invoked in Van Gennep's model: French marge, Latin margo, our "margin". In Latin margo has several meanings: edge, border, limit, path. All these semantic aspects for limit, limen, and marginal pertain to the wild man.

Objects in the boundary zone take on these same attributes of power and danger. They naturally resist classification. Objects of the boundary belong to both categories separated by the boundary and at the same time, to neither

⁶ In his novel, The History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters, Julian Barnes humorously explains the fate of many mythical creatures in the following way: "As far as Noah and his family were concerned, we were just a floating cafeteria. Clean and unclean came alike to them on the Ark; lunch first, then piety, that was the rule. And you can't imagine what richness of wildlife Noah deprived you of. Or rather, you can, because that's precisely what you do: you imagine it. All those mythical beasts your poets dreamed up in former centuries; you assume, don't you, that they were either knowingly invented, or else they were alarmist descriptions of animals half-glimpsed in the forest after too good a hunting lunch? I'm afraid the explanation's most simple: Noah and his tribe scoffed them...After the basilisk, it was the griffon's turn; after the griffon, the sphinx; after the sphinx, the hippogriff. You think they were all gaudy fantasies, perhaps? Not a bit of it. And do you see what they had in common? They were all cross-breeds." (1989; New York: Vintage, 1990) 14-16.

⁷ Dudley Young, Origins of the Sacred: The Ecstacies of Love and War (New York: St. Martin's, 1991) xvi-xvii.

category. This ambiguity gives the liminal figure its paradoxical both/and neither/nor character.

We react to liminal objects in a variety of sometimes dramatic, often emotionally charged ways. We can ignore differences, inconsistencies, or ambiguities, in order to fit the liminal object into known categories. We can try to avoid or ignore the object entirely. We can give it its own category and name it an accident or aberration. We can label it as dangerous. Or we can purposely use it to call attention to a discontinuity in our experience which points to the continuity masked by our categorizing scheme. The liminal object can point the way to other levels of existence (Douglas 39-40). These final recourses help explain why religion and art are drawn to liminal symbols. Liminal objects inspire fear and compel attention. Their power and danger makes them both attractive and horrifying. In fact Turner describes the liminal as a "realm of pure possibility where novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise" (7). In particular, the artistic and intellectual power of the limen derives from the way in which it points to the division of continuity.

Our symbolic ordering of the world ultimately fails with the semiotics of the self. Homo symbolicus has a unique problem when it comes to finding a place in its world of signs. As Walker Percy expresses it: "Semiotics would call attention to the strange position of the symbolizing self in the world which it discovers. In a word, the self can perceive, formulate, symbolize everything under the sun except itself. The self stands in the dead center of its universe, looking out" (Signposts 126). A fateful consequence of our symbol-making ability is our need to place ourselves in the world of symbols without a symbol which can be used by the self of itself alone. Like other animals, we respond to our environment. But unlike all other animals, man must also place himself in the world created by his unique way of understanding of the universe. We have the unique problem of trying to find adequate semiotic clothing to cover our nakedness in the semiotic world we have created.

The individual depends on his culture for ways to name the nameless and define the self. Culture is defined semiotically by Clifford Geertz as "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions embodied in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge of an attitude towards

life.⁸ Ritual, myth and art are essential to our understanding of where we belong in the world and our task of self-placement. No matter where the individual places him or herself in relation to the world, to fellow creatures, to a god or gods, categories are chosen. Placement means drawing lines. Lines become boundaries. The placement of the self in the world, like the creation of the world by signs and symbols, requires boundaries.

The wild man is a universal symbol within the Western tradition. The wild man first appears with the earliest traces of symbolic activity and remains with us in our own postmodern age. Semiotics suggests that when we define or represent reality, there is a boundary zone between the self as human being and the non-human natural world. The wild man is a personification or figural representation of the boundary that is created when we try to account for our place in the natural order.

The wild man figure is not an answer to the problem of self-placement in the universe. But his liminality encourages us to think about our place in natural order, about what its unique about human beings and how we are like other animals, in short, how we are part of nature. As a symbol, the wild man is an invitation to reflect on these aspects of the human condition. The wild man functions as a sacred symbol. According to Clifford Geertz, sacred symbols: "...synthesize a people's ethos—the tone, character, and quality of life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood—and their world view—the picture they have of the way things in their sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order" (89). As Geertz notes elsewhere: "The problems, being existential, are universal; the solutions, being human, are diverse" (363). The Wild Man, an existential symbol, is a universal. The individual embodiments, wild men figures, are indeed diverse.

Definition of the Wild Man

The wild man is a recognizable human being who lives outside of Society, whose appearance and behavior reveal a closeness to the non-human world of nature.

Our examination of this skeletal definition of the wild man will focus on the variety this figure offers to the artist.

⁸ Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Culture (New York: Basic Books, 1973) 89.

The wild man is a recognizable human being...

The essence of the wild man's liminality is implied in this simple clause—he or she is both human and not-human. The artist creates a character which the percipient is able to recognize as human. At the same time, some distortion is present. The percipient must work to see the human in the wild man. A continuum of possible wild man images is represented in Figure 4.

←Fully animal---Hybrids & Mixtures---Distorted Human---Fully Human→

Figure 4. The Continuum of Wild Man Images.

At one extreme, embodiments of the wild man archetype may take an entirely animal form, such as the serpent in the Garden of Eden or King Kong. The theriomorphic state is most often temporary, as in the case of Leda's swan or Lucius the Ass, the hero of The Golden Ass by Apuleius. Elements of the supernatural or diabolic are typically present. The animal form may be assumed voluntarily, as in Zeus' case, or it may be some sort of punishment, as in the case of Lucius or King Nebuchadnezzar. When a wild man figure appears in fully animal form, the artist will have to find some way to anthropomorphize the figure, perhaps by empowering it with human emotion, intention or the faculty of speech.

Next on the continuum come the hybrids, combinations of the human with other elements. The three categories with which humans can be combined are the three traditional kingdoms of the natural world: animal, vegetable and mineral. The modern American folk tale, The Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum, contains one of each of these possible combinations as companions to the heroine, Dorothy. The cowardly lion represents the human-animal limen, the scarecrow represents the human-plant, and the tin man, the human-mineral.⁹

⁹ A perceptive review of The Wizard of Oz which analyzes the story and the film in terms of rites of passage is Salman Rushdie's "Out of Kansas," The New Yorker, 11 May 1992: 93-103.

Mythology and folklore offer a tremendous variety of combinations of the human and the animal, such as sphinxes, mermaids, minotaurs, satyrs, and centaurs. These creatures play a crucial role in the history of the wild man, and a selection of images of these human-animals hybrids appears in Figure 5.¹⁰

Combinations of human and plant result in the Green Man, an umbrella term like "Wild Man" used to cover a variety of figures in both legend and the fine arts.¹¹ In legend, his embodiments include Robin Hood and Jack in the Green.¹² Hundreds of foliate heads in Gothic and Romanesque churches testify to the attraction that Green Man archetype had for the master sculptors of Northern Europe during the Middle Ages.¹³

Finally, there are many possible combination of man and mineral. Human and metal come together to form mechanical humanoids, from Hephaestus' golden mechanical handmaidens to modern day robots, such as the co-stars of George Lucas' Star Wars series, R2D2 and C3PO.¹⁴ Clay is a particularly significant material in creation myths. It is often the substance from which human bodies are formed. Technically, clay consists of hydrated silicates of aluminum, but for poets, potters and gardeners alike it is a liminal

¹⁰ Illustrations from Richard Huber, Treasury of Fantastic and Mythological Creatures: 1,087 Renderings from Historic Sources, Dover Pictorial Art Series (New York: Dover, 1981).

¹¹ The most complete study to date is William Anderson, Green Man: The Archetype of our Oneness with the Earth (London: HarperCollins, 1990). Anderson considers the Wild Man to be "one of the animals and plants who have their abode in the demense of the Green Man" (31). In contrast, I believe that the Green Man is one of the many forms of the Wild Man.

¹² An original and succinct version of the Green Man legend appears in Gail Haley's childrens' book The Green Man (New York: Scribners, 1979), with marvelous illustrations by the author.

¹³ Documented photographically in Anderson's Green Man by Clive Hicks. See also Ronald Sheridan and Ann Ross, Gargoyles and Grotesques: Paganism in the Medieval Church (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975).

¹⁴ A brief but fascinating history of man-machine combinations from a psychiatric perspective appears in Claude Allard, L'enfant-machine: Les enfants de demain seront-ils des robots? (N.p.: Balland, 1986) His interest is pertinent to literary studies: "Dans des mythes comme chez les personnages de roman, les figures du double, qu'elles soient mechanisées ou non, sont toujours la contrepartie d'une enfance manquée" (24). "In myths as with characters in novels, figures of the double, mechanized or not, are always the counterpart of a failed childhood." My translation.



Figure 5. Hybrids and combinations.

1. Centaur: half-man, half-horse; Greek.
2. Humanized ox; Sumerian harp.
3. Minotaur: man's body with a bull's head; Greek.

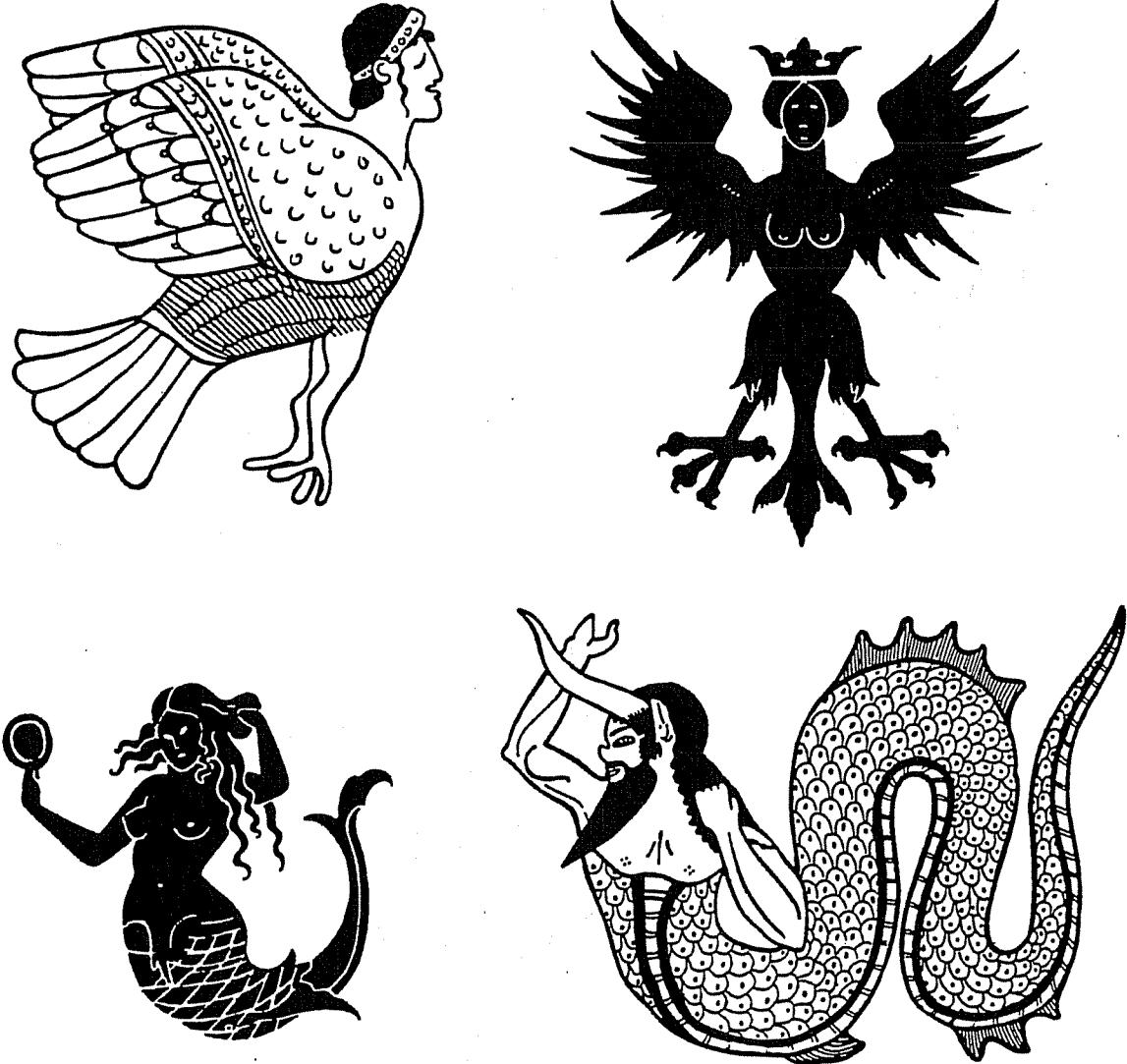


Figure 5 continued. Hybrids and combinations.

1. Siren: human head, bird's body; Greek.
2. Harpy: female head and torso, bird's wings, legs and feet; Medieval German heraldry.
- 3 . Mermaid: half-female, half fish; Medieval German heraldry.
4. River god; Greek.

substance, both mineral and dirt and more than either. It is not organic like true soil, but possesses a creative potential unmatched by other mineral. These special properties are widely recognized, as here from the book of Isaiah, when the Lord speaks angrily to his ever-questioning creation, man:

Will the pot contend with the potter,
or the earthenware with the hand that shapes it?
Will the clay ask the potter what he is making?
or his handiwork say to him, 'You have no skill?'¹⁵

In the center of the continuum, the wild man's body is human but distorted. The various parts of the body may be exaggerated, duplicated or else entirely absent. Here we might place such examples from Greek and Roman mythology as Priapus and the Cyclops, the Androgyn and the Amazons (literally: without breasts). The disembodied or severed head is a potent mythological image, from Medusa to John the Baptist to the Wizard of Oz. This head may speak or sing, and often has prophetic or magical powers, as in the case of Orpheus or the Green Knight who challenges Gawain after the knight chops off his head. The multi-armed and multi-headed deities of Hindu mythology attest to the universality of physical duplications.¹⁶ The distortion of the human body itself may also be a primarily a question of size: larger than normal wild-men figures include giants, smaller than normal, trolls, dwarves, faeries.

Further along the continuum, the wild man can be presented in a completely human form with more subtle differences from the norm. His identity as a wild man will be recognized by variations from conventional appearance. This might be more hair or claws instead of nails.¹⁷ Clothing

¹⁵ Isaiah 45:9-10. The New English Bible, (New York: Oxford UP, 1971).

¹⁶ The duplicate heads and arms can be used for either good or evil. Compare the myth of Sisyphus and the monstrous from Greek mythology with the following passage from an Indian folk tale: "The heart of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara filled with sorrow. Suddenly, his head split into many heads. His arms shattered into many arms. The one thousand heads looked in all directions to see the suffering of every being, the thousand arms were enough to reach into any realm, to save those in need. Rolling up his one thousand sleeves, the great Bodhisattva settled down once more to the unending task." Margaret Read MacDonald, Peace Tales: World Folktales to Talk About (Hamden, CN: Linnet Books, 1992) 98.

¹⁷ On the cultural significance of hair see Desmond Morris, Bodywatching (New York: Crown, 1985) 31ff. On hair as a indicator of wildness and barbarism in medieval iconography from the twelfth century on, see Husband 10, 52.

may be tattered, absent, or made of specific materials such as pelts, foliage, or fur. These variations themselves become conventions. Anthropology teaches us to read clothing as a language, and the various costumes of the wild man may point to his lineage. For example, leaves suggest a vegetation deity, hair or fur, an animal god, and tattered finery, an aristocrat lost in the woods.

Within these categories, fascinating nuances can be observed. For example, Anderson comments on the significance of the three different plants—vine, acanthus and oak—being used under a set of three Green Man heads on the south transept portal of the cathedral at Chartres:

Their forcefulness may derive from the thought that they represent the three great traditions at Chartres: the oak being sacred to the druids who, according to old belief, held the site of the cathedral as one of their holiest places; the vine, which was the symbol of Bacchus and later became that of Christ; and the acanthus, which is the plant of the central head and which was sacred in both the classical and northern traditions as a symbol of rebirth (86).

Anderson explores further the symbolic significance of the acanthus, and compares the Green Man/acanthus head with a lion's head which is in the central position of a corresponding set of three beast-heads on the south portal. Although he never uses the term "liminal," the significance of liminality is apparent in his comparison of the two heads just as it underlies his basic conception of the Green Man. The subtitle of his book, The Archetype of our Oneness with the Earth, defines the Green Man as an illustration of the continuity between humans and the natural world. Here Anderson focuses on the acanthus and lion as liminal symbols.

The acanthus signifies the plants that cross the boundaries of farm and wild land, the herbs that flavour, heal, or poison: it transcends the categories of its fellows just as the lion as king of beasts and as a symbol of the sun and of Christ transcends the division of tame and feral (86-87).

The lion, like the wild man, frequently appears in mythology and folklore somewhere on the boundary between tame and feral. This is one reason the lion is a fitting symbol for Christ's liminal role as mediator between the human and divine worlds. The acanthus also occupies a boundary zone, quite literally as a plant which grows in between cultivated land and the wilderness. As a medicinal plant, it is liminal in another sense. The Greek word

φάρμακον, from which we derive pharmacy, means remedy as well as poison. Today, as in ancient times, the same substance can be a cure or a poison depending on the dosage, the malady, and the patient. Medicines are an excellent example of liminal substances which are both powerful and dangerous. When wild men appear in myths, they frequently attract other liminal symbols, such as the lion and the acanthus in this example.¹⁸

The wild man can also appear without any clothing whatsoever, for absolute nakedness also has its own story to tell. It may be a tale of innocence, such as the lack of self-consciousness of prelapsarian Adam and Eve. Or it may be a tale of shame, as with the outcast, who has been deprived of the social role that clothing provides. Accessories can also serve as the identifying feature of the wild man, especially a small tree or club which the wild man frequently uses as a weapon. The artist may also identify the wild man as such simply by naming him Wild Man, Woodwose, or Savage. The artist may prefer an unconventional name such as Caliban, Iron Hans, or Namelos (Nameless).

Finally, at the end of the continuum, the wild man may be represented as an improvement on the actual human form. This wild man often represents a link to divine forces in nature. For example, the gods and goddesses of the hunt, such as Celtic Cernunnos or Greek Apollo and Artemis, are the noblest of savages, divine incarnations of forest spirits.

Because it is a function of recognition, this aspect of the wild man's identity is admirably suited to the visual arts. The artistic fruits of the tension between distortion and recognition of the human form appear in paintings, drawings, sculpture. In the Middle Ages, in particular, wild men appear in a tremendous variety of media, from the marginalia of manuscripts to the tapestries and pediments of church and castle walls. These images are displayed for modern percipients in illustrated books such as Richard Bernheimer's Wild Men in the Middle Ages, Anderson's Green Man, Gargoyles and Grotesques: Paganism in the Medieval Church and especially Timothy Husband's The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism. In the

¹⁸ Literary examples where wild men and lions are linked include Chrétien de Troyes' Yvain ou Le chevalier au lion, Book I of Spenser's Faerie Queene, and C. S. Lewis' The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.

Renaissance, on the other hand, the wild man shifts his domain towards the written word.

...lives outside Society...

The wild man is frequently portrayed in isolation. However, this isolation may obscure important aspects of his liminality. The wild-man figure shares the quality unique to the human species of being both social and solitary. The wild man exaggerates the human pull between solidary and solitary.¹⁹

The wild man is spatially marginal. He is an outsider. We find him either in fields or forests just outside villages or we find him at the farthest reaches of the known world. It is fitting that a liminal figure should inhabit the inner or outer limits of civilization. His status as outsider can be temporal as well, as we saw in Cicero's account of the origins of our cultural order. In this view, the wild man is pre-social and pre-civilized, rather than anti-social and anti-civilized.

However, it is rare that the wild man is actually alone. Often he is in the company of others just like him, members of the same subspecies. When he is portrayed as isolated, it is often because he is temporarily out of place in the wild. In fact, the closer the wild man is spatially to society, the more likely he is to be portrayed as alone or isolated. In this case, the reasons for his separation from society are important. Was it caused by accident? Was he born there or exposed shortly after birth? Did he wander there because of mental confusion? Is his isolation by choice? If so, he may take on the role of shaman or hermit. Was he expelled by society? Here, the possibilities include the wild man as exile or scapegoat. Although the wild man's isolation is significant, we find that is often a temporary condition. It is a part of a larger story.

¹⁹ The terms for this opposition come from the final line in Albert Camus' short story Jonas ou l'Artiste au travail. At his death the artist Jonas leaves behind a single cryptic canvas, a commentary on the human condition and the plight of the artist. "Dans l'autre pièce, Rateau regardait la toile, entièrement blanche, au centre de laquelle Jonas avait seulement écrit, en très petits caractères, un mot qu'on pouvait déchiffrer, mais dont on ne savait s'il fallait lire *solitaire* ou *solidaire*." Albert Camus, Théâtre, Récits, Nouvelles (Paris: Gallimard, 1962) 1654. "In the other room, Rateau looked at the canvas, entirely white, at the center of which Jonas had written, in very small letters, a single word which was decipherable, but might either be *solitary* or *solidary*." My translation. Italics in the original.

The farther away the wild man is in space, the more likely he is to be found in like company. The completely isolated individual is of limited interest, because it is too alien to our experience as social beings. Leach draws a connection between our social network and liminality:

Individuals do not live in society as isolated individuals with clear cut boundaries; they exist as individuals interconnected in a network by relations of power and domination. Power, in this sense, resides in the interfaces between individuals, in ambiguous boundaries (62).

When we find a wild man in a literary text, he may simply stand out as leader or representative of a group. We may see what makes him powerful in his own social group and how that network operates. This group also provides an alternative social organization to that of Society. As portrayed in literature, wild societies are generally simply organized, offering contrasts with the strict social hierarchies characteristic of the civilized, citified societies whose perspective governs the account. The wild man is outside of or free from strict social hierarchies. He occupies the "ambiguous boundary" between two societies, his own (if it is described) and Society's. It is the wild man's relative, not absolute, isolation that is of greatest importance. Ironically, it is particularly important for twentieth century American students of the wild man to be sensitive to the interplay of isolation, exclusion and freedom. Our own society is built on a myth which equates freedom and individualism. As Rollo May writes in The Cry for Myth, "American cling to the myth of individualism as though it were the only way to live, unaware that it was unknown in the Middle Ages (except for hermits) and would have been considered psychotic in classical Greece."²⁰ This observation helps to explain the current appeal of the wild man.

In a paradoxical sense, then, the wild man is never alone. Whether we find him isolated or in a group, we must look through the wild man to see the society by whose standards and conventions he is judged as wild. The wild man does not consider himself wild. It is a status granted in reference to given cultural standards, hence the capital "S" in Society in my definition.

²⁰ Rollo May, The Cry for Myth, (New York: Norton 1991) 108. Compare Aristotle, "But he who is unable to live in society , or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god..." Politics, 1253a 28-29.

The wild man shares this paradox with the pastoral. The stock pastoral character, the shepherd, is often not sufficiently self-reflective to create a pastoral work of art. We look past the shepherd to the artist, the urban sophisticate who perceives the contrast between city and country and creates a mediating garden or Arcadia. True to his marginal status, we will often find the wild man on the periphery of these gardens. Unlike the shepherd, however, the wild man has no genre or mode to call his own.

No one particular society or culture creates the wild man figure. As a schematic figure, he is a shared cultural symbol, created by many self-conscious societies within the long Western tradition. When we look at individual examples of wild men, however, we are able to appreciate the details which are of concern to individual societies. Those variations give us a glimpse into those values held by those who created him. The artist may serve as a spokesman for surrounding cultural assumptions, or question them by drawing our attention to them.

The fundamental moment of the wild man's story, the Encounter, is what proves he is not alone. In the Encounter the wild man and society come together. The importance of the Encounter is what makes the figure of the wild man so well suited to the literary art. We have noted that visual arts can vividly capture the liminality of the natural and human, but they generally capture one isolated moment in time. The literary art, with its discursive form, can best represent the elements pertinent to an encounter: "the relational order of things, causal connections, time and change."²¹ Change follows the Encounter. Will the changes be in the wild man or in the representative of society who encounters him? The power in the interface between individuals takes on a special force here when the artist places the wild man and society face to face. Questions of ethics and justice become potentially intracultural as well as intercultural, as we walk the tightrope between solitary and solidarity, between self-fulfillment and social responsibility. What transpires in the Encounter, the way in which society and the wild man threaten or learn from each other, constitutes a large part of the wild man's literary significance.

²¹ Suzanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1957) 73.

...whose appearance and behavior reveal a closeness to the non-human world
of nature.

There are many different ways of dividing up experience into categories and naming the artificially separated categories which the wild man links. Since this terminology derives from need to place man in the natural order, it is not surprising that so many paired categories place Nature as one pole. We can hope to understand what a given artist and tradition make of nature by attention to what is offered as contrast or complement to Nature: Nature/Culture, Nature/Art, Nature/Grace, Natural/Artificial, Natural/Manmade, Nature/Nurture. In Cicero's account of the origin of civilization, we found the opposition between Wildness and Domesticity. We also find the alternatives presented as Chaos/Order or Irrational/Rational. The pair Nature and Culture is the most fundamental, and most resistant to an essentialist definition. As Leach observes, it tends to be understood in such a way that "culture may be defined as the way of life which we humans experience in our society and Nature is everything else" (72). However, the simplified view of the wild man as man without culture is insufficient. Geertz puts the matter quite bluntly:

[T]here is no such thing as a human nature independent of culture. Men without culture would not be the clever savages of Golding's Lord of the Flies thrown back upon the cruel wisdom of their animal instincts; nor would they be the nature's noblemen of Enlightenment primitivism or even, as classical anthropological theory would imply, intrinsically talented apes who had somehow failed to find themselves. They would be unworkable monstrosities with very few useful instincts, fewer recognizable sentiments, and no intellect: mental basket cases (49).

The wild man may represent a different or strange culture and lack specific customs, but he is always about culture, as well as nature.

How is the wild man's proximity to nature to be portrayed? We have seen how various distortions of the human form or certain conventional clothes and accessories are well suited to the way the visual arts portray the wild man's liminal status between human and non-human natural worlds. In addition to the wild man's physical appearance, a description of where he lives adds significantly to the portrayal. He frequently resides in the wilderness, whether forest or desert. Trees, huts, and caves are common dwelling

places. Descriptions of behavior also link the wild man to nature. How does his behavior exemplify nature? Is it more animal-like or less artificial? The wild man's behavior provides a way to explore ideas about human nature and natural law. Behavior can be consonant with appearance or it can provide a counterpoint: ignoble or noble.

Giving a full account of behavior or exploring the ways appearance and behavior may be related requires a story rather than an image. Stories are the basis of myth, and thus the two poles of behavior provide basis for two predominant myths in which we find wild man embedded. First, the myth of the noble savage, associated with primitivism, which holds that man was unspoiled and innocent before the coming of civilization.²² At the opposite extreme we find the myth of the ignoble savage or primitive, where civilization brings everything good to man, even transforming human nature. The poles of noble and ignoble savage, primitivist and primitive, can be traced through intellectual history. Hayden White's excellent analysis in "The Forms of Wildness: Archeology of an Idea" shows how these alternatives represent two distinct views of nature and society.²³ The first "looks upon nature as world of struggle" and sees "the wild man as antitype of desirable humanity" (28). This view prevails in thought "from Machiavelli through Hobbes and Vico down to Freud and Jean-Paul Sartre" (28). The second sees society "with all its struggles, as a fall from natural perfection," where "wild men...serve as antitypes of social existence" (28). White includes in this tradition Locke, Spenser, Montesquieu and Rousseau, and more recently, Albert Camus and Claude Lévi-Strauss. The first view is imbued with the myth of the ignoble savage, and the second with the myth of the noble savage.

²² The preeminent work on primitivism is Arthur Lovejoy, Gilbert Chinard, George Boas, and Ronald Crane, A Documentary History of Primitivism and Related Ideas, Vol. I: Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins P, 1935) Other significant works on the idea of the primitive include Ashley Montagu, ed., The Concept of the Primitive (New York: The Free Press, 1968); Edward Dudley and Maximilian Novak, eds., The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism, (Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1972); Marianna Torgovnick, Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1990).

²³ Hayden White, "The Forms of Wildness: Archeology of an Idea," Dudley, 3-38.

The paradox inherent in the wild man figure lends itself to such a variety of uses. At either extreme or in between the poles of these two myths, a spectrum of possibilities are available to the writer. A model for the sort of literary play inherent in the wild man's paradox comes in Hesiod's Works and Days. Hesiod's well known account of the ages of man is offered in tandem with the story of Prometheus and Pandora. The myths are offered together as alternative ways of understanding why life and man are the way they are. This spirit of multiple possibilities and interpretations is highly appropriate to our study. Mythology, like literature, is not reducible to a single meaning.

The notion of liminality is useful in accounting for the distance between the two poles defined by the myths of the noble and ignoble savage. The wild man's closeness to nature is the essence of his liminality and is the source of both his power *and* his danger. The wild man derives his strength from nature, which in turn may make him dangerous to society, whether as a human who is chaotic, irrational, wild or as a supernatural force which threatens the civil fabric. On the other hand, he can serve as link stressing the continuity between nature and culture, bringing the power of nature and the gods to men. The channel to nature's power is potentially both good and bad. The figure of the wild man carries potential for both nobility and ignobility, so we should not be puzzled by the coexistence of such figures within the same culture or even the same text. Nature is the source of both power and danger, and so the source of both noble and ignoble savages.

We have defined the wild man as a recognizable human being who is liminally both human and not-human. He or she appears in a wide variety of forms in the visual arts, sculpture, mythology, folklore and literature. The wild man lives outside of Society. He is isolated, but not necessarily alone. Both social and solitary, he lives on the margin between civilization and the wilderness, a position that endows him with both power and danger. The moment of Encounter between the wild man and Society focuses his power and produces change. His appearance and behavior reveal a closeness to the non-human world of nature. The wild man links man and society to nature and the natural order. Finally, because of his liminal status, the wild man is both noble and ignoble.

Models of Liminality

Three complementary models of liminality provide an intellectual framework for an understanding of the wild man and his embodiments in literature. The first model, The Great Chain of Being, places the wild man in the cosmological setting. The second, The Wild Man Out There and the Wild Man Within, relates the wild man as Other and the Wild man as Self. The third, The Rites of Passage and the Liminal State, explores the parallels between the wild man and initiation, creativity, education, and travel.

1. The Great Chain of Being

The Great Chain of Being provides an introduction to the world view that shaped the poetics and poetry of the sixteenth century. This model describes the plan and order of the universe which dominated Western thought from Plato's time through the Romantic movements, as well as a theory of man which held until our own century.²⁴

In this model, the Universe is a Great Chain in which all things, living and non-living, are arranged in a hierarchy. God is at the top, and metals are at the bottom. Among each class, there is also hierarchy from base to noble, such as in the metals from lead to gold, and in man's social order from slave to king. Each element of the universe has its own qualities and its proper place in the chain.

Man has a unique place in the center of the chain. Man was created by God as a microcosm of all the elements in the Cosmos. As such he is a liminal creature. Man is the link between the Intelligible Sphere of God and the angels, and the Sensible Sphere of animals, plants and minerals. As the mediator between spirit and matter, man can become the battleground for the struggle between reason and passion, the bestial and the angelic.

One humanist contribution to this concept portrays man not as half-angel half-beast, but as neither angel nor beast and at the same time potentially angelic and brutish. These possibilities are inherent in the paradox of liminality. Pico della Mirandola sees in this nexus a great dignity and free-

²⁴ The classic works on the subject are A.O. Lovejoy The Great Chain of Being, (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1936) and E.M.W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture, (New York: Vintage, 1943).

dom, and envisions the chain as a ladder. Speaking as God to Adam in his Oration on the Dignity of Man:

We have set thee at the world's center that thou mayest from thence more easily observe whatever is in the world. We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself into whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower form of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power, out of thy soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine.²⁵

Man's place in the natural world is given to him so that he may learn from nature. He should use his higher faculties to seek his own perfection and rise towards the Good. He should seek above all to know himself and his proper place in the Cosmic Order.

The possibilities of this liminal theory of man are beautifully realized in the literature of the sixteenth century. We cannot expect to understand Spenser's vision of Beauty and Love in the Fowre Hymnes or Montaigne's attacks on human reason and pride in the Apologie pour Raymon Sebond unless we share the sixteenth-century awareness of the framework of Great Chain. This framework is also part of understanding their use of the figure of the wild man as well.

Where is the place of the wild man on the Great Chain? This was no idle question for the medieval thinkers, as Bernheimer's Wild Men in the Middle Ages and Friedman's The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought detail.²⁶ The hybrid nature of the wild man figure defied the rigid classifications that the Great Chain provided. On the one hand, the wild man was linked with the pagan woodland deities and the pilosi of St. Jerome's Vulgate. In this supernatural light, he was considered a demon, in particular

²⁵ Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, "Oration on the Dignity of Man," trans. Elizabeth Livermore Forbes, The Renaissance Philosophy of Man, eds. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, John Herman Randall, Jr. (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1948) 225.

²⁶ John Block Friedman, The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought, (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981).

of a sexual nature, and was also linked with incubi.²⁷ On the other hand, the wild man was also included in the natural realm as one of the monstrous races of Pliny and the Greek romances. These beings posed particular problems for Christian thinkers. For example, Saint Augustine speculates about the monstrous races in his City of God. Do they really exist? Are they to be considered men? How do they fit into God's moral order? Do they have rational or brute souls? Were they descended from Adam? The classical association, as we saw in Cicero, of homo silvester or agrestis with our precivilized ancestors was incompatible with Judeo-Christian genealogy. Natural historians connected certain of the monstrous races, particularly the hairy ones, satyrs and the cynocephali, with apes. For example, the Pygmies were of much interest to the scholastic commentators on Aristotle's De Animalibus. Because of their size and faculties, which were judged to be both similar and inferior to those of European men, Albert the Great placed them on the Great Chain between man and apes (Friedman 190-96).

The association of the wild man and the ape is pertinent to the Christian understanding of the Great Chain. Even as Man strives toward the Good, with his eyes towards the Angels, the world around him and below him exercises tremendous fascination. Genesis places man at the apex of the animal world. When Adam named the animals, they were to serve him as he was to serve God. But, as Pico notes, the Great Chain as a ladder goes in both directions. Philosophical and literary works from the Platonic dialogues to Aesop's Fables use animals to illustrate the human tendency to slide into the realm of the senses. The role of animals in Christian moral thought is significant as well. Janson explains the ape as a figura diaboli: "Man had been 'demoted' from the level of a potential angel through an act of divine displeasure, while the ape had similarly forfeited his status as human being" (13).

The anxiety generated by the boundary between man and beast, and the fascinating possibility of transformation from one to the other and back is widely represented in literary and folk tale traditions. Two important exam-

²⁷ H.W. Janson, Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Studies of the Warburg Institute Vol. 20, (London: Warburg Institute, 1952) 349n25.

ples are the Metamorphoses of Ovid and Apuleius's Golden Ass.²⁸ Folkloric figures such as the werewolf²⁹ or the enchanted Beast of Beauty and the Beast combine the marvelous and the horrible, and are popular through the ages.

The wild man's association with the apes, in particular, does not end with the Middle Ages. This association has fascinating consequences for the contemporary scientific view of the human place in the universe. The wild man's location on the Great Chain between Man and Beast became increasingly acceptable with the ascendance of empiricism, when the authority of the physiologist replaced that of the philologist. For example, in the seventeenth century, homo silvester was identified formally with the Orang-outang, whose name in Malay means man of the forests (Janson 335). During the next century, scientists even proposed mating an orangutan with a prostitute so that their presumably human progeny could be studied.³⁰ The great catalog of the Swedish botanist Linnaeus, Systema Naturae, included Homo Ferus—four-footed, mute, hairy—among his five subspecies of Homo Sapiens: Wild Man, American, European, Asiatic, and African. Linnaeus also provided six subspecies of Homo Monstruosus: Mountaineer, Patagonian, Hottentot, American, Chinese, and Canadian.³¹

The familiar term "the missing link" alludes to the liminal model of the Great Chain. The wild man was expected to fulfill this role, as Edouard Le Brun insists in his 1760 poem De la nature, using the verb "lier", to link, as a leitmotif:

Tous les corps sont liés dans la chaîne de l'être,

²⁸ See the discussion of Ovid's version of the Actaeon story in Chapter 4. We also touch on the problem of incarnation here. See Leonard Barkan, The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism (New Haven: Yale UP, 1986).

²⁹ On the wild man as werewolf see Figure 8 and the discussion of Plate 25, "Cannibal or werewolf" in Husband 110-112. An excellent example of the werewolf in literature is Marie de France's lai "Bisclavret." For history of the wolf figure in folklore and popular culture, see Jack Zipes, The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood: Versions of the Tale in Sociocultural Context (South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 1983).

³⁰ Russ Rymer, "A Silent Childhood," The New Yorker 13 April 1992: 72.

³¹ Chart from Vol. I of Linnaeus' Systema Naturae in David Maybury-Lewis, Millenium: Tribal Wisdom and the Modern World (New York: Viking, 1992) 19.

La Nature partout se précède et se suit...
 Dans un ordre constant ses pas développés
 Ne s'emportent jamais à des bonds escarpés.
 De l'homme aux animaux rapprochant la distance,
 Voyez l'Homme des Bois lier leur existence.³²

By the turn of the century, the notion of gradualism, which had been incompatible with the medieval notion of salvation, was thoroughly accepted and linked with notion of progress. Charles White's 1799 Regular Gradation of Man³³ illustrates the progression of vertebrate life from a bird to European man, by means of a series of profiles. Here the "Man of the Woods" is placed between the monkey and the orangutan, and followed by the "Negro," then the "American Savage," on the way to the Caucasian profile. Even before the requisite fossils were unearthed, Haekel, the German evolutionist, gave the missing link a scientific name, Pithecanthropus alalus. The two parts of this name, which means ape-man without speech, reveal the missing link's wild-man patrimony. Belief in the missing link was so strong that Pithecanthropus was subsequently discovered in Java in 1893, and the head of the Piltdown man, an ape jaw joined to a human skull, fooled anthropologists for 40 years in our own era.³⁴

The notion of the animal world as a hierarchy with man at its apex continues to permeate our current understanding of evolution. The rigidity of the Great Chain of Being was loosened in the 1860's by acceptance in cultural thought of a different model, the intertwining branches of the Haekel's Tree of Life. Yet Steven Jay Gould shows in Wonderful Life how the iconography of the Tree, with its conflation of low and primitive, high and advanced, maintains the mistaken reading of evolution as a ladder, moving purposefully and inexorably toward man in general, and Western man in

³² Edouard Le Brun, De la nature, chant troisième, cited by Lovejoy, Chain 236. "All bodies are linked in the chain of being, / Everywhere Nature precedes and follows herself... / Her steps develop in a constant order / and never break away in steep jumps. / Bridging the distance between man and the animals, / See the Man of the Woods link their existence." My translation and emphasis.

³³ Reproduced in Steven Jay Gould, Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History (New York: Norton, 1989) 28-29.

³⁴ "Missing Link" Richard Milner, The Encyclopedia of Evolution: Humanity's Search for Its Origins (New York: Facts on File, 1990) 308.

particular. He argues that our need for a moral order corresponding to our "hopes for a universe of intrinsic meaning defined in our own terms" colors scientific investigations as well as popular thought (43). Cultural assumptions and cultural symbols readily cross the artificial boundaries we have established between scientific, religious, and artistic domains.

As science and our ability to change our planet force us to rethink our place in the natural order, the boundary line between man and animal continues to exert an intense fascination and generate extreme emotions. Areas such as animal communication, human-animal transplants, and genetic engineering provide examples where both interest and emotion run high. Boundary lines are continually being challenged and redrawn. Just as race, gender and ethnicity have been officially (if not actually) removed in Western culture as acceptable morally relevant differences between human beings, questions are loudly being raised as to which differences between humans and animals are morally relevant.³⁵

To place the Wild Man exclusively in between man and beast is to ignore an important part of his history as well as the prehistory of the Great Chain. This is due primarily to the complicated view of Nature in Western thought. Changing views of Nature are reflected in changing images of the Wild Man. The ability to find divinity in nature presents a challenge to the hierarchy of the Great Chain. This challenge is reflected in the possibility of the wild man as a noble savage or golden age figure. For the ascetic, closer to nature may also imply farther from worldly concerns, and closer to God. Here the wild man may be linked with prelapsarian Adam or the saint. In the Renaissance, the Neo-Platonist view of Nature as the anima mundi, Plato's world soul, gave her a place between Man and the Angels.

The theological and zoological difficulties posed by the variety of wild men translates into riches from an artistic perspective. In the Middle Ages for example, the inability to categorize the wild man decisively with man or beast permitted writers to choose either alternative (Bernheimer 5). When the authority of the philologist was still strong, it was believed that monsters

³⁵ Many of these questions are addressed in the useful symposium volume Man and Beast Revisited, eds. Michael Robinson and Lionel Tiger (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution P, 1991). See especially Part 5, with appropriate liminal imagery in the title and in the essays: "The Man and Beast Interface: Networking with Animals," 231-315.

were created by God to show us something (monstrum <monstrare, to show). What is that lesson to be? Wild men serve as illustrations of virtues and vices, and shadows of truth and of life.³⁶

Wild men also function ornamenteally to illustrate the diversity of God's creation. The monstrous and grotesque contribute to the beauty and harmony of the universe by providing contrast, according to Augustine's influential aesthetic of concordia discors (Friedman 184-85). Lovejoy connects diversity as an aesthetic value with the Great Chain's principle of Plenitude. He shows how diversity becomes especially programmatic in Romantic literary theory where excellence in art is equated with "the fullest possible expression of abundance of differentness that there is, actually or potentially, in nature and human nature" (Chain 293). For Lovejoy, the key to this aesthetic trend is Plotinus, and diversity comes to play a significant role in Renaissance poetics. Indeed, diversity is central to the organizational principles of Renaissance narratives from Montaigne's Essais to Spenser's Faerie Queene. In our own time, Anderson links the resurgence of the Green Man archetype with the rise of ecology, "the science of the interdependence of living things and their interactions with the environment" (155). Ecology's major theme is *biodiversity*.

In sum, the tension inherent in the wild man figure, a result of his composite status and his connection with nature, makes it difficult to place him on a vertical hierarchy. Yet this same difficulty has positive aesthetic consequences for his literary expression, in particular when diversity is valued as an aesthetic criterion.

2. The Wild Man Out There and the Wild Man Within

The first model of liminality found artistic possibilities inherent in placing the wild man on a vertical ladder of cosmic and moral order. The second model of liminality envisages the wild man as a horizontal bridge linking the way the physical world (out there) and the psychic world (within) are understood. Hayden White describes the history of the wild man as a progression from an association with undomesticated wilderness to an association with untamed forces within each of us.

³⁶ See Friedman, especially Chapter 6 "Signs of God's Will".

From biblical times to the present, the notion of the Wild Man was associated with the idea of the wilderness--the desert, forest, jungle, and mountains--those parts of the physical world that had not yet been domesticated or marked out for domestication in any significant way. This despatialization was attended by a compensatory process of psychic interiorization....So that, instead of the relatively comforting notion that the Wild Man may exist *out there* and can be contained by some kind of physical action, it is now thought...that the Wild Man is lurking within every man, is clamoring for release within us all, and will be denied only at the cost of life itself (7).

White's critique of the contemporary wild man myth is suggestive, particularly in light of the rediscovery of the Wild Man by the American men's movement of the last few years.³⁷ The Renaissance wild man plays a key role in this historical progression. For White, the transitional period between the medieval and modern periods marks the consolidation of the wild man as a fiction, and the shift from out there to within. Despite the continuity of the cosmological world view from the Middle Ages into the Renaissance, the way in which the world was viewed geographically changed tremendously and irrevocably in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The two principal factors for these changes were the voyages of exploration and the communication revolution made possible by the invention of the printing press.³⁸

The wild man has an important role to play at both ends of the voyages of exploration. First, explorers saw the new worlds and new peoples through the lens of old beliefs and categories. The profusion of travel literature generated by exploration of the new worlds interpreted the new discoveries based on old myths and expectations. Mythic themes of the Golden Age and Noble

³⁷ See, for example, Robert Bly, Iron John: A Book about Men (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1990; Sam Keen, Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man (New York: Bantam, 1991); "On Being a Man: An Interview with Michael Meade" Sy Safransky, The Sun April 1989: 2-10.

³⁸ There has been a wealth of books and art exhibits relating to Columbus and the voyages of exploration in these quincentennial years. See, for example Gary Will's book review "Man of the Year", New York Review, 21 November, 1991, 12-18. See also two exhibition catalogs Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration, ed. Jay Levenson, (Washington: National Gallery of Art and New Haven: Yale UP, 1991); The Age of the Marvelous ed. Joy Kenseeth (Hanover NH: Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, 1991). On the latter topic, see the selection from Rabelais in Chapter 1, and especially Elizabeth Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

and Ignoble Savages appear over and over again, as scholars have well documented.³⁹ The European mythic imagination survives in American geographical names. For example, the Spanish expectations of encountering the Amazons, the savage women warriors of Greek mythology, were so strong that the greatest South American river still bears their name, and the state of California was named after Amazon island kingdom in the Spanish chevalric romance *Amadis de Gaule*.⁴⁰ As with the Great Chain of Being and the Tree of Life, old categories and iconographies do not die easily.

The myths helped determine discoveries in the fifteenth century, but by the time of Montaigne at the end of the sixteenth century, the discoveries had also taken their toll on the myths. In the medieval *mappa mundi*, the Mediterranean Sea and Jerusalem are placed at the center, as they were in the hearts of Christians. Earthly Paradise is located to the east and the single great Ocean is covered with liminal figures suggesting the dangers and terrors of the unknown and unexplored. The monstrous races take up their habitat on the boundaries of the *Oikoumēnē*, the inhabited or civilized world. The monstrous races were relegated to regions of extreme climate and distance.

By the sixteenth century, the focus of the maps and many of their details have changed. The world center shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and Northern Europe. Ortelius makes special mention of the fact that he had eliminated Earthly Paradise from his map (Eisentstein 127). The great sea god Okeanus was demystified into a common noun and dispersed into several smaller seas (Avalle-Arce). Liminal creatures remain in the sea, but on land, the inhabitants of the New World are realistically portrayed and their costumes are soon included in Renaissance costume books, as illustrated in Figure 6.⁴¹ The discovery of these enormous new continents with their

³⁹ See for example, Stanley Robe, "Wild Men and Spain's New World" and Gary Nash, "The Image of the Indian in the Southern Colonial Mind" in Dudley, 39-53, 55-86. See also Fredi Chiapelli, ed., *First Images of America*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976). More recently, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991).

⁴⁰ Juan Avalle-Arce, "The Marvelous and the Spanish Conquistadors," *The Exotic, The Bizarre and the Wonderful* lecture series, North Carolina Museum of Art, 19 Feb. 1992.

⁴¹ From *Vecellio's Renaissance Costume Book, All 500 Woodcut Illustrations from the Famous Sixteenth-Century Compendium of World Costume by Cesare Vecellio*, Dover Pictorial Art Series (New York: Dover, 1977).



Figure 6. Selections from Vecellio's Renaissance Costume Book.
Top: Old World. Unmarried French noblewoman; French nobleman.
Bottom: New World. A "queen" from Florida; a warrior of Florida.

previously unknown flora, fauna, and human specimens ultimately raised serious questions about the authority of the Greeks. The revelation of their ignorance eventually added to the decline of the prestige of the Ancients in favor of the Moderns and the new cosmology. Books and printed illustrations made the new discoveries on earth and in the heavens accessible to a growing public and contributed greatly to the coming Scientific Revolution.⁴²

In sum, the wild man is a participant in this gradual shift of reality from the transcendent metaphysics of Plato and Christianity to the empirical reality of verifiable scientific facts and laws. As interest in the New World changed from exploration to colonization and exploitation throughout the sixteenth century, the portrayal of wild men in literature also shifted from myth to fiction. Hayden White notes that the demythification of the wild man by the scientific knowledge gained in the discovery of New World is a shift in emphasis from Wild Man Out There to Wild Man Within because the internal world remained an unconquered frontier: "For 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 the levels of psychic anxiety where such images have their origins" (6). The literary wild men of the sixteenth century draw on both the Wild Man Out There and the Wild Man Within. A significant aspect of the wild man's liminality is the way in which he can function as a link between our inner and outer worlds.

The Wild Man Within, as a representation of a facet of the human psyche, has appeared in guises as varied as the dream-body of the shaman, the "god within" of the Greeks (literally ἐνθουσιασμός, enthusiasm), or the "beast within" of the Victorians. Long before words such as "id" or "libido" had psychological connotations, the symbols of dreams and myth were readily available to convey the connection between the world within and world outside.

One example is the wilderness itself, which was literally embodied in homo silvester, forest man. Bruno Bettelheim writes in The Uses of Enchantment, "From ancient times, the near impenetrable forest in which we

⁴² See, for example, The Age of the Marvelous, and Antonello Gerbi, The Dispute of the New World: The History of a Polemic, 1750-1900 rev. and enlarged ed., trans. Jeremy Moyle (Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh Press, 1973).

get lost has symbolized the dark, hidden, near-impenetrable world of our unconscious.”⁴³ To illustrate, Bettelheim turns to a significant literary example: “Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita / mi ritrovai per una selva oscura / che la diritta via era smarrita.”⁴⁴ These opening lines from Dante’s *Inferno* identify the personal journey through the unknown of the dark woods with the hero’s search for identity and salvation.

The connection between “savage” and the “woods” is visible in the Italian word for wood, *selva*, (*selva oscura*) which is cognate with our *sylvan*. Both point to the etymological heritage of “savage” the Latin *silva*, or in adjectival form, *silvestris*, familiar to us from the *homines silvestres* of Cicero and Horace. The Roman god Silvanus is another significant embodiment of the noun *silva*. He was the deity of the woodland and uncultivated land, the protector of cleared fields, as well as the guardian of boundaries. These zones of dominance attest to his liminal status. Iconographically, he bore a tree in his left hand and a pruning hook in his right, “symbols of his dual nature.”⁴⁵ Silvanus is a recognized precursor of the medieval Green Man. In contrast with the practice of inscribing names above the heads of prophets or sibyls carved on medieval churches, there is only one example of a name being inscribed above a foliate head: that name is Silvanus.⁴⁶

The psychological models of the unconscious proposed by Freud and Jung have had a major impact on twentieth-century theories of the wild man and our understanding of the Wild Man Within. The Freudian map of the mind locates the id, the instinctual energies, impulses and drives within the unconscious.⁴⁷ The id must be satisfied and controlled by the ego, which is

⁴³ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (1976; New York: Vintage, 1977) 94.

⁴⁴ “In the middle of the journey of our life I came to myself within a dark wood where the straight way was lost.” Dante, *The Divine Comedy, 1:Inferno*, trans. John D.Sinclair (1939; New York: Oxford UP, 1961) 22-23.

⁴⁵ *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, rev. ed. (London: Hamlyn, 1968). 216. See Fig. 1.

⁴⁶ Anderson 111, photo 112.

⁴⁷ I am indebted for this “map” and for the following section on psychology to Charles Hampden-Turner, *Maps of the Mind: Charts and Concepts of the Mind and its Labyrinths*, (1981; New York: Collier, 1982).

liminally conscious and unconscious. Some of the defense mechanisms by which this control is exerted are especially pertinent to the wild man, in particular repression and projection. In Wild Men in the Middle Ages, the most thorough study to date, Richard Bernheimer makes use of these mechanisms to offer an explicitly psychological explanation of the wild man.

It appears that the notion of the wild man must respond and be due to a persistent psychological urge. We may define this urge as the need to give external expression and symbolically valid form to the impulses of reckless physical assertion which are hidden in all of us, but are normally kept under control...But the repressed desire for such unhampered self-assertion persists and is projected outwardly as the image of a man, who is as free as the beasts, able and ready to try his strength without regard for the consequences to others, and therefore able to call up forces which his civilized brother has repressed in his effort at self-control (3).

The Freudian model makes an explicit link between the Wild Man as Self (within) and the Wild Man as Other (out there). Freud's insights continue in the vocabulary of more recent critics of the Wild Man and the Primitive. For example, in the essay "The Noble Savage as Fetish," White analyzes both the psychological and anthropological meanings of the term "fetish."⁴⁸ In Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives, Torgovnick describes primitivism as nostalgia and oversentimentalization.

Jung's model of the unconscious also provides space for the Wild Man. In his map of the mind, there is a collective unconscious at a deeper level than the personal unconscious associated with the self. The structure of the collective unconscious is revealed to the conscious only in symbolic and metaphoric forms or archetypes.⁴⁹ Mythologists in the men's movement include the Wild Man in the community of archetypes that constitute the masculine psyche. In Iron John, for example, Robert Bly identifies seven of these archetypes: Wild Man, Warrior, King, Lover, Trickster, Magician, and Grief Man (229-30). Each archetype has its dark side, analogous to Jung's

⁴⁸ Hayden White, Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978) 183-196.

⁴⁹ Following critical convention, I capitalize "Wild Man" when referring to him as an archetype in this sense.

notion of the shadow. The shadow is the split-off or repressed part of the persona, the part of the ego which we present to the world. In the circle of the Jungian psyche, the Wild Man is the representation of the feeling function which dominates the unconscious portion of the psyche. Moving around and through the psychic circle towards its integration is part of a life-long process for Jung. As part of this process, we confront our own personal and cultural shadows. Anderson stresses the significance of archetypal theory for figures like the Wild and Green Men.

[A]n archetype such as the Green Man represents will recur at different places and times independently of traceable lines of transmission because it is part of the permanent possession of mankind. In Jung's theory of compensation, an archetype will reappear in a new form to redress imbalances in society at a particular time when it is needed.⁵⁰

We will want to keep in mind the cultural context and societal imbalances when we examine the variety of forms that the Wild Man takes at different times. Finally, from the Jungian perspective, the Wild Man is a liminal figure because his function is to lead towards personal and cultural integration: he is neither a stopping point nor a goal.⁵¹

The uncanny also resides in the liminal realm between Self and Other. The Wild Man's association with the uncanny is as ancient as his association with the unconscious. For example, our word "panic" derives from the Greek god Pan, the half-goat, half-human spirit of the pastures, the shepherd's deity. The sudden inexplicable feeling of terror which might strike a person in the wilds was attributed to Pan. For Freud, the uncanny brings together the familiar and the unfamiliar, the conscious and the unconscious. The uncanny is "that class of the frightening which leads back to...something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it

⁵⁰ Anderson 25. His reference to "independence from traceable lines of transmission" also has implications for the intertextuality. See Chapter 3.

⁵¹ Bly addresses this distinction: "The aim is not to be the Wild Man, but to be in touch with the Wild Man. No sane man in Greece would say, 'I want to be Zeus,' but in American culture, past and present, we find people who want to be the Wild Man--writers as intelligent as Kerouac fail to make the distinction between being, and being in touch with. Trying to be the Wild Man ends in early death, and confusion for everyone" (227).

only through the process of repression."⁵² This definition of the uncanny helps to explain a persistent reaction to the primitive, which combines fascination with rejection and resentment. For example, when the Spanish viewed the religious rites of the inhabitants of the New World, they felt that their own rites were being mocked. The Victorians had a similarly indignant reaction to the Darwinian suggestion that they were descended from apes. As Disraeli said, "The question is this; is man an ape or an angel? My Lord, I am on the side of the angels" (Cited by Janson 13). It is not that native American religious practices or apes are unknown and unrecognizable. It is precisely the recognition of ourselves and our own practices in these Others that makes them so troubling and compelling. As the medieval bestiary explained: "They are called MONKEYS (Simia) because people notice a great *similitude* to human reason in them."⁵³ The similitude, as Darwin made so clear, extends far beyond the domain of human reason.

Recent scientific advances in our understanding of the nature of the human brain support these metaphoric models of the unconscious. For example, the evolutionarily older, inner parts of the brain govern emotions, while the autonomic nervous system governs instinct. Together they provide a physical location for Jung's collective unconscious. They also determine much more of our behavior than those who would define man as a rational animal would like to believe.⁵⁴ Neuropsychologist Robert Ornstein argues that emotions, not rationality, are the "chief organizing system of the mind."⁵⁵

On the other hand, the neocortex, the seat of our higher faculties and a relatively recent evolutionary addition, is tremendously important. Of

⁵² Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny,'" Trans. James Strachey, The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVII (London: Hogarth 1953-74) 220, 241.

⁵³ The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts, ed. and trans. T. H. White (1954; New York: Perigree, 1980)

⁵⁴ The Papez-MacLean theory argues that the human brain is really three superimposed brains: the reptilian, the paleomammalian and the neocortex. Hence MacLean's aphorism: "Speaking allegorically, we might imagine that when a psychiatrist bids the patient to lie on the couch, he is asking him to stretch out alongside a horse and a crocodile." Hampden-Turner 80-81. For an application of this theory to popular psychology, see Harville Hendrix, Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples (1988; New York: Harper Perennial, 1990)

⁵⁵ Robert Ornstein, The Evolution of Consciousness: Of Darwin, Freud, and Cranial Fire--The Origins of the Way We Think (New York: Prentice Hall, 1991) 88.

particular significance: the different ways in which the two hemispheres of the cortex process information. In Hampden-Turner's words, the left and dominant hemisphere is characterized as "verbal, analytic, reductive-into-parts, sequential, rational, time-oriented, and discontinuous." The right hemisphere's mode is "non-verbal, holistic, synthetic, visuo-spatial, intuitive, timeless, and diffuse" (88). He argues that this hemispheric specialization is the physiological basis for the long intuited duality conveyed in myth and metaphor in forms as varied as Scylla and Charybdis, Yang and Yin, Conscious and Unconscious, the Tree of Life and The Tree of Knowledge, and even the split between signifier and signified.⁵⁶

These recent insights into the nature of the human brain bring us back to the concerns raised by Cicero in De inventione, especially the association between wild men, language acquisition, and culture. Evolutionary biology currently contends that "all distinctively human traits are extensions of the behavioral capacity of other primates."⁵⁷ Nonetheless, the specialized division of our cortex, the number of uncommitted nerve cells in the human brain at birth, and the related development of language separate us from other primates. These differences define the current boundaries of the human condition. Ornstein explains, "The division of functions into two separated hemispheres is what makes us distinctively human, distinctly creative, and distinctly isolated from our mental processes" (133). Newborn infants already show preference for hearing speech in the right ear and heartbeat in the left. (128). By the time a child is two or three, both language and hemispheric specialization begin to be established, and damage to either hemisphere will result in serious impairment.

Such impairment is also observed in children who have been deprived of language, such as the recent case of Genie, a child who was kept isolated in her room from the time she was two until she was thirteen. Genie's subsequent difficulties were a rich source of information for the field of psycholinguistics. In "A Silent Childhood" Russ Rymer analyzes Genie's story in light

⁵⁶ These and other dualities are displayed in a helpful chart on page 89.

⁵⁷ Richard Potts, "Untying the Knot" Man & Beast, 42. For an extended argument along similar lines, see John McCrone, The Ape that Spoke: Language and the Evolution of the Human Mind (1990; New York, Morrow, 1991.)

of the history of linguistics, and comments on what her story reveals about the profound interrelationship between language and humanity:

[W]e are physically formed by the influence of language. An essential part of our personal development is conferred upon us by others and comes in at the ear. The organization of our brain is a genetically ordained and as automatic as breathing, but, like breathing, it is initiated by the slap of a midwife, and the midwife is grammar...What does it mean to say that something is language? Language is a logic system so organically tuned to the mechanism of the brain that it actually triggers the brain growth. What are human beings? Beings whose brain development is responsive to and dependent on the receipt at the proper time of even a small sample of language.⁵⁸

The Wild Man is frequently represented as an adult who is frozen in the childlike, plastic, prelingual state. To interpret the Ciceronean fable in these terms, we might say that when the great and wise teacher brought ratio et oratio to the wild men, what he really did was to give the midwife's slap to the left hemispheres of their cortices. He completed them, rather than changed them.

The pre-Encounter wild man embodies the characteristics of the right hemisphere and of the older inner brain which governs instinct and emotion. It is no accident that Linneaus defines Homo ferus as mute, or Cicero speaks of the passion and violence dominating the homines silvestres. The right hemisphere governs our large muscle systems and our apprehension of the tone and gesture rather than verbal content of a message (Ornstein 81, 84). The Wild Man's remarkable physical prowess, his use of gestures and guttural sounds, his irrationality, his intuitive powers all correspond to right-brain characteristics.

Learning and language have been the crux of the tremendous problems of adaptation to culture faced by historical wild people. On the one hand, there are the fascinating cases of feral or abused children such as Peter of Hanover, Kaspar Hauser, the Wild Boy of Aveyron, as well as Genie. These children and their problems have been the subject of great interest from the days of King Psammetichos to our own time. Their stories have been told in history books, beginning with Herodotus, in scientific journals since the

⁵⁸ Russ Rymer, "A Silent Childhood (I)" The New Yorker, 20 April, 1992: 68-69.

Enlightenment, as well as on stage, in books, and on film.⁵⁹ Here, as well, the Wild Man reveals his propensity for crossing generic boundaries.

Much insight into the nature of language and human culture has come from another group of people who experience isolation, not because they are raised in closets or abandoned in the wild, but because they are deaf. If deaf children are not exposed to language during their critical period of the first few years, their brains may not become lateralized for language and higher cortical functions. In his study Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf, Oliver Sacks writes: "A human being is not mindless or mentally deficient without language, but he is severely restricted in the range of his thoughts, confined in effect, to an immediate small world."⁶⁰ Sacks reiterates that the language which serves as the midwife's slap to the brain need not be verbal. It can also be visual and spatial, as is American Sign Language.

The predicament of the deaf, especially the languageless deaf—the "dumb"—confronts us with the major Wild Man themes: isolation, language, education, nature and culture. Susan Schaller, a health educator and a Sign interpreter, wrote a book about a deaf man, Ildefonso, whom she introduced to language when he was twenty-seven years old. At the end of her case study, she links the cultural attitude towards the deaf with our reaction to wild children.

An animal-like child challenges our most sacred ideas of humanness. Thus, wild children are often treated horribly upon

⁵⁹ An succinct overview is provided in Rymer's "A Silent Childhood (I)" *The New Yorker*, 13 April 1992: 41-81 and "A Silent Childhood (II)" 20 April 1992: 43-77. This essay examines Genie's case in detail as well as the diverse group of scientists and social workers who became involved with her. The principal book on Genie is the doctoral dissertation written about her: Susan Curtiss, Genie: A Psycholinguistic Study of a Modern Day "Wild Child" (New York: Academic Press, 1977). On Peter of Hanover, see Maximilian Novak, "The Wild Man comes to Tea" Dudley, 183-221. Novak's essay deals extensively with Defoe and Swift. On Kaspar Hauser, see Anselm von Feuerbach, (1832; Caspar Hauser: An account of an individual kept in a dungeon, separated from all communication from the world, from early childhood to about the age of seventeen; London: Simpkin & Marshall, 1834). More recently, Werner Herzog's 1974 film Kaspar Hauser: Every Man for Himself and God Against All, and Leonard Shengold, Halo in the Sky: Observations on Anality and Defense (New York: Guilford P, 1988). On Victor, see François Truffaut's 1970 film L'Enfant sauvage; Harlan Lane, The Wild Boy of Aveyron (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1974); Roger Shattuck, The Forbidden Experiment: The Story of the Wild Boy of Aveyron (New York: Farrar, 1980).

⁶⁰ Oliver Sacks, Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf (Berkeley, U of California P, 1989). Includes references and a selected bibliography.

capture, with the intention of making them more "human." Deaf people encounter similar reactions from the hearing world. People are repulsed by sounds that seem more animal-like than human. Often, even among parents, the inability to speak is associated with mental retardation... People often describe the vocalizations produced by deaf people as eerie, animalistic—inhuman. The frequent mistreatment of deaf persons may stem from the same fear as that provoked by wild children. If deaf children or adults are also languageless, they run a greater risk than their humanity will be denied.⁶¹

As Schaller makes clear here, the stakes are high for those outside the cultural mainstream. Within a given culture, people may be marginalized by such causes as deafness or mental illness.⁶² When these marginalized individuals, real or fictional, are considered too close to the human/animal limen, the question will be asked, as it was by the medieval theologians: "Are they human?"

The Wild Man, in fact and fiction, is a mediating figure who embodies the qualities of the right hemisphere, but is conveyed to the percipient through external verbal and visual media. The Wild Man Out There and the Wild Man Within represent the two sources of information we have about our selves and our world. As Anderson writes in Green Man:

We are born with two hemispheres, one of which will be our means of calculating, using language and dealing with the outside world, and the other of which will be out path into our inner emotional natures, our dreamlands and our faculties of spatial and rhythmic apprehension (160).

The Wild Man in his artistic context brings the two together. Moreover, according to Francisco Varela, each hemisphere of the brain seems to have its own preferred metaphor or paradigm. For the right it is a net, for the left, a tree.⁶³ We have already encountered each of these metaphors in our defini-

⁶¹ Susan Schaller, A Man Without Words (New York: Summit, 1991) 154-155.

⁶² On the mentally ill and liminality, see Michel Foucault, Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason, trans. Richard Howard (1961, 1965; New York: Vintage, 1973). More recently see Roy Porter, Mind-Forg'd Manacles: A History of Madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1987). See also note 111 below.

⁶³ Varela's work is discussed in Hampden-Turner 192-193.

tion of the Wild Man. The Great Chain of Being and the Tree of Life are clearly left-brain inventions, whereas Percy's semiotic world and Geertz' web of culture draws on right-brain imagery. In a similar fashion, Stanley Fish invokes the fable from De inventione as an illustration of the contrast between two ways of perceiving truth: Serious Man's unitary Truth, a hierarchy of essences and absolutes, and Rhetorical Man's shifting network of possibilities, interpretations, and strategies. Once again, the vertical tree is opposed to the interwoven web.⁶⁴

This Wild Man Out There/Within model of liminality provokes many questions. The wild-man figure, appearing in narrative or fine art, can be a link between the right and left hemispheres, between the inner and outer human worlds. How does a given writer make use of this link between the Wild Man as Other and Self? Is the link between the Wild Man Out There and Wild Man Within made explicitly by the writer or implicitly by the reader? Are we to recognize ourselves or distance ourselves from the Other we encounter as we read? If we examine the individual traits of the Wild Men as repressed (Freudian) or submerged (Jungian) psychic content, what do we learn about the culture and the individual that has produced them? How is this unconscious content brought to consciousness? How does these impulses, drives, feelings, and fears take literary form? Can we evaluate the psychological and the literary elements involved? We must balance the reality of the Other as well as the reality of the Self. Finally, how do the encounters with the actual human beings to whom these traits are attributed, whether foreigner, primitive, savage, or marginal, affect the way they are subsequently seen and imagined? How do the encounters change their psychic or literary personae?

I would argue that the wild man is a symbol and expression of our recognition on an unconscious level that Nature is not an Other, despite the strength this dichotomy has in our history and philosophical tradition. This recognition is generally not welcome to the conscious, rational mind. Susan Schaller writes of the appeal of Victor and Peter, as well as Friday, Tarzan, and

⁶⁴ Stanley Fish, "Rhetoric," Critical Terms for Literary Study, eds. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1990) 203-222. Ironically, I find Cicero's vir magnus et sapiens to be an illustration of Serious Man rather than Rhetorical Man in Fish's terms.

Mowgli, accurately summarizing our reaction to the liminal and the uncanny: "We are simultaneously attracted and repelled. We envy the freedom but we fear the wildness. Our animal qualities frighten, and every culture spends considerable effort in denying or hiding certain aspects of our nature" (154). The Wild Man says emphatically that we are part of Nature. Through symbolic mediation, especially language and literature, we confront the continuity between our selves and the world out there. We need liminal symbols to appreciate the full range of our capabilities, to respect our emotions as well as our intellect, our dark side as well as our more admirable. The Wild Man serves as a bridge between the two hemispheres of our brain, our inner and outer worlds, the Self and the Other.

3. The Rites of Passage and the Liminal State

The third model of liminality which helps illuminate literary uses of the wild man figure is based on the rite of passage, as elaborated by anthropologists, notably Arnold van Gennep, Edmund Leach and Victor Turner. Although the model can apply to every change of "place, state, social position and age," it is particularly used to study the most prominent of the changes in human life: birth, puberty, marriage, and death (Turner 4). The rites of passage are the rites society uses to mark and celebrate the transition from one state to the next. The structural model of these rites of passage reveals a common tripartite pattern, as shown in Figure 7.⁶⁵

The model shows that to move from one social state to the next, the person is first separated from his or her initial role. During the liminal period, the person passing from one state to the next, the passenger, is separated physically from "normal" society and is no longer governed by social conventions. The passenger's status "betwixt and between" two ordered, articulated states in society's pattern is described by Danforth as "ambiguous, paradoxical, and anomalous"⁶⁶ and Douglas as "vulnerable,

⁶⁵ Figure adapted from Leach 78.

⁶⁶ Loring Danforth, The Death Rituals of Rural Greece (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1982) 37.

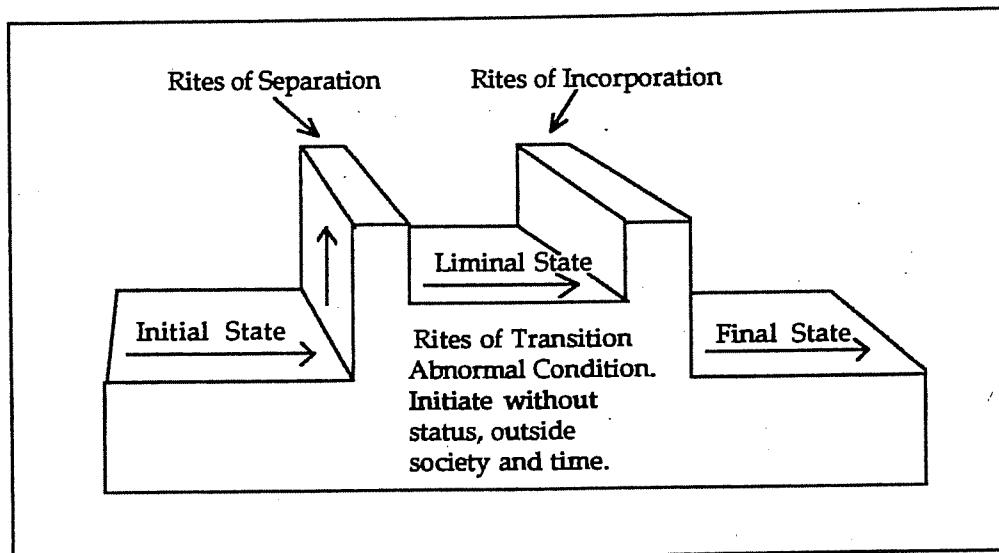


Figure 7. The Structural Model of the Rites of Passage.

dangerous, lawless, formless and inarticulate" (94-97). Douglas discusses how ritual makes use of the power and danger inherent in states of disorder:

In these beliefs there is a double play on articulateness. First there is a venture into the disordered regions of the mind. Second there is the venture beyond the confines of society. The man who comes back from these inaccessible regions brings with him a power not available to those who have stayed in the control of themselves and of society (95).

Finally, following the liminal period, the passenger is welcomed back into society by rites of incorporation or aggregation and is integrated into a new role or state.⁶⁷ These rites are crucial for controlling the power and danger of the liminal state for both the passenger and society. However, it is the middle, transitional period which is important to the wild man, and which sheds the most light on his characteristics and function.

⁶⁷ Douglas points to the lack of rituals of aggregation in a modern secular societies to reinsert people who have been marginalized because of time spent in prisons or mental institutions. "A man who has spent any time 'inside' is put permanently 'outside' the ordinary social system. With no rite of aggregation which can definitively assign him to a new position, he remains in the margins, with other people who are similar[ly] credited with unreliability, unteachability, and all the wrong social attitudes" (97).

The Initiate (Victor Turner)

The rites of initiation, especially those pertaining to the transition from childhood to adulthood, have been extensively studied. Victor Turner's essay "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage" focuses on the symbols associated with these rites. The liminal period in the initiation process has two goals: removal of the old identity and communication of information necessary for the new identity. To accomplish the removal of the old identity, the initiate is separated physically from society or disguised by masks or costumes. Old clothing, property, rank, and relations are removed. The initiate may be washed clean. Turner likens the denuded initiate to Lear's "naked unaccommodated man" and the condition of sacred poverty (8). The symbols used to accompany this process are often drawn from the biology of death, decomposition and dissolution (6).

The logic of liminality is not either/or but both/and. In passage, the liminal persona is at the same time "no longer classified and not yet classified" (6). As the former is expressed in terms of death and dissolution, so the acquisition of the new identity and the rebirth of the initiate is heralded by the symbols of gestation and birth and suckling (7). Turner notes that liminal processes seek out symbols which link the processes of "undoing, dissolution, decomposition" with their antitheses, "growth, transformation, reformulation of old elements in new patterns" (7). He gives examples such as huts and tunnels that are at once tombs and wombs, the moon which both waxes and wanes, the snake which appears to die but emerges in a new skin, and the bear who "dies" in hibernation and is "reborn" with the coming of spring. The condition of nakedness is very suggestive, since it is "at once the condition of the newborn infant and the corpse prepared for burial" (7).

The wild man figure is drawn by the same logic and attracts many of these symbols. The wild man lends himself to powerful and dangerous embodiments, noble and ignoble. He is both man and animal, and neither man nor animal. In folklore and mythology we often find him associated with both the mysteries of death and birth. For example, the wild man is linked with motifs such as the hero's mysterious birth in the forest where he is subsequently nurtured by wild beasts. The Wild Man or Woman also appears as a cannibalistic ogre who kidnaps and devours bad children. As a figure of death, the Wild Man also threatens adults as well. Orcus, the Roman god of death, or the Germanic tradition of the Wild Hunt draw on this aspect

of the Wild Man's heritage.⁶⁸ Three examples of ignoble savages are displayed in Figure 8.

The liminal period in the initiation rite also has an educative dimension. The initiate learns how to function as an adult in society. Some lessons emphasize the teaching of practical concerns. The initiate learns society's ethical and social rules. He may also be taught the knowledge necessary for survival, in particular learning to read the ways of nature. Robert Bly's interpretation of the Wild Man focuses on his role as a teacher and guide to the initiate.⁶⁹

Turner's emphasis is on metaphysical concerns, governed by rules of secrecy. The initiate grows and is ontologically changed by the transition rites: "It is not mere acquisition of knowledge but a change in being" (11). This transformation is accomplished by "the communication of the sacra, the heart of the liminal matter" (11). These are the lessons which provide special powers which will permit the initiate to succeed in a new role when he or she is reintegrated into society.

Turner's cross-cultural study of the ways by which sacra are communicated, as exhibitions, actions or instruction, are especially pertinent to the representation of the wild man. He specifies three problematic characteristics: "their frequent disproportion, their monstrousness, and their mystery" (13). Turner interprets the disproportion or exaggeration as a "primordial mode of abstraction" where "the exaggerated feature is made into an object of reflection" (13). In the same way, the representation of monsters is not a sign of irrationality or a lack of distinction between man and animal, but on the contrary, "monsters are manufactured precisely to teach neophytes to distinguish clearly between the factors of reality, as it is conceived in their culture" (14).

⁶⁸ Bernheimer is particularly strong on the Germanic tradition.

⁶⁹ Bly: "[W]e could look at a linear view of male initiation laid out in five stages. First, bonding with the mother and separation from the mother...Second, bonding with father and separation from the father...Third, the arrival of the male mother, or the mentor who helps a man rebuild the bridge to his own greatness...Fourth, apprenticeship to a hurricane energy such as the Wild Man, or the Warrior, or Dionysus, or Apollo...And finally, fifth, the marriage with the Holy Woman or the Queen." 181-182. Bly connects the Wild Man with both the third and fourth stages, so the Wild Man may be the male mentor and/or the source of hurricane or divine energy.

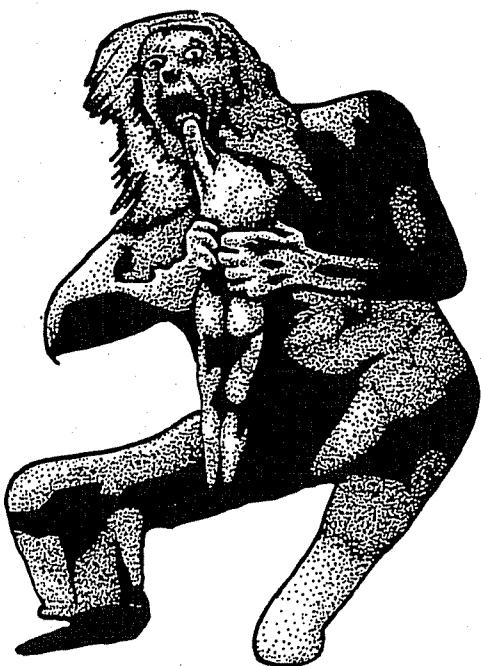


Figure 8. Ignoble Savages.

Top: Detail from "Cannibal or Werewolf," woodcut by Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1510-1515. (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art). Rpt. in Husband, 111. Center: Manticore, man-eating beast from India from Topsell's Historie of Foure-Footed Beastes, 1607. Rpt. in Huber. Bottom: Detail from Goya's Cronus Devouring One of his Children, ca. 1820. Rpt in Huber.

Turner gives the example of a human head joined to an animal's body, a hybrid familiar to the wild man tradition:

There could be less encouragement to reflect on head and headship if that same head were firmly ensconced on its familiar, its all too familiar, human body. The man-lion monster also encourages the observer to think about lions, their habits, qualities, metaphorical properties, religious significance and so on. More important than these, the relation between man and lion, empirical and metaphorical, may be speculated upon, and ideas developed on this topic... Liminality is the realm of primitive hypothesis, where there is a certain freedom to juggle with the factors of existence (15).

Turner's explanation offers a satisfying account of the grotesque or monstrous features so often associated with representations of the Wild Man, and makes the notion of liminality essential to our understanding of his varied artistic and literary forms. In these various incarnations, the Wild Man functions in the liminal state, sharing features with the initiate, the instructor, the sacred materials and the mysteries of life themselves.

The Hero, the Guide, the Guardian, the Obstacle (Joseph Campbell)

In The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Joseph Campbell explicitly bases the hero's adventure on the structure of the rites we have just elucidated:

The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation-initiation-return*: which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth. A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.⁷⁰

Campbell portrays this monomyth as a circle to stress the return of the hero to his community, as well as the completion of the task of self-discovery which ends in the complete integration of the psyche.

⁷⁰ Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Bollingen Series XVII, 2nd ed., (1949; Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968) 30. For Campbell's use of Freudian and Jungian psychology, see the introduction by Robert A. Segal, In Quest of the Hero (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990). Segal also includes a comparison of the Freudian mythic interpretation by Rank and Tylor's anthropological theory as explored by Raglan.

Wild men and liminal imagery generally appear at the juncture of the first two parts of Campbell's schema, leading the hero from separation into initiation. The hero is called to an adventure and leaves his everyday world. On the way towards the unknown, the hero encounters a supernatural being, a guardian or protective figure. In fairy lore this is often the helpful crone or fairy godmother, or in masculine form:

some little fellow of the wood, some wizard, hermit, shepherd or smith, who appears to supply the amulet and advice the hero will require. The higher mythologies develop the role in the great figure of the guide, the teacher, the ferryman, the conductor of souls to the underworld... (72).

In our literary study, the wild man may take on this guardian role in relation to the hero or other characters.

The hero's next task is the crossing of the first threshold into the unknown, the zone of initiation and trials. Entering this zone requires passage across some threshold or physical representation of liminality: a bridge, a ford, a door, a gate, a wardrobe. This passage often marks the interface of two ecosystems, so that the hero passes from one kind of world into another:

The fateful region of both treasure and danger may be variously represented: as a distant land, a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountain top, or profound dream state; but it is always a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, superhuman deeds, and impossible delight (58).

Diverse liminal figures guard these thresholds. The maps of the voyages of explorations featured the guardians of the vast Ocean, the "fabled leviathans, mermaids, dragon kinds, and other monsters of the deep" (78). Campbell also includes the "Wild Women" of the Russian peasants, Pan, Sylvanus, and Faunus from classical mythology, and the gargoyles on church among the varied embodiments of this dangerous presence just beyond the protected or civilized zone (81). These guardians have a Janus-like function. On the one hand, they frighten away those travelers who are not ready to cross into another world. On the other hand, for those who are spiritually ready, they convey a deeper message. The hero may cross the passage by fighting or conciliating the guardian, and descend alive into the Other World. Other heroes are slain and literally come to pieces. To cross the threshold the hero

must disappear inwardly, perhaps into the belly of a whale or into a temple interior. The old self dies symbolically in order that the new self be born.

Having crossed the threshold, the hero is now ready for the Adventure where various temptations and trials are endured. Wild men and women appear both as guardians and helpers as well as monstrous obstacles. This pattern continues until the hero has his supreme ordeal, a triumphal encounter with a god and/or goddess. The final task of the hero is to leave the transcendental powers which made it possible for him to succeed behind. He then returns to his community with the boon, which may be a tangible gift, such as a bride or fire, or an intangible one, such as illumination or transfiguration.

In this model, the liminal figure serves as a guardian and obstacle, whose uncanny combination of qualities provides the hero with clues in his adventure. The encounters with liminal figures at the thresholds show the hero what he must learn and what he must overcome. Often, the hero learns from the wild man that he already possesses all he needs to succeed. Each of us, as heroes or heroines in our own life's adventure, learns from myth or invents our own liminal figures to help us on our way.

The Traveler (Eric Leed)

In The Mind of the Traveler, Eric Leed breaks the experience of travel into a familiar tripartite structure: departure, passage, and arrival.⁷¹ Leed notes that departure "transforms the passenger into a species not unlike Rousseau's savage man, who has his own forces constantly at his disposal and carries himself 'whole and entire' about with him" (11). This model explicitly links the hero and the wild man. By leaving the familiar comforts of home and cultural context, the hero becomes like the wild man he encounters on his journey.

In Leed's model, the middle or liminal stage has unique educative qualities because of the way it affects the traveler's perceptions of time and space.

⁷¹ Eric Leed, The Mind of the Traveler: From Gilgamesh to Global Tourism (n.p.: Basic Books, 1991).

The mental effects of passage—the development of observational skills, the concentration on forms and relations, the sense of distance between an observing self and a world of objects perceived first in their materiality, their externalities and surfaces, the subjectivity of the observer—are inseparable from the physical conditions of movement through space (72).

Like Douglas, Leed characterizes the liminal period as inarticulate. He notes that passage tends to be experienced in silence. The traveler's tales, his observations and theorizing come later, when he is no longer in motion. He also notes the tendency for these observations to come in the form of comparisons. The traveler relates the new and unfamiliar in terms of the familiar, and generates new universals outside of customary contexts.

The final step in Leed's sequence is the arrival. His account of arrival is appropriate to travel in the real world, as well journeys to mythic Other Worlds. He emphasizes the function which arrivals have for the society which receives the traveler, as well the effects on the traveler himself. Both seek to resolve the uncanny experience. Arrivals are defined by the "[c]reation of tests, ordeals and proofs by means of which the unknown is made known...The stranger is a potential pollutant of the domestic order as well as a potential source of strength within that order. The procedures of arrival effectively establish this distinction" (88). Travelers, whether strangers or returning heroes, are the source of new information and change, entertainment and enlightenment. For Leed, the traveler's tale is the original source of fiction. Later, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, travel journals come to set the standard for nonfiction.

In addition to the synchronic model with which Leed examines the transformations wrought by travel, he also offers a diachronic account of European travel traditions: heroic, sacred, and philosophical travel. He traces a history of travel as a "rough but evident transition from the ancient emphasis upon travel as a necessary suffering to the modern emphasis upon travel as an experience of freedom and the gaining of autonomy" (12). At the hinge of this transition, Leed places the period and the literature which underlie the European Renaissance: the chevalric tales and voyages of exploration. These two literary travel traditions have great impact on sixteenth-century noble and ignoble savages. The Renaissance is a period concerned with the journey of heroes and journeys of heroic stature.

In sum, the three models of liminality provide different but interrelated avenues of investigation with which the wild man can serve the writer. In each, the wild man's liminality sheds light on what it means to be human. The three models address human placement in the natural order and human relation to animals and gods, the relationship between the inner world of the psyche and the outer world of experience, and finally, the journey through time and space which is also a search for personal and cultural identity, a passage towards understanding.

CHAPTER III: THE INTERTEXTUALITY OF THE WILD MAN

What is intertextuality?

vos exemplaria Graeca/ nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.

"Turn the Greek models over and over in your hand, turn them by night, turn them by day." Horace, Ars Poetica, l. 268

The indebtedness of a literary work to its predecessors has long been recognized, as the epigraph from Horace's Ars Poetica attests. The nature of such indebtedness has been central to the activity of literary criticism throughout the centuries. As in any discipline, the focus and terminology of the investigation change over time. Horace's exhortation to the aspiring writer captures the way the relation between a work and its antecedents traditionally has been viewed: the writer should look back to the successful exempla of the past and through careful study, learn to write from them. In terms of the mimetic model examined in the Chapter 1, such an approach to the relation of literary texts focuses on the author. As a critical method, it identifies which works were available to a given writer in order to assess the impact of earlier works on his own creation. The scholar seeks to uncover and establish verifiable facts to support such assessments. This has been the focus of source and influence studies characteristic of traditional literary scholarship: it envisions a line of transmission which moves in one direction from past to present: author⇒text⇒author⇒text.

Movements in literary theory and criticism throughout the twentieth century have undercut this notion and led to other ways of viewing the recapitulative nature of the literary tradition. One similarity of diverse movements in the first half of our century, including Russian formalism, Prague structuralism, and American New Criticism, is their interest in the intrinsic features of the literary work. The focus of critical attention shifted from the author and his socio-historical setting as determinants of the literary work to the work itself as the appropriate object of study. This tendency has continued on through the structuralist and poststructuralist movements of the past

thirty years. The shift in focus is exposed by the critical term currently used to describe literary indebtedness: intertextuality.

The origin of the term intertextuality is attributed to Julia Kristeva in her 1969 Semiotikè: "tout texte se construit comme une mosaique de citations et tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte."¹ The imagery of this definition is significant. In opposition to the aquatic vocabulary of source and influence, which implies a linear flow from author to work or from one work to another, structuralist criticism offers terms such Kristeva's mosaïque, Riffaterre's matrices, or the all-purpose réseau, or network. Perhaps the most evocative is Genette's palimpsestes, which was originally a parchment or other writing material, on which later writing is inscribed over an effaced earlier writing.² It is striking how these two metaphor systems, "source" and "influence" for the traditional approach and "mosaic," "network," and "palimpsest" for the intertextual approach, correspond to the left-brain/right-brain image preferences for tree/web metaphors.³

These intertextual terms share the notion of structure: interrelated parts or pieces which take on purpose or meaning as part of a whole. As Roland Barthes, the most influential critic promoting the idea of textuality in both structuralist and poststructuralist thought, writes:

We now know that the text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological meaning' (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture.⁴

¹ Julia Kristeva, Semiotikè: Recherches pour une sémanalyse (Paris: Seuil, 1969) 146. "Every text comes together as a mosaic of citations and every text is the absorption and transformation of another text." My translation.

² Gérard Genette, Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré (Paris: Seuil, 1982). The term comes from the Greek παλίμψητος, scraped again. Its figurative meaning is defined in Le Petit Robert dictionary (1973) by the following citation from the poet Baudelaire: "L'immense et compliqué palimpseste de la mémoire." ("The immense and complicated palimpsest of memory." My translation.)

³ See pages 60-61 above.

⁴ Roland Barthes, Image, Music, and Text (New York: Hill & Wang, 1977) 146. Cited in Jonathan Culler, On Deconstruction Theory and Criticism after Structuralism (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982) 32.

The key to the imagery of intertextuality is the word “text” itself, from the Latin texo, to weave. For Barthes, the text is a tissue, a veil, a web.⁵

Barthes also makes a fundamental distinction between œuvre and texte, *work* and *text*:

[T]he work can be seen in bookstores, in card catalogues, and on course lists, while text reveals itself, articulates itself according to or against certain rules. While the work is held in the hand, the text is held in language: it exists only in discourse.⁶

The “work” is concrete and material, marked by closure, while the “text” is ephemeral and evolving, marked by play. The distinction is extended from work and text to literature and textuality:

While Literature is seen as a series of discrete and highly meaningful Great Works, textuality is the manifestation of an open-ended heterogeneous disruptive force or signification and erasure that transgresses all closure—a force that is operative even within Great Works themselves.⁷

Work and text correspond to two different ways of conceiving what the individual literary artifact is, how one artifact is related to another, and how the objects themselves and the process that generates them should be studied. The intertextual approach addresses the tension between closed, concrete literary works and the ongoing processes of reading interpretation.

Barthes’ rejection both of the Author-God and the text’s unified theological meaning combines the structuralist attack on the idea of unified sub-

⁵ For example, Barthes “Texte (Théorie du)” (1973) Encyclopaedia Universalis (1968-75): “[A]lorsque précédemment la critique...mettait unanimement l’accent sur le ‘tissu’ fini (le texte étant une ‘voile’ derrière lequel il fallait aller chercher la vérité, le message réel, bref *le sens*), la théorie actuelle du texte se détourne du texte-voile et cherche à percevoir le tissu dans sa texture, dans l’entrelacs des codes, des formules, des signifiants, au sién duquel le sujet se place et se défait, telle une araignée qui se dissoudrait elle-même dans sa toile.” “Although critics previously...emphasized unanimously the finished ‘tissue’ (the text being a ‘veil’ behind which one went to find the truth, the real message, in a word, the meaning), current theory turns away from the text-veil and seeks to perceive the tissue in its texture, in the interlacings of the codes, the expressions, the signifiers, in the very heart where the subject locates itself and undoes itself, as though it were a spider dissolving herself in her own web.” My translation.

⁶ Barthes, “From Work to Text” in Ed. Josué Harari, Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism (Ithaca, Cornell UP, 1979) 74-75.

⁷ Barbara Johnson, “Writing,” Lentricchia, 40.

ject, or individual as conceived in the Western tradition, with the poststructuralist attack on the process of representation itself and the possibility of meaning.⁸ The impact of Darwin, Marx, and Freud and the insights of structuralism and poststructuralism have transformed our modern understanding of the human individual and of meaning. Yet we need not ascribe total bankruptcy to these concepts to find intertextuality a valuable way of viewing the literary tradition.

Barthes makes clear that the author, the central figure in the Horatian model of inspiration and imitation, has been dethroned. In response to Barthes announcement of the "Death of the Author," Michel Foucault's influential "Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?" proposes that we see the author not as a subject but as a function:

We are accustomed to saying that the author is the genial creator of a work in which he deposits, with infinite wealth and generosity, an inexhaustible world of significations... The truth is quite the contrary: the author is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work; the author does not precede the works, he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition and recomposition of fiction...⁹

Without restoring the author to a quasi-divine status, Foucault shifts the emphasis from Barthes' "text as tissue" to literary discourse as a catalyst within culture. Foucault's view of discourse as a means of power and instrument of control requires that we reinsert literary activity into a cultural context. In this light, the intertextual study must take into account what is missing from a text, what the text suppresses, as well as what is presented to the reader. What parts of the intertextual tradition have been excluded? Why? Following Bakhtin, readers and critics are especially invited to listen to the minor key, marginalized voices in the polyphonic structure of the narrative, now that the powerful, hegemonic narrative voice has been hushed. The wild man is such a marginalized voice.

⁸ Harari's Textual Strategies provides a useful presentation of the structuralist and poststructuralist movements and their impact on literary criticism.

⁹ Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" Harari, 159.

The significance of the reader and the critic has risen along with the prominence of textuality. If the text is a creative field, a productivity rather than a production, then the reader and critic have new responsibilities. Just as the text is no longer the passive construction of the author, the reader is no longer the passive recipient of the text. Thus, Michel Riffaterre places the locus of intertextuality as a critical activity in between the text and the reader:

[L']intertextualité: il s'agit d'un phénomène qui oriente la lecture du texte, qui en gouverne éventuellement l'interprétation, et qui est le contraire de la lecture linéaire. C'est la mode de perception du texte qui gouverne la production de la signification, alors que la lecture linéaire ne gouverne que la production du sens... On doit donc se représenter le texte non pas comme une séquence de mots groupés en phrases, mais comme *une complexe de présuppositions*, chaque mot du texte étant comme la pointe de l'iceberg proverbial.¹⁰

The image of the word as an iceberg floating in a textual ocean provides a marked contrast to the linear river imagery of source and influence, and captures the partially submerged quality of the wild man.

The Intertextual Significance of the Wild Man

It is my responsibility as a critic to sketch out the wild man's *intertext* and to establish the range of his significance, before examining what such a character brings to individual *works* such as *Gilgamesh* and "Des cannibales." We will examine significant layers of the wild man palimpsest, not to identify one-to-one correspondences between them or posit an original or ideal wild man, but to establish the images and themes which, in various cultural contexts, are pulled into orbit around the wild man, as a center of narrative gravity.¹¹ There are several reasons which validate the use of the intertextual approach in the study of the wild man.

¹⁰ Michel Riffaterre, "L'intertexte inconnu," *Littérature* February 1981, 5-7. "Intertextuality is a phenomenon which orients the reading of the text and eventually governs its interpretation, and which is the contrary of linear reading. It is the mode of perception which governs the production of significance, whereas linear reading only governs the production of meaning... We should, therefore, represent the text not as sequence of words, grouped into sentences, but as a complex of presuppositions, where each word in the text is like the tip of the proverbial iceberg." My translation.

¹¹ This image of a center of narrative gravity comes from a quotation of Kenneth Burke, "Words are like planets, each with its own gravitational pull," and the presentation of the conscious

First of all, the metaphors of intertextuality offer a compelling way to gain access to the wild man. When the iceberg tip of a wild-man figure surfaces in a particular narrative, the alerted reader is aware of an enormous mythic realm submerged beneath the waves. Like Riffaterre's word/iceberg, the wild man has his origins in the univers langagier of Texte, the linguistic process we use to order our experience and perception of the universe. The tension between the two parts of this figure's name, wild and man, reflects the tension of his liminal role as mediator between nature and society. In turn, this tension is part of the wild man tessera, or mosaic tile, within the mosaic of the text. The character and fit of this tessera will also be modified by both formal intrinsic factors and external, personal and cultural, factors. Genette's image of the palimpsest, the superimposition of images, one blurring into another, is equally appropriate. The individual wild man, appearing in a given work, adds to the Wild Man of Text, those different images of which have come before and those which are yet to come.

The poststructuralist rejection of the lines separating literary from non-literary discourse and those which demarcate the different literary genres highlights the wild man's intertextuality, because wild men figures delight in defying such boundaries. The intertextual approach also usefully recasts what Comparative Literature traditionally designates the mutual illumination of the arts, as interpenetrating systems of signs. A focus on shared themes rather than differing media is essential to an interdisciplinary analysis of a figure such as the Wild Man.

In contrast with the scholar of source and influence, the intertextual critic is not limited to the works accessible to a given author. A twentieth century critic reads Gilgamesh and Montaigne's Essais with a knowledge of pre-history and the enduring legacy of the voyages of exploration. The modern perception of the wild man tradition provides the framework from which the critic assesses which aspects of that tradition were used as well as those which were ignored or suppressed. The textual downplaying of the author's role is also appropriate. Since the wild-man intertext is drawn from pre-Renaissance texts, the modern game of books and authorship critiqued by Barthes and Foucault had not yet been invented. The authorial function developed dur-

self as a narrative center of gravity in Daniel Dennett, Consciousness Explained (Boston: Little Brown, 1991) 418.

ing the Renaissance, and it is hard to imagine a more allusive author than Montaigne. The intertextual approach shifts the focus to the traditions within which the writer works. Unlike the authors themselves, we are now in a position to assess how their contributions enter the wild-man tradition.

Along with the author, the fictional character as an object of representation, has been marginalized by structural and poststructural approaches to literature. However, the study of character is necessary in an examination of the wild man. Robert Alter points to the weakness of the structural approach to character, which he attributes to both formal and ideological causes:

It is symptomatic that narratology should be most conspicuously inadequate in its treatment of character because with its conception of narrative as a system of structural mechanisms, character can be little more than a function of plot. The narratologists have scarcely any critical vocabulary for encompassing the mimetic dimension of character.¹²

In my mind, this recognition of the representational function of literature provides a necessary supplement to the valuable notion of intertextuality.

Telling stories is a quintessentially human activity. The literary document is above all a human document. It is ironic that at the same time that literary criticism aspires to a scientific status, which in structuralist and post-structuralist thought implies demoting the value of both literary art and the individual, scientific disciplines, including medicine and anthropology are increasingly recognizing the importance of narrative and imaginative representation.¹³ Literary criticism should combine textuality's insights into the meanings of form, the power of narrative, and the sense of play and transformation with a recognition of the essentially serious and profound content of literary art. We must balance and value what is said and how it is said, what is read and how it is read.

Intertextuality has broadened the spectrum of critical approaches to narrative. It suggests a focus on interconnection between texts, literary and

¹² Robert Alter, The Pleasures of Reading in an Ideological Age (1989; New York: Touchstone, 1990) 51.

¹³ In history, for example, there is an increased use of diaries and accounts of individual lives, as in the Annales tradition. In medicine, we find a similar ascendancy for the case study, see for example the works of Oliver Sacks and the journal "Literature and Medicine." In anthropology, see Clifford Geertz, Works and Authors.

non-literary, and the cultural framework of the literary work. Such a focus is appropriate to the study of the wild man, whose varied embodiments do not belong to any single type of text. Wild-men figures appear throughout the long history of the Western tradition, in fiction, nonfiction, myth and legend, sacred and secular art, and popular and high culture. A critical study of the Wild Man incorporates the insights of intertextual analysis and recognition of the representational function of language and literature.

Human Evolution and the Wild Man

The most ancient layer of the wild man palimpsest is also the most recently discovered. When today we encounter the image of an individual with the characteristics of the medieval wild man: large muscular frame, long, dark, shaggy hair and unruly beard, sporting an over-the-shoulder animal pelt and brandishing a knotty club in one hand, we recognize him as our distant ancestor: the cave man. As the selection from Cicero's De inventione reveals, the wild man is a major participant in the narratives within the Western tradition pertaining to our physical and cultural origins. In literary terms, the wild man is a character, an experimental self or an existential possibility, to borrow Milan Kundera's useful terms.¹⁴ Certain basic questions persist from before Cicero's time through our own: What are we humans? Where did we come from? How are we different from other animals?

While in some ways our answers to these questions in the 1990's are quite different than those of Cicero and Montaigne, the images of our ancestors, noble and ignoble savages alike, play a central role in our creation myths and fables. Some elements of the Ciceronian tale seem quite prescient. We still believe that society and civilization were built as sparse, scattered groups of people came together for mutual benefits. We still hold that the coming of language marks a crucial point in our development as a species. We continue to look at our ancestors with the same prejudices that accompany Cicero's description of homines silvestres. We assume them to be our mental and moral inferiors. We still use the same prejudicial words for our human ancestors that we use for contemporary peoples of different cultures, "savage" and

¹⁴ Milan Kundera, The Art of the Novel, trans. Linda Asher (1986; New York: Harper & Row, 1988).

"primitive". Insults in colloquial English include "Neanderthal" and "Troglodyte". Let the wild man be our guide, in his universal mythical role, as we travel into the deep past of human history.

Darwinian theory and the twentieth century understanding of genetics have provided a different perspective of change and time than that of Cicero and the humanists. The Great Chain of Being held that human ancestors were always human. Genesis speaks of creation in terms of days, and Archbishop Ussher, in 1650, added up the biblical generations to date the creation of the world precisely in 4004 BC. Copernicus did not displace the idea that humans were unique creatures designed to rule the earth when he proposed the heliocentric universe in 1543. Descartes, considered the first modern scientist for freeing human knowledge from strictures of the Church, defined man as "maître et possesseur de la nature."

Today, science encourages a more humble attitude toward the natural world. We now trace our ancestry back to primordial bacteria, whose genes are still in DNA present in our cells, with time spans of billions of years.¹⁵ Current views of our planet and the human role on earth rejoin the themes and imagery of ancient creation myths. For example, the Gaia hypothesis promotes such themes as symbiosis and cooperation.

Web and network imagery is not restricted to Roland Barthes, but dispersed widely in anthropological, political, and ecological discourse. The message sounds forth in Chief Seattle's now ubiquitous warning to the white settlers who displaced Native American "Savages": "Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself." Scientific discourse uses identical motifs. As John Crook advises in "Consciousness and the Ecology of Meaning: New Findings and Old Philosophies": "We may come to see the universe in a less adversarial way, not as a resource about to let us down but as the matrix from which came, of which we are, and with which we must cooperate" (Robinson 220). The current problems we face, the unprecedented challenges of the post-industrial age make it all the more important that we know where we come from. We urgently need to understand the kinds of evolution which pertain to human beings. The most rational among us recognize the importance of mythic

¹⁵ For a brief but lucid account of these theories, see Lewis Thomas, The Fragile Species (New York: Scribner's, 1992).

wisdom. We must combine the age-old insights of religion and literature with our ever-improving technological abilities if we are to adapt to the future. The specter of impending environmental catastrophe and the questionable fate of the entire human race add to the sense of urgency which makes the study of the wild man palimpsest especially pertinent in the 1990's.

A Brief View of Human History. *Dramatis Personae:* Hominid to *Homo*

Here is the cast of characters, wild men all, that populate the current telling of human history. These are literally skeletal figures, whose features and daily lives must be imaginatively reconstructed. Like the wild men of the literary tradition, hominoids and hominids assume starring roles in a chronological order, but the actual relations among them and to modern humans remains controversial. Even the paleontologists who have recreated them stress that human "fossil species are mental constructs."¹⁶ None of these prehistoric figures is the proverbial missing link, half-human and half-ape. Yet all are liminal links to our complex primate ancestry. As Robert Ornstein writes in The Evolution of Consciousness, "Our real history is 'written' in our blood, in our bones, and in our nerve circuits. And it was written before there were writers" (17). Part of this history written within each of us is also the history of the Wild Man.

The current version of the story of human evolution begins five to six million years ago, and is set in the thinning forests in East Africa.¹⁷ This is when the first hominids, the family of humans and human ancestors, split off from another primate group, the African apes. These prehumans came down from the trees, and began our tradition of bipedal locomotion, either to learn to live in grasslands as Darwin believed, or as a means to travel more efficiently from one remaining patch of forest to another, as more recent theorists suggest.¹⁸

¹⁶ Glenn Conroy cited in Bruce Bower, "Erectus Unhinged," Science News, 20 June, 1992.

¹⁷ For the presentation which follows, in addition to other works cited in footnotes I am indebted to paleontological information from Ornstein's The Evolution of Consciousness, and David Lambert and the Diagram Group, The Field Guide to Early Man (New York: Facts on File, 1987).

¹⁸ A good survey of changes in evolutionary assumptions over last 100 years appears in Richard Potts, "Untying the Knot," Robinson, 41-59.

The setting shifts to 3-4 million years ago. Now we find traces of Australopithecus, including one with a proper name, Lucy, an intertextual reference to the Beatles' song played by her archeological excavators. This hominid was about 4 feet tall, with arms longer than a human's but shorter than an ape's. Primarily a vegetarian, with huge teeth and jaws, this potential human precursor had a brain size one-third of our own. Although she may have spent time in trees, Lucy's pelvic bones and other fossil footprints show that Australopithecines walked upright. These were decisive evolutionary steps.

In contrast with the structural reconfiguration that bipedalism required, many other characteristics of human appearance evolved with relative ease. Stephen Jay Gould explains that:

[H]umans are neotonic—we have evolved by retaining juvenile features of our ancestors. Our large brains, small jaws, and a host of other features, ranging from distribution of bodily hair to ventral pointing of the vaginal canal, are consequences of eternal youth.¹⁹

The move to an upright posture had profound consequences for human evolution. It freed the hands to carry food or weapons. It led to the thinning of the pelvis and constrained skull size at the time of birth, which, in turn, provides for prolonged infancy and increased parental involvement typical of the human pattern. Standing up, we learned to face each other. Millions of years later, significant human communication still takes place face to face, eye to eye. Face to face, the many confrontations of love and war unfold, and supply the major themes of our history and literature.

The neotonic principle appears in thematic form throughout the wild man palimpsest. The frequent variations on the themes of nature and nurture relate to neotony, as does the prominent role played by infants and children, especially those abandoned in the wild and raised by animals. For example, the wild man intertext includes Roman Romulus and Remus, medieval Orson and Valentine, modern Tarzan, Lord Greystoke, and even ET, a junior interstellar visitor abandoned by his mother ship who must survive

¹⁹ Stephen Jay Gould, "The Greatest Evolutionary Step," The Panda's Thumb: More Reflections in Natural History (New York: Norton, 1980) 132. For a delightful demonstration of neotony see "A Biological Homage to Mickey Mouse" in the same volume.

the wilds of terrestrial life. In each case, the wild character's childhood and nurture has a decisive role to play in his life's adventure.

About 2.3-1.3 million years ago, "Handy human," Homo habilis, appeared on the scene, marking the beginning of our own human genus. Habilis had a 50% larger brain than Australopithecus and was the first to specialize in tool use, and most notably the first primate to use one tool to make another. This liminal figure was an omnivore. The diet of the habilines was more varied than our own, and probably included leaves, nuts, berries, roots, and scavenged meat. Diet remains a key feature of the ethnology of the wild man, whether fossil or literary, as Montaigne's title "Des cannibales" suggests. Quite often we will find the noble savage is portrayed as a vegetarian, while the ignoble savage is a carnivore, or worse yet, a cannibal. The practice of cannibalism in our human ancestors continues to be a contentious issue in current anthropology.²⁰ Finally, the increasing importance of communal life for the habilines would have enhanced innate primate skills for communication. In The Ape that Spoke, John McCrone speculates that early humans communicated much as chimps and apes do today, as "intelligent interpreters of each other's cries and actions," relying on gestures and expressive sounds, as well as eye contact to attract and direct another's attention (170).

We take a brief intermission about 1-1.25 million years ago, and behind the scenes the fastest evolutionary transformation known occurs, resulting in an tremendous growth in human brain size. When Homo erectus makes his stage appearance in the fossil record, about 1.6 million years ago, it is with a brain size of 775-1225 cc, compared with the modern ranges of 1000-1400 cc. Erectus, as the name implies, had a fully upright posture, and was as tall or taller than modern humans. Reconstructions show a modern human from the neck down, with a smaller, more "ape-like" head. These hominids exploited their posture, strength, and intelligence to travel all over Africa, as well as to Europe, China, and Java. Spreading through Eurasia, Erectus not only adapted physically to a variety of climates, but also left traces of *creative* adaptation, the special human talent for altering the environment to suit our own needs, in ways far beyond simple tool use.

²⁰ Arens' The Man-eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy (New York: Oxford UP, 1979) is at the center of recent controversies. In light of Jane Goodall's work with the chimpanzees, see Dudley Young's contentions in Origins. See also Chapter 5 below.

The most important creative adaptation of Homo erectus was the taming of fire, which facilitated expansion into colder, previously uninhabited regions. Fire also helped frighten away predators, as well as herd or stampede animals in organized hunts. The Homo erectus act of our play of human history includes scenes where actors make clothing and pots, build shelters and campsites. Their hands are like ours, yet the tools they created, especially heavy stone axes, changed little over the million years these wild men and women dominated the stage.

There seems to be a tremendous time lag between the growth in brain size with Erectus and the development of attributes such as organized society, art, abstract language, and technological innovation which indicate modern human beings. We don't begin to find the signs of these activities until some 250,000 years after the coming of Homo sapiens, who gradually and as yet inexplicably replaces Erectus, 300,000 years ago. How do we account for such a tremendous delay between brain size and utilization? How much information is simply inaccessible to us? The answers remains shrouded in mystery, which neuropsychologist Robert Ornstein links to the human need for creation myths.

I believe this highly unlikely and unexplained leap of cranial capacity helps give rise to our creation myths—that the gods (details differ) fabricated us in their image, they made us out of water, they made us out of clay. We came from outer space. I don't think such explanations are due only to our ability to make up stories, but are as well a universal and deep response to the seeming impossibility of the emergence of the human mind (48-49).

Attempts to account for our seemingly unaccountable gifts (as well as our limitations) appear in the countless fictions fashioned through the ages to tell the human story, whether those attempts are mythic or scientific. This mystery is embedded in our long-lived fascination with the wild man, whether he appears in fable, epic, or anthropological scenarios like those above, which can, in Ornstein words, "seem like creationist myths in the paleontological religion" (51).

Two more members in our cast of characters bring the human body and brain up to modern evolutionary specifications. Neanderthal, with a cranial capacity larger than our own, makes his appearance 200,000 years ago.

Neanderthal presents an excellent example of an ignoble savage whose reputation has been dramatically revised in the last few decades. Previously envisioned as a clumsy, brutal lowbrow, he is now included in the family of Homo sapiens. John Pfeiffer's comments in The Creative Explosion: An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion illustrate the wild man's propensity for crossing the generic borders of literature, myth, and science. Pfeiffer discusses the attitudes of the Victorians and modern public toward the Neanderthal:

Indeed, the Neanderthals burst into the world of the Victorians like naked savages into a ladies' sewing circle. The Victorians, who had long suspected that every Dr. Jekyll had a Mr. Hyde lurking in his background, responded with a shock of horror and a grim determination to disown this member of the family of man as utterly as possible....[I]t will be a long before the general public accepts the Neanderthals as anything more than a coarse-featured, slouching half-humans...Monster myths die hard.²¹

The wild man palimpsest encourages us to see the continuity in such seeming contraries as the sewing circle and the naked savages or Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. It leads us to question our monster myths and be aware of the role they play in the way we look at fellow Homo sapiens, past and present. As Pfeiffer and others show, the archeological evidence of tools, speech and burial customs encourages us to be more appreciative of our distant relations, Homo sapiens neanderthalensis.

For example, a whole tool industry was uncovered in the mid-nineteenth century at Le Moustier in the French Dordogne. These Mousterian finds suggest that a variety of flake tools were mass assembled here from various templates. These tools reveal an intelligence and design sense far beyond that of earlier hominids. Similar tool kits have been found from Europe to Africa and Asia, and date from 100,000 to about 35,000 years ago.²² The recent discovery of a tiny throat bone, the hyoid, more like a modern human's than any other primate's, raises the question of

²¹ John Pfeiffer, The Creative Explosion: An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion (New York: Harper & Row, 1982) 89, 91.

²² Lambert 144. "Mousterian Industry," Encyclopedia of Evolution.

Neanderthal speech.²³ Burial sites such as the 60,000 year old flower strewn grave uncovered in Shanidar, Iraq reveal that Neanderthal culture included care for the crippled and the dead. Burial artifacts suggest a belief in an afterlife. Here death is not considered a finality, but a threshold to be crossed in company and with ceremony. Such beliefs signal the beginnings of religion and remain an abiding trait of human culture. This is a remarkably early example of how liminal symbolism helps human beings cope with those life experiences which seem to both require and defy our explanation and control. Of these experiences, the most inchoate of all remains death.²⁴

The final persona in our drama emerged in Africa about 100,000 years ago, according to the most widely held theory, known as the "out of Africa" hypothesis. Within 70,000 years, these hardy nomads traveled far into the Americas and Australia, beyond the range of Homo erectus, and had interbred with or otherwise replaced all other hominid species. This is our own subspecies: Homo sapiens sapiens. How did these people differ from earlier hominids? Taller but smaller boned than Neanderthal, Homo sapiens sapiens' skull was shaped differently. The brain itself is similar in size but higher in the skull. There were also major changes in the mouth and throat which resulted in the modern human vocal tract: voice box dropped low, arched roof of mouth, mobile tongue, powerful throat muscles, strong lips. A result of these changes was the ability to produce tremendous range of sounds and to string those sounds together rapidly: 200 words a minute for Homo sapiens sapiens in contrast with 60 for Homo erectus (McCrone 160-61). Indeed, Cicero would not be surprised to find that speech and abstract thought are still the innovations invoked to explain Homo sapiens sapiens' worldwide success. As the writers of The Human Dawn proclaim in terms strongly reminiscent of De inventione: "It was because they had at their disposal a tool that was to prove more useful than any of their bone sewing needles, a weapon more powerful than any of their stone spearheads. That tool was language."²⁵

²³ James Shreeve, "The Deepening Conundrum of Neanderthal Man," Smithsonian December 1991.

²⁴ Pfeiffer 100. On the liminality of death and death rituals, see also Danforth.

²⁵ The Human Dawn (Alexandria, VA: Time Life Books, 1990) 36.

Yet such success was a long time in coming. The different wild men of human history contributed significant features to Homo sapiens sapiens over the millions of years we have surveyed in these several acts. Bipedalism began with Australopithecus, tools characterize Homo habilis, taming fire and creative adaptation are credited to Homo erectus. With the coming of Homo sapiens sapiens, the potentials implicit in our enlarged neocortex and the increased number of unspecialized brain cells are actualized. The human story really takes off. In contrast with the Ciceronean point of view, the evolutionary perspective requires us to include ratio et oratio along with other factors implicated in human evolution, such as bipedalism, hunting, meat-eating, tools, play, home bases, large brains, prolonged infancy, pair-bonding, culture (Potts 41). These factors did not appear as a purposeful integrated package in any single missing link, any individual vir magnus et sapiens. In the evolutionary perspective, these human traits are adaptive features, extensions of other vertebrate and especially primate abilities. They gradually coalesced over vast stretches of time from our many ancestors. The term used to describe this pattern is familiar to our intertextual study. It is *mosaic* evolution and is defined as follows in the Encyclopedia of Evolution: "We are composite creatures; our bodies and behaviors have been shaped by a particular sequence of events in evolutionary history (313)." This is as true for our brain and mind as for our bodies and behaviors.

It is hard for us to believe that we were not created but that we evolved, that we are an assemblage, rather than a designer model. It is hard for us to accept that we are substantially the same, physically and mentally, as our ancestors 40,000 years ago. The wild man intertext derives much of its hardness from these sorts of difficulties and the persistent mystery of our brains and bodies. In many ways, the Wild Man remains the 40,000 year old being that we all really are biologically. In any case, the story of our still juvenile species takes a marked turn with the triumph of Homo sapiens sapiens. Human history begins to be told in a different way.

The Upper Paleolithic Strata: The Creative Explosion

From this point, roughly 40,000 years ago, where we find the first traces of symbolic human artifacts, our species will mark its development, not in terms of organic evolution, which operates in a geologic time scale, but by cultural evolution, which is the transmission of non-genetic material from one

generation to the next. This sort of transmission is important to many animals, but especially to humans. Our ability to make and manipulate symbols sets cultural evolution at a much more rapid pace than physical evolution. Thousands of generations are required for biologically significant physical changes. With the long human life span, hundreds of thousands of years of organic evolution would be necessary for the sorts of cultural changes which take place over generations, and in our times, even more rapidly.²⁶ And much of this speed is due to language, as Cicero recognized. Language takes us out of the here and now world of our relatives in the animal world. It gives us a future and a past. It allows us to communicate to ourselves and to others about objects that are not physically present or may not even exist. Our ability to create and to problem-solve is extended enormously.

As human history shifts its emphasis from biological to cultural evolution, so the wild man's intertext shifts. Up to this point we have been concerned with the wild man as an actor, a paleontological specimen. When we view the wild-man palimpsest as a whole, we note a persistent feature of the wild-man figure: the propensity to split or refract. We never find any single clearly bounded original figure at the depth of the wild man palimpsest, any more than paleontologists have found any single original human being. This propensity to twin or tessellate makes the intertextual model and its mosaic metaphor so compelling. The refracting propensity is most obvious in the split of the wild man into noble and ignoble savage, but in this early layer of the palimpsest, we are presented with a different pair: the wild-man figure divides into actor/artist *and* artifact. We move from the wild man in the cave to the wild man in the cave who paints and engraves another wild man on the cave wall! Before visiting the cave paintings, however, we need to know more about the changes which underlie the shift from biological to cultural evolution.

What are the defining characteristics of the first great human cultural revolution which took place during the Upper Paleolithic period of the last Ice Age, roughly 40,000 to 10,000 years ago? Technological, social, and artistic changes that occurred during this time are significant to our understanding of

²⁶ This is the argument of Ornstein makes in *The Evolution of Consciousness* and even more pointedly in Ornstein and Paul Erlich, *New World, New Mind: Moving Toward Conscious Evolution* (1989; New York: Touchstone, 1990.)

the wild man. Two key elements in all three interrelated areas are innovation and diversity. For example, the tools of Upper Paleolithic differ from those of earlier hominids in quality and variety. New kinds of tools, such as sewing needles and harpoons, appear. Tools are constructed from new materials, including animal bone and ivory. Different materials are also joined to create a single tool, such as the bow and arrow, or to make an entirely new medium, such as potters' clay. Upper Paleolithic innovations in skill and design were such that it is estimated that the same two pounds of flint would have provided four eighteen-inch knife edges for Homo erectus, six feet of blade for Neanderthal and thirty yards for Homo sapiens sapiens! (Human Dawn 62). In contrast to the millions of years of unchanging hand axes of the Lower Paleolithic, a new pattern emerges which applies to tools as well as other aspects of life. Cro-Magnon technology is characterized by increased local standardization and, at the same time, increased regional diversity. To John Pfeiffer, this suggests major social changes taking place during this period, a "shift in lifestyle from small hunter-gatherer bands to something rather more complicated, larger and closer-knit groups, sharper differences between groups, the rise of new unities and a new restlessness" (52). The tempo and variety of change suggest cultural rather than biological evolution.

These social changes accompanied the expansion of Homo sapiens sapiens all over the world. As human beings spread all over the globe, they evolved the different physical characteristics (racial diversity) as they interbred with local peoples and adapted to local conditions. Local cultures also evolved different ways of doing things. One of the benefits of being born with billions of unspecified brain cells is the adaptability to local conditions. This is why it is said that humans, unlike other organisms, have no environmental niche. Because of our unique brains, each infant is able to adapt to the language, diet, altitude, climate, customs, and beliefs of the family into which she is born, out of the hundreds and eventually thousands our globe offers. The extent of our adaptive abilities is aptly expressed by Desmond Morris's startling assertion: "If a prehistoric baby from, say, 40,000 years ago were to be whisked into the present day by a time machine and reared by a modern family, nobody would notice the difference" (13-14). Here again are the leitmotifs of the wild man palimpsest: travel through time, travel to new cultures, concerns with child rearing and education, and adaptability.

Early humans explored new territories, following and anticipating animal migrations and the seasonal availability of plants and seafood. Our ancestors had to expand their knowledge of the natural resources to provide for their increasing needs. This intimate natural knowledge is still associated with the wild man in both literary and scientific writings.²⁷ When these early human groups arrived in a new area, they tended to settle in larger groups, for longer periods of time, in more elaborate home bases. By the late Stone Age, stone is used not just for tools, but for making sites more suitable for human habitation (Pfeiffer 55). Creative adaptation takes another step forward.

These new settlement patterns create new social demands. Hunting can take place in relative silence, but communal life requires language based systems for sharing tasks and planning for the future. In the Upper Paleolithic we also find "an archeology of inequality," the first signs of social hierarchy (Pfeiffer 65). New cultural questions arise. How is status to be marked and preserved?

Language would have an important role to play as a means of social control as well as communication. Enter the great and wise man in the Ciceronean fable. It is intriguing that we are not told where the vir magnus et sapiens comes from. The imperial interpretation assumes that he is a stranger, come from a superior outside culture to domesticate the local rustics, the homines silvestres. The idea of a foreign and frequently divine culture hero appears throughout world mythology. One of the most alluring is the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, a fabulous snake-bird god of the wind, who was also a patron of the arts and bringer of civilization. In the sixteenth century, the emperor Montezuma sent Quetzalcoatl's symbols, a snake mask and feather cloak, along with other gifts to the Spanish conquistadors. His sentries mistook the Spanish arrival for Quetzalcoatl's promised return from Eastern lands.²⁸ A more modern version is the belief Ornstein alluded to above: "We came from outer space." Here the great and wise man takes the form of an alien who arrives in a spacecraft to enlighten the terrestrials. Indeed the

²⁷ For example, on ethnobotany, see the profile of Richard Evans Shultes by E.J. Kahn "Jungle Botanist" *New Yorker*, 1 June 1992. On eco-tourism, see Douglas Adams and Mark Carwardine, *Last Chance to See* (New York: Harmony, 1990).

²⁸ New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology, 1977 ed., 437.

greatest variety of wild-man figures are currently to be found in science fiction, and especially in film. In this light, Joseph Campbell offers George Lucas' Star Wars as an example of contemporary American myth, and film is frequently the medium of choice for modern monster myths.

Such scenarios are not strictly required by Cicero's fable, however. The culture hero need not be a stranger. For all the attention to language in De inventione, the reader never learns if the great teacher speaks the same language as those he educates. Do the homines silvestres speak at all? Do they understand his words? Are they simply in awe of his power? Or is the great man really one of them, unequal because of his special talents and insights? These sorts of questions will accompany us throughout the wild-man palimpsest, and we can imagine that they were raised in different forms throughout human prehistory. How are leaders to be chosen? How do the people know whom to follow? In terms of the wild-man palimpsest, questions are framed in similar terms. To whom does the wild man pledge his great strength and profound loyalty? How does the wild man recognize goodness and evil in those who would civilize him?

We would expect dialects to follow the technological pattern of regional diversity and local standardization. There must have been a tremendous growth in vocabulary to deal with new tools, foods, and more complicated social relationships. In each local group, there is ever more culture to transmit! At the same time, there would also be pressure to evolve more effective, economical ways to communicate important and complicated ideas. This places a premium on abstraction and on artistic uses of language, figures of thought and speech. Cultural knowledge is shared in daily life, but also in ceremonies and spectacles where words and visual images are reinforced by music and movement. Hence the tradition of the culture hero as an artist, especially a poet and musician, as in Horace's examples of Orpheus and Amphion as the bringers of civilization. Unfortunately, the state of language in the Upper Paleolithic remains fascinating but speculative. Sounds leave no traces in stone, and the earliest writing we now have dates from 3500 BCE, in Mesopotamian accounting records. Instead, the answers to the new cultural questions have to be found in other traces which have survived from the last Ice Age. It is the birth of art which most profoundly marks the creative explosion of the Upper Paleolithic, a birth is commemorated by precious artifacts which have withstood the passage of tens of thousands of years.

The Art of the Caves

Around 30,000 to 40,000 years ago, the archeological record displays a sudden outpouring all over the globe of artistic expression. The forms vary. There are different types of portable art: clay animal and human forms, decorations and engravings on tools, and ornaments, such as beads or shell necklaces, markers of social status. But the most amazing artifacts of all are utterly unportable: the cave art of Southern Europe. There are no other archaeological finds which have the power to touch us so deeply and compel an eerie and yet unmistakable feeling of kinship with those ancient ancestors. As Georges Bataille writes:

Si nous entrons dans la grotte de Lascaux, un sentiment fort nous étreint que nous n'avons pas devant les vitrines où sont exposés les premiers restes des hommes fossiles ou leurs instruments de pierre. C'est ce même sentiment de présence—de claire et brûlante présence—que nous donnent les chefs-d'œuvre de tous les temps...²⁹

The inventiveness of cave art, the technical virtuosity of these paintings and engravings, their profound mystery and patent connection to us are nothing short of miraculous. Even today, the story of Western artistic achievement often begins with the classical Greek and Romans. I agree with Bataille that we should trace our artistic and cultural heritage much further back in time:

Ce qui différencie l'homme de la bête, a pris en effet pour nous la forme spectaculaire d'un miracle, mais ce n'est pas tellement du miracle grec que nous devrions parler désormais que du *miracle de Lascaux*.³⁰

The rediscovery of this art is only a century old, and appreciation of its remarkable duration is much more recent. Scientifically we are known as Homo sapiens sapiens, man doubly-wise, but a more appropriate name might

²⁹ Georges Bataille, La Peinture préhistorique: Lascaux ou la naissance de l'art (Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1980) 12. "If we enter into the Lascaux cave, a strong feeling grabs us which we do not have in front of display cases where the first human fossils or stone tools are displayed. It is the same feeling of presence—a clear and burning presence—that masterpieces of every age give us." My translation.

³⁰ Bataille, forward. "That which separates man from beast, takes the spectacular form of a miracle, but it is no longer really the Greek miracle we should speak of, but *the miracle of Lascaux*." My translation, emphasis in the original.

be forged from Walker Percy's Homo symbolicus and Johan Huizinga's Homo ludens: man, the symbol-maker at play. It is play, and in particular, the play of symbols through imitation and invention that marks the cultural explosion of the Upper Paleolithic. From the Upper Paleolithic on, if not earlier in human history, such activities will be as essential to being human as food, sex, and sleep.

Huizinga's concept of Homo ludens is helpful because it complements the anthropological idea of liminality.³¹ It also extends the play of symbols from the realm of aesthetics into a social context. The aesthetic realm is pertinent to our interest in the variety of artistic embodiments of the Wild Man.³² The social context is crucial to the major myth associated with the wild man, the coming of civilization. The most important characters in this myth are the culture hero and the people to whom culture comes. The social context is woven from what Cicero called the "ordered system of religious worship and social duties" (divinae religionis, humani offici ratio). Huizinga finds play to be common ground of origin for these institutions. He links them in a truly intertextual spirit: "Now in myth and ritual the great instinctive forces of civilized life have their origin: law and order, commerce and profit, craft and art, wisdom and science. All are rooted in the *primaeva* soil of play" (5).

In sum, creative play with symbolic forms results in, among other human creations, art and religion. This play generates the variety of forms which appear throughout the intertext of the wild man. It is this same serious and fanciful play which figures forth on the walls of French and Spanish caves. For it is in these caves that we find the earliest examples of the wild

³¹ For example, Huizinga defines play as follows: "a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious,' but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly... It proceeds within its own boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings which tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world by disguise or other means" (13).

³² Huizinga on play and aesthetics: "Play has a tendency to be beautiful. It may be that this aesthetic factor is identical with the impulse to create orderly form, which animates play in all its aspects. The words we use to denote the elements of play belong to the most part to aesthetics, terms with which we try to describe the effects of beauty: tension, poise, balance, contrast, variation, solution, resolution, etc. Play casts a spell over us; it is enchanting, captivating. It is invested with the noblest qualities we are capable of perceiving in things: rhythm and harmony" (10). The liminal states of consciousness such as enchantment, trance, and rapture have been associated with art and religion from prehistoric times to the present.

man as work of art. The most important of these early wild men were created during the Magdalenian period of the Upper Paleolithic, roughly 20 to 15,000 BCE.³³ In Figure 9, a wild man from the Middle to Late Magdalenian, roughly 15,000 BCE, is reproduced from the French cave of Les Trois Frères.³⁴

This earliest wild man, two and a half feet high and fifteen inches across, is a veritable illustration of the boundary between human and animal. His human trunk, legs, and feet reside within a fantastic disguise or covering. He sports a tremendous set of antlers and the ears of a deer. His piercing owl-like eyes stare compellingly over a long pointed beard. He is unquestionably male. The penis seems human, but is turned in a direction more typical of a feline (Pfeiffer 107). From the tip of his horns to his wolf or horse's tail, this wild man's link with the animal world is overwhelming. Furthermore, the selection of animals brought together to create his mosaic appearance is significant in itself. According to the argument of André Leroi-Gourhan in his influential Treasures of Prehistoric Art:

Statistical analysis of subjects discloses a system of symbolic representation of the living world which persists, with only minor variations, throughout the period of Paleolithic art. This system seems to imply a division of the animal species into two groups which are comparable to a division of male and female of the human world. The horse, the stag, the ibex, and the more dangerous species such as the lion and the rhinoceros belong to the male group; the bison and the aurochs or wild ox belong to the female group (205).

The Wild Man of Les Trois Frères cave combines a human form with cervid, feline, and equine elements. Each of these elements points to the male group of animals. It is no wonder that Leroi-Gourhan concludes that "'this personage' combines all the male symbols then at the disposal of the artist who executed it" (367).

³³ For dates and periodization, I am following Pfeiffer and Lambert who update Leroi-Gourhan.

³⁴ Based on Abbé Breuil's drawing, reproduced in Bataille.

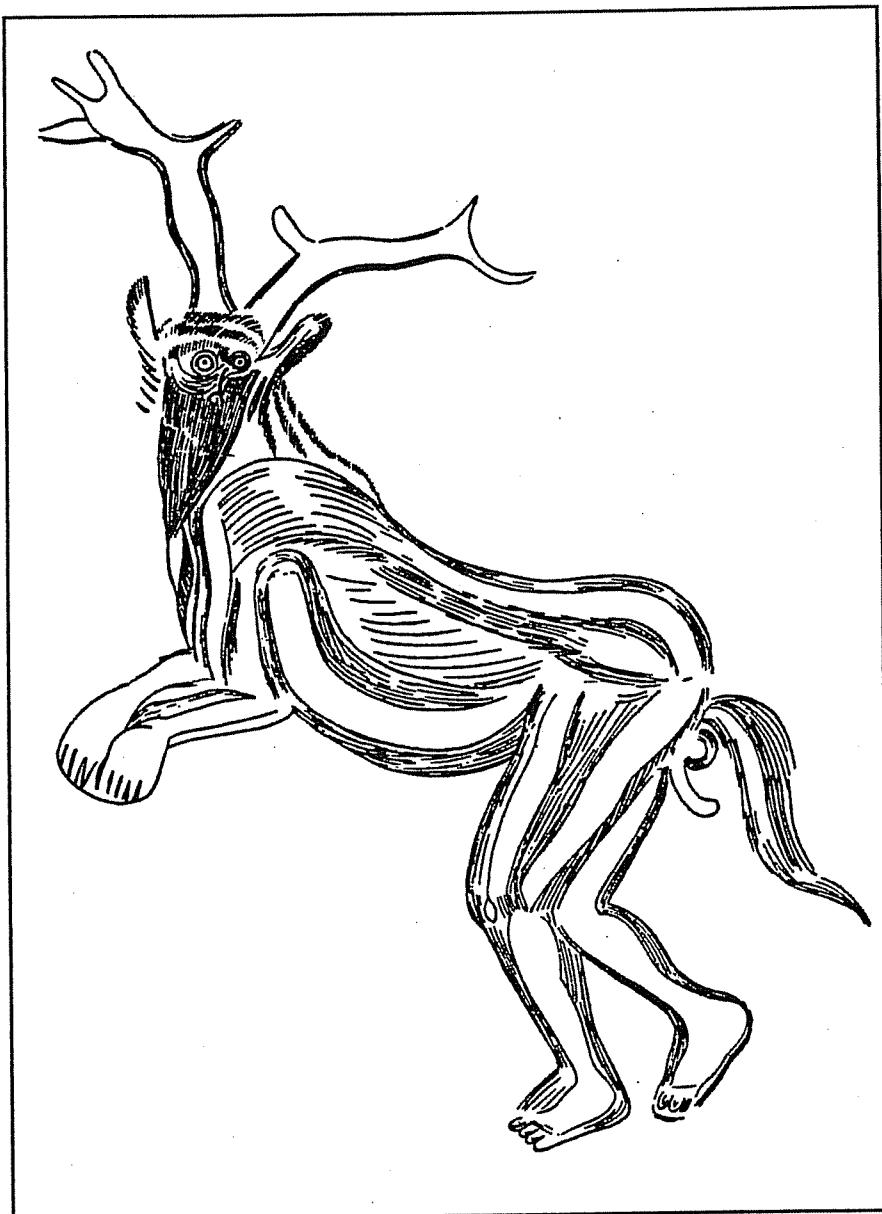


Figure 9. The Wild Man of Les Trois Frères.

An intriguing aspect of the wild man's posture is that he is in motion. Some have identified him as a dancing sorcerer and Abbé Breuil, the first great French scholar of cave art, compares his movements to the American dance, the cakewalk! (Bataille 120). The wild man's artistic treatment and his position in the cave is also significant. He is the only figure in the room which is both engraved and painted. Placed high above on the cave wall, he seems to preside over a vast ocean of interlaced and superimposed animal

figures beneath him. Leroi-Gourhan stresses the placement of this figure in both the cave and in art history when he comments:

It is not surprising to find so hypersymbolic a figure at the highest and innermost part of a chamber that is decorated with hundreds of figures, in the arrangement of which Magdalenian symbolism is displayed with a richness unattained elsewhere (367).

It is especially striking when we consider the wild man's essential liminality that "this personage" both presides over the animal world beneath him and at the same time resembles it so profoundly. The search for a more definitive name for this wild man points the way to additional mysteries.

Who is the wild man of Trois Frères ?

"In all of the wild imaginings of mythology, a fanciful spirit is playing on the border line between jest and earnest." Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens

Several interpretations of the wild man's identity have been offered. We referred to him earlier as a "dancing sorcerer." Some have seen a self-portrait of the artist.³⁵ Abbé Breuil first considered him as a sorcerer or shaman and then later called him a god: "le Dieu des Trois Frères." Even as a god, he is variously named: The Horned God, Animal Master, Lord of the Forest, Master of the Hunt, Lord and Releaser of the Animals. Whatever his name, for Mircea Eliade, he is "the most divine figure in all prehistory," thus, "the prototype of all subsequent gods."³⁶

For us, he is the precursor of all subsequent wild men as well. His various names and identities are all accommodated by the capacious wild-man palimpsest. It makes little mythological difference whether we interpret him as a god or a man serving that god. Indeed, such ambiguity is proper in the liminal sphere. The wild man of Les Trois Frères cave, like other wild men, is a mediator, a link connecting the human world to the supernatural powers of the gods and animals. Joseph Campbell writes of him:

³⁵ Joseph Campbell discusses this and other interpretations in Masks, Vol. 1, 310 ff.

³⁶ Personal communication from Mircea Eliade, cited in Pfeiffer 119.

[W]hen the sacred regalia has been assumed, the individual has become an epiphany of the divine power itself. He is taboo. He is a conduit of divine power. He does not merely represent the god, he is the god, he is a manifestation of the god, not a representation.³⁷

At the very depths of the wild man's artistic heritage, then, a figure resides, unseen but ineradicable, who is a manifest link between the human and divine worlds. Intertextuality permits us to grant the wild man of Les Trois Frères cave ancestral status, even if he is not *the* original wild man. He is, however, the most important of the wild-man figures we have yet uncovered from the deepest layers of the palimpsest.

Reinforcing the mystery of the wild man's ancestry, Leroi-Gourhan reminds us that the very existence of a figurative system of male and female animals presupposes a mythology or ideology preexisting the art works by several millennia (150). New scientific techniques such as thermoluminescence may yet extend the artistic record by tens or hundreds of thousands of years. As James Shreeve writes in a recent article, "More and more, the Cro-Magnon are beginning to look like the last modern humans to show themselves and start acting 'human' rather than the first."³⁸

It is in intertextual terms that we can trace the divinity and hence nobility of many savage figures to come, from India's Shiva to the Blackfoot Buffalo God, from Gawain's Green Knight to Spenser's Belpheobe, back to this cave painting. One example of intertextual connection is the representation of the Celtic god Cernunnos from the Gundestrup Cauldron. A detail of this artifact is shown in Figure 10.³⁹ The magnificent silver-gilt bowl from which this detail comes is now in the National Museum of Copenhagen. Probably created in Gaul in the first century BCE, it was recovered from a Danish bog in 1891.⁴⁰ On the Cauldron itself, Cernunnos holds a torc or collar in one hand, and in the other a liminal creature, a ram-headed snake. His magnificent

³⁷ Campbell, Masks, Vol. 1, 311. Emphasis in the original.

³⁸ James Shreeve, "The Dating Game," Discover September 1992: 83.

³⁹ From Huber, Plate 11.

⁴⁰ Anderson 40-43 has a good discussion of the bowl and of Cernunnos and the Green Man. Marion Zimmer Bradley's retelling of the Arthurian legend, The Mists of Avalon, includes the rites of the Horned One as part of Arthur's initiation into kingship. (New York: Knopf, 1982).

antlers mirror those of a stag next to him. They can also usefully be seen as traces of the antlers on the head of the *Trois Frères* wild man, even though the silversmith who created the bowl was unlikely to have visited the French cave. Through Cernunnos, as well as Pan and his liminal companions from classical mythology, the horns pass into Christian iconography and appear on the devil's head. The archetypal or intertextual route is not always a direct one, but the persistence of such images linking the human, animal, and supernatural worlds is impressive. We do not and probably will never know why animals play, and why human play expresses itself in art and myth. But we do know that our inquiry into the origins of myth, art, and religion leads us back to the days of cave art, and that the figure of the wild man shares his origins with the origins of both art and myth.

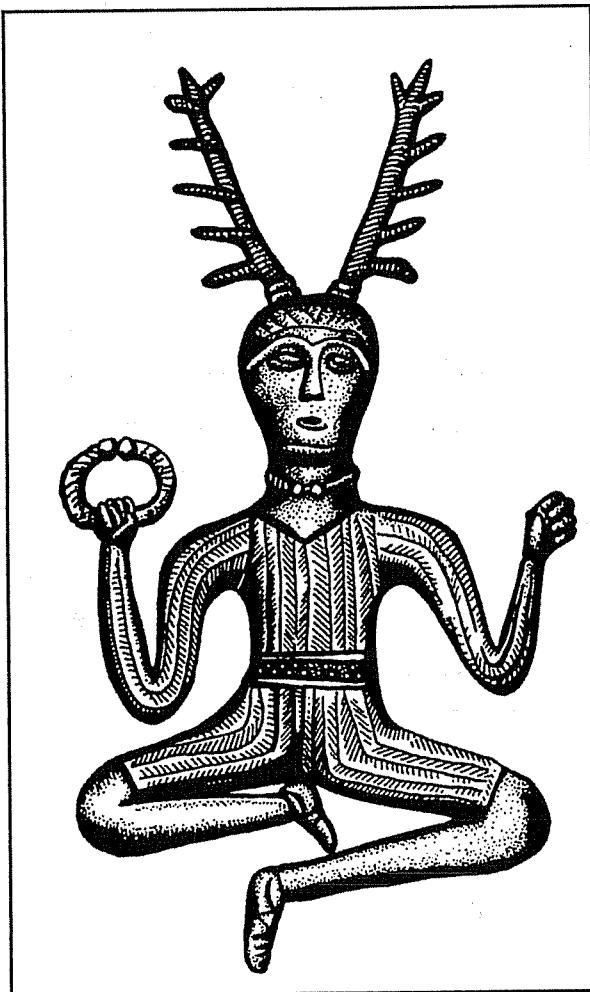


Figure 10. Cernunnos. Detail from the Gundestrup Cauldron.

The wild man of the Trois Frères cave is the keeper of many more mysteries than the secret of his name. Artistically, he is typical of the way humans are represented in Upper Paleolithic. In contrast with the realistic and exquisite detail with which animals are portrayed, the human figures all seem to be distorted, often profoundly. When we defined the wild man figure in the previous chapter, we stressed his identity as a *recognizable* human being, which implied that distortion was also an essential factor of his identity. This is precisely how we expect a liminal figure to appear. For example, human figures in cave art are most often part human and part animal. Faces are often covered. Sometimes they are mask-like, sometimes animal-like. Bataille compares the distorted painted figures with the compelling and mysterious "Venus" statuettes of Central Europe with their exaggerated femininity and smooth, faceless heads. These statuettes are far earlier than the paintings and date from the Aurignacian period, roughly 26 to 30,000 years ago.⁴¹ Bataille observes that prehistoric artists expose the parts of the body we prefer to cover, such as genitals, and veil those parts we feature and expose, such as faces. To Bataille, it seems "comme si les hommes de l'Age du renne avaient d'eux-mêmes la honte que nous avons de l'animal."⁴² In this far away time, the animal is noble, the uniquely human, ignoble.

In another example of the strength of liminal imagery in Upper Paleolithic art, Pfeiffer describes a stone face sculpture from El Juyo, created around 14,000 years ago, which can be interpreted as half-human/ half-animal or half-male/ half-female, depending on the viewer's perspective (117). These are precisely the two principal divisions, male/female and human/animal, which seem to govern the Paleolithic world view according to Leroi-Gourhan. The zones defined by these two boundaries is the liminal space which wild-men figures occupy throughout history. Pfeiffer concludes, "It seems that the habit of dividing the world into opposite or opposing forces existed among prehistoric people, and again, we see a continuity between their way of thinking and ours" (117). Finally, in Origins of the Sacred,

⁴¹ Camille Paglia begins her survey of western art with the most famous of these statuettes, the Venus of Willendorf. See Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson (1990; New York: Vintage, 1991) 54-57.

⁴² Bataille 116: "as if the men of the Age of Reindeer were ashamed of themselves in the way we are ashamed of the animal [in us]."

Dudley Young draws attention, as do these liminal figures themselves, to the *complementary* nature of these opposites and the significance of the boundary zones: “[T]he grammar of Ice-Age religious art remains constant, and...its message is a simple one shared by the world’s profoundest poems, that harmony (or reality) involves the conjunction of opposites, yin and yang, feminine and masculine...”(88). Liminal figures such as the wild man of Trois Frères compel us to consider our similarities to our human ancestors as well the bonds which link us to the rest of the natural world.

In addition to their distortions, another paradox is the fact that human figures are relatively rare in the art of the caves. Quantitatively, humans run a distant third behind the images of animals and a second category of abstract geometric shapes and patterns. These abstract forms are rarely discussed, perhaps because they are so difficult to interpret. They may be an early form of notation or calendars. Leroi-Gourhan offers the most convincing interpretation. He divides the shapes into male and female categories. The female forms derive from the vulva and include ovals, triangles, and rectangles. The male shapes derive from the phallus and include dots, strokes, barbed and hooked lines (135 ff.). Leroi-Gourhan insists that these shapes be seen in context with complementary shapes and associated animals. In any case, the importance of these abstract shapes reinforces the idea that mimesis should be defined in terms of playful manipulation of symbols rather than simple representation. Yet the basic question remains. Why should *animals* play such a dominant role in the earliest works of art which *human beings* created?

To answer this question we turn again to the fundamental idea of the wild man as a symbol of the boundary between the human and non-human spheres in the natural world. If the dominance of animals in Upper Paleolithic art seems strange philosophically, it makes sense numerically. It points to some of the ways our world is different from the world of our Cro-Magnon ancestors. Human beings were then, and for a very long time, a statistically insignificant species! Ornstein and Erlich make the point in New World New Mind, “Next month the world population will *increase* by more than the number of human beings that lived on the planet 100,000 years ago, a time when evolution had already produced a human brain almost indistinguishable from today’s model” (10).

Then, and through the Upper Paleolithic, people lived in groups of 20-40, and larger social units might range to several hundred. In central France,

where many cave paintings are found, small groups of humans witnessed the migrations of herds of reindeer and others which numbered in the thousands and hundreds of thousands. Not only the numbers, but the tremendous energy of these passing herds is still awe-inspiring! Even today, a stampeding herd (of animals or people) is exhilarating and terrifying. The transforming power of play and art turns this energy of potential chaos into something people can use for their own benefits. Young suggests that same "epiphany of abundance" or energy was incorporated in our hominid days "on the dancing ground and in the hunting pack" (186). The wild man of Les Trois Frères imitates the animal world in costume and movement. His position above the sea of animals on the wall of the caves suggests that he has devised a way to capture the energy of the thundering herd and incorporate it into ceremony.

For all the differences between now and then, it was during the Upper Paleolithic that the relationship between people and the rest of the animal world changed radically and irrevocably. Until urbanization, even individual animals posed a major threat to human life. Weaponry had a major role to play in changing the relationship between man and beast. With fire, Homo erectus could lead a stampede off a cliff and kill hundreds. In the Upper Paleolithic, the invention of the spear thrower doubled the distance a hunter could throw a spear. This small innovation had substantial consequences. Pfeiffer comments "As the killing distances increased, so did a less tangible distance, the gap between human beings and the rest of the animal kingdom" (52). With planning and group efforts, mass kills became more feasible. Again, Pfeiffer points to the implications of these techniques: "Homo sapiens had come a long way in his game drives. He was no longer killing like a normal predator, but like a natural catastrophe, an act of God" (61). Human cultural evolution broadened the limen that separated humans and animals, and turned the liminal sphere into an area where technology as well as art and religion took hold and grew.

This boundary is at the heart of the wild man's paradox. The complex themes of the hunt in a world where man is hunter *and* hunted, expert killer *and* potential victim dates from these earliest times. The paradox makes mythologic rather than logical sense. At the very time that humans step away from the other animals because of their cultural achievements, one of those achievements is the elevation of the animals, especially those hunted, to divine stature. The early hunter may have better tools, but the animals have

sharper senses, more agility, greater strength. The animals are closer to nature, nature's secrets and power. For Bataille, the art of the caves, with its magnificent beasts and strangely beast-like human figures, celebrates the animal grace which men lost when they became men (125). We encounter here again, the myth of the Golden Age, which has the paradoxical effect of promoting both the consciousness of change and suspicion of it (Young xx). The caves paintings' admiration of animals sings a refrain we will encounter many times in the wild man palimpsest, a song of loss and the price we pay for human progress.

Liminality reveals that putting things in order means creating boundaries and drawing lines. Young coined the felicitous term "lawlines" to describe these artifacts which regulate the culture, "the fabric of human orderliness." He defines lawlines as:

...lines drawn in the mind and on the dancing ground to regulate the flow of energies no longer governed by the codes of primate instinct...the ways in which magic, myth and ritual were used to allow us to talk to the gods without being swallowed by them (xx).

One of the wild man's principal functions is to serve as the figure who explores the boundaries drawn by the lawlines. He helps each member of a culture to see what is permissible and what is dangerous, especially in the many confrontations of love and war. He is the experimental self who tests the way and takes risk for us. In certain cultures, the wild man's status between the human and animal worlds gives him special access to the divine, and liminality offers one answer to the problem of incarnation.

Even a brief look at the parade of gods that people have created reveals a fascinating and gradual transition from animal to human. Animals were our first gods. By the time of the Egyptians, many deities were liminal in the most literal sense: half animal and half human. For the Greeks, the highest gods had human forms but could take on animal shape if convenient for travel on earth. The great monotheisms mark a decisive break with this tradition, and manifest a loss of comfort with nature and the liminal zone between man and beast. Animals become ignoble as God takes on and transcends human form. This divine parade has tremendous implication for the corresponding parade of forms the wild man takes in the different layers of his palimpsest. Indelibly imprinted in that palimpsest is the fundamental

human bond with the animal world and our awareness that we have inadvertently broken that original contract and stepped away from the threshold. Nowhere is this imprint revealed more clearly than in the idea of sacrifice, which Young calls "the central mystery of all religions" (xx).

All animals must eat to live, must destroy other living things to eat. Only humans, as far as we know, are troubled by the fact that life requires the death of other living things. As early as Neanderthal, Homo sapiens has devised ways to come to terms with mortality. We have also devised ways to cope with the destruction of our plant or animal victims, such as the idea of sacrifice. The mythological rule for sacrifice is that one's food source becomes a god, so that the slain mammoth or the harvested corn becomes a willing victim. Sacrifice, as a liminal rite, creates a bridge between death and rebirth. The individual animal or plant, meets death. It is torn to pieces, consumed or buried. Then it lives again.

In contrast with the transitory individual, the species that the individual represents is eternal. For Joseph Campbell, the paintings of animals on the caves walls correspond to the Platonic Idea of those animals. For the hunter, the individual animals are mere shadows and "their flesh is to be regarded as the willed gift of that master to the people, according to the magical order of nature" (Masks I, 293). They illustrate permanence in change, in the same way that species are conceived in the Great Chain of Being, or in Spenser's words: "eterne in mutabilitie." The gift of sacrifice binds the ecstasy and violence of the hunt and death to the comfort of food in the present and future, to the promise of life and rebirth.

As the intermediary between the human and animals world, the wild man as Animal Master arranges the sacrifice. He may also take on the role of sacrificial victim. This is one interpretation of cave painting with a wild man as famous as that of the Trois Frères, this one from the most illustrious of all the Upper Paleolithic caves, Lascaux. (See Figure 10.)

This is a much discussed and profoundly mysterious painting. The relation that interests us is the one between the two figures at the right in this painting: the bird-headed man and the wounded bison. The theme of the painting is one of the most significant in Paleolithic art: the wounded man theme. It is possible to see the painting as straightforward interpretation of that theme, as Leroi-Gourhan does: "Man thrown to the ground by bison" (315). Yet the tools that Leroi-Gourhan has given us to understand male and



Figure 10. The scene from the shaft, Lascaux.

female symbols suggest that we should interpret the wound theme on the metaphysical level and incorporate the idea of sacrifice.

One apparent paradox is the wound itself. The bird-headed man lies flat on his back—yet no wound is visible. His outstretched fingers and erect penis belie the idea that he is dead or even in a coma. The bird's head recalls the owl eyes of the wild man of Les Trois Frères, and these liminal traits suggest that he, too, may be a shaman. His posture may illustrate a trance or rapture, a liminal state of consciousness which is the pathway to the gods. Could he be magically and playfully enacting the massive wound of the bison?

For it is the bison who is drastically and visibly wounded in this picture. Yet her wound is paradoxical as well. Unlike the man, she is still standing. The most literal interpretation of her wound is that she has been disemboweled. In Leroi-Gourhan's scheme, the bison is the predominant female animal, and the concentric rings of bowel, female shapes, also suggest an udder or amniotic sac. Could this be a wound which brings birth, the renewal of life? When we add that possibility to the bird-headed man's erect penis and to the masculine shape of the spear and its unlikely position in the bison's body, we turn to a metaphoric interpretation of the wound, suggested by Leroi-Gourhan himself: "It is highly probable that Paleolithic men were expressing something like 'spear is to penis' as 'wound is to vulva'" (173). And he continues: "Taken as symbols of sexual union and death, the spear and the wound would then be integrated into a cycle of life's renewal, the

actors in which would form two parallel and complementary series: man/horse/spear, and woman/bison/wound" (174).

This interpretation makes the connection between the wound and sacrifice explicit. In Young's words: "To sacrifice means literally to make sacred, and our first way of doing this was to tear living flesh until the blood flowed. Our second way was to do something metaphorically similar in the sexual embrace" (135). Both types of sacrifice are suggested here. As Young concludes his interpretation:

And just as it may be seen to culminate and resolve the Magdalenian meditation on violence, so it points forward to subsequent shamanic developments: the bird-topped wand will lead to the magical wand of Hermes, and the man who acquires power and wholeness by being wounded will lead to the hermaphroditic shaman who acquires access to the feminine through the undergoing of violence, a tradition that culminates in Christ (91).

From this significant Upper Paleolithic painting, themes of wounds, healing, and spiritual power persist through subsequent layers of palimpsest.

Post-paleolithic layers of the wild man's intertext reveal his self-sacrifice in a symbolic wound or a scar. For example, Robert Bly sees the symbolic wound as a part of the initiation process, connected with such rituals as the boar hunt. For Bly, the wound, often in the leg, grounds its bearer to the earth, and provides a door through which the Wild Man's wisdom of grief and nature can enter (226). Variations on this theme include the ecstatic self-castration of Attis and the thigh wounds of the Fisher King, the boar attacks on Odysseus and Adonis, and the thigh wound-womb Zeus created for Dionysus. The wound may only lead to a scar, as for Oedipus and Odysseus. It may lead to laming, as for Esau and Hephaestus. Immediate death may be avoided, as in the case of Isaac, replaced at the last moment by a ram. So human sacrificial victims may be replaced by in rites by animals, plants or most playfully of all, by symbols. At the very heart of religious mysteries, the sacrificial wound leads to death and rebirth, as the stories of Dionysus, Adonis, and Christ all tell. The Wild Man is willing to walk the lawlines, to take the risk of self-sacrifice and face the danger of the violence, in the form of the hunt, of conflict, or death.

The initiation model also helps us answer one final question. Why are caves the site of the wild man's artistic origins? It was certainly a good evolu-

tionary move, for the paintings and sculptures survived remarkably well for tens of thousands of years in their natural storage vaults. But it was not for us that the Cro-Magnon selected their sites. To understand why the caves were chosen, it helps to make the journey to south-central France and visit them. Reaching them is a ritual journey in itself. At the cave site, you cross a natural threshold and leave the light and security of day behind. Everyday sounds are hushed, replaced by strange hollow echoes. You pass through dark labyrinthine passages to reach the rooms where the paintings, engravings, and sculptures were created. The excellent photographs available cannot recreate the astonishing experience of seeing cave art in context. Modern experience of art museums habituates us to paintings on two-dimensional surfaces and freestanding sculptures. In the caves, however, the word context must be taken quite literally. The paintings are *also* sculptures, part of the three-dimensional textured undulations of the cave walls. In these rooms, surrounded by walls covered with colorful figures, the viewer is transported into a new world. Here we can imagine why the caves were so effective. In a time before buildings and cities, when all the earth was wilderness, caves provided nature's own artificial wilderness. They were places bounded and set apart, sanctuaries of eerie quiet and mystery.

Just as the wild man, as Lord of the Animals, shares his origins with the birth of the gods, so the caves themselves are among the original sacred, liminal spaces. The art caves were neither dwellings nor were burial sites, as in Neanderthal times. The caves are natural temples, and comparisons with our own temples and churches are inevitable. One book on Lascaux is entitled "La Chapelle sixtine de la préhistoire." Paintings and carvings were created and displayed by firelight, inviting the comparison with candlelit churches. Many of the same ceremonies of sacrifice and communion must have been celebrated there. Music, poetry, movement, sound, sight, and smell would have all played their parts.

It is significant to our initiation model that the principal human traces found in the caves besides the art works and art materials are children's footprints (Pfeiffer 184). Cave art had a role to play in the education and initiation of the young. The cultural function of the caves would have been broader than our secularized, compartmentalized society offers. Pfeiffer observes:

Everything that happens now in churches, schools, town halls, and theaters happened concentrated and intense and all at once

in caves. It was the only way in those days to create a human unity, a body of conforming and obeying people. People who were individuals in the modern sense could never have survived (190).

These caves were unique sites of cultural transmission. We appreciate cave art as a fantastic display of creativity and innovation, but we should not neglect the social function they served.

Survival demanded new ways of transmitting, from generation to generation and before writing had been invented, the contents of an expanding tribal encyclopedia, a body of new rules and traditions about how to do things and how to relate to others (228).

Cultural evolution requires the creation of an "accumulated fund of significant symbols" to direct human behavior and organize human experience (Geertz 49). The caves, as liminal spaces, and the art complete with wild men helped to fill this need. The ancient rites would be one answer to the problem of utilizing the great potential of the human brain to absorb and pass on information.

We can try to imagine these ceremonies. The same tricks that work with our 40,000 year old brain would have worked then. We respond to novelty and things out of the ordinary. The ritual journey to the cave site helps to make the audience receptive to new information. Their minds, numbed by sensory deprivation, enter a twilight state. Dressed in sacred regalia, probably animal costumes, the master of ceremonies would use surprise, strangeness and illusion to grab the attention of his or her audience. He or she could exploit the darkness and remoteness of the caves to reenact the hunt with sudden shouts, pounding drums, and carefully placed torches. From our modern perspective, we see the wild man refracting once again. We see the cave man, dressed as a wild man, painting pictures or telling stories about wild men, stories of life and death, male and female, animal and human. The wild man, in his various incarnations, takes many parts in these most profound human mysteries: actor, artist, shaman, and participant. Huizinga illustrates this refractive property of the wild man in his discussion of the yates, the Latin word for prophet or seer.

The true appellation of the archaic poet is yates, the possessed, the God-smitten, the raving one. These qualifications imply at the same time his possession of extraordinary knowledge...

Gradually the poet-seer splits up into the figures of prophet, the

priest, the soothsayer, the mystagogue and the poet as we know him; even the philosopher, the legislator, the orator, the demagogue, the sophist, and the rhetor spring from that primordial composite type, the *yates* (125).

In sum, tracing the wild man back to the days before history permits us to which link the bird-headed and owl eyed shaman of the cave paintings with their many poet-seer descendants, including Cicero's *vir magnus* and Horace's Orpheus and Amphion. This trip back in time also links our ancestors to us.

These deepest layers of the human and wild-man palimpsests are still revealing their secrets. The Wild Man has a crucial role to play in the way we imagine our past and we find him in the many different mental constructs scientists, philosophers, and artists have created. The trail from *Australopithecus* to the Animal Master is the best understanding we currently have of how we became human. The Wild Man is implicated in our notions of the sacred, in how we learn about the lawlines of our own culture, and in how we learn what is necessary for our survival as a species. The essential crystalline structure of wild man mosaic has taken shape by the top of the prehistoric strata of his palimpsest. The art forms used and the settings and cultural contexts of his adventures will change through time, but the wild man, in many ways, remains a prehistoric, pre-cultural being. He is also a vital part of what we need from our culture to complete ourselves as human beings.

CHAPTER IV: THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

In the previous section we examined the figure of the wild man in prehistoric human culture, as both creator and subject of the parietal art of the Paleolithic period. As the glaciers retreat from the last Ice Age, our focus moves forward into the Holocene or Recent Era, towards the present day. Traversing a time span of nearly 10,000 years, our attention is drawn to a wild man named Enkidu, the co-star in the most significant literary work of the early historic period of Western Civilization: The Epic of Gilgamesh.

The years between Lascaux and Sumer mark the beginning of the human transformation of the Earth, due largely to the agrarian revolution of the past 12,000 years. As a species we have added a new layer, the technosphere, to the preexisting, naturally occurring layers: the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere.¹ The forces of creative adaptation we noted with Homo erectus take on local and global ecological significance. Plants and animals come under human social control, as the arts of farming and pastoralism gradually develop. From 10,000-2,500 BCE, communities coalesce and grow in major fertile river basins, such as the Indus, Yellow, Nile, and Tigris and Euphrates river valleys. Humans make liminal incursions into the lithosphere and hydrosphere as the arts of irrigation and metallurgy develop. These arts and other technological innovations, such as the invention of the wheel, profoundly alter the lives of the growing populations in these communities. Humans no longer need be food producers in order to eat. They come to depend on each other as much as the natural world. This transition is encapsulated in the story of Enkidu, literary history's first wild man, as he travels from his life among the animals in the plains to a new life in the city as companion to King Gilgamesh.

The origins of a city-oriented way of life, commemorated in the word civilization itself (<Latin civis, citizen) are attributed to the Bronze Age

¹ Harold J. Morowitz, "Balancing Species Preservation and Economic Considerations," Science 16 Aug. 1991: 753.

Sumerians of Mesopotamia, beginning around 8000 BCE. By the second half of the fourth millennium, Uruk, one of Sumer's seven cities, is the first community to meet archaeological standards for a city as opposed to a town: population in the thousands rather than hundreds, diverse commercial and manufacturing enterprises, a central administration governed by kings or priests housed in temples or palaces, and finally, surrounding walls (Human Dawn, 142). These last two features are of special interest to our study of the poem. Its prologue celebrates Gilgamesh, a historical figure who ruled Uruk during the Second Dynastic Period (between 2700-2500 BCE), as the builder of two important sets of walls: "He ordered built the walls of Uruk of the Sheepfold/The walls of holy Eanna, stainless sanctuary." (I. i.9-10.)²

These two urban architectural features, the central temple-palace complex and city's outer perimeter walls, bear directly on our literary concern with liminality. Eanna, the city's holy precinct, like the decorated caves of the Paleolithic, is a sacred space where the human and the divine meet. In the introduction to her edition of the poem, Sandars stresses the liminal function of the Sumerian temple precinct :

They were magnificent buildings decorated with reliefs and mosaics, and usually comprising a great court and an inner sanctuary, with sometimes, as at Uruk, a ziggurat behind. This was a holy mountain in miniature: an antechamber between heaven and earth where the gods could converse with men.³

The gradual shift in power within these buildings, from priests to individual secular kings, is an important part of the Gilgamesh story. However, our literary interests direct us to another, even more practical concern. It was in these Mesopotamian temples that writing was first developed during the fourth millennium BCE.

In the beginning, the priest-scribes developed a cuneiform script to use as an accounting system. Later, this symbol system was used to commemorate the deeds of men such as King Gilgamesh:

² John Gardner and John Maier, trans., Gilgamesh: Translated from the Sin-lequ-i-unni version (1984; New York: Vintage, 1985) 57. All subsequent references to this edition will be given in the text, including column, tablet, and line numbers, followed by page numbers.

³ N.K. Sandars, ed., The Epic of Gilgamesh, Rev. ed. (1972; London: Penguin, 1973) 15. References to this edition/translation will be given in the text with page numbers and author's name, when appropriate. Her version does not include tablet or column numbers.

who saw things secret, opened the place hidden
 and carried back word of the time before the Flood—
 he travelled the road, exhausted, in pain,
 and cut his works into a stone tablet. (I.i.5-8; 57)

As the king's own actions show, writing soon became much more than a scribal tool. It is associated early on with a search for meaning and a desire for immortality. For later generations such as our own, some 4,000 years from the historical Gilgamesh, writing is still the primary means of preservation of a precious archive for those who wish to see into the lives and share the stories of people of distant times, places, and cultures.

The outer city walls of Uruk provide an another, more concrete example of our liminal theme. The walls constitute a visible boundary between the city and the rest of the (uncivilized) world. They intensify the contrast between inside and outside, insiders and outsiders. Gates and doors become sanctioned zones of passage, and many scenes in the Gilgamesh poem take place in such privileged locations.

The Epic of Gilgamesh is a story of journeys through the city's walls: Enkidu's multi-stage journey to Gilgamesh's Uruk, the adventures of the two heroes out in the Cedar Forest and within the city walls, and finally Gilgamesh's own wanderings around the world and ultimate return to Uruk. Eric Leed argues that as civilization emerged, so did the fundamental contrast between travel and rootedness: "Mobility is the first, prehistorical condition; sessility (attachment or fixation to one place), a later, historical condition" (4). Cicero's account in De inventione takes us to the days when the homines silvestres were gathered together in a congregation so that the institutions of humanized, civilized life could take hold. The history of literature seems to suggest that as soon as humans did settle, travel became a major preoccupation and the subject of much imaginative activity.

The text of the Epic of Gilgamesh has itself undergone many journeys. It has a remarkable history of its own, complete with birth, death and rebirth. Its history offers some intriguing parallels with Paleolithic cave art. Part of the celebrity of these artifacts comes from their historical primacy. The word "first" recurs frequently in connection with Gilgamesh: "world's earliest known epic," "the first work of Western travel literature," "first great epic of

the destiny of man.”⁴ Sandars writes of the poem’s protagonist “If Gilgamesh is not the first human hero, he is the first tragic human hero of whom anything is known” (7). As with the Paleolithic art of the caves, it would be a mistake to interpret this primacy either as “primitive” or as an historical absolute. Both the formal technical sophistication and the existential concerns underlying the content of these artifacts presuppose substantial cultural development.

Moreover, like the cave art, the Epic of Gilgamesh spent thousands of years submerged underground. It was only recovered a hundred and fifty years ago by archaeologists unearthing the library of Assurbanipal located in ancient Ninevah (modern Iraq). In this sense we can speak of the rebirth of these artifacts. Inevitably, we view these rediscoveries with twentieth-century eyes. Mindful of the remarkable history of the Gilgamesh Epic, it is striking how pertinent modern critical terms associated with intertextuality, such as mosaic and palimpsest, are to this ancient work.

Modern critical theory emphasizes the mosaic nature of all literary works. The process of reading imaginative fiction is like assembling a puzzle. The reader puts pieces together, and fills the gaps between words, sentences, paragraphs, and chapters to create a coherent or meaningful picture. Gilgamesh offers this challenge to the reader and even more. Is there a poem for which the term mosaic is more appropriate? The story of Gilgamesh survives today literally in fragments. It was inscribed in cuneiform on clay tablets, which survive by the hundreds, all fragmentary.

Scholars of classical and Renaissance literature are accustomed to discussion of variants and editions, but these discussions take on monumental proportions when we consider the Gilgamesh poem. Though our literal subtext is clay rather than parchment, its history attests to the validity of the term palimpsest. Since we have recovered so many fragments of different versions of the poem, Gilgamesh provides an excellent example of the tension between Work and Text. Through works such as Jeffrey Tigay’s The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic,⁵ we are able to appreciate some of the ways in which

⁴ Citations from Human Dawn 154; Leed 6; and Campbell, Mask Vol. 3, 87 respectively.

⁵ Jeffrey Tigay, The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic, (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1982).

the adventures and characters that make up the poem we read today were separated and recombined over the years in different forms and different languages. It is logical that even scholars who are not working in a structuralist or poststructuralist tradition gravitate toward intertextual imagery as they ponder this poem.

Gilgamesh was a Sumerian king, and the world described in the poem is that of the early to middle third millennium BCE. In this sense, Gilgamesh himself is a palimpsest, with historical, legendary and then literary incarnations. The poem we read today was not written in Sumerian, but Akkadian, the language of the Assyria, the conquerors of Sumer. The Akkadian hero Sargon, the world's "first emperor," considered the destruction of Uruk's walls to be one of his greatest accomplishments. Modern versions of Gilgamesh are based on the Late Standard Edition, written in Akkadian some thousand years after the historical king's reign.

The Standard Version is not the translation of any single Sumerian work, but a remarkable collation and transformation of a variety of Sumerian materials. It includes some episodes which originally pertained to Gilgamesh, but many which did not, from diverse sources such as wisdom literature, hymns, and myths.⁶ In fact, the part of the poem which generated the greatest interest when the tablets were first uncovered in the nineteenth century was the story of the Flood on Tablet XI. The account has uncanny similarities to the biblical accounts in Genesis, which it antedates. Ironically, in the Akkadian versions of the Gilgamesh poem, the story of the flood is a narrative digression. It is a tale told to Gilgamesh as part of his own heroic journey to learn of "things secret" and "places hidden" and its contribution to the rest of the poem is primarily thematic.

The story of the Flood shows how a palimpsest casts its shadows into the past as well as the future. The origins of the myth of the Deluge are no more tangible and verifiable than the path the same story took to the Old

⁶ The tendency to describe these sources with liminal and geologic imagery is evident in Sandars's introduction: "...the tradition reaches back into a preliterate age on the borderline of legend and history, a little later than the Deluge... Once a myth has crystallized into literary form it is already dead as belief or ceremonial, but it is possible that, at least in the earliest strata of material, this change was not yet complete, and for that reason we must not be surprised to find embedded in such early poems fragments of belief which appear grotesque or banal..." 13, 49. Emphasis added.

Testament. Similarly, we confront the shadowy filaments of intertextuality when we try to assess the impact of Gilgamesh on world literature. Sandars' assessment of the influence of Gilgamesh, a poem widely known for 2,000 years and then completely lost from sight for a similar length of time, is both modest and appropriate. She does not wish to see Gilgamesh, the hero, in the customary terms of "prototypes and parentage":

Although the Sumerian hero is not an older Odysseus, nor Hercules, nor Samson, nor Dermot, nor Gawain, yet it is possible that none of these would be remembered in the way he is if the story of Gilgamesh had never been told (46-47).

The tenuousness of the intertextual web is due in part to the fragility of its material substrata. However, Sandars reminds us that the disappearance of the poem was not accidental, but the result of willful suppression. Just as Sargon destroyed Gilgamesh's own walls, so the Akkadian version of the poem was buried beneath the hostility of Medes and Babylonians who sacked Ninevah in 612 BCE. Contemporary Persians and Hebrews had their own reasons to forget the literature of their enemies, the Assyrians (44-45). It is a remarkable tribute to the strength of Text that characters, symbols, and themes survive suppression and burial to reappear in new forms and fashions in the new Works. The shadows remain, incomplete testaments in the palimpsest.

Given this history, it is not surprising that the questions of origins and originality, authorship and authority of the Gilgamesh poem are problematic. What is surprising is that the durability of the clay palimpsest permits a scholar such as Tigay to reconstruct different versions and take a compelling stand on the question of authorship. In doing so, he also explicitly rejects the traditional linear approach to source study:

Students of ancient literature have, in the past, seen their task primarily as the identification of sources or the reconstruction of earlier, or even original, versions. This was based on a predisposition to view what was early as pure, and what was late as degenerate...[I]t seems to me that historical study demands that each version be taken seriously as a piece of literature in its own right, and that whenever possible an attempt be made to discern the aims and methods of those who produced it (20).

An appreciation of the power of Text does not mean we should not also appreciate individual Works, individual editions or variants. Tigay's study of

the many versions of the Gilgamesh epic lead him to posit as the creative force or author of the poem an unnamed scholar of the Old Babylonian period, 2000-1600 BCE rather than Sîn-leqi-unninni who is associated with the 1250 or Late Standard edition.

Tigay describes the Old Babylonian version as “a new and profound work of art whose originality is in no way compromised by its indebtedness to earlier sources” (54). He bases this judgment on the narrative and thematic unity of this version:

As the central idea in this epic, the author seized upon a theme which was adumbrated in three of the Sumerian tales, Gilgamesh's concern with death and his futile desire to overcome it....As a result, what were originally tales about a particular hero's life and exploits became a vehicle for exploring the problem of mortality and the way to live with the knowledge of ultimate death (242, 249).

From separate Sumerian tales and other materials, the Old Babylonian author created a coherent narrative unified by a profound existential theme. For Tigay, this shift is the defining moment in the poem's evolution. The poem continued to change for at least another thousand years, but its essential pattern was established by this nameless but admired author.

The process of revision and compilation continues to this day. Any modern translator/editor is also obliged to piece the poem together. The artistic freedom the mosaic form entails is evident in the contrast between two excellent, widely used modern editions: that of Gardner and Maier and that of Sandars. Sandars explains her choice to highlight the poem's narrative unity over its imperfect survival by presenting it as a prose epic in chapter form. She supplements the Late Standard text with passages from Old and Middle Babylonian and Hittite versions as well as the older Sumerian sources in order to present as complete a narrative as possible (49-54). In contrast, the Gardner/Maier edition strictly limits itself to the Sîn-leqi-unninni version, with supplementary passages included only in the notes. This edition also emphasizes the segmented nature of the poem by presenting it as “72 separate poems,” or cantos, following the division of the poem on twelve tablets of six columns each. Although it makes for difficult reading, this formal emphasis aligns Gilgamesh with other epics into canto form such as Dante's Divina

Commedia and Spenser's Faerie Queene.⁷ Both Gardner/Maier and Sandars eliminate the innumerable parentheses and footnotes of scholarly editions, which reinforce the tenuous nature of our understanding of the poem's individual words and lines for the non-specialist. Unlike Sandars, Gardner and Maier take pains to remind the reader in the summary, text, and notes of the many missing parts of the clay tablets, which make fitting this particular mosaic together such a challenge.

Finally, even when the text is construable, we encounter profound cultural gaps, where words refer to objects or practices which we no longer understand. Michel Riffaterre's describes this experience as the reader's awareness "dans le texte de la *trace* de l'intertexte."⁸ The reader searches for clues directed to an missing and possibly unrecoverable intertext. He calls these gaps "anomalies *intratextuelles*"⁹ and offers as an example the sociolinguistic distance between medieval literature and the modern reader. How much greater is distance between the Sumerian and Akkadian worlds and our own! The mysterious "stone things" which Gilgamesh uses and destroys in crossing the waters of death in Tablet X, or the notorious pukku and mikku of the Tablet XII are notable examples of these intratextual anomalies.

It may seem remarkable that despite these literal and figurative gaps, the extensive passage of time, and the difficulties of cuneiform script a strong sense of the poem's narrative and thematic unity has managed to survive. Equally remarkable and even more pertinent is Enkidu's role in this cohesion. Sandars asserts that, "The great friendship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu that begins with the wrestling bout in Uruk is the link that connects all the episodes of the poem" (31). Dossin goes even further in attributing the poem's unity to Enkidu. "Cette unité lui est assurée autant, sinon davantage,

⁷ Despite this, Gardner and Maier are uncomfortable calling the poem an epic. Their translation is simply titled Gilgamesh, rather than The Epic of Gilgamesh. They discuss the difficulty of fitting the poem into any generic category, a familiar problem for liminal texts. They finally opt for Northrop Frye's "romance" centering on an heroic quest in two phases, Apollonian and Dionysian (40).

⁸ Riffaterre 5. "the *trace* of the intertext in the text." My translation. Emphasis in original.

⁹ Riffaterre 5. "*intratextual anomalies*." My translation. Emphasis in original.

par le rôle prêté à Enkidu que celui de Gilgames."¹⁰ Tigay finds that the most significant change the Old Babylonian author made in compiling and revising his Sumerian sources was to elevate Enkidu from Gilgamesh's servant to his friend, brother, and equal.¹¹ Finally, he describes the character and role of Enkidu as the "unifying cement of the poem" (46).

Enkidu is as prominent in this poem as it is possible for a marginal character to be. He is not the hero, yet his central role in the plot is indisputable. The themes initiated by him are subsequently reflected in other characters of the poem, and most significantly by Gilgamesh himself, when he grieves over Enkidu's death and enters his own wild-man phase. In light of the significance of his relationship with Gilgamesh to the poem's unity, it can even be argued that the center of the poem's narrative gravity is not a single character. In contrast with our own solar system with its single sun at the center, the complex relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu suggests a different astronomical model. The narrative center of this poem is more like a binary star system where two stars, here Gilgamesh and Enkidu, are bound together by gravity, and orbit around a mutual center of mass. This is the sense in which Enkidu is the co-star of this epic.

Let us turn now to an overview of the plot.¹² The poem is divided in two principal parts: "The Friendship of Gilgamesh and Enkidu" and "The Journey of Gilgamesh." Since our analysis focuses on Enkidu, we are primarily concerned with the first part. We also wish to know how this first part of the poem contributes to the whole and supports the mythic quality of epic, in the words of G. S. Kirk: "the emotional exploration of the permanent meaning of life, by the release of fantasy about the distant past."¹³ We can further subdivide Enkidu's half of the poem into three broad segments: 1) Enkidu's

¹⁰ "This unity is assured as much, if not more, by the role given to Enkidu as compared to the role of Gilgamesh." My translation. Cited in Tigay 29.

¹¹ Tigay 30. He includes the Akkadian terms which convey Enkidu's raised stature: "ibru, tappu, ahu, masil, kima."

¹² I follow Young, Sandars, and Tigay rather than Gardner and Maier in viewing the poem as a coherent whole rather than relying solely on the Late Standard Edition. I follow Tigay's approach as well on the controversial 12th Tablet.

¹³ G.S. Kirk, Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures (Cambridge and Berkeley: UP and U California P, 1970) 133.

journey to Uruk; 2) His two adventures with Gilgamesh—the confrontations with Humbaba and Ishtar; and 3) Enkidu's death. Each of these segments can be analyzed in light of liminal concerns.

1) Enkidu's Journey to Uruk

Enkidu is the principal embodiment of liminality in the poem. As a wild man, he is a mediator between nature and culture. This aspect of Enkidu's identity has been recognized since Kirk's application of Lévi-Straussian insights to Mesopotamian and classical mythology. What is less frequently recognized is that mediation is a dynamic process. For example, Sandars rejects the idea of "Enkidu representing 'nature' opposed to Gilgamesh as 'culture,' " and the "baseless identification of civilized man with disease and natural man with health and well-being" (31). While Sandars is right to reject such a reductive reading, this is not an accurate portrayal of Kirk's argument. Kirk's understanding of the liminal dynamics of the poem is evident in his suggestion that "Enkidu exemplifies, at least as powerfully as Gilgamesh, both the good and bad side of culture..."(151n21). Enkidu is the principal liminal figure in the poem, but his journey could not take place without the participation of other mediators.

Enkidu's mediation is a gradual, on-going process. He changes as the poem unfolds. He becomes less wild and more human as he travels from the wilderness to the city. The contrast between nature and culture are but one aspect of his liminality. His journey has a temporal as well as a spatial dimension. It is both metaphysical and physical, as Gilgamesh's journey in the second part of the poem will be as well. In his very body, Enkidu mediates the natural and the supernatural. His encounters with wild beasts and the gods help to situate the human place in the cosmos. As he interacts with people and gods, he helps establish appropriate boundaries for human social behavior. As Kirk suggests, his story illustrates both the blessings and bitterness of human civilized life.

If we consider the first half of the poem as a whole, the model of the rites of passage applies. The first seven tablets encompass Enkidu's entire life: we follow him from birth to death. Each of Enkidu's life passages is pointedly related to Gilgamesh. For example, his birth is a direct response to the problem which Gilgamesh has become for the citizens of Uruk. Gilgamesh has violated the "lawlines" of his kingship, although the details of his

oppressive behavior are not clear.¹⁴ The gods' solution to his abuse of power is the creation of Enkidu. The gods fashion Enkidu out of nothing, like a committee of novelists confronting an unexpected problem in the plot.

When [Anu the sky god] heard their lamentation
he called to Aruru the Mother Great Lady: "You, Aruru, who
created humanity,
create now a second image of Gilgamesh: may the image be equal to
the time of his heart.

Let them square off one against the other, that Uruk may have
peace. (I.ii.29-32; 68)

Enkidu is created to restore balance to Gilgamesh, so that the king's behavior can return to its proper boundaries. He will be a complement to Gilgamesh, a "second self" (Sandars 62). From birth, Enkidu is designed to fulfill an essential aspect of the literary wild man: he is to be the foil, the brother, the companion, the shadow. The wild man is the Other for the hero, the Self. This pattern repeats throughout the wild-man palimpsest. Prominent examples include Robert Louis Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde or Robinson and his man Friday in Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Michel Tournier's 1969 "remake" or hypertext Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique.¹⁵

Enkidu's creation shows that the wild man's role in beliefs about human origins is an ancient tradition indeed. Enkidu is brought to life by the goddess Aruru, whose epithet here is "she who created humanity." The birth of Enkidu parallels the birth of man. The following passage defines Enkidu as both wild man and primordial man.

When Aruru heard this, she formed an image of Anu in her heart.
Aruru washed her hands, pinched off clay and threw it into the
wilderness:

In the wilderness she made Enkidu the fighter; she gave birth in
darkness and silence to one like the war god Ninurta.
His whole body was covered thickly with hair, his head covered
with hair like a woman's;

¹⁴ See page 102 above for a discussion of the term "lawlines".

¹⁵ On the topic of the literary double, see, for example, Albert Guerard, Stories of the Double (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1967). This collection includes two general essays and Conrad's The Secret Sharer, Dostoevsky's The Double, Melville's Bartleby the Scrivener, and Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

the locks of his hair grew abundantly, like those of the grain god,
Nisaba.

He knew neither people nor homeland; he was clothed in the
clothing of Sumuquan the cattle god.

He fed with the gazelles on grass
with the wild animals he drank at waterholes;
with hurrying animals his heart grew light in the waters.

(I.ii.33-41; 68)

Enkidu clearly meets the definition of the wild man presented in Chapter 2. Enkidu is a recognizable human being, who lives outside of Society ("In the wilderness...He knew neither people nor homeland...") whose appearance and behavior reveal a closeness to the non-human world of nature ("...clothed in the clothing of Sumuquan the cattle god. He fed with the gazelles on grass...").

The passage emphasizes Enkidu's liminal, composite nature. He is part divine, part human, part animal, part earth. He begins as an image in the mind of the goddess. Then that image is modeled in clay, a liminal substance in its own right—part dirt and part mineral. Clay is the mythic material of choice when human beings are to be created.¹⁶ Its similarity to dirt is a reminder of our ties to the earth. Its malleability makes the perfect substance for the artist to mold and shape. Aruru washes her hands before working in clay, suggesting a ritual of purification as well as the practical preparations of a potter. Sasson places Enkidu squarely in the wild-man tradition as he explains the significance of Enkidu's name: "[Aruru] shapes him out of clay from the EDIN, the step. As his name implies, Enkidu is Pan-like, hirsute, yet a noble savage."¹⁷

Enkidu is made in the image of Anu, the god of heaven, and likened as well to the gods of war, grain, cattle. This combination of diverse divine attributes recalls the wild man of the Trois Frères caves with his assorted animal and human features. In contrast with modern monotheisms, the Sumerian pantheon was well populated. Two of the gods to which Enkidu is compared, Nisaba and Sumuquan, illustrate a continuity between nature and divinity. They are responsible for products which fuse nature and culture,

¹⁶ See pages 30, 33 above.

¹⁷ Jack M. Sasson, "Some Literary Motifs in the Composition of the Gilgamesh Epic," *Studies in Philology* 69 (1972): 266.

since cattle and grain are both products of domestication. In the Mesopotamian world view, human technology participates in this continuity between nature and divinity, for cultural traits as well as natural processes are under divine supervision.¹⁸ Thus Enkidu's hair and clothing link him to the divine as well as the animal world.

His human qualities are also specified. In subsequent verses Enkidu will be called "lullû-amelu", an Akkadian term which Sandars renders as "savage" and Gardner and Maier translate more literally as "man-as-he-was-in-the-beginning." Tigay suggests "Ursprünglicher Mensch" or Primordial Man (202n15). The emphasis in this passage is on the wild man's traditional physical strength: "Enkidu the fighter...like the war god Ninurta." His hairiness is also repeatedly emphasized. It is worth noting that we imagine our ancestors, such as Australopithecus or Erectus, as muscular and hirsute.

The description of Enkidu's head, "covered with hair like a woman," is particularly suggestive. In this context, hair serves as meeting ground for male and female traits, as well as the divine and bestial. Androgyny is a gender boundary frequented by wild men and women. For example, some Greek and Roman portrayals of the god Dionysus present a feeble and effeminate appearance which belies the god's fierce, vital energy. On the other side of the gender boundary, there are female huntresses and warriors such the Amazons or Spenser's avatars of Artemis and Athena, Belphoebe and Britomart.¹⁹ Although Enkidu's masculinity is never called into question, he will be described in female terms in relation to Gilgamesh repeatedly in the poem. These comparisons are ultimately less concerned with sexuality than with Enkidu's role as a complement to Gilgamesh.²⁰ The sexual imagery reinforces the powerful attraction between them, a force akin to gravity, and the perfection of their friendship.

¹⁸ Iris Furlong, "The Mythology of the Ancient Near East," The Feminist Companion to Mythology, ed. Carolyne Larrington (London: Pandora Press, 1992) 4.

¹⁹ The literary implications of sexual ambiguity are a prominent concern of Camille Paglia's Sexual Personae. See especially her treatment of the Faerie Queene: Chapter 6, "Spenser and Apollo."

²⁰ I agree with Young's reasoning on this controversial topic: "[T]he text is quite uninhibited in its sexual explicitness, and had it intended sexual union, would have said so" (279-80).

The parallels between Gilgamesh and Enkidu are carefully prepared by the poet before the two characters actually meet. Before the passage describing Enkidu's birth, the reader has been informed that Gilgamesh was also divinely created in liminal proportions: "Two-thirds of him divine, one-third human. The image of his body the Great Goddess designed." (I.ii.1-2; 47). Furthermore, the king's misbehavior was described in specifically animal terms. The gods are asked to intervene because Gilgamesh is "like a wild bull rising up supreme" (I.ii.8). He "runs wild" (I.ii.11), he is a "mighty wild bull" (I.ii.20).

In contrast, Enkidu's animality is revealed by his location, his diet and his companions. His birth takes place in the wilderness, because that is where Aruru throws the clay. His ignorance of people and civilized institutions is explicitly stated. He eats grass like his companions, the gazelles, and drinks at the waterhole with the other wild animals. This vegetarian fare is part of the profile of the noble savage. Grass is a specifically animal diet. Following the invention of farming, people only eat grass when faced with starvation or when, like King Nebuchadnezzar, they have lost their minds. Tigay uses this dietary fact to counter the suggestion of many scholars that Enkidu's early life is based on the descriptions of semi-nomadic Amorites. Like Enkidu, the Amorites knew no barley (agriculture), no house, no city.²¹ Tigay stresses that unlike Enkidu, the Amorites lived in tents and ate uncooked meat (200). Behind this scholarly disagreement is the tradition of viewing people of other cultures through the lens of the wild-man myths, of both noble and ignoble savages. This especially occurs when one culture looks at another which it considers inferior and primitive. Clearly this tradition has a long and venerable history. Montaigne will use the same tradition to his advantage in "Des cannibales." Enkidu's status as companion rather than consumer of animals distinguishes him from the desert Arabs, as well as recalling Gilgamesh's beastly behavior in Uruk. Finally, Enkidu's presence as a member of the animal community at the waterhole provides the occasion for his first encounter with civilization.

²¹ Erica Reiner, "City Bread and Bread Baked in Ashes," Languages and Areas: Studies Presented to George Bobrinskoy (Chicago: U of Chicago, 1967) 118. See also definition by negatives, page 8 above.

Enkidu's journey to Uruk is a true rite of passage. It takes place in several stages. Its complexity is underscored by the participation of other mediating figures along the way. It is appropriate that the journey to Uruk is initiated at the water hole. Human beings and animals alike are drawn to locations where earth, water, and sky intersect. Enkidu shares the animals' joy there: "with the hurrying animals his heart grew light in the waters." The water hole is also an ecological symbol for the balance of nature. Scientists have observed that enemy species manage to schedule their visits to sources of fresh water so they can drink without encountering each other. This is the liminal location where Enkidu is first seen by another human being.

Like other secondary characters in the poem, this person is named only by his social role. As Enkidu's trip to Uruk is gradual, so this character is one step removed from natural man. He is not a city dweller nor a farmer, but like the wild men on the cave walls, a hunter. Gardner and Maier call him The Stalker. His reaction to Enkidu is intense:

Worried, troubled, quiet,
The Stalker's heart rushed; his face grew dark.
Woe entered his heart.

His face was like that of one who travels a long road. (I.ii.47-50; 68)

This intensity is psychologically appropriate for the Stalker's encounter with the Uncanny. The simile of the traveler is intriguing because of the importance of travel throughout the poem. This encounter is the beginning of Enkidu's journey to Uruk, for the Stalker recognizes Enkidu as a threat to his livelihood. Like Mircea Eliade's primordial god, Enkidu is revealed to be the Releaser of Animals. The Stalker runs first to his father.

Father, there is a man who has come from the hills.
In all the land he is most powerful; power belongs to him.
Like a shooting star of the god Anu, he has awesome strength.
He ranges endlessly over the hills,
endlessly feeds on grass with the animals,
endlessly sets his feet in the direction of the watering place.
For terror I cannot go near him.
He fills up the pits I dig;
he tears out the traps I set;
he allows the beasts to slip through my hands, the hurrying
creatures of abandon;
in the wilderness he does not let me work.' (I.iii.2-12; 73)

Enkidu is defined as the quintessential stranger, the outsider from the hills. His antagonism to human ways is matched by his cunning. He protects the animals by undoing the hunter's traps.

The father sends the Stalker to Gilgamesh. He assures his son that the king is even stronger than this wild man. He uses the Stalker's own words to describe Gilgamesh's strength, repeating the son's words verbatim, but changing the subject: "In all the land he is most powerful; power belongs to him. Like a shooting star of the god Anu, he has awesome strength." This repetition is a desirable stylistic devise in Akkadian poetry, but it also underscores here the parallel between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, and lays the ground for their eventual confrontation.

Before that can take place, Enkidu still has many changes to undergo. These changes are accomplished by another mediating figure, this time a female figure. In this case, gender matters absolutely. Kuzbu, sexual attractiveness or strong beauty, is the lure used to snare Enkidu, the releaser of animals. The Stalker goes to Uruk, consults with Gilgamesh, and returns with a temple priestess, identified, like the Stalker, only by the names of her profession: harimtu and samhatu. Translating her name offers an example of intra-textual anomaly. As Furlong explains:

The term harimtu is usually translated, on sound lexicographic evidence, as 'prostitute', 'harlot' or 'courtesan': all words which today have pejorative connotations inappropriate to the period of the original composition of the Epic, when sex and the fertility principle were accorded a value in religious practice that is difficult or impossible for us to assess nowadays (10).

The harimtu's liminality is twofold. As a representative from Uruk, she takes the civilization-wilderness mediation one step closer to the city. As a representative of the goddess Ishtar, her sexual attractiveness is a divine attribute and she corporally mediates the divine and human worlds.

The courtesan untied her wide belt and spread her legs, and he struck her wildness like a storm.
 She was not shy; she took his wind away.
 Her clothing she spread out, and he lay upon her.
 She made him know, the man-as-he-was, what a woman is.
 His body lay on her;
 six days and seven nights Enkidu attacked, fucking the priestess.

After Enkidu was glutted on her richness

he set his face toward his animals.
 Seeing him, Enkidu, the gazelles scattered, wheeling:
 the beasts of the wilderness fled from his body.
 Enkidu tried to rise up, but his body pulled back.

His knees froze. His animals had turned from him. (I.iv.15-27; 77)

The wild man is tamed, not by the eloquent words of a great and wise man as in Cicero's De inventione, but much more vividly and plausibly by the body of a woman. Love and lust are at not at stake in this encounter. It is more like a match between two great natural forces, as the wild man strikes the harimtu's divine wildness.

The hexameral duration of the contest suggests creation myths in which divine sexual congress creates the earth. In Mesopotamian mythology, the fertility goddess, Ishtar or Innana, is responsible for all earthly fertility. Her good will is ensured in the city through a Sacred Marriage ritual, in which the roles of goddess and her chosen spouse are played by human surrogates (Furlong 19-20). The encounter here between the temple prostitute, Ishtar's representative, and Enkidu parallels this Sacred Marriage ritual and anticipates the upcoming conflict between Ishtar and Gilgamesh. Furthermore, the time span of six days and seven nights has intratextual significance. This is the precise length of time, in the second part of the poem, that Gilgamesh spends sleeping outside the home of Utnapishtim, thus failing the test of wakefulness and losing his bid for immortality.

When Enkidu is finally satisfied and rests, he learns what was actually at stake in the encounter. It is not a question of victor and victim. In gaining physical satisfaction, Enkidu has lost his harmony with the wilderness. Something has snapped. A boundary line has been sharply drawn through the animal-human continuum. This was not a conscious choice on Enkidu's part. The choice was made for him by the gazelles who turn from him and run. When this happens, Enkidu is no longer the same. His body does not respond, his knees lock and his swiftness disappears. But the loss is not total. The courtesan offers him something in return.

Enkidu grew weak; he could not gallop as before.
 Yet he had knowledge, wider mind.
 Turned around, Enkidu knelt at the knees of the prostitute.
 He looked up at her face,
 and as the woman spoke, his ears heard...
 The woman said to him, to Enkidu:
 'You have become wise, like a god, Enkidu.'

Why did you range the wilderness with animals?
 Come let me lead you to the heart of Uruk of the Sheepfold...’ 37
 She speaks to him, and they look at one another. 40
 With his heart’s knowledge, he longs for a deeply loving friend.
 (I.iv.28-41; 78)

The courtesan's victory over Enkidu has brought him blessings as well as loss. Like the homines silvestres of Cicero, he has been raised from an animal existence. His mind works in a new way: he can think, he can know. Suddenly, he understands human language and he can also speak. In contrast with the male teacher in De inventione, it makes sense that Enkidu should learn language from a woman. Compare the observations of Merleau-Ponty:

Les enfants séparés inopinément et durablement de leurs mère montrent toujours des phénomènes de régression linguistique. Au fond, ce n'est pas seulement le mot 'maman' qui est le premier que l'enfant prononce, c'est tout le langage qui est pour ainsi dire maternel.²²

Enkidu's case is the opposite side of the same coin. His introduction to the female of the species is sudden and complete, and so is his miraculous acquisition of language. There is a parallel with Genesis, since sexual knowledge is associated with higher-level thinking, or in the courtesan's terms, divine wisdom. On the other hand, the price paid for this knowledge is a profound alienation from the natural order (Young 275). The courtesan does not intend to compensate Enkidu for his loss herself. Instead, she offers him the city and Gilgamesh: "I will lead you/to Eanna, home of Anu/ the place where Gilgamesh is completely powerful, and you [will embrace] him [like a wife]. You [will love him like yourself.]" (Gardner/Maier 91).

Now that Enkidu is domesticated, it remains to civilize him. The Old Babylonian version follows this process in great detail. The courtesan takes him to a pastoral community, perhaps one composed of the semi-nomadic Amorites mentioned above. In any case, it represents the next stage in the

²² Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Les relations avec autrui chez l'enfant (Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1975) 18. "Children who are unexpectedly separated from their mothers on a long-term basis always show the phenomenon of linguistic repression. Finally, it is not just that the word 'mama' is the first that a child pronounces, but language itself is, so to speak, maternal." My translation. Cited in Lucien Malson Wolf-Children and the Problem of Human Nature. (1964; New York: New Left Books, 1972) 55. It is also striking that Rymer's comparison of language acquisition to a midwife's slap specifies a female midwife rather than the more common male obstetrician (p. 58 above).

journey towards civilization. The courtesan's role expands. She is clearly both mother and teacher.

She divided her clothing in two and with the one half she clothed him and with the other herself; and holding his hand she led him like a child to the sheepfolds, into the shepherds' tents. There all the shepherds crowded round to see him, they put down bread in front of him, but Enkidu could only suck the milk of wild animals. He fumbled and gaped, at a loss what to do or how he should eat the bread and drink the strong wine. Then the woman said, 'Enkidu, eat bread, it is the staff of life; drink the wine, it is the custom of the land' (Sandars 67).

Enkidu may have the wisdom of the gods, but he still has to learn manners. Human culture is acquired gradually, and so Enkidu learns step by step to dress, to eat bread, and to drink wine.

Given his earlier grace and cunning, his fumbling and inadequacy in front of prepared food and drink seem comical. On the other hand, his incomprehension of bread and reluctance to drink wine have parallels with cases such as Victor, the wild boy of Aveyron, who, captured after many years in the wild, refused prepared foods.²³

All those who examined the child at the moment of his entry into society are agreed that he had a very pronounced distaste for bread, meat soup, and that he only ate potatoes, raw chestnuts, and acorns... [H]is mastication was equally astonishing, executed as it was solely by the sudden action of the incisors, which because of its similarity to that of certain rodents was a sufficient indicator that our savage, like those animals, most commonly lived on vegetable products...²⁴

Like Enkidu, the wild boy of Aveyron eventually accepted his new diet. On the other hand, Victor maintained a special preference for water.

The following lyrical passage from Itard's notebook points to the resilience of the wild-man myth in the heart of scientific inquiry:

²³ See page 59n59 above.

²⁴The first selection is from Pierre-Joseph Bonaterre's 1800 Notice historique sur le sauvage de l'Aveyron, translated by Harlan Lane in Lane's The Wild Boy of Aveyron 39. The second selection is from The Wild Boy of Aveyron (Rapports et mémoires sur le sauvage de l'Aveyron) by Jean-Marc Itard, trans. George and Muriel Humphrey (New York: Century Co, 1932) 80.

Yet in spite of his aversion to spirits Victor has acquired a certain liking for wine, without appearing, however, to feel very much its privation if it is not given to him. I even believe that he has always retained a marked preference for water. The way he drinks it seems to show that it gives him the keenest delight, but this is due no doubt to some cause other than the pleasures of the sense of taste. At the end of dinner, even when he is no longer thirsty, he is always seen with the air of an epicure who holds his glass for some exquisite liquor, to fill his glass with pure water, take it by sips and swallow it drop by drop. But what adds much interest to this scene is the place where it occurs. It is near the window with his eyes turned toward the country that our drinker stands, as if in this moment of happiness this child of nature tries to unite the only two good things which have survived the loss of his liberty—a drink of limpid water and the sight of sun and country (Humphrey 65-6).

There is no corresponding passage in our poem where, having arrived in Uruk, Enkidu looks out the palace window with a goblet of spring water in his hand. On the other hand, Reiner does cite a pertinent passage from the Akkadian epic of Era: "Abundant city food does not measure up to bread baked in ashes, sweet *naspū*-beer does not measure up to water from a waterskin..." (119). Her comments on this passage emphasize the variety of incremental positions along the nature-culture continuum:

As later, it is the food habits that distinguish the different ways of life, food habits where not merely the nature and the provenience of the food distinguishes men, *siton edontes*, from beasts, cultivators from savages, but the way of preparing the food, the bread-cake baked in ashes in the country side is opposed to oven-baked bread, just as pure water is opposed to the tavern-keeper's brew (119).

It is clear that diet has a fundamental role to play in cultural assumptions and comparisons. Reiner makes the point that this connection has been observed from Mesopotamian days till our own.

Once he adjusts to his new diet, Enkidu's identity as human being is nearly complete.

So he ate till he was full and drank strong wine, seven goblets. He became merry, his heart exulted and his face shone. He rubbed down the matted hair of his body and anointed himself with oil. Enkidu had become a man; but when he had put on man's clothing he appeared like a bridegroom. He took arms to hunt the lion so that the shepherds could rest at night. He

caught wolves and lions and the herdsmen lay down in peace; for Enkidu was their watchman, that strong man who had no rival (Sandars 67-8).

Enkidu now has proper clothing. His hair is under control. His resemblance to a bridegroom anticipates his arrival in Uruk, with a double meaning that will soon be revealed. Finally, his new role as hunter and protector of the shepherds brings his transformation full circle. At the outset he was helping the animals escape the Stalker, but now he uses his great strength to defend men and their domesticated animals. As the shepherd's guardian, he has become even more like the Greek god Pan.

His journey thus far mirrors the human journey from Paleolithic days through the agricultural revolution. Now Enkidu eats bread not grass. He no longer shares water with the gazelles, but drinks wine and kills predators such as lions and wolves to protect the sheep. This is the metaphysical dimension of his journey. He has compressed tens of thousands of years in the human journey into a matter of weeks. He is now ready for the city. He is ready to meet and challenge Gilgamesh.

Gilgamesh has been warned in his dreams of Enkidu's arrival. His first dreams feature a shooting star, the same metaphor the Stalker and his father used of Enkidu and the king, and then an axe. Dreams play a prominent role in this poem. Typically they are recounted by one character and then interpreted or untied (as Gardner and Maier render it) by a second character. The symbolic and allusive nature of dreams add to the narrative. The interpretation of the untier adds further, sometimes contradictory layers of meaning. Dreams are a liminal state of consciousness, and frequent in the wild man intertext. In modern psychology, dreams permit the subconscious to speak to the rational self. It is hard to imagine modern psychotherapy without them. Their role in ancient cultures was not dissimilar: "Nocturnal messengers were valued by all ancient civilizations as vehicles in which the gods counseled their creations" (Sasson 270). In the case of Gilgamesh, his mother interprets both the axe and star as symbols of "a strong companion able to save a friend...whom you hug like a wife" (Gardner/Maier 86). Both the temple courtesan and Gilgamesh's mother use the analogy of husband and wife when describing the friendship-to-be between Gilgamesh and Enkidu.

The "first recorded arrival in Western literature," the long-anticipated encounter between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, takes place in the city of Uruk in a

liminally charged spot: a gate (Leed 91). It is a gate leading to a bride-house or marriage chamber. In one interpretation, one of the abuses Gilgamesh inflicted on the people of Uruk was his insistence on the jus primae noctis, the right of the king or lord to be first with a bride. Enkidu would enforce a different set of lawlines. In another interpretation, Gilgamesh is fulfilling his role as king in a Sacred Marriage ceremony,²⁵ and Enkidu arrives at the gate to challenge Gilgamesh and assert his own claim to the throne (Furlong 14).

Mighty Gilgamesh came on and Enkidu met him at the gate. He put his foot out and prevented Gilgamesh from entering the house, so they grappled, holding each other like bulls. They broke the doorposts and the walls shook, they snorted like bulls locked together. Gilgamesh bent his knee with his foot planted on the ground and with a turn Enkidu was thrown. Then immediately his fury died. When Enkidu was thrown he said to Gilgamesh, 'There is not another like you in the world. Ninsun, who is as strong as a wild ox in the byre, she was the mother who bore you, and now you are raised above all men, and Enlil has given you the kingship, for your strength surpasses the strength of men.' So Enkidu and Gilgamesh embraced and their friendship was sealed (Sandars 69).

Enkidu's arrival is marked by a ritual battle. Their fight takes place on the threshold, and is so physical that doorposts break and walls shake. Eric Leed observes that both the location and violence reinforce the meaning and the conventions of arrival:

[The] ritual battle is not only an induction of a stranger but also a means by which the stranger learns the 'moral' order of the place he is entering... Violence is clearly a language—the first language—in which boundaries are marked (94-5).

Although Enkidu has forsaken the animal world during his passage to Uruk, the violence of his entry battle is measured in animal terms. The human-animal connection is underscored further as Enkidu and Gilgamesh are repeatedly compared to bulls. Enkidu's reference to the goddess Ninsun "as strong as a wild ox," reminds us that the human-animal interface has a divine dimension as well.

²⁵ According to The Human Dawn, Ishtar-Innana's "emblem was the gatepost of a temple, and the pictograph of a gatepost became the written symbol of her name" (151).

This wrestling match has similarities to Enkidu's encounter with the love-priestess. This confrontation is not designed as a win-lose contest, but as a rite of passage. Gilgamesh is recognized as the stronger, as the proper king. It is, after all, his story. But Enkidu has accomplished his mission as well. The king has finally met his partner and peace is restored to the city. The waiting bride is apparently forgotten, although Ishtar will seek her revenge in due time. The first phase of Enkidu's journey ends as the two men embrace, and Enkidu is incorporated into a new civil order.

2. The Adventures of Enkidu and Gilgamesh: Humbaba

But peace and tranquillity do not endure. Gilgamesh has a dream which Enkidu interprets for him: "The father of the gods has given you kingship, such is your destiny, everlasting life is not your destiny" (70).²⁶ Although Gilgamesh is two-thirds immortal, it is his mortal side that determines his fate. It is not clear whether it is the dream or the earlier loss of contact with nature which debilitates Enkidu, but he soon falls sick in mind and body.

The eyes of Enkidu were full of tears and his heart was sick. He sighed bitterly and Gilgamesh met his eye and said, 'My friend, why do you sigh so bitterly?' But Enkidu opened his mouth and said, 'I am weak, my arms have lost their strength, the cry of sorrow sticks in my throat, I am oppressed by idleness' (70).

Enkidu's regrets the loss of his wild man's strength and energy that occurred along the journey to the city: "[I]n order to enable the wild Enkidu to fit between the city gates he must be somewhat shrunken to a civil size..." (Young 274). On the one hand, this illness also offers another parallel with Victor, the wild boy of Aveyron. When first captured Victor appeared insensitive to heat and cold, but as his guardian-scientist Itard undertook to "awaken his nervous sensibility by the most energetic stimulation," other consequences followed:

Finally, disease itself, that irrefutable and troublesome witness of the characteristic sensitiveness of civilized man, came at this point to attest to the development of this principle of life.

²⁶ Unless noted, all citations from the Humbaba section of the poem are from Sandars.

Towards the first day of spring, our young savage had a violent cold in the head and some weeks later two catarrhal affections, one almost immediately succeeding another (Humphrey 19).

Perhaps this is why Enkidu falls sick so soon after his arrival in Uruk. On the other hand, his malaise seems more moral or psychological than physical. His self-diagnosis of idleness brings to mind a similar analysis by Blaise Pascal, as the mathematician-philosopher pondered the human condition some two thousand years later.

[J']ai découvert que tout le malheur des hommes vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos, dans une chambre...Rien n'est si insupportable à l'homme que d'être dans un plein repos, sans passions, sans affaire, sans divertissement, sans application. Il sent alors son néant, son abandon, son insuffisance, sa dépendance, son impuissance, son vide. Incontinent il sortira du fond de son âme l'ennui, la noirceur, la tristesse, le chagrin, le dépit, le désespoir.²⁷

Gilgamesh proposes a solution which will address both their problems: a journey! Clearly, what Enkidu needs is the motion of passage and the excitement of adventure. Gilgamesh's motives are more in line with the traditions of heroic travel. In his mind, a successful adventure will ensure the only immortality accessible to him. He can serve his god as he extends his own fame:

I have not established my name stamped on bricks as my destiny decreed; therefore I will go to the country where the cedar is felled. I will set up my name in the place where the names of famous men are written, and where no man's name is written yet I will raise a monument to the gods (71).

The adventure that Gilgamesh selects is quite promising: he proposes to travel to the land of the cedars. Unfortunately, this part of the poem is very poorly preserved in the Late Standard Edition, so we have to rely on alternate versions.

²⁷ Pascal, *Pensées* (Paris: Livre de poche, 1972) 66, 64. (*Pensées* 139, 131). "I have discovered that all the unhappiness of men comes from a single thing, that they do not know how to sit still in a room...Nothing is as unbearable to man as being completely at rest, without passion, without business, without distractions, without industry. He then feels his nothingness, his resignation, his insufficiency, his powerlessness, his emptiness. Immediately, from the depths of his soul come boredom, darkness, sadness, sorrow, spite, despair." My translation.

The journey to the forested hinterlands is an appropriate economic expedition for a city builder such as Gilgamesh, for hardwoods are a rare commodity on the Mesopotamian plain. Given Gilgamesh's concern with his own mortality, it is fitting to note that cedar is a wood that resists rot (Young 275). The adventure is also extremely suggestive from the perspective of the wild man and his refractions. The main danger the journey presents is not the journey itself or the logging of the wood, but confronting the guardian of the woods: Humbaba. Enkidu warns Gilgamesh about him:

'When I went with the wild beasts ranging through the wilderness I discovered the forest; its length is ten thousand leagues in every direction. Enlil has appointed Humbaba to guard it and armed him in sevenfold terrors, terrible to all flesh is Humbaba. When he roars it is like the torrent of the storm, his breath is like fire, and his jaws are death itself. He guards the cedars so well that when the wild heifer stirs in the forest, though she is sixty leagues distant, he hears her. What man would willingly walk into that country and explore its depths? I tell you, weakness overpowers whoever goes near it; it is not an equal struggle when one fights with Humbaba; he is a great warrior, a battering-ram. Gilgamesh, the watchman of the forest never sleeps' (73-4).

Enkidu response to Gilgamesh's proposal is to strike a note of caution. Enkidu once encountered Humbaba in his pre-civilized nomadic days, and remembers him well.

The wild-man intertext suggest to us another reason that Enkidu claims to have already seen Humbaba and to know him. Sandars identifies Humbaba's descendants: "This Humbaba is the perennial Monster Herdsman, like the ugly man with a club, whom Cynon met or the Green Knight of the northern romance; he is a divinity of wild nature who would not alter through centuries any more than the forests themselves..."²⁸ It is also possible that Enkidu "knows" the watchman of the forest because they share a common ancestor. Along with the sorcerer/god of the Trois Frères cave, Enkidu and Humbaba are embodiments of the archetypal Wild Man. Enkidu's recognition of Humbaba is an encounter with the Uncanny.

Humbaba is at once frightening, familiar, and strange. Freud's connection between the uncanny and the double, is pertinent.

²⁸ Sandars 34. Cynon is the hero of the late Welsh romance Mabinogion.

[T]he quality of uncanniness can only come from the fact of the 'double' being a creation dating back to a very early mental stage, long since surmounted--a stage, incidentally, at which it wore a more friendly aspect. The 'double' has become a thing of terror, just as, after the collapse of their religion, the gods turned into demons (236).

Humbaba is a perfect example of what happens to old gods: they change their size and often become evil. These giants must be overcome or outsmarted for the next, more diminutive, generation to succeed. For example, there are the giants Gog and Magog, who appear in the Bible as well as medieval British legend, and romances featuring Alexander the Great, who, in some reports, imprisoned them in the Caucasus.²⁹ In European folklore, they have become giants and ogres, such as the one who met Jack at the top of his beanstalk. Enkidu and Humbaba are both variations of the essential wild-man figure. At a very early stage in mythic time, they were closer than doubles, they were one. Humbaba's development followed the path of the ignoble savage.

Humbaba is even closer than Enkidu to the natural source of his powers. Humbaba's monstrous features are barely disguised natural forces, "his shout is the storm-flood, his mouth, fire, his breath is death" (Gardner / Maier 105). In contrast, Enkidu is built on a human scale, despite his super-human strength. Humbaba's vital connection with the earth makes him obsolete, and this obsolescence is equated with evil. Joseph Campbell elaborates Freud's comment about dethroned gods in a way that explains Humbaba's evolution into ignobility: "A god outgrown immediately becomes a life-destroying demon" (*Hero* 338n1). Enkidu and Gilgamesh believe the forest should belong to their god, the sun god Shamash: "Because of the evil that is in the land, we will go to the forest and destroy the evil; for in the forest lives Humbaba whose name is 'Hugeness,' a ferocious giant" (71). The feelings a dethroned god inspires depend on size. No single image conveys this more effectively than Goya's painting Cronus Devouring One of His Children. The horrors of cannibalism and infanticide are magnified by the huge discrepancy between the sizes of father and child. (See Figure 8.) In turn, these horrors

²⁹ "Gog and Magog," The Reader's Encyclopedia, ed. William Rose Benét (New York: Crowell, 1948). Mary Campbell, The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing 400-1600 (1991; Cornell: Cornell UP, 1988) 68.

help justify the rebellion of the new generation against the old gods, as the Olympians overthrew the Titans. Humbaba is massive, a formidable opponent in Enkidu's initial description. Other outgrown gods shrink, becoming brownies, dwarves, or gremlins which are generally mischievous and frightening rather than terrifying.

Even in this same passage, there is a hint of ambiguity about Humbaba's ignobility. When Enkidu observes that Humbaba is so sensitive to his duty that he knows when a heifer sixty leagues away is in danger, it seems to be an admirable trait rather than a sign of evil. Enkidu lost his own capacity for harmony with his animal companions when he spent those six days and seven nights with the temple-priestess. Before entering Uruk, he was a protector of both wild and domesticated animals, not so different from Humbaba.

The departure of Enkidu and Gilgamesh from Uruk to the Land of the Cedars is recounted in minute detail. For Leed, it is the locus classicus of all departures: "This departure contains the essence of all historical and observable departures" (29). No aspect of preparation is neglected. Sacrifices are made, armor obtained, and elders consulted. Each of these bases must be touched, for a departure is a rite of separation from both the comfort of home and the identity that home provides.

The most poignant of the departure ceremonies comes as Gilgamesh seeks the counsel of his mother Ninsun. In Leed's words: "Because every departure, no matter how routine and unexceptional, is part of a history of separations, each may echo the primal departure from the mother and from other significant figures..." (30). Ninsun responds to the significance of the journey with all due ceremony. The great queen puts on elaborate clothing and prays to Shamash to protect Gilgamesh, underscoring the divine impetus of his quest: "O Shamash, why did you give this restless heart to Gilgamesh, my son?" (74). Next, she performs an adoption ceremony for Enkidu.

'Strong Enkidu, you are not the child of my body, but I will receive you as my adopted son; you are my other child like the foundlings they bring to the temple. Serve Gilgamesh as a foundling serves the temple and the priestess who reared him. In the presence of my women, my votaries and hierophants, I declare it.' Then she placed the amulet for a pledge round his neck, and she said to him, 'I entrust my son to you; bring him back to me safely' (75).

This ceremony grants tremendous dignity to Enkidu's relationship with Gilgamesh. Their fraternity is holy and formal. Ninsun also guarantees protection and support for her son. Unlike his solo journey in the second half of the poem, this time Gilgamesh sets off as a king, with his social identity intact.³⁰

In comparison with the rituals of departure, the journey to the Humbaba's forest is uneventful. In three days they cover as much ground as would normally take six weeks. Then they reach the first threshold: "They crossed seven mountains before they came to the gate to the forest. Then Enkidu called out to Gilgamesh, 'Do not go down into the forest; when I opened the gate my hand lost its strength'" (76). Has Enkidu lost his liminal powers? Diminished by his entry battle at the gate in Uruk, here a second gate threatens his strength. Gilgamesh's solution shows how seriously he takes their partnership, as well his continuing concern with fame: "When two go together each will protect himself and shield his companion, and if they fall they leave an enduring name" (77).

After they enter the beautiful forest, much of the action takes place in dream-time. There are three dreams and three interpretations. For Sasson, this passage provides a marvelous example of the poem's skillful use of dramatic irony: "With almost cynical irony, however, the poet assigns Enkidu the task of *favorably* interpreting these visions of obviously calamitous portent" (270). While the heroes are encouraged by the promise of success, the audience anticipates disaster. Finally, Gilgamesh takes an ax to a cedar. Humbaba, more watchful than the hundred-eyed Argus of Greek legend, immediately makes his presence known.

When Humbaba heard the noise far off he was enraged; he cried out, 'Who is this that has violated my woods and cut down my cedar?' But glorious Shamash called to them out of heaven, 'Go forward, do not be afraid.' But now Gilgamesh was overcome by weakness, for sleep had seized him suddenly, a profound sleep held him; he lay on the ground, stretched out speechless, as though in a dream (79).

Like Enkidu in the palace and then at the gate to the forest, Gilgamesh is struck by weakness. This leitmotif of lassitude and sleep connects the two

³⁰ Leed 31. Young also stresses Enkidu's economic role as client, vassal, and subordinate to the king.

heroes, and serves throughout the poem to remind the reader of human frailty. Despite the cheerleading of Shamash, the ambivalence about Humbaba's role and the sense that there is something fundamentally improper about this undertaking persists.

Once again a ritual battle of entry takes place. We envision a small son challenging a huge and powerful father as Gilgamesh announces to Humbaba, "[M]y weak arms and my small weapons I have brought to this Land against you, and now I will enter your house" (82). Enkidu and Gilgamesh chop down seven cedars which correspond to Humbaba's seven glories, and with each felled tree, Humbaba's powers are diminished.

As the seventh blaze died out they reached his lair. He slapped his thigh in scorn. He approached like a noble wild bull roped on the mountain, a warrior whose elbows are bound together. The tears started to his eyes and he was pale, 'Gilgamesh, let me speak. I have never known a mother, no, nor a father who reared me. I was born of the mountain, he reared me, and Enlil made me the keeper of this forest. Let me go free, Gilgamesh, and I will be your servant, you shall be my lord; all the trees of the forest that I tended on the mountain shall be yours. I will cut them down and build you a palace' (82).

This passage contains several interesting elements. When the heroes finally reach him, Humbaba is no longer a frightening monster. His gesture of slapping his thigh in scorn reduces him to the stature of a normal man. The simile comparing him to a "noble wild bull" invokes the human-animal limen once again and recalls the repeated earlier comparisons of Gilgamesh and Enkidu to bulls.

The emphasis on uncanny resemblance between Humbaba and Enkidu is reinforced here, first by the emphasis of "noble and wild" in the simile. The second part of the simile recalls that, like Enkidu, Humbaba has been defeated by Gilgamesh in ritual confrontation: "a warrior whose elbows are bound together." Humbaba pleads extenuating circumstance: he is a mere orphan. Like Enkidu, he was not of woman born, but the child of nature and the gods. As the psychologist Claude Allard observes, "[T]he double is always the counterpart of a failed childhood (enfance manquée)."³¹ The parallel between the two wild man is extended by Humbaba's offer to become Gilgamesh's servant.

³¹ See page 30n14 above.

He would take on the role that Enkidu assumed when he lost his wrestling match with Gilgamesh. His offer would suit the purpose of Gilgamesh's heroic journey. The evil Humbaba admits defeat and pledges allegiance to his new lord. Gilgamesh successfully extends his fame and property to new lands. But that is not the way the story ends, and it is the parallel between Humbaba and Enkidu that makes this alternative ending impossible.

Gilgamesh is deeply moved by this appeal to his compassion, but he consults with his traveling companion: "O Enkidu, should not the snared bird return to the nest and the captive man return to his mother's arms?" (82). In this fascinating question Gilgamesh returns to the psychological underpinning of the rites of departure. It combines an animal metaphor with consideration of the powerful mother-child bond. By posing the question, Gilgamesh proposes to complete the ritual model. He would heal the wounds of departure with its rites of separation by returning the snared bird or the captive man to their homes, performing rites of aggregation.

There are several reasons for Enkidu to object, as he does in unequivocal terms, calling for Humbaba's death:

'The strongest of men will fall to fate if he has no judgment. Namtar, the evil fate that knows no distinction between men, will devour him. If that snared bird returns to its nest, if the captive man returns to his mother's arms, then you my friend will never return to the city where the mother is waiting who gave you birth. He will bar the mountain road against you, and make the pathways impassable' (82-83).

Enkidu uses Gilgamesh's own metaphor in argument against him. If he frees Humbaba, figuratively reuniting the mother bird and the captive man with their respective families, then Gilgamesh will never be restored to his own mother, a task Enkidu was solemnly sworn to accomplish. Enkidu has some support from the rites-of-passage model. The purpose of the rite of passage is not to return the initiate to a pre-separation state, but to prepare him or her for a new role. For the liminal phase to be successful, the initiate must undergo change. In the circular model of the heroic journey, the hero returns to his point of departure, the maternal nest or metropolis, but he returns changed and wiser with a gift for his people. This will be the pattern Gilgamesh observes in second half of poem. On one level his journey is a failure. He fails the sleep test and forfeits his personal chance at immortality. Then he loses the magic plant that was to bring the gift of rejuvenation to his

people. Yet, he is transformed by these failures. He becomes resigned to Enkidu's death and his own mortality. He finally returns to Uruk a wiser king. It is not a simple matter of returning home safe and sound.

Enkidu's argument is also based on his experience as a wild man. Enkidu has already been caught up in the civilizing process. He knows its rule first hand. Like the bird in Gilgamesh's analogy, Enkidu was himself snared at the waterhole by the temple priestess. Once caught, he could not return to his pre-civilized state, for the gazelles would not have him. His education further severed him from that bond with nature which Humbaba represents.

It is instructive to compare this scene with another from a distant layer in the wild-man palimpsest. In the *Faerie Queene* of Edmund Spenser, there is a wild man named Sir Satyrane, a half satyr-half knight as his name suggests, who takes over defense of Lady Una when she has been abandoned by the hero of Book I, the Red Crosse Knight, Saint George of England. Satyrane is born when the "myld and faire" Lady Thyamis (desire in Greek), gets lost wandering in the woods after her husband Therion (wild beast in Greek), who prefers hunting to her company. Thyamis is captured by a lusty satyr:

So long in secret cabin there he held
Her captiue to his sensuall desire,
Till that with timely fruit her belly sweld,
And bore a boy vnto that saluage sire:
Then home he suffred her for to retire,
For ransome leauing him the late borne childe;
Whom till to ryper yeares he gan aspire,
He nourseled vp in life and manner wilde,
Emongst wild beasts and woods, from lawes and men exilde.

For all he taught the tender ymp, was but
To banish cowardize and bastard feare,
His trembling hand he would him force to put
Vpon the Lyon and rugged Beare,
And from the she Beares teats her whelps to teare;
And eke wyld roring Bulls he would him make
To tame, and ryde their backes no made to beare;
And the Robuckles in flight to ouertake.
That euery beast for feare of him did fly and quake. (I.vi.23, 4)³²

³² (I.vi.23, 24) All citations from the *Faerie Queene* are from *Spenser: Poetical Works*, eds. J.C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (1912; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979). Book, canto, stanza, and line numbers will be noted in the text.

Enkidu and Satyrane are outstanding wild men because we get such details of their birth and upbringing. This degree of detail makes sense when we consider the role of education in the wild-man intertext. Sasson contends that the popularity of the stories of Gilgamesh and the reason why the epic was written is that it is a "*paedeia*, an education of a king to his humanity...if not in how to behave, certainly in how not to behave among equals" (279). This is quite similar to Spenser's explanation of his intentions in writing the *Faerie Queene*: "The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline."³³ The upbringing of wild men and heroes has notable parallels, and is part of this same concern with education and proper behavior.

One of the prerequisites for wild-man status is parentage which crosses divine/human/animal boundaries. This was the case with Satyrane (Satyr and a gentle woman) and Enkidu (clay and Goddess Aruru) as well as Humbaba (mountain). The first phase of the wild man's education takes place in the wilderness. The teacher may be a wild-man hybrid, such as the Satyr here or Chiron, the centaur tutor to many Greek heroes including Achilles. Or the wild man may be raised by wild animals, such as Romulus and Remus; compare the allusion to Enkidu as knowing only how to suckle the milk of wild sheep. In any case, the relationship with parents is consistently problematic. Both Enkidu and Humbaba are orphans, and Satyrane is separated from his mother soon after birth. It is no accident that this motif of mother-infant separation comes up in Gilgamesh's analogy and Satyrane's lessons from the Satyr.

Although Satyrane's mixed parentage give him wild-man status from birth, he has to learn to be fierce and fearless. The Satyr uses wild animals to teach these lessons. Satyrane is forced to touch and tame lion, bear, and bulls. In a later verse, he has to place panthers, boars, tigers, antelopes, and wolves in iron yokes, suggesting the lion-drawn chariot of the Phrygian goddess Cybele. In a reenaction of Satyrane's own loss of his mother, the Satyr requires him to tear bear cubs from their mother's teats. This lesson bears a manifest similarity to current theories of child abuse which suggest that violence is a result of subconscious compulsion to reenact the abuser's own experience of

³³ Spenser: Poetical Works 407. From the Letter of the Authors to Sir Walter Raleigh.

abuse as a child.³⁴ The result of these lessons exceeds even the Satyr's expectations. The beasts "fly and quake" at Satyrane's approach, and eventually it becomes second nature to him: "Such ioy he had, their stubborn hearts to quell...That his behest they feared, as a tyrans law" (Liv.26.7,9).

This process of education recalls Enkidu's transformation from releaser of the animals to guardian of the shepherds, enemy of the predators. In both cases, the process by which a wild man becomes domesticated involves domesticating wild animals. In both cases, the wild man's education is completed by a female figure. Enkidu is brought to the city by the temple courtesan, and Satyrane's mother returns to the forest to tell him of the world of knights and ladies where he will seek his fame and knighthood. One result of this education in the wild is the sort of harsh code of justice frequently associated with wild men figures. In Satyrane's case, it is called "tyrans law." In Greek mythology, this sort of automated justice was enacted by a giant man of brass, Talos, who was created by Hephaestus as the guardian of Crete. This giant reappears in Book V of the Faerie Queene as Talus, the iron man equipped with an invincible iron flail, which never fails to seek out the truth. Talus serves as the groom to Artegall, the Salvage Knight and Champion of Justice. Like Gilgamesh, Artegall must learn to choose between harsh and compassionate codes of justice.

It is ironic that Enkidu was brought to Uruk in order to deliver its citizens from Gilgamesh's tyranny. Here he is the advocate of "tyrans law" while Gilgamesh considers Humbaba's appeal for compassion. Humbaba responds to Enkidu's comments with an ad hominem argument: "Enkidu, what you have spoken is evil: you, a hireling, dependent for your bread! In envy and for fear of a rival you have spoken evil words" (83). Humbaba recognizes the parallels between himself and Enkidu: they are doubles and rivals for the king's favors. If Humbaba's goal is to persuade Gilgamesh, however, the attack on Enkidu and the accusation of evil intentions actually harm his cause. The journey to the cedar forest was originally undertaken to eradicate the evil personified by Humbaba and claim the forest for Shamash.

Enkidu pretends to ignore Humbaba's attack and urges Gilgamesh to do the same. His severity carries the day, "Do not listen, Gilgamesh: this

³⁴ See, for example, Alice Miller, For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-rearing and the Roots of Violence, trans. Hildegarde and Hunter Hannum, 2nd ed. (New York: Farrar, 1984).

Humbaba must die. Kill Humbaba first and his servants after" (83). At first Gilgamesh objects that Humbaba's powers won't pose any threat after he is dead. Enkidu elaborates the snared bird metaphor in his response: "First entrap the bird, and where shall the chicks run then? Afterwards we can search out the glory and the glamour, when the chicks run distracted through the grass" (83). Humbaba's fate is sealed. The impact of his death resounds though the forest for miles around, just as his voice used to do.

At the third blow Humbaba fell. Then there followed confusion for this was the guardian of the forest whom they had felled to the ground. For as far as two leagues the cedars shivered when Enkidu felled the watcher of the forest, he at whose voice Hermon and Lebanon used to tremble. Now the mountains were moved and all the hills, for the guardian of the forest was killed (83).

The entire ecosystem is in a state of confusion—trees shiver, hills and mountains move. The devastation is of monumental proportions: "They uncovered the sacred dwellings of the Anunnaki and while Gilgamesh felled the first of the trees of the forest Enkidu cleared their roots as far as the banks of Euphrates" (83). A suspicion arises. Haven't the heroes exceeded the aims of their mission? Was the death of Humbaba really necessary? Wouldn't his demotion to Gilgamesh's forest ranger have sufficed? Is this vast deforestation what Shamash intended or is it some sort of trick?

For if Enkidu and Humbaba are doubles, as both recognized, the order to execute Humbaba will eventually become Enkidu's own death warrant. There is, however, a subtle but significant difference between the doubling of Gilgamesh and Enkidu and the doubling of Humbaba and Enkidu. Gilgamesh and Enkidu are a complementary yin/yang pair, as the repeated comparisons to the male/female relationship underscore. Sasson offers intertextual comparisons with other literary friendships: Roland and Oliver or Sancho Panza and Don Quixote (267, 271). Enkidu and Humbaba have a different sort of relationship. It is uncanny, not complementary. They are refractions of the same figure, and what happens to one, will happen eventually to the other. In dooming Humbaba, Enkidu has set his own fate in motion. Humbaba's death is related to and perhaps even a consequence of what happened to Enkidu at the waterhole. In other words, if civilization requires the death of nature to progress, at what point does this progress become fatal to nature and

eventually to civilization as well? For the moment, Enkidu and Gilgamesh see only victory. They return to Uruk triumphant.

Ishtar and the Bull of Heaven

At the beginning of Tablet VI, Gilgamesh performs the rites of purification which mark his return and reincorporation in the city. He puts the violence of Humbaba's destruction behind him as he cleans his hair and discards his warrior clothing for ceremonial garb. He reasserts his kingly role. His renewed appearance has a stunning effect on the goddess Ishtar.

He washed out his grimy hair and cleaned his straps;
he shook out the braid of hair against his back;
he threw off his filthy clothes and put on clean ones;
he covered himself with a cloak, fastened the sash;
Gilgamesh put on his crown.

To Gilgamesh's beauty great Ishtar lifted her eyes.

'Come Gilgamesh, be my lover!

Give me the taste of your body.

Would that you were my husband, and I were your wife!

(VI.i.1-8; 48)³⁵

Gilgamesh's appearance and his sexual attractiveness spark a most sensual marriage proposal from Ishtar, the goddess of fertility. Such a marriage is also part of Gilgamesh's social identity as king. After his successful adventure to the Cedar Forest, he is even more worthy to be Ishtar's consort in the ritual Sacred Marriage. There were allusions to this ritual in the seduction of Enkidu, Gilgamesh's counterpart, by Ishtar's temple-priestess and in the gate scene where Enkidu and Gilgamesh first met. Now the bride is tired of waiting. Ishtar desires satisfaction.

Gilgamesh's response is most unexpected. Like the account of the flood in the second part, this lengthy passage has its own coherence and bears the hallmarks of a set piece which was intertextually appropriated for the purposes of the poem. Unlike the flood story, this creative and daring speech bears directly on our liminal themes.

It is framed in three parts. For the moment the focus is off Enkidu, but thematically he is still present. First, in a series of questions, Gilgamesh dis-

³⁵ Unless noted, all further citations from the poem will be from the Gardner / Maier edition.

tances himself from the goddess and compares himself to the priestess who seduced Enkidu by recalling gifts she gave him. "What could I give you if I should take you as a wife? / Would I give you bread and victuals?—/ you who eat food of the gods,/ you who drink wine fit for royalty?" (148).

He dispenses with this posture of the humble, inferior mortal in the two remaining segments of his speech. In the second part he compares the goddess to a series of nine everyday objects. As if it were not sufficiently insulting to compare the Great Goddess with such commonplace items, Gilgamesh specifies that each one is faulty in some fundamental way: "You're a cooking fire that goes out in the cold,/ a back door that keeps out neither wind nor storm...a shoe that bites the owner's foot!" (149). What a statement to make about human-divine relationships! This is a far cry from the harmony suggested when Enkidu was created: when men have a problem, the gods design the perfect solution. Although it hardly seems possible, the final segment of Gilgamesh's rejection of Ishtar is even more insulting. Moreover, it pertains most specifically to liminality.

The continuum of wild man images ranges from figures which are fully animal to those which appear fully human. A character such as Enkidu occupies the middle of the continuum as befits his role as a mediator maintaining animal and human aspects simultaneously. Humbaba is another example from the middle of continuum, as a forest and mountain god who has taken human form. Change also plays an important role in literary accounts of the continuum. We have already seen this in the case of Enkidu who was first humanized then urbanized. Similarly, Humbaba was shrunk from mountain and tree size to a human stature so that he could be killed by Gilgamesh and Enkidu. The following passage about the fate of Ishtar's former lovers outlines the possibilities of even more extreme changes. Gilgamesh's final reason for rejecting Ishtar is that accepting her offer might prove fatal or worse.

'Which of your lovers have you loved forever?
 Which of your little shepherds has continued to please you?
 Come let me name your lovers for you?...
 For Tammuz, the lover of your youth.
 Year after year you set up a wailing for him...
 You loved a shepherd, a herdsman,
 who endlessly put up cakes for you
 and every day slaughtered kids for you.

You struck him, turned him into a wolf.
 His own boys drove him away,
 and his dogs tore his hides to bits.

You also loved Ishullanu, your father's gardener,
 who endlessly brought you baskets of dates
 and every day made the table jubilant.
 You lifted your eyes to him and went to him:
 'My Ishullanu, let us take pleasure in your strength.
 Reach out your hand and touch my vulva!'
 Ishullanu said to you,
 'What do you want from me?
 Mother, if you don't cook, I don't eat.
 Should I eat the bread of bad faith, the food of curses?
 Should I be covered with rushes against the cold?'
 You heard his answer.
 You struck him, tuned him into a frog.
 You set him to dwell in the middle of the garden,
 where he can move neither upward nor downward.

So you'd love me in my turn and, as with them, set my fate.'

(VI.i.42-44; ii.45-79; 149, 152-3)

This portion of Gilgamesh's answer to Ishtar's proposal is long and detailed. It shows intertextual sophistication. It may even be seen as a miniature version of poem itself, a carefully crafted mosaic of examples from extant legends, and perhaps, literary works.

Although I have only included Ishtar's principal victims in this excerpt, Gardner and Maeir note the order of the complete series of her lovers. The arrangement is reminiscent of our wild-man continuum:

The list of Ishtar's lovers begins with the divine lover (a mortal raised to divine status through Ishtar), Tammuz, the very paradigm of the sacred marriage. Then the list moves from animals in the wild to domesticated animals, from an unnamed shepherd to the most detailed example, Ishullanu, the gardener, the case most like Gilgamesh's own. In each case, the "fate" of the creature is set by Ishtar (154n46-79).

The list of Ishtar's lovers crosses every imaginable boundary line, reinforcing the idea of continuity between the human, divine, and animal spheres. Ishtar's lovers not only include members of each group, but are moved from one sphere to another as consequence of her attentions.

The first example which Gilgamesh mentions is Tammuz, whose name is linked with Ishtar's in an ancient tradition which resurfaces throughout the wild man intertext. According to Gardner and Maier, Tammuz is probably "the most famous and widespread of the Mesopotamian gods in literature and ritual" (154-46.) In Sumerian, his name was Damuzi and he was associated with Ishtar-Innana's descent into the underworld. In documentary evidence from the twentieth century BCE, Sumerian kings identified themselves with Damuzi as part of the royal ritual of the Sacred Marriage ceremony (Furlong 20). As Tammuz, son of Ningishsida, "Lord of the Wood of Life," this figure is regarded, along with Attis and Dionysus, as one of the earliest examples of the Green-Man archetype (Anderson 35). Tammuz is a vegetation and fertility god, whose annual death at harvest time was honored by widespread lamentation, wailing, and flute music, especially by women. His cult was so widespread that it is mentioned in the Bible (Ezekiel 8.14) and continued to be practiced until the tenth century CE in the Middle East (Furlong 21).

Between Tammuz and the unnamed shepherd, Ishtar's lovers include the shepherd bird (allallu), a lion, and a stallion: "It is most important not to divide the world of the gods from the world of nature" (155n57). The final two lovers, the shepherd and Ishullanu, feature the theme of metamorphosis as an illustration of change within the wild-man intertext. In contrast with the experience of Enkidu, where a wild man became human through the mediation of a woman, here a wild woman, the female embodiment of the divine power inherent in nature, transforms human beings into wild animals.

First, consider the shepherd who is changed into a wolf. A shepherd is an intermediary between civilization and the wilderness. In Enkidu's journey to Uruk, a pastoral community was the stopping point where Enkidu learned to eat bread, drink wine, and dress like a human being. Perhaps he also learned his first religious rituals there, such as those which the shepherd performs here in Ishtar's honor. The shepherd's gift of cakes and kids is reminiscent of Gilgamesh's sacrifice to Shamash before setting off to conquer Humbaba. The equivocal result of that adventure is underscored by the disaster that befalls the shepherd here. The shepherd performs his duty to the goddess, and in recompense, is transformed into his own enemy: a wolf. When Enkidu stayed with shepherds, he killed such predators. Here the shepherd is chased away by his own boys and attacked by his own hounds.

How do we explain this? Intratextually, the transformation of the shepherd into his own enemy, a wolf, recalls the uncanny interaction between Enkidu and Humbaba, where murder is really suicide. In this light, the shepherd's metamorphosis may be a variation on the theme of mistaken identity, which Young associates with the Humbaba episode as well as the painting of the shaman and bison in the Lascaux cave (277). Perhaps this shepherd has been hunting wolves in order to protect his flock. His fate makes more sense when we compare him with the two Greek heroes whose stories offer the closest parallels: Actaeon and Adonis. In all three stories, there are the linked motifs of a powerful goddess and a human who falls victim as prey. These motifs create significant and recurring patterns in the wild-man palimpsest.

The first illustration is the story of Diana and Actaeon, best known to us from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Actaeon is a hunter who gets lost in the woods and happens to stumble upon Diana and her nymphs bathing in a secluded pool. Diana is the noblest of savage figures in Greek and Roman mythology as the goddess of the hunt, the protectress of the wilderness and wild animals. Her anger at Actaeon for invading her privacy is implacable. Her arrows are not at hand, so she splashes water in his face:

'Now if you can speak, you can make it known that you have seen me without my robe.' And without further threats, she caused his water-sprinkled head to grow the horns of a vigorous stag. She caused his neck to stretch out and gave him pointed ears, and feet instead of hands, and changed his arms into long legs and enveloped his body in a spotted hide...³⁶

Actaeon intended to hunt a stag, not a goddess. For his error he is transformed from hunter into prey. Actaeon's horn-covered head reminds us of the cervid-headed wild man of the Trois Frères caves or the god Cernunnos. His death at the teeth of his own hounds echoes the fate of Ishtar's unlucky shepherd, and his piety seems equally misbegotten:

And while they held their master back, the rest of the pack comes together and sink their teeth into his body until no spot lacks a wound. He groans and makes a sound which, although not human is not a sound a deer could make. He fills the well-

³⁶ My translation from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, III, 192-97.

known mountain heights with sorrowful cries and stooping forward, as a suppliant, as though entreating, he turns his silent face and arms... And, as they say, not until his life was ended by many wounds was the anger of quiver-bearing Diana appeased.³⁷

This version of the Actaeon story emphasizes the liminal qualities of the dying man-beast's voice. It is neither a human nor deer's voice, and it resounds through the valleys like Humbaba's death cry. Actaeon's vivisection by his own hounds is truly a savage punishment. It is well within the tradition of harsh wild-man justice, and clearly stands as a warning to other mortals to show proper respect for areas favored by the gods. This story is also a favorite mythological subject for paintings. Instead of evoking sound, visual representations of Actaeon illustrate his liminality by showing his transformation in progress. He is frequently represented as a stag with a human, horn-covered head. (See Figure 12.)

The second story suggested by the fate of Ishtar's shepherd and the related complex of themes is the story of Venus and Adonis. The intertextuality of this story is complex. Here we follow Shakespeare's version of the myth from Ovid. Ironically, the story of Venus and Adonis has its origins with Tammuz, the hero who was the starting point for Gilgamesh's rejection of the goddess Ishtar. When the story of Ishtar and Tammuz reached Phoenicia, it became the story of Astarte and a vegetation god named Eshmun, and included a boar. Tammuz was referred to in Semitic as Adon or "Lord." Greek and Roman versions of the story use the name Adonis.

The parallels between Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis and Gilgamesh's rejection of Ishtar are striking. Adonis is the unwilling recipient of the attentions of the goddess of love. Like Therion, the absent husband of Lady Thyamis, Satyrane's mother, he would much rather hunt than make

³⁷ My translation from Ovid's Metamorphoses, III, 235-241, 251-52.



Figure 12. Images of Actaeon.

Top: Actaeon transformed into a stag. Copperplate. Museum Hermeticum. Rpt. in Hans Biedermier, Dictionary of Symbols, (New York: Facts on File, 1992) 3. Bottom: Italian dish with Diana and Actaeon. Rpt. in Encyclopedia of World Mythology (New York: Galahad, 1975) 225.

love: "Hunting he loved, but love he laughed to scorn" (4).³⁸ If Venus comes after him like a predatory eagle (55-61), Adonis is compared to a snared bird, like Enkidu and Humbaba: "Look how a bird lies tangled in a net,/ So fastn'd in her arms Adonis lies" (67-8). Venus is sure that it is not her desirability which is in question. The fault must be with Adonis. She casts doubts upon his parentage: "Art thou a woman's son, and canst not feel/ What 'tis to love, how want of love tormenteth?/ O, had thy mother borne so hard a mind,/ She had not brought forth thee, but died unkind" (201-204).

With sexual imagery nearly as overt as Ishtar's, Venus urges Adonis to take on Actaeon's role and become a deer:

'I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer;
Feed where thou wilt on mountain or in dale;
Graze on my lips; and if those hills be dry,
Stray lower where the pleasant fountains lie.'

'Within this limit is relief enough,
Sweet bottom-grass, and high delightful plain,
Round rising hillocks, brakes obscure and rough,
To shelter thee from tempest and from rain.

Then be my deer, since I am such a park.
No dog shall rouse thee, though a thousand bark.' (231-240)

Although Adonis rejects the chance to play Actaeon, his fate is not unlike that of the unlucky hunter. Venus foresees his death (661-66). She urges him to hunt hare, fox, or roe (674-6) rather than the dangerous boar, but Actaeon remains unconvinced. He would still rather hunt than make love.

He sets off, as planned, the following morning. Venus finds him, her worst fears confirmed. Adonis lies dead from a wound inflicted by the boar's sharp tusk.

' 'Tis true, 'tis true! thus was Adonis slain:
He ran upon the boar with his sharp spear,
Who did not whet his teeth at him again,
But by a kiss thought to persuade him there;
And nuzzling in his flank, the loving swine
Sheathed unaware the tusk in his soft groin.

³⁸ Shakespeare, "Venus and Adonis," in The Narrative Poems, eds. Richard Wilbur and Alfred Harbage, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin, 1974). All selections are from this edition. Line numbers will be noted in the text.

Had I been toothed like him, I must confess,
 With kissing him I should have killed him first;
 But he is dead, and never did he bless
 My youth with his—the more am I accursed.' (1111-1120)

Here Shakespeare manipulates motifs as old as the caves of Lascaux. The boar's tusks are equated with Adonis' spear. The two combatants exchanged pointed blows. The parallel between the hunt and sexual intercourse operates two levels: human-animal and human-divine. Venus compares the boar's tusk goring Adonis' thigh to a nuzzling kiss, equating the boar's sheathed tusk to a human penis and Adonis' male thigh to the vagina. Clearly we are embroiled in mistaken identities here: there is confusion between the human and animal worlds, and between male and female as well. The goddess of love admits the predatory parallel when she notes that if she had teeth like the boar's, her kiss would have been fatal as well.

The metamorphosis of Adonis is complete when a purple flower, the anemone in Ovidian tradition, springs from his bloodstained body. Like his ancestor Tammuz, Adonis represents the perennial resurrection of the plant world. Venus kills the flower as she plucks it from the ground and takes it with her to her retreat in Paphos, promising to kiss it every minute, night and day. She is no more restrained in her grief than she was when pursuing her reluctant lover. Like Adonis in Shakespeare's version of the myth, Gilgamesh will not escape Ishtar in the end.

The final example in Gilgamesh's catalog is given the most detail in the poem, but much of it remains obscure. This lover is named, and his parallels with Gilgamesh are the most obvious. Like Gilgamesh and Adonis, he is propositioned by the goddess in most explicit terms. The references to mother, death, and bread are difficult to understand, and may be clues to a missing intertext. The significance of Ishullanu being a gardener is easier to understand, for the garden, as locus amoenus, represents perfect mediation between civilization and wilderness. The garden represents man's artful and fruitful manipulation of nature, symbolized here by the baskets of dates Ishullanu brings to Ishtar and her father. A garden is where Spenser sets his version of the Venus and Adonis story in Book III of the Faerie Queene.

Spenser depicts an earthly paradise, complete with double walls, double gates, and a liminal porter, the gatekeeper Genius: "the which a double nature has" (III.vi.31.9). All living creatures pass through these gates. This "Gardin of

"Adonis" is a nursery where "infinite shapes of creatures...are bred" (III.vi.35.1). Matter is always conserved, only the forms change. When any individual completes its natural term outside the garden, it returns to be restored: "The substance is not chaunged, nor altered,/ But th'only forme and outward fashion; For every substance is conditioned/ To change her hew, and sundry formes to don..." (III.vi.38.1-4).

This is the spot where Venus has hidden Adonis to protect him from wicked Time and the Stygian gods. Here the two lovers find endless mutual pleasure: "There now he liueth in eternall blis, Ioying his goddesse, and of her enjoyed..." (III.vi.48). This vision of sexual harmony is utterly different from the Shakespearean burlesque or the vicious indictment of Ishtar. This Gardin of Adonis is part Spenser's Legend of Chastitie, where chastity is defined expansively enough to include a sexual relationship like the Mesopotamian Sacred Marriage ritual which reflects the eternal natural cycle. Adonis himself is the central image where certain themes common to the Faerie Queene and the Epic of Gilgamesh come together: mortality, immortality, diversity and change.

And sooth it seemes they say: for he may not
 For euer die, and euer buried be
 In balefull night where all things are forgot;
 All be he subject to mortalitie,
 Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,
 And by succession made perpetuall,
 Transformed oft, and changed diuerslie:
 For him the Father of all formes they call;

Therefore he needs mote he liue, that liuing giues to all. (III.vi.47)

This representation of Adonis is as close to the archetypal Wild Man as Renaissance literature provides. It is fitting, given Adonis' extensive history, stretching back to the earliest days of recorded time. Here his role as a symbol of fertility, which he took over from the female goddess, is most fully realized. He is the generative source of a tremendous variety of forms, not only the vast array of wild man images aligned on our continuum, but of all things. Awe of his power finds its echo in modern scientific writing. Edward O. Wilson seems to invoke Adonis, the Father of all Forms, when he writes

in The Diversity of Life: "The most wonderful mystery of life may well be the means by which it created so much diversity from so little matter."³⁹

The fate of Ishullanu is pitiful in comparison. It is not even clear exactly what insignificant beast he becomes. For Sandars he is transformed into a "blind mole deep in the earth" (87); for Gardner and Maier, a frog. Whatever animal he becomes, the most significant part of the transformation is that he is trapped: "You set him to dwell in the middle of the garden,/ where he can move neither upward nor downward." Ishullanu's immobility is permanent, and he joins the ranks of snared and temporarily rooted characters: Enkidu at the waterhole, Humbaba as the captured bird and slave, and Shakespeare's Adonis. Immobility is a dreadful fate for a living being whose natural inclination is to move. As Pascal describes it, "Notre nature est dans le mouvement, le repos entier est la mort."⁴⁰

This final section of Gilgamesh's elaborate refusal of Ishtar's proposal is a selection of variations on the themes associated with the wild man. The boundaries separating the human, divine, and animal spheres are repeatedly transgressed. The connecting motifs are divine punishment and transformation. The fate of those punished by the gods is death or life as a wild man or a wild creature. The parallels in Western literature are numerous. In the case of Nebuchadnezzar, madness is the God's punishment for pride and blasphemy. In later secular Western literature, as here, the hero is often driven wild or mad because of love: examples include Merlin, Yvain, Spenser's Timias, and Don Quixote. This section also foreshadows Gilgamesh's transformation into a wild man in the second half of the poem, for this rejection of Ishtar is one of the contributing factors to his self-imposed exile.

After such a detailed condemnation of Ishtar's past behavior, we wonder why Gilgamesh doesn't anticipate the violence of her reaction. Doesn't he know he will suffer mightily for this rejection? Dramatic irony helps the reader predict disaster, even if Gilgamesh doesn't. Ishtar goes straight to Anu, the father, and gives him a choice: either make a Bull of Heaven to sent down to Uruk or I will "smash in the gates of the netherworld" (156). Once again, Ishtar invokes her power to transgress the

³⁹ Edward Wilson, The Diversity of Life, (Cambridge MA: Belknap, 1992) 35.

⁴⁰Pascal 64. Pensée 129: "Our nature is in movement, complete rest is death." My translation.

conventional boundaries. She would destroy the threshold which keeps living and dead safely apart. She threatens to let the dead take over Uruk, invoking a Mesopotamian version of ignobly savage ghouls, cannibal zombies. She promises that "they will devour the living..."(156).

As in the case of Humbaba, the accuracy of Gilgamesh's complaints against Ishtar doesn't protect him. In fact, the impolitic nature of the accusations ensures that the punishment will be harsh. Like Enkidu over Humbaba, Ishtar has power and uses it. The Bull of Heaven is dispatched to Uruk, where it wreaks great havoc. Hundred of men fall in to the gaping holes created when the bull snorts. These earth-shattering sounds echo the sonic boom of Humbaba's fall. Freshly triumphant, Gilgamesh and Enkidu respond to the challenge.

At the third snorting a hole opened before Enkidu.
Enkidu fell upon him.
Enkidu leaped up, seized the Bull of Heaven, took hold of his
horns.
The Bull of Heaven threw spittle in Enkidu's face;
he threw excrement on him... 133

And Gilgamesh, like a matador... 150
mighty and...
struck [with his sword] in the neck [behind the horns].

After they had killed the Bull they tore out his heart.
They set it before Shamash.
They withdrew and worshipped Shamash.
They sat down, blood-brothers, the two of them.

(VI.iv.129-133, v.150-156; 159, 161)

Ishtar's Bull of Heaven has met his match in Shamash's two-man team of blood-brothers. Intratextually, it is a recreation of the conflict with Humbaba: as a pair, these heroes are ruthless and fatal. Gilgamesh and Enkidu turn the slaughter of the Bull of Heaven into another divinely endorsed mission, by dedicating it as a sacrifice to Shamash.

The encounter between a bull and these heroes also has intertextual ramifications. The detail of Enkidu grasping the Bull's horns recalls the Cretan bull-vaulting games, which have their echoes in the story of Theseus and the Minotaur. A more contemporary note is sounded by Gardner and Maier's use of "matador." It evokes the danger of the encounter between a man and this powerful animal. The matador's successful domination of the

bull gives him great standing in cultures where this is the essence of admirable masculine traits. Consider the victorious matador in Merimée's *Carmen*, who replaces the faithful soldier, Don José, as the object of the gypsy's affections. Although Carmen might have served well as one of Ishtar's votaries, she is a mortal creature. Unlike the Great Goddess, Carmen pays for her romantic inconstancy by death. In contrast, Ishtar bides her time while the Bull ravages Uruk and is killed. Then her voice is heard.

Ishtar went up on the walls of Uruk of the Sheepfold.
Disguised as a mourner she let loose a curse:
'Curse Gilgamesh, who has besmeared me, killing the Bull of Heaven!'

When Enkidu heard this, the words of Ishtar,
he tore out the thigh of the bull and threw it in her face.
'If I could reach you, as I can him,
it would have been done to you:
I'd hang his guts around your arm!'

Ishtar called together the hair-curled high priestesses,
the love-priestesses and the temple whores,
and over the thigh of the Bull of Heaven she set up a wailing.

(VI.v.157-167; 161)

Enkidu's reaction to Ishtar's curse mirrors Gilgamesh's speech to the goddess. While Gilgamesh's polished civility (left brain) was displayed in his clever composition, Enkidu still behaves like a wild man (right brain), and his insult is physically graphic. Gardner and Maier insist on the parallel between Enkidu's action and Gilgamesh's words: "In both cases, they are shocking, unparalleled violation of human/divine disparity" (163n161).

To get her revenge, Ishtar has come down to earth and disguised herself as a human mourner. The theme of mourning evokes the cult of Tammuz. It also reminds us that each boundary line has two sides, and that what is a triumph for one person is a defeat for another. Murder, even under divine auspices, is not to be taken casually. Humbaba's death was mourned by the trees, hills, and mountains. The bull is also worthy of being mourned. In *The Origins of the Sacred*, Young argues that the "rites and energies of lamentation, essentially *yin*-feminine, seek to monitor, attenuate, criticize, dampen, subvert, forgive and redeem the hunting ecstasy..." (228). He goes on to link

lamentation with the notion of sacrifice in terms prophetic for Gilgamesh's fate:

[T]he critical moment in the sacrificial process comes...when the wounded or guilty or bereaved hunter (or sexual warrior) stops to listen for the sound of lamentation. If he truly hears it, his killing rage will be contained, and he will be moved by the same sacrificial energies to repair or redeem what he has inappropriately damaged. If not, he will stop up his ears, sequester his tenderness, and try to repair the damage by doing some more (229).

Gilgamesh is not yet ready to lament. The only mourning voice that reaches him in the poem is his own. Enkidu will have to be sacrificed to atone for the wounds the heroes have inflicted on the earth and the gods. Despite their momentary triumph and the support of Shamash, the heroes' violence is not allowed to stand unpunished. Gilgamesh ultimately accepts Ishtar's offer at the close of the poem, when his mourning and transformation are completed and he returns to Uruk. Meanwhile, the price of recent adventures must be paid.

3. The Death of Enkidu

What looked like the progress of civilization, the harvesting of forests and the sacrifice of the destructive Bull of Heaven, proves to be something else as well. This "something else" proves that any analysis of the poem in terms of a simple opposition between nature and culture is insufficient. Instead, the poem offers a sophisticated examination of the price we pay for civilized life. Enkidu knows something is wrong when he has a dream where the gods are in council. Justice is the topic of discussion and this time it is Enkidu who receives the death penalty.

'Because they have slain the Bull of Heaven, and Huwawa
they have slain, for that reason'--said Anu--'the one of them
who stripped the mountain of its cedar [must die].'

But Enlil said: 'Enkidu must die.'

Gilgamesh shall not die.'

Then heavenly Shamash answered mighty Enlil:

'Was it not by my order

that they killed the Bull of Heaven and Huwawa? Should
now innocent

Enkidu die?' But Enlil turned

in anger toward heavenly Shamash. 'Because, much like one of their comrades, you went down to them daily.'⁴¹

As Shamash's outcry reveals, innocence and guilt are not clear cut even to the gods. What pleases one god may displease another, and that displeasure may well prove fatal for mortal beings. For once, Enkidu and Gilgamesh have no trouble interpreting this dream accurately. The effects of the dream are felt instantly, and the mourning process begins: "Enkidu lay down [sick] before Gilgamesh./ Tears streaming down, [Gilgamesh] said:/ "My brother, my dear brother! They would set me free/ at the cost of my brother!"(168). There is no protest about divine injustice. Enkidu reexamines the nature/culture continuum as he retraces the path that led him to his death bed. These meditations take the form of three curses, and lead inexorably back to the decisive step when his harmony with the natural world was disturbed.

Enkidu's first curse takes the form of a prosopopoeia, a first person address to an inanimate object. The object in question could not be more liminal: it is a door or gate. There is no agreement as to exactly which door Enkidu addresses, but it is not crucial to know whether it was the entry gate to Uruk or the gate in the cedar forest which paralyzed his hands, or even a door in Uruk made from that cedar wood. It is essential that he recognizes that liminal transitions have brought him to his present state: "Had I known, door, that it would come to this..." (170).

The next two curses are more conventional. They are directed against the Stalker and the temple prostitute, the two mediators who incrementally engineered his journey to Uruk. The curse of the harimtu is especially interesting, since she both humanized and civilized him. Here is the end of the curse, from a Middle Babylonian text.

You shall never enter the tavern of young women;
 your lovely breasts...
 the place of your festivities may the drunkard spoil with vomit,
 ...all the troops.
 The dust of the potter's crossroad will be your dwelling place,
 the desert will be your bed,
 the shadow on the wall will be your station,
 thorn and bramble will skin you feet,
 the besotted and the thirsty will hit your face (174-75).

⁴¹ Gardner/Maier 167-8. Huwawa is an alternate spelling.

One of the reason that twentieth-century readers have such trouble interpreting the female characters of this poem is our inability to understand their professions. Enkidu's curse has the force of prophecy. When we use the words "harlot" or "prostitute" as translations of harimtu, we envision the sort of despised, marginalized woman that Enkidu describes here, and fail to grasp her association with the sacred.

It is a remarkable inversion that Enkidu wishes on her. She tore him from his comfortable existence in the wilds. In exchange, he would expel her from her social identity in the temple and exile her from urban comforts. The wine she taught him to drink will desecrate her temple as vomit. Her wild existence will be anything but idyllic. As with King Nebuchadnezzar, the temple prostitute's forcible return to a state of nature is a punishment, not a reward.

What makes the poem's treatment of nature and culture so fascinating is what follows these curses. Shamash, in whose name Enkidu and Gilgamesh undertook their adventures, speaks to Enkidu from heaven. He points out to Enkidu that his journey has not been without rewards. To be specific, Enkidu has deeply enjoyed Gilgamesh's love and esteem. "Listen: hasn't Gilgamesh, your beloved friend...made you lie down in a bed of honor... / The world's kings have kissed your feet" (173). The perfect friendship between the two heroes as well as the glory they have earned together is recompense enough, Shamash implies, for whatever Enkidu lost on the plains. Finally, Shamash prophesies for Enkidu the extent that Gilgamesh and the entire city will grieve for him, and Gilgamesh's own transformation into a wild man in the second part of the poem.

'He will make the people of Uruk weep for you, cause them to grieve you,
[will make the women], the whole city, fill up with sorrow for your sake.'

Afterward he will carry the signs of grief on his own body,
putting on the skin of dogs and ranging the wilderness.'

Enkidu listened to the words of Shamash the warrior
[and]his angry heart grew still,
. . .grew quiet.

(VII.iii.45-51; 173)

The effect of Shamash's words on Enkidu is very significant. His curses are not eradicated, although he adds a blessing for the courtesan to restore her holy status. He does not renounce his recognition of the tragedy that has be-

fallen him since he left the waterhole. He laments that he will die in bed rather than in battle. But he does accept the importance of his friendship with Gilgamesh. He accepts the profundity of the bond which inspires Gilgamesh's lamentation and his journey to the abyss, beyond the end of time.

Reconciliation or not, there is no flinching from Enkidu's slow and painful death. He describes to Gilgamesh the gruesome liminal figure, a "sombre-faced man-bird," with vampire face, lion's feet, and eagle-talon hands who takes him down to the kingdom of the dead from which no man returns (Sandars 92). Gilgamesh is at his side until Enkidu draws his final breath:

And he--he does not lift his head.
 'I touched his heart, it does not beat.'
 He covered the friend's face like a bride's.
 'Like an eagle I circled over him.'
 Like a lioness whose whelps are lost
 he paces back and forth.
 He tears and messes his rolls of hair.
 He tears off and throws down his fine clothes like things
 unclean.

(VIII.ii.15-22; 187)

Pain, as the price to be paid for the heroes' victories, is passed directly to Gilgamesh, as he begins his lamentation. The details reinforce the thematic unity of the poem and its liminal imagery. The veiling of the face of the deceased, the mourner's tearing of hair and the ripping off of clothes are all traditional signs of mourning. Yet in the context of the poem they take on special force. The comparison of the deceased to a bride is still practiced in rural Greece today. Danforth explains this paradoxical image as a function of the liminal rites surrounding death which mediate loss by describing it in terms which are more tolerable for the bereaved. Marriage is a rite of passage which requires that the bride leave home and family, and thus bears a structural similarity to departure by death (Danforth 82). On the other hand, Enkidu has been described as Gilgamesh's spouse throughout the poem. Here Gilgamesh takes on the feminine role of mourning, echoing the laments of Ishtar and her priestesses over the death of the Bull.

The two similes which compare Gilgamesh to an eagle and a lioness recall comparisons throughout the poem linking the heroes with animals. In particular, the pain of mother-infant separation is invoked in the lioness simile. Like the lioness deprived of her cubs, Gilgamesh is so distressed that

he cannot stay still. He paces back and forth, until he figures out how to mobilize his grief. The animal similes are also appropriate as Gilgamesh undoes his hair and clothes and comes to resemble Enkidu as the courtesan found him at the water's edge. The complementarity between the two heroes has reached a new stage. As Enkidu dies, Gilgamesh becomes Enkidu.

Before he leaves Uruk, Gilgamesh's final act of lamentation is to order a memorial statue for Enkidu: "The statue was fashioned with a great weight of lapis lazuli for the breast and of gold for the body" (Sandars 96). This memorial belongs to the tradition that inspired Horace to imagine his poetry as a monument more lasting than bronze. It is haunting as well, for it will be Gilgamesh's fate to be transformed into an artifact when he returns to Uruk and "cuts his work into a stone tablet." These stone tablets ultimately outlast the earthly lives of Enkidu and Gilgamesh, Sumerians and Akkadians alike. Gilgamesh places honey and butter in jeweled bowls in front of the statue, and then he sets off on a long journey in search of Utnapishtim, the Noah of Mesopotamian tradition.

This quest reinforces the complementarity of these two characters. As Enkidu's journey to Uruk compressed thousands of years of cultural development into a short trip, Gilgamesh's journey is equally symbolic. Gilgamesh sets off in the opposite direction from Enkidu, traveling across space and time back to the days before the flood. Dressed like a wild man, crossing all sorts of liminal landscapes, he takes us on another wild man's journey, another voyage towards understanding our origins and what it means to be human.

At the end of his travels, he is reborn a new King Gilgamesh through rites of purification. He sheds his liminal identity with his clothing, as his mourning and his quest for immortality finally end.

Urshnabi took [charge] of him and brought him to the washing place.

He cleaned his filthy body hair in the water, made him pure.

He cast off skins and carried them to the sea;
the goodness of his body shone out.

He bound the hair on his head again
and put a garment on him, the robe of life,
so he could return to his city,
so he could now go the rest of the way down his road.

(XI.v.246-254; 246)

Gilgamesh has come to terms with Enkidu's death and his own mortality. As he dresses and fixes his hair, he takes on the responsibility to fulfill his earthly royal destiny. He has learned enough to leave his wild man clothes behind at the sea's edge. We trust that he returns to Uruk prepared to rule wisely and to be reconciled with his divine consort, the great Ishtar. It has taken a long time for the creation of Enkidu to fulfill the gods' original intention of making Gilgamesh a proper king for Uruk. Enkidu's birth and death, even the death of the Enkidu-like Gilgamesh, who undertook the quest for immortality, all were required in order to give birth to this final, greater king.

On a final note, when we consider the epic from Enkidu's perspective, an evolutionary and ecological reading emerges. One of the wonders of the literary art is how the same work raises new questions and problems for each generation of readers to discover. Like Enkidu on his death bed, we can look back over his journey to civilization and try to assess how that journey and his two adventures with Gilgamesh were linked to his fatal illness. This will not, of course, be a complete reading of the poem, but it does account for intriguing parallels between Enkidu's death-bed concerns and our own today. The twentieth-century reader of this poem adds another 4,000 years to the perspective of human history presented in this poem. We can complete more fully two related issues that our consideration of the wild man theme raised to prominence in the poem: disease and biodiversity.

Sandars rejected the analysis of the epic in terms of an opposition between nature and culture on the grounds that the connection between civilization and illness was baseless. In fact, current epidemiological studies concerning the history of human diseases and the way they spread suggest that Enkidu's deathbed curses were prescient. Jared Diamond examines the problem in The Arrow of Disease:

The major killers of humanity throughout our recent history—smallpox, flu, tuberculosis, malaria, plague, measles and cholera—are all infectious diseases that arose from diseases of animals...In contrast [with chronic diseases such as leprosy or nonfatal infections such as hookworm], the evolution of crowd diseases could only have occurred with the buildup of large, dense human populations, first made possible by the rise of

agriculture about 10,000 years ago, then by the rise of cities several thousand years ago.⁴²

The parallels with Enkidu's story are compelling. His health and strength were first compromised by his long honeymoon with the temple-courtesan. The next step in his domestication was leaving his identity as a companion of the wild animals to a protector of domesticated ones. This is the step where many diseases make the jump from animal to human populations. When Enkidu reaches Uruk, he has his first serious illness. Gilgamesh's plan for a restorative adventure proves counterproductive. Enkidu essentially signs his own death warrant when he participates in their civilizing adventures, destroying the cedar forest and Humbaba, and slaughtering the Bull of Heaven. His death is not long in coming.

In The Arrow of Disease, Diamond focuses on another journey, the encounter between New World and Old which begins with Columbus's 1492 voyage, as the "grimmest example of the role of germs in history:"

Numerous as the Indian victims of the murderous Spanish conquistadores were, they were dwarfed in number by the victims of murderous Spanish microbes. These formidable conquerors killed an estimated 95 percent of the New World's pre-Columbian Indian population (66).

It now appears that disease, not superior brains or weapons or culture, was the most effective weapon of the conquistadores. The Old World tradition of domesticated animals made all the difference. Although the New World civilizations did have large populations and highly domesticated agricultural practices, they did not have comparable types of domesticated animals, such as pigs, sheep, goats, from which most human infectious diseases evolved. The New World's turkeys and llamas do not herd or interact with humans in the same close way. This explains why the "arrow of disease" was unilinear, with the possible exception of syphilis, and the inhabitants of the New World were struck down so overwhelmingly in contrast with the Europeans.⁴³ These discoveries shed new light on the encounters we will be

⁴² Jared Diamond, "The Arrow of Disease," Discover Oct. 1992: 66, 70.

⁴³ See John W. Verano and Douglas H. Ubelaker, "Health and Disease in the Pre-Columbian World," Seeds of Change, eds. Herman J. Viola and Carolyn Margolis (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press: 1991) 217-219.

examining in next chapter as we move ahead to the sixteenth century and Montaigne's essay.

Finally, recent examinations of our species and planet require us to consider the ecological impact of Homo sapiens over the last 15,000 years. Of course, none of the authors of Gilgamesh could share this perspective, but the adventures of Gilgamesh and Enkidu with Humbaba and Ishtar address many of the same topics as current studies in ecology. Enkidu's death is not just a consequence of his status as a domesticated wild man exposed to domesticated animals and urban conditions, but even more immediately as a result of his success at overcoming divine and natural forces.

It is tempting to juxtapose Enkidu's "accomplishments" with Edward Wilson's assessment of the effect of humanity on our planet's biodiversity. Wilson argues that the history of life on our planet has witnessed five major "extinction spasms." The sixth extinction spasm was ushered in shortly after humankind evolved. From a twentieth-century perspective, our numbers, our energy consumption, and our impact on the planet are so out of proportion with our biology that we have become an "ecologically abnormal species" (273). These changes are not only recent. Wilson argues, "From prehistory to the present time, the mindless horsemen of the apocalypse have been overkill, habitat destruction, introduction of animals such as rats and goats, and diseases carried by these exotic animals" (253).

The connections with Enkidu are suggestive. We remember Enkidu's transformation from releaser of animals to protector of the sheep, and slayer of wolves and lions. Could this be overkill? He also ordered the death of the Guardian of the Forest. Enkidu's massive deforestation program, uprooting trees from the mountains to the Euphrates, is clearly habitat destruction: "The cutting of primeval forest and other disasters fueled by the demands of growing human populations, are the overriding threat to biological diversity everywhere" (259). Meanwhile, pharmaceutical companies are returning to the rain forests in search of new medicines to cure human diseases. In the twentieth century we can see that the innovations of the technosphere, such as the irrigation projects that permitted Uruk to rise out of the plains of the Fertile Crescent, have altered the biosphere in fundamental ways no one could have foreseen.

When Enkidu slaughtered the Bull of Heaven and threw parts of its body in the face of the goddess of love and fertility, was this not also an attack

on biodiversity? Enkidu's death-bed realization that his journey to civilization has cost him dearly speaks directly to present-day concerns and echoes our own ecological consciousness. Wilson's closing comments seem to be a direct reading of Enkidu's last days.

Only in the last moment of human history has the delusion arisen that people can flourish apart from the rest of the living world. Preliterate societies were in contact with a bewildering array of life forms. Their minds could only partly adapt to this challenge. But they struggled to understand the most relevant parts, aware that the right responses give life and fulfillment, the wrong ones sickness, hunger and death (349).

The Epic of Gilgamesh is one of our most precious witnesses to the changes humans endure as we moved from preliterate societies into recorded history. In this poem, the Wild Man fulfills his mission as "Father of all forms." He directs our attention to the human role in the natural world. The Wild Man is not presented as a solution, whether as noble or ignoble savage. Neither Wilson nor Enkidu advocate returning to steppe or renouncing the blessings of civilized life. Instead we are called upon to use our human blessings, the gifts of life, language, friendship, and wisdom, to understand our rightful place on the planet, and to serve as the stewards of our natural world.

CHAPTER V: MONTAIGNE'S ESSAIS AND "DES CANNIBALES"

Montaigne and his Time

The life and literary works of Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) occupy a central position in the formative transition marked by the terms Renaissance and Reformation: the dawn of the modern era of western civilization. It is hard to imagine a French man of letters and an epoch for which the adjective "liminal" is more appropriate. Merely evoking an alliterative suite of names of some of this era's most celebrated individuals—Columbus, Cortés, Calvin, Copernicus—suggests the scope of expansion and change.

The sixteenth century witnessed the birth of a New World, although not necessarily the one Amerigo Vespucci described in his 1503 letter Novus Mundus. By the time Montaigne began his Essais, some seventy years later, the conquest and colonization of the Americas was well underway. From our modern perspective, the New World of the sixteenth century is seen as the convergence of several Old Worlds. The Old World of Europe encountered the Old World of the Near East during the Crusades and the Far East during medieval missionary and mercantile explorations.¹ Europe rediscovered the Old World of its own past, especially the arts and sciences of the classical Greeks and Romans that give the Renaissance its name. Finally, the discovery of the Old World of the Americas and the resulting cross-fertilization of flora, fauna, and cultures created a New World, complete with "planetary empires," the foundation of our modern global economy.² This New World encompasses many questions about the human relationships with the heavens, as well as the place of our own planet in those heavens. New religious and sci-

¹ See Mary Campbell, Part One: "The East."

² These cross-fertilizations are the topic of the anthology Seeds of Change: A Quincentennial Celebration. I have borrowed the idea of the New World as meeting ground of two old worlds from Herbert Viola's essay "Seeds of Change" (12). The term "planetary empires" comes from Sidney Mintz, "Pleasure, Profit, and Satiation" (112).

entific ideas were generated both from the old learning, the rediscovery of Greek and Arab philosophy and science, as well as technology, which provided new instruments to explore the seas and skies.

Montaigne serves well as a guide to these changes of the sixteenth century. He was a man nourished on the past, completely alive to the present, whose legacy looks toward the future. His contributions include the perfection of a new literary form and a profound ability to question and challenge. He advocates a moral science which examines human life in accordance with human capabilities and needs. The liminal qualities of Montaigne and the final years of the sixteen century are illustrated by fact that while Montaigne and Shakespeare are considered the two pillars of the High Renaissance,³ Montaigne is also associated with labels such as post-Humanist, Counter-Renaissance, Mannerist and Baroque.⁴ He lived long enough to witness the bitter fruits of the Reformation in the religious civil wars which raged around him as he wrote his *Essais*. As a Catholic, he was part of the Counter-Reformation which ushered in the seventeenth century, the Age of the Marvelous, the Age of Science.

There are many ways in which Montaigne's life is exemplary of the changing values of sixteenth-century France. He had a unique childhood. His father, Pierre Eyquem, fought in Italy and returned with Renaissance educational ideals. Michel's maternal language was neither French nor Gascon, the local dialect, but Latin, which was the only language he heard for the first six years of his life.

Quant à moy, j'avois plus de six ans avant que j'entendisse non plus François ou de Perigordin que d'Arabesque. Et sans art, sans livre, sans grammaire ou precepte, sans fouet et sans larmes, j'avois appris du Latin, tout aussi pur que mon maistre d'eschole le sçavoit: car je ne le pouvois avoir meslé ny alteré.⁵

³ For example, Harold Bloom, ed. and intro., *Michel de Montaigne's Essays*, Modern Critical Interpretations Ser. (New York: Chelsea House, 1987) 1.

⁴ For example, Hiram Hayden, *The Counter-Renaissance* (New York: Scribner, 1950). Also R. A. Sayce, *The Essays of Montaigne: A Critical Exploration* (n.p.: Northwestern UP, 1972), especially Chapter 13, "Renaissance, Mannerism, and Baroque."

⁵ I.xxvi. Rat I, 188. All citations from the *Essais* in French are from Montaigne, *Essais* ed. Maurice Rat (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1962). Following Rat, Book and Chapter references from the *Essais* will be given in Roman numerals, followed by the volume number of the Rat edition and

This early secure base of learning served Michel well. His favorite reading at age eight was Ovid's Metamorphoses (in the original Latin, of course). During the following seven years at the Collège de Guyenne in Bordeaux, his studies included the core works of the Humanist program, the history, poetry, and philosophy of the Greeks and Romans.⁶ On the other hand, his Latin quickly degenerated there and he left school with a life-long disdain of pedantry. In any case, he benefited greatly from the work of the Humanist philologists. For example, Terence Cave argues that the Latin translations of Sextus Empiricus and Amyot's translations of Plutarch made Montaigne's own work possible. Cave observes, "It was no longer necessary, in 1570, to be a professional scholar in order to read and reflect on the writings of the ancient world."⁷ Even Montaigne's early positive reception is tied to the educational and social changes of the sixteenth century. Erich Auerbach writes,

ct#1

[B]y the success of the Essays the educated public first revealed its existence. Montaigne does not write for a particular class, nor for a particular profession, nor for "the people" nor for Christians; he writes for no party; he does not consider himself a poet; he writes the first work of lay introspection, and lo! there were people—men and women—who felt they that they were spoken to (308).

Montaigne benefited from the accomplishments of Humanist educators and scholars, but was sufficiently distant to judge the limitations of their zeal.⁸

the page number. For the convenience of the reader I will also include in the notes the English translation of the same passage by Donald Frame, The Complete Works of Montaigne: Essays, Travel Journal, Letters (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1948; reprinted here by permission of Stanford UP). Unlike Rat, Frame includes the indications of a, b, c strata in his text (discussed below p. 200), so that the English translation alone will bear those marks. I would also like to acknowledge here my indebtedness to an indispensable resource for Montaigne scholars: Roy E. Leake, Concordance des Essais de Montaigne, 2 vols., Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance No. 188, (Genève: Droz, 1981). ⁶ As for me, I was over six before I understood any more French or Perigordian than Arabic. And without artifical means, without a book, without grammar or precept, without the whip and without tears, I had learned a Latin quite as pure as what my school masters knew, for I could not have contaminated or altered it." Frame 128.

⁶ For this biographical sketch, I am indebted to Donald Frame, Montaigne: A Biography (New York: Harcourt, 1965).

⁷ Terence Cave, "Problems of Reading in the Essais," Montaigne: Essays in Memory of Richard Sayce, eds. I.D. McFarlane and Ian Maclean (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982) 135.

⁸ Sayce (316-7) compares Montaigne's assessment of the difference between his own and his father's reverence for letters "Moy, je les aime bien, mais je ne les adore pas" (I like them, but I don't love them), with Gargantua's letter in Pantagruel, discussed above pages 12-13.

As in the case of Gilgamesh and the Cro-Magnon cave paintings, the title of "first" may disguise the cultural base that supports the creation of an innovative artifact.

After his formal education, Michel de Montaigne took up the life to which he was born. His was a newly ennobled family, which had made its money in business, and purchased its property and social status. Like his father, he lived on and administered the estate of Montaigne, named for its hilly location. This is where Michel derives his own surname, dropping the ancestral Eyquem. Besides his life on the family estate, he traveled for duty and pleasure. A loyal Catholic, he served his Church and the king of France, both by pen and by sword. The French nation did not yet have its modern shape or identity, and Montaigne's public service was local as well as national. Following the example of his father, he spent thirteen years at the Bordeaux Parliament, (1557-1570) and also served for two terms as Mayor of Bordeaux (1581-1585.) He came quite close to achieving the Renaissance ideal of the gentleman in devising a life balanced between the active and the contemplative, where contemplation is humanist—moral and literary—rather than religious. In between these two periods of public service, Montaigne officially retired from the world of public service and placed a plaque on the wall outside his library, inscribed in Latin:

In the year of Christ 1571, at the age of thirty-eight, on the last day of February, his birthday, Michel de Montaigne, long weary of the servitude of the court and of public employments, while still entire, retired to the bosom of the learned virgins, where in calm and freedom from all cares he will spend what little remains of his life, now more than half run out. If the fates permit, he will complete this abode, this sweet ancestral retreat; and he has consecrated it to his freedom, tranquillity and leisure (ix-x).

As with all of Montaigne's writings, it is advisable not to take this inscription solely on face value. He never retired completely. For example, he was active in political negotiations between Henri III and Henri de Navarre, who became Henri IV. His unexpected and unsought election to the mayoralty, ten years after his official "retirement," interrupted a much enjoyed lengthy trip to Germany and Italy, recorded in another of Montaigne's works, his Journal du Voyage. On the other hand, Montaigne did use the fruits of leisure, the thousand volumes in his personal library, as well his experiences at home, in

Bordeaux and throughout Europe to create a gift for his family and friends, a gift truly worthy of the Muses, his *Essais*.

Yet for each of these elements which point to him as illustration of his time, there is a counterpoint, just below the surface. Michel de Montaigne illustrates liminal ambiguity. He is a complex figure, like the paradoxes he so loved.⁹ For instance, his Catholic heritage and loyalty are complicated by the fact that his mother came from a family of recently converted Spanish Jews, and her relatives included "many martyrs of the Inquisition" (Frame, *Biography*, 17). Although Montaigne deplores the forced treatment Jews by the Portuguese after their expulsion from Spain he does not mention his own mixed heritage.¹⁰

On the other hand, this silence is consistent with his portrayal of his mother in the *Essais*. For Irma Majer, this silence is psychological repression. It represents the dark side of the innovative methods that governed Michel's early years.

Montaigne's infancy, that period before language acquisition (*infans*: which does not speak) was marked by two telling separations: from his mother tongue, because according to his father's wish, Latin was substituted for French; and from his mother's breast (and consequently the culture that come to us from 'mother's milk'), since he spent his infancy with a wet nurse. These two initial replacements of the mother seem to have resulted in a permanent displacement, and Montaigne's mother makes virtually no appearance in the whole of his *Essais*.¹¹



Majer's goal is to provide the missing motivation for Montaigne's journey to Rome and explain the missing first pages of Montaigne's *Journal du Voyage*. In light of the wild-man figure, however, the psychological significance of mother-infant separation and the curious aspects of Montaigne's language acquisition recall certain elements in the childhoods of Humbaba, Enkidu and

⁹ On the topic of Renaissance paradox in general and paradox in Montaigne in particular, see Rosalie Colie's *Pardoxica Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1966), especially Chapter 12, "I am that I am: Problems of Self-Reference."

¹⁰ See Lxiv. "Que le goust de biens et de maux depend en bonne partie de l'opinion que nous en avons" Rat I, 50-51. Frame 35-6.

¹¹ Irma Majer, "Montaigne's Cure: Stones and Roman Ruins," *Michel de Montaigne*, ed. Harold Bloom, Modern Critical Views Series (New York: Chelsea House, 1987) 130.

Spenser's Satyrane which were analyzed in the previous chapter. These elements might lead us to suspect that the most significant liminal figure in the Essais may not be found in "Des cannibales" at all, but, at home, in France. Just as Gilgamesh became a palimpsest, with historical, legendary, and finally literary layers, so Montaigne displays archaeo-textuality. He existed historically, and was also an artist leaving an artifact in which he featured himself prominently. In Montaigne's palimpsest, the layers are not just superimposed, they also interpenetrate.

Yes, Montaigne devoted his life to serving his King and his Church, but decidedly in his own way.

Je sers plus gayement mon prince par ce que c'est par libre eslection de mon jugement et de ma raison, sans obligation particulière... Ce que j'adore moy-mesmes aus Roys, c'est la foule de leurs adorateurs. Toute inclination et soubmission leur est deue, sauf celle de l'entendement. Ma raison n'est pas duite à se courber et flechir, ce sont mes genoux.¹²

Montaigne's ultimate loyalty is not to historical individuals, whether they are princes or philosophers, but to his own judgment and reason. Ratio, the Latin word for reason, system, and order served as a key word in the passage from Cicero's De inventione describing how the homines silvestres became civilized.¹³ Cicero used ratio in all these diverse senses, but consistently as a positive force aligned with the civilizing process.

"Raison" is also key word for Montaigne, but his usage of the term is anything but consistent. He does not intend to offer any systematic philosophy. Donald Frame explains the difficulty of defining what reason is for Montaigne: "[H]e uses it to mean at least two very different faculties: theoretical reason, which is always dangerous, and practical reason, which is always good. However, he never makes this distinction explicit... (Biography 176n). Hiram Hayden views Montaigne's preference for nature and instinct over art and reason as direct response to Cicero (481).

¹² III.ix. Rat II, 431. "B I serve my prince the more gaily because I do so by the free choice of my judgment and my reason, C without personal obligation..." Frame 756. Also III.viii. Rat II, 371. "B What I myself adore in kings is the crowd of their adorers. All deference and submission is due to them, except that of our understanding. My reason is not trained to bend and bow, it is my knees." Frame 714.

¹³ See pages 5-8 above.

J'ay pris, comme j'ay dict ailleurs, bien simplement et cruement pour mon regard ce precepte ancien: que nous ne scaurions faillir à suivre nature, que le souverain precepte c'est de se conformer à elle. Je n'ay pas corrigé, comme Socrates, par force de la raison mes complexions naturelles, et n'ay aucunement troublé par art mon inclination.¹⁴

If Montaigne doesn't explicitly define reason, he does explicitly challenge the humanist belief that man improves himself through reason, as Cicero's great and wise man improved the wild men. Here Montaigne clearly favors nature, natural temperament and inclination over correction, reason, and art.

Montaigne is interested in individual judgment and reason rather than institutional order. He rejects the idea that social systems are inherently rational. For example:

Mayke

Et le conseil de Platon ne me plaist pas, de parler tousjours d'un langage maistral à ses serviteurs, sans jeu, sans familiarité, soit envers les masles, soit envers les femelles. Car, outre ma raison, il est inhumain et injuste de faire tant valoir cette telle preorogative de la fortune; et les polices où ils souffre moins de disparité entre les valets et les maistres, me semblent les plus équitables.¹⁵

It is fortune that decides rank, not reason. To think otherwise is inhuman and unjust. This is a strong position for social equity. Servants should be conversed with playfully, not addressed magisterially. Indeed, one of the most important informants in "Des cannibales" is one of Montaigne's servants who had spent many years overseas.

Such considerations play a large part in Montaigne's life-time goal of developing the faculties of individual reason and judgment into the most effective tools possible. Judgment and reason sharpened by experience are our guides to the moral science of living appropriately:

Il n'est rien si beau et legitime que de faire bien l'homme et deuëment, ny science si ardue que de bien et naturellement scavoir

¹⁴ III.xii. Rat II, 510-11. ^B"As I have said elsewhere, I have very simply and crudely adopted for my own sake this ancient precept: that we cannot go wrong by following Nature, that the sovereign precept is to conform to her. I have not, like Socrates, corrected my natural disposition by force of reason, and have not troubled my inclination at all by art." Frame 811.

¹⁵ III.iii. Rat II, 240-1. ^C"And I do not like Plato's advice, always to talk to our servants, whether male or female, in masterful terms, without playfulness and without familiarity. For besides the reason I have given, it is inhuman and unjust to make so much of this accidental privilege of fortune." Frame 623.

vivre cette vie; et de nos maladies la plus sauvage, c'est mespriser nostre etre.¹⁶

Montaigne insists on human limitations, at the same time that he embraces being human. It is a life-long goal and arduous duty to develop our faculties of reason and judgment, to play our human role. These faculties are inadequate for many tasks, especially the knowledge of absolutes, but Montaigne reserves the superlative "de nos maladies la plus sauvage" for the idea of holding human nature in contempt. It is interesting to see the context of this adjective "sauvage," one of the key terms in the wild man's semantic constellation. It applies here to human nature in general. Montaigne also invokes a liminal or "barrier image"¹⁷ to convey the limitations of human faculties:

...mais la raison m'a instruit que de condamner ainsi resolument une chose pour fauce et impossible, c'est se donner l'avantage d'avoir dans la teste, les *bornes et limites* de la volonté de Dieu et de la puissance de nostre mere nature; et qu'il n'y a point de plus notable folie au monde que de les ramener à la mesure de nostre capacité et suffisance.¹⁸

Montaigne is discussing miracles and the supernatural here. Even what is implausible in our experience may turn out to be possible, he argues. Human reason informs us of human limits, which include not being able to know the limits of God or Nature. This recalls Young's term "lawlines," and suggests that there are human lawlines, which are knowable if irrational, and divine natural lawlines, which are neither.¹⁹ The syntactic parallel drawn here between God and mother Nature is enough to suggest the controversial status

¹⁶ III.xiii. Rat II, 571. "^AThere is nothing so beautiful and legitimate as to play the man well and properly, no knowledge so hard to acquire as the knowledge of how to live this life well ^Cand naturally; ^Band the most barbarous of our maladies is to despise our being." Frame, 852. Note Frame's translation of "barbarous" for "sauvage," pertinent to our discussion of "Des cannibales."

¹⁷ This Sayce's term (298-99).

¹⁸ I.xxvii. Rat I, 193-4. "...^Abut reason has taught me that to condemn a thing thus, dogmatically, as false and impossible, is to assume the advantage of knowing the *bounds and limits* of God's will and of the power of our mother Nature; and that there is no more notable folly in the world than to reduce these things to the measure of our capacity and competence." Frame 132. My italics.

¹⁹ See discussion of the term "lawlines" page 102 above.

of Montaigne's religious beliefs: a loyal Catholic perhaps, a dogmatist, clearly not.

This is not a simple man, nor did he create a simple work. The Essais were built on his classical education, but are nonetheless bold and new in both form and content. If we consider content alone, there are so many ways in which he was out of step with the conventional thinking of his time (or ours!), that Hiram Hayden singles Montaigne out as a prime example of the double rejection of scholasticism and Ciceronian humanism that define his Counter-Renaissance: "He represents the culmination and terminus of the Counter-Renaissance—a movement born of men's weariness with the pretensions of the speculative intellect and the systematizing mind" (76).

The two most common words in Montaignian criticism are "And yet..." Again, this is no accident. This recourse to counterpoint is not just a matter of putting Montaigne in historical context. If we can speak of an essence of Montaigne's thought, this is it: "Je n'ay rien à dire de moy, entierement, simplement, et solidement, sans confusion, et sans meslange. *Distingo* est le plus universal membre de ma Logique."²⁰ Distinguo: to distinguish, to divide, to discriminate. It is the simplest way to describe Montaigne's method, his humorous and rigorous questioning of accepted ideas which enabled him to make his mark in such diverse fields as philosophy, psychology, education, anthropology,²¹ as well as literary studies. Even within literary studies, Montaigne stands not only as respected writer, a major participant in the historical shift from medieval *authorities* to author in the

²⁰ II.i. Rat I, 370. Italics in the original. "I have nothing to say about myself absolutely, simply, solidly, without confusion and without mixture, or in one word. *Distinguo* is the most universal member of my logic." Frame 242.

²¹ Norris Johnson, "Cannibals and Culture: the Anthropology of Michel de Montaigne" Dialectical Anthropology, (forthcoming), situates Montaigne in the anthropological tradition and critiques the common assumption that he is a cultural relativist.

modern sense, but also increasingly as a reader²² and a critic.²³ Because his impact crosses the boundaries of traditional disciplines, Montaigne also qualifies as an author in Foucault's broadest sense, as a founder of a sphere of discourse, along with Homer, Aristotle, Church Fathers, Freud, and Marx (Harari 153-4). Harold Bloom places Montaigne in this company:

"Montaigne's defense of the self is also an analysis of self, and Montaigne appears now to have been the ancestor not only of Emerson and Nietzsche, both of whom acknowledged him, but also of Freud, who did not" (5). No one has improved on Auerbach's assessment of Montaigne's contribution to modern thought.

[A]mong all his contemporaries he had the clearest conception of the problem of man's self-orientation; that is, the task of making oneself at home in existence without fixed points of support. In him, for the first time, man's life—the random personal life as a whole—becomes problematic in the modern sense (310).

Auerbach's analysis illustrates how Montaigne's task in the Essais joins the premise which underlies our investigation of the wild-man figure: the problem of exploring, representing, and communicating the human place in the universe.

The Work

What exactly is the work which Montaigne has created? It is a text in prose, entitled Essais.²⁴ The first edition published in Bordeaux in 1580 con-

²² See, for example, Cave and Cathleen Bauschatz, "Montaigne's Conception of Reading in the Context of Renaissance Poetics and Modern Criticism," The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation, eds. Susan Suleiman and Inge Crossman (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980) 264-91.

²³ For example, Sayce 44-9. Bloom argues that "Montaigne rather than DuBellay or Sidney becomes the great critic of the early Renaissance" because of his "deidealization of the Humanist manifesto." Introduction, Montaigne 5.

²⁴ Sayce's comments on the absence of the definite article in the title shows how significant even a single word can be: "...[U]p to 1588 is just Essais but from 1595 onwards Les essais: the original title is more modest, the later (not Montaigne's) assumes that the work is already well known." Sayce 20. The title pages of different editions have also been scrutinized. See for example, François Moureau, "Le Sens du titre: Typographie et gravure dans les premières éditions des Essais," Le Parcours des Essais: Montaigne 1588-1988, eds. Marcel Tetel and G. Mallary Masters (Paris: Aux amateurs de livres, 1989) 13-16 plus illustrations. (See Fig. 17.)

tained a Book I with 57 chapters and Book II, with 37. A fifth edition was published in 1588 "augmentée d'un troisième livre et de 6 cens additions aux deux premiers," (enlarged by a third book and six hundred additions to the first two). The fifth edition contains 170 chapters, which range in length from one to over 200 pages. Montaigne continued to add to this 1588 version of the Essais until his death in 1592. The text with his handwritten additions is known as the "exemplaire de Bordeaux" or Bordeaux Copy. (See Figure 14.) His literary executrix, Mlle de Gournay, prepared another edition based "directly or indirectly" on the Bordeaux Copy which was published in 1595.²⁵ In order to appreciate the originality of Montaigne's accomplishment, we turn once again to the idea of intertextuality and the imagery of text, mosaic, and palimpsest. If the most fundamental opposition in the intertextual approach to literature is the one made between the concrete, closed Work and the open, elusive Text, Montaigne's Essais is outstanding for its openness.²⁶ Montaigne uses a tremendous variety of resources to keep his work from resembling a concrete closed object. The study of any individual chapter such as "Des cannibales," should begin with an assessment of how he accomplishes this degree of openness.

1. Essai, Experience, Passage

The title Essais alone suggests the originality of his enterprise. In the same way that referring to the Epic of Gilgamesh puts that work into a specific context in the literary tradition, Montaigne accomplishes the opposite effect, by inventing not only a title, but a form. He is considered the founder of the essay, and the word "essai" tells us something about what he did and how he did it. It is helpful to temporarily suspend our modern understanding of the noun "essay" as a short prose composition. "Essay" is the term typically used in English to describe the individual chapters of Montaigne's book, such as "Des cannibales" which are frequently read in isolation. Although Montaigne does occasionally use the word in this sense, the plural Essais of the title sug-

²⁵ Sayce 15. See David Maskell, "The Evolution of the Essais," MacFarlane, 13-34 for more details about the textual complexities of the last two editions, and the problems this poses for modern editors and readers.

²⁶ For a discussion of Work and Text, see page 74.

Cf. A

gests that the three books be considered as a whole, as does Montaigne himself: "Mon livre est toujours un."²⁷ "Essai" derives from the verb "essayer," which in modern as well as Renaissance French means "to try, to attempt, to put to the test." Montaigne shows great strength in his use of verbs (Sayce 287-8), and in his hands, the noun "essai" has verbal force. From the Latin exigere and exagium comes the sense of weighing, also apparent in English cognates "assay" and "assess." A more accurate English version of the title than the usual Essays might capture this verbal force by following Auerbach's "less graceful but more fitting" suggestions: "Tests upon One Self" or "Self-Try-Outs" (292).

Following Montaigne, the French critics refer to the individual essays as chapters. A significant nuance is lost in translation into English. "Chapter" encourages us to see individual pieces as part of a related whole. We take it for granted that the order of the chapters in a novel is significant, but we may not look deeply into the order of essays in a collection. In any case, the Table of Contents in Frame's translation includes proposed dates for each chapter and reveals that the Essais are not organized in a simple chronological manner. The novelistic analogy has merit. For example, Sayce has studied the order of the Essais in detail, and points out the thematic links between "Des cannibales" and the chapters that precede and follow it.²⁸

The verbal dimension of the title Essais suggests the sense of exploration, the on-going process that Montaigne strove for in his desire to stimulate and sharpen human judgment.²⁹ He spent several years writing and exploring before arriving at his title and his preferred form and style. The following passage illustrates how the two terms, "jugement" and "essais," are related:

²⁷ III.ix. Rat II, 402. "My book is always one." Frame 736. We will examine the inevitable counterpoint to this assertion later, page 197 and following.

²⁸ Sayce argues that the final sentence in "De la moderation" (I, xxx) "conveys [Montaigne's] pastoral vision of America almost better than *Des cannibales* itself," (311) and that the key word "imposture" links "Des cannibales" and "Qu'il faut sobrement se mesler de juger des ordonnances divines," I.xxxii (265).

²⁹ It is no accident that two of Montaigne's most attentive and sensitive readers, Sayce and Starobinski, use appropriately mobile imagery in their titles—A Critical Exploration and Montaigne en mouvement.

★

Le jugement est un util à tous subjects, et se mesle par tout. A cette cause, aux *essais* que j'en fay ici, j'employe toute sorte d'occasion. Si c'est un sujet que je n'entende point, à cela mesme je l'*essaye*, sondant le gué de bien loing; et puis le trouvant trop profond pour ma taille, je me tiens à la rive...³⁰

There are two examples of the word "essai" here. The first describes his writings as explorations of variety of subject matters, which are unified by their utility in the exercise of judgment. Just as judgment is a proper tool for intellectual investigation, so the *Essais* are the literary instrument for sharpening judgment. In the second case he uses the verb "essaye" to compare writing and judging to the process of sounding the depth of a river, recalling for the modern reader the origin of Samuel Clemens' pen name, Mark Twain. Montaigne is always willing to try something new. He takes on both unknown and well known subject matters, and is not afraid to admit that something is too deep for his understanding. Both judgment and the *Essais* are all-purpose tools.

This passage is also typical of Montaigne's use of figurative language. He turns so easily to metaphors and images such as the one here between mental and physical explorations/essays, that the distinction between literal and figurative is often blurred. Sayce speaks of Montaigne's "constant intermingling of the figurative and literal" (297). Montaigne himself does not hold generic distinctions in high regard, either in psychology³¹ or literature: "Mille poëtes traînent et languissent à la prosaïque; mais la meilleure prose ancienne (et je la seme ceans indifferemment pour vers) reluit par tout la

³⁰ I.I. Rat I, 334. My italics. "Judgment is a tool to use on all subjects, and comes in everywhere. Therefore in the tests that I make of it here, I use every sort of occasion. If it is a subject I do not understand at all, even on that I essay my judgment, sounding the ford from a good distance, and then, finding it too deep for my height, I stick to the bank." Frame 219.

³¹ III.xiii. Rat II, 529. "Ainsi à mes amys je descouvre, par leurs productions, leurs inclinations internes; non pour regner cette infinie variété d'actions si diverses et si découpées, à certains genres et chapitres, et distribuer distinctement mes partages et divisions en classes et regions cogneuës..." "So I reveal to my friends, by their outward manifestations, their inward inclinations. I do not attempt to arrange this infinite variety of actions, so diverse and so disconnected, into certain types and categories, and distribute my lots and divisions distinctly into recognized classes and sections..." Frame 824. Sayce contrasts Montaigne with the scholastics, Pascal, Hugo, Helgel and Marx: "Reality in Montaigne is never distorted by the need to impose on it a rigidly consistent or monolithic or tripartite vision of the world. This is not the least of his lessons" (199).

vigeur et hardiesse poétique, et représente l'air de sa fureur."³² Just as he mingles the figurative and the literal, Montaigne sows poetry and prose in his verbal garden. The same liminal sensibility appears in his own writing. Like Rabelais in his verbal inventiveness, or like Baudelaire in his prose-poems, Montaigne selects his words with a poet's care, ever distinguishing and differentiating, ever-pushing the boundaries of such basic generic distinctions as between prose and poetry, literal and figurative. Both his purpose and method are open-ended, writing and thought are a vagabond pair: "Mon style et mon esprit vont vagabondant de mesme."³³

His mode, like his famous motto "Que sçay-je?" (What do I know?), is one of questioning rather than one of establishing a final answer, reveling in process rather than product. This preference is related to the Counter-Renaissance reaction to the crumbling of the Aristotelian world view which was grounded in reason and order. O'Neill comments, "The world is no longer the enclosure of a divinely guaranteed rational inquest. Reason must essay itself, no surer of its ends than any other voyage of discovery."³⁴ In another example, "essayer" is used to illustrate the challenge of his subject matter and the problem of change. In an open work, the problem of change and contradiction is inevitable.

Je ne puis asseurer mon object. Il va trouble et chancelant, d'une yvresse naturelle. Je le prens en ce point, comme il est, en l'instant que je m'amuse à luy. Je ne peints pas l'estre. Je peins le passage... Je pourray tantost changer, non de fortune seulement, mais aussi d'intention. C'est un contrerolle de divers et muables accidens et d'imaginactions irresoluës et, quand il y eschet, contraires; soit que je sois autre moymesmes, soit que je saisisse les subjects par autres circonstances et considerations. Tant y a que je me contredits bien à l'aventure, mais la vérité, comme disoit Demades, je ne la contredy

³² III.ix. Rat II, 439. "A thousand poets drag and languish prosaically; but the best ancient prose—and I scatter it here indiscriminately as verse—shines throughout with the vigor and boldness of poetry, and gives the effect of its frenzy." Frame 761. My Greek is as rudimentary as Montaigne's, but my own closest encounter with the poetic was translating Plato's Ion. I agree with Montaigne's assessment that Plato is "tout poétique." Rat II, 438.

³³ III.ix. Rat II, 438-9. "My style and my mind alike go roaming." Frame 761.

³⁴ John O'Neill, Essaying Montaigne: A Study in the Renaissance Institution of Writing and Reading (London: Routledge, 1982) 22.

point. Si mon ame pouvoit prendre pied, je ne me'essaierois pas, je me resoudrois; elle est toujours en apprentissage et en espreuve.³⁵

There are two fundamental and related contrasts in this passage: the first between being and passage, the second between deciding and essaying. The Essais record change and passage rather than being because the individual changes through time. Contradictions are inevitable. Changes in the text as well are both accidental and voluntary, because they reflect changes in the author and his experience of a world in motion. Both life and literary creation are on-going apprenticeships, and Montaigne faces them imbued with a natural, thus desirable, intoxication.

The Essais is an open work because its subject matter and its author are constantly shifting. How are the topics and chapters, the subjects and objects related? "Tout argument m'est également fertile. Je les prens sur une mouche... Que je commence par celle qu'il me plaira, car les matieres se tiennent toutes enchesnées, les unes aux autres."³⁶ Once again, unity is asserted: "My book is always one, because my subjects are always linked." The chain alluded to here is not a ladder like the Great Chain of Being, but more like the links in a metal mesh or strands in a web. The pieces are strung together by key words and themes. There is no necessary starting point in a web or net. There is no logical rigorous order dictated from outside. So with Montaigne's Essais.

Being and passage are contrasted beautifully in the final line of the passage which sets "resolving" against "essaying" and a "firm footing" against "being on trial" or "in apprenticeship." Once again, process is opposed to product:

³⁵ III.ii. Rat II, 222. "B I cannot keep my subject still. It goes along befuddled and staggering with a natural drunkenness. I take it in this condition, just as it is at the moment I give my attention to it. I do not portray being; I portray passing... I may presently change, not only by chance, but also by intention. This is a record of various and changeable occurrences, and of irresolute and when, it so befalls, contradictory ideas: whether I am different myself, or whether I take hold of my subjects in different circumstances and aspects. So all in all, I may indeed contradict myself now and then; but truth, as Demades said, I do not contradict. If my mind could gain a firm footing I would make decisions; but it is always in apprenticeship and on trial." Frame 610-11.

³⁶ III.v. Rat II, 304. "B Any topic is equally fertile for me. A fly will serve my purpose... Let me begin with whatever subject I please, for all subjects are linked with one another." Frame 668.

En toute conscience, il ne peut donc être question de résoudre le problème de l'homme, il ne peut s'agir que de décrire l'homme comme problème. De là cette idée d'une recherche sans découverte, d'une chasse sans prise, qui n'est pas le vice d'un dilettante, mais la seule méthode convenable quand il s'agit de décrire l'homme.³⁷

Montaigne recognizes a Truth that is not contradicted by contradictions, and which, like his God may be intangible, unknowable by human rules of evidence. This recalls the right and left-brain images for truth.³⁸ Montaigne's literary organization follows a right-brain model: a moving network with interrelated undulating branches.

Montaigne challenges the assumptions of the first model of liminality, the Great Chain of Being, directly in his longest and for many most puzzling chapter, "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" (II, xii). A large part of the "Apologie" is devoted to challenging the belief that humans are separate from and superior to the rest of the animal world. His attitude may be summed up in his famous question about his cat: "Quand je me jouë a ma chatte, qui scâit si elle passe son temps de moy plus que je ne fay d'elle? Nous nous entretenons de singeries réciproques. Si j'ay mon heure de commencer ou de refuser, aussi elle a la sienne."³⁹ The question suggests a horizontal rather than vertical relationship. The two following sentences from the 1595 edition insist on the reciprocity of the bond, appropriate to a equal points in a

³⁷ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960) 255. "In good conscience, there cannot be any question of solving the problem of man; it can only be a question of describing man as problematic. Hence this idea of a investigation without discovery, a hunt without a capture, which is not the vice of a dilettante, but the only appropriate method for describing man." My translation.

³⁸ See pages 60-61 above.

³⁹ II.xii. Rat I, 496. "^CWhen I play with my cat, who knows if I am not a pastime to her more than she is to me? We entertain each other with reciprocal monkey tricks. If I have my time to begin or refuse she has hers." Frame 331. On the "singeries"—monkeys and *mimesis*,—see Janson, Chapter X "*Ars Simia Naturae*." This passage can also be compared with another in which Montaigne brings the anxiety of influence together with an allusion to the wild man intertext: "Or j'ay une condition singeresse et imitatrice: quand je me melois de faire des vers...ils accusoient evidemment le poète que je venois de lire; et de mes premiers essays, aucuns puent un peu a l'étranger... Imitation meurtrière comme celle des singes horribles en grandeur et en force que le Roy Alexandre rencontra en certaine contrée des Indes." III.v. Rat II, 303. "^BNow I have an aping and imitative nature. When I used to dabble in composing verse...it clearly revealed the author I had been last reading...^CA murderous imitation, like that of the horribly big and strong apes that King Alexander encountered in a certain region of the Indies." Frame 667.

web rather than hierarchical levels on a ladder. The theme of playfulness links this passage with Montaigne's rejection of Plato's advice that one speak masterfully instead of playfully with servants. In the same way, Montaigne engages his readers playfully, but as befits Huizinga's homo ludens, it is a serious playfulness.

Montaigne anticipates modern studies in animal communication which stress the importance of speaking with animals "in their own language."⁴⁰ His next questions continue the challenge to the human presumption of superiority:

Ce defaut qui empesche la communication d'entre elles et nous, pourquoi n'est il aussi bien à nous qu'à elles? C'est à deviner à qui est la faute de ne nous entendre point; car nous ne les entendons non plus qu'elles nous. Par cette mesme raison, elle nous peuvent estimer bestes comme nous les estimons.⁴¹

Montaigne suggests that we take equal responsibility for our mutual lack of understanding. Like the modern ethologist, he wonders if the problem is the insistence that all communication take place in the investigator's own language. The implications for interlinguistic and intercultural communication are obvious, and Montaigne goes to make precisely this point: "Ce n'est pas grand'merveille que nous ne les entendons pas (aussi ne faisons nous les Basques et les Troglodites)."⁴² The relativity of the term "beste" is also raised forcefully here, as the relativity of the terms "sauvage" and "barbare" will be in "Des cannibales." Who are we to judge?—a fundamentally Montaignian question.

Montaigne also radically challenges the topos of man as a nexus between the bestial and the angelic:⁴³

⁴⁰ Robert Trivers "Deceit and Self-Deception: The Relationship between Communication and Consciousness," Robinson 182.

⁴¹ II.xii. Rat I, 497. "The defect that hinders communication between them and us, why is it not just as much ours as theirs? It is a matter of guesswork whose fault it is that we do not understand one another; for we do not understand them any more than they do us. By the same reasoning they may consider us beasts, as we consider them." Frame 331.

⁴² II.xii. Rat I, 497. "It is no great wonder if we do not understand them; neither do we understand the Basques and the Troglodytes." Frame 331.

⁴³ See pages 42-43 above.

C'est par la vanité de cette mesme imagination qu'il s'egale à Dieu, qu'il s'attribue les conditions divines, qu'il se trie soy mesme et separe de la presse des autres creatures, taille les parts aux animaux ses confrères et companions et leur distribue telle portaison de facultez et de force que bon luy semble.⁴⁴

It is presumptive for humans to grant themselves divine status, and insulting to both God and our "brothers and companions," the animals. It is another symptom of "our most savage malady:" contempt for the human condition.⁴⁵ Montaigne envisages a human condition in which the body and soul remain united and balanced. Our diverse elements should not be divorced:

Nostre esprit n'a volontiers pas assez d'heures à faire ses besongnes, sans de desassocier du corps en ce peu d'espace qu'il luy faut pour sa nécessité. Ils veulent se mettre hors d'eux et eschapper à l'homme. C'est folie; au lieu de se transformer en anges, ils se transforment en bestes; au lieu de se hausser, ils s'abattent.⁴⁶

It is folly to try to escape our natural condition. Attempts to ascend to the ranks of the angels are futile. This insistence that man remains true to his nature is from Montaigne's final and most comprehensive chapter, entitled De l'experience.

In this final essay, experience becomes a worthy companion to reason in our life-long quest for knowledge:

Il n'est desir plus naturel que le desir de connoisance. Nous essayons tous les moyens qui nous y peuvent mener. Quand la raison nous faut, nous y employons l'experience.

*Per varios usus artem experientia fecit:
Exemplo montrate viam*

⁴⁴ II.xii. Rat I, 496. "AIt is by vanity of this same imagination that he equals himself to God, attributes to himself divine characteristics, picks himself out and separates himself from the horde of other creatures, carves out their shares to his fellows and companions the animals, and distributes among them such portions of faculties and powers as he sees fit." Frame 331.

⁴⁵ The expression "human condition" originates with Montaigne. In a continuation of the passage quoted above on being and passage: "[C]haque homme porte la forme entiere de l'humaine condition." III.ii. Rat II, 222. "Each man bears the entire form of the human estate." Frame 611.

⁴⁶ III.xiii. Rat II, 576-7. "Our mind like to think it has not enough leisure hours to do its own business unless it disassociates itself from the body for the little time that the body really needs it. They want to get out of themselves and escape from the man. That is madness: instead of raising themselves, they lower themselves." Frame 858.

qui est un moyen plus faible et moins digne; mais la vérité est chose si grande, que nous devons desdaigner aucune entremise qui nous conduise.⁴⁷

This passage brings together several of the key words we have been examining and heads us in the direction of the third model of liminality: travel. "Essayons" encompasses the diverse ways we seek to meet our natural desire for knowledge, just as the literary *Essais* encompasses diverse but related topics. "Reason" appears in positive light here, as stronger more dignified than experience. On the other hand, it is not always available. And yet, truth is such a worthy, if unattainable, destination that we should not hesitate to try either path.

The theme of travel is implicit in Montaigne's verbs "mener" and "conduise" (both mean to lead, to guide) as well as the Latin "viam" (way or road). Eric Leed takes fascinating excursion as he explores the origins of the word "experience" itself with the "retroconstruction" of its Indo-European root **per*.

**Per* has been construed as "to try," "to test," "to risk":—connotations that persist in the English word *peril*. The earliest connotations of **per* appear in Latin words for "experience": *expior* and *experimentum*, whence the English *experiment*....These crossing of words and meanings reflect one of the first conceptualizations of travel as suffering, a test, an ordeal—meanings explicit in the original word for travel: *travail* ... This ostensibly negative sense pervades ancient travel epics, including the *Epic of Gilgamesh*... At every stage of his passage, Gilgamesh is met with the same questions: 'Why are your cheeks so starved and your face drawn? Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey; yes, why is your face burned with heat and cold, and why do you come here wandering over the pasture in search of the wind?' (5-6).

This semantic web links essays, experiments, experience, and travel, and connects the *Epic of Gilgamesh* to Montaigne's *Essais*. More than "jugement"

⁴⁷ III.xii. Rat II, 516. ^AThere is no desire more natural than the desire for knowledge. We try all the ways that can lead us to it. When reason fails us, we use experience—^CExperience, by example led,/ By varied trials art has bred—^Bwhich is a weaker and less dignified means. But truth is so great a thing that we must not disdain any medium that will lead us to it." Frame 815.

or “raison,” “experience” emphasizes Montaigne’s fascination with passage.⁴⁸ His desire to paint passage rather than being (“Je ne peints pas l’estre. Je peins le passage...”) has significant implications for the rites-of-passage model. Instead of viewing life as a series of “normal” stages, Montaigne describes normal life as one long passage: “Nous n’avons aucune communication à l’estre, par ce que toute humaine nature est toujours au milieu entre le naître et le mourir...”⁴⁹ He is interested in recording as much as possible the experience of passage.

The most important topics in the Essais pertain to passage. Along with death, health and illness, travel is Montaigne’s most central concern. As in the ancient epic, when Gilgamesh’s dream and Enkidu’s illness motivated the journey to the cedar forest, so Montaigne recognizes the need to travel as intrinsic to the human condition: “Je sçay bien qu’à le prendre à la lettre, ce plaisir de voyager porte tesmoignage d’inquietude et d’irresolution. Aussi sont ce nos maistresses qualitez, et prædominantes.”⁵⁰ Travel in Gilgamesh was god- and grief-driven. The heroes’ journey to Humbaba’s forest was ill-fated. Gilgamesh’s trip to the abyss and the past was perilous and did not gain him the immortality he sought. Like Gilgamesh, Montaigne finds his quest for knowledge to be like chasing the wind.⁵¹ Each undertakes a solo journey that ultimately takes him back home to himself.

There are important differences as well. Leed offers the following historical contrast: “Ancients saw travel as a suffering, even a penance; for moderns, it is a pleasure and a means to pleasure” (7). Europeans of the sixteenth century were aware of the unprecedented opportunities that travel presented. Montaigne, in particular, embraces travel as he embraces any

⁴⁸ Discussing the shifting currency of “raison” and “experience,” Hayden writes, “The word ‘experience’ is almost as popular in the sixteenth century as ‘reason’ in the eighteenth...” 190.

⁴⁹ II.xii. Rat I, 678. “^AWe have no communication with being, because every human nature is always midway between birth and death...” Frame 455.

⁵⁰ III.ix. Rat II, 431. “^BI know well that if you take it literally, this pleasure in traveling is a testimony of restlessness and irresolution. And indeed these are our ruling and predominant qualities.” Frame 755-6.

⁵¹ Compare Bloom’s and Cave’s readings of Montaigne’s identification with the wind: “Mais quoy, nous sommes par tout vent.” III.xiii. Rat II, 566. “But what of it? We are all wind.” Bloom, intro., Essays 7-8.

natural need and pleasure. For Montaigne, any path that leads to knowledge is worth taking.

Travel is fundamental to Montaigne's view of a proper education:

Ce grand monde, que les uns multiplient encore comme especes soubs un genre, c'est le miroüer où il nous faut regarder pour nous connoistre de biais. Somme, je veux que ce soit le livre de mon escholier. Tant d'humeurs, de sectes, de jugemens, d'opinions, de loix et de coutumes nous apprennent à juger sainement des nostres, et apprennent nostre jugement à reconnoistre son imperfection et sa naturelle foiblesse: qui n'est pas un legier apprentissage.⁵²

The world constitutes the proper textbook for Montaigne, as for his presumptive student or his reader. The proper angle for self-examination may be oblique rather than direct. Examination and experience of the world's variety is the means for self-understanding and improving judgment. The human need for novelty and desire for knowledge can be fulfilled on the road, literally or figuratively, as part of the life's work of apprenticeship.

The significance of travel is readily apparent in "Des cannibales" when we realize that it compresses at least twenty journeys into the principal round-trip excursion between France and the New World. These journeys are part of life's journey as an essay, an investigation, an apprenticeship: in order to learn how to live we must learn who we are. Montaigne's self-study is never limited to himself. His method takes Terence's aphorism "Homo sum, humani a me alienum nihil puto" to the letter.⁵³ In order to know who we are, we examine ourselves directly but also "de bias," from the side, by studying others.

In this basic educational and philosophical principle, the second and third models of liminality intersect. Travel is one of the foremost means by which the Self learns about the Other. The changing face of travel in Renaissance Europe brings the Wild Man Out There and the Wild Man

⁵² I.xxvi. Rat I, 169. "A This great world, which some multiply further as being only a species under one genus, is the mirror in which we must look at ourselves to recognize ourselves from the proper angle. In short, I want it to be the book of my student. So many humors, sects, judgments, opinions, laws, and customs teach us to judge sanely of our own, and teach our judgment to recognize its own imperfection and natural weakness, which is no small lesson." Frame 116.

⁵³ "I am a man, and I consider nothing human to be alien to me." This is one of the 57 sentences inscribed in Montaigne's library ceiling. See page 190 below.

Within into contact. Encounters with different cultures in Africa and the Americas made European cultural self-consciousness possible in the sixteenth century. The mirror of the world, Montaigne's preferred textbook, becomes a mirror for individual and cultural self-study. History reveals that Montaigne was one of the few of his time who, with both curiosity and courage, "looked into the glass darkly and saw his own reflection."⁵⁴

How do we, as readers and critics, deal with an author who asserts that his work is unified, but who doesn't hesitate to contradict himself, and asserts that furthermore these contradictions don't contradict the truth? Early in this century, the answer was found in the concept of evolution, the principal nineteenth century idea to explain change. The work of the French scholar Villey, *Les Sources et l'évolution des Essais de Montaigne* (1908), traced the evolution of Montaigne's thought thorough Stoical, Skeptical, and Epicurean or Naturalist periods, and designated a skeptical crisis in 1571 to mark a rite of passage between the first two stages.⁵⁵ This evolutionary perspective set the tone for much Montaignian criticism of this century, until the rise of textuality in the last two decades. Just as scientists recently have been concerned with separating the Darwinian concept of evolution from ideological assumptions about progress and the human place in the natural order,⁵⁶ recent literary criticism questions the notion of a linear evolution in Montaigne's thought and emphasizes how Montaigne's later essays embody and enlarge ideas latent in the early essays.⁵⁷

On the other hand, change is much more fundamental to Montaigne's thought and work than the evolutionary schema suggests. Change is implicit in the title *Essais*, and Montaigne's interest in recording the experience of passage remains constant. One might even speculate that Pierre Eyquem's innovative educational ideas stimulated his son's sensitivity to transitions.

⁵⁴ Johnson 16. He also usefully compares Montaigne's self-reflexive process to Picasso's "Girl Before a Mirror."

⁵⁵ Both Sayce and Cave discuss Villey's work in regard to impact of Darwinism on literary criticism, especially in France.

⁵⁶ See pages 46-47 above.

⁵⁷ See, for example, Sayce 166.

Car, entre autres choses, il avoit esté conseillé de me faire gouter la science et le devoir par une volonté non forcée et de mon propre désir, et d'eslever mon ame en douceur et liberté, sans rigeur et contrainte. Je dis jusques à telle superstition que, parce que aucun tiennent que cela trouble la cervelle tendre des enfans de les esveiller le matin en sursaut, et de les arracher du sommeil (auquel ils sont plongez beaucoup plus que nous ne sommes) tout à coup et par violence, il me faisoit esveiller par le son de quelque instrument; et ne fus jamais sans homme qui m'en servit.⁵⁸

This anecdote is both touching and revealing. Pierre d'Eyquem's idea of having a member of his household staff to awaken his child daily by music suggests a certain social standing as well as a remarkable commitment both to his son and to his own educational ideals.⁵⁹ Once again the educational ideas seem very modern. The idea that a child learns best when the discipline is gentle and materials are developmentally appropriate echoes the successful way Michel learned Latin: "without whips or tears." Montaigne's insight into developmental psychology is also apparent in his observation that children sleep differently than adults. Furthermore, the twilight states of consciousness, between sleep and wakefulness, between fainting and consciousness have abiding interest to Montaigne. Many critics note Montaigne's attraction to such liminal states.⁶⁰ For example, Luthy opens his comments with the leitmotif of Montaignian criticism: "And yet these 'mental exercises' reach a greatness, a truth and a profundity, when he follows himself into the twilight borderlands of his consciousness, on the edge of sleep, dreams, distractions, torpor, and death..."⁶¹ Montaigne is exceptionally comfortable in these liminal danger zones.

⁵⁸ I.xxvi. Rat I, 189. "For among other things he had been advised to teach me to enjoy knowledge and duty by my own free will and desire, and to educate my mind in all gentleness and freedom, without rigor and constraint. He did this so religiously that because some hold that it troubles the tender brains of children to wake them in the morning with a start and to snatch them suddenly and violently from their sleep, in which they are plunged much more deeply than we are, he had me awakened by the sound of some instrument; and I was never without a man to do this for me." Frame 129.

⁵⁹ The invention of the modern clock-radio makes gentle transitions possible for those without personal fortunes. The contrast between being awakened by a buzzer or by classical music brings Montaigne's point home to the modern reader/sleeper.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Sayce 139 or Starobinski 110.

⁶¹ Herbert Luthy "Montaigne, or the Art of Being Truthful," Bloom, Montaigne 14.

The preference for transitions which are subtle and gentle, artful and anticipated but natural has its ramifications in Montaigne's thought and work. It figures in his approach to death, the final life-passage. The centrality of death in the *Essais* is similar to the importance of death in *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Death is often regarded by critics as one of the principal topics where evolution in Montaigne's thought can be observed: "Mais il m'est avis que [la mort] est bien la bout non le but de la vie; c'est sa fin, son extremité, non pourtant son object."⁶² This passage from the Book III of the *Essais* is considered a rejection of Montaigne's earlier Stoical attitude. And yet a celebrated passage from an early chapter: "que la mort me trouve plantant mes chous, mais nonchalant d'elle, et encore plus de mon jardin imparfait,"⁶³ shows the same calm acceptance of death as a natural process that appears in the final chapter "De l'experience:" "Mais tu ne meurs pas de ce que tu es malade; tu meurs de ce que tu es vivant."⁶⁴

Montaigne's sensitivity to transitions and his aesthetic preference for nonchalance have consequences for his literary undertaking. The importance of passage is also apparent in the textual strategies he employs to link his arguments as well as his chapters. While his chapters are linked thematically, there are also many times in the *Essais* when his goal is not to provide a gentle transition for "tender brains," but to shake his reader out of his or her preconceptions. Then tactics must be different as the following liminal image suggests: "Ou que je veuille donner, il me faut forcer quelque barriere de la coutume, tant elle'a soigneusement bridé toutes nos avenues."⁶⁵ Customs are a necessary guide for creatures as uncertain as human beings. However, it is necessary to shake these barriers to their very foundations to uncover the natural laws which apply universally in contrast with the diversity of local

⁶² III.xii. Rat II, 502. "But it seems to me that death is indeed the end, but not the goal, of life; it is its finish, its extremity, but not therefore the goal." Frame 805. The English version doesn't capture Montaigne's pun on "bout" (end) and "but" (goal). On the evolution of Montaigne's approach to death, see, for example, Sayce and Frame.

⁶³ I.xx. Rat I, 91. "A...and I want death to find me planting my cabbages, but careless of death, and still more of my unfinished garden." Frame 62.

⁶⁴ III.xiii. Rat II, 548. "But you do not die of being sick, your die of being alive." Frame 837.

⁶⁵ I.xxxvi. Rat I, 255. "Wherever I want to turn, I have to force some barrier of custom, so carefully has it blocked all our approaches." Frame 166.

customs. In essays such as "Des cannibales" and the "Apologie," Montaigne's desire to shake those mental boundaries dictated by custom and convention takes precedence and the consequences are apparent on thematic and stylistic levels.

2. The Intertextuality of the *Essais*

A profound aspect of the openness of the *Essais* is due to its remarkable intertextuality. As the title reveals, Villey's landmark 1908 study was to establish both the sources and evolution of the *Essais*. It is the former topic which is now at the center of much of recent criticism of Montaigne's *Essais*.⁶⁶ The emphasis on textuality dictates that the question is no longer one of determining Montaigne's sources, but evaluating what he did with these sources, and assessing his strength in the face of his predecessors. A truism in Montaignian criticism can be demonstrated anew in the 1980's and 1990's. As Luthy observed "There have been almost as many different Montaigne's as there have been readers of him. For the pious, he was a man of piety, and for the free thinkers, a free-thinker; for the pagan a pagan..." (12). So, structuralists find structure in the *Essais*,⁶⁷ Freudians find anxiety,⁶⁸ neurotics find neurosis,⁶⁹ and deconstructionists discover emptiness at the core of *Essais*.⁷⁰

No one seems to disagree with the assessment that the *Essais* is one of the most profoundly intertextual of all literary works. In the words of Terence Cave, "All literature, it can be argued, depends for its existence on the literary texts which preceded it, whether or not it draws directly on them as its sources, and the proposition is nowhere more palpably true than in the *Essais*"(133). For all his innovations, Montaigne is well aware of his predeces-

⁶⁵ Besides Terence Cave, other critics interested in this aspect of the *Essais* include Antoine Companion, Mary McKinley, Dorothy Coleman, Steven Rendall, and Jefferson Humphries.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Sayce and Steven Rendall Distinguuo: Reading Montaigne Differently (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1992) Chapter 1.

⁶⁸ See Bloom's introduction in Montaigne.

⁶⁹ O'Neill disagrees with the diagnosis in Chapter 6, "Reading and temperament."

⁷⁰ For example, Terence Cave, The Cornucopian Text, Problems of Reading and Writing in the French Renaissance (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1979).

sors, which include Pliny's Natural History, the Moralia of Plutarch, Aulus Gellius' Attic Nights, Machiavelli's Discourses, Erasmus' Adagia and Colloquies, as well as numerous lesser works of Renaissance, collections of exempla and other miscellany. The Essais began as an intertextual exercise. Montaigne did not set out to create a new genre, but to record his reactions to his readings, among other things. Montaigne speaks openly of his thefts, "mes larrecins" (I.xxvi) and describes his work as an "amas de fleurs étrangers,"—a bunch of other people's flowers (III.xii).

In fact, the Essais are nearly as intertextual as a modern reference work such as Bartlett's Familiar Quotations. As Sayce observes, "To talk of sources seems in the end grossly inadequate" (33). For example, Cave counts some 1,300 proper quotations in the Essais, set off from the text by indentation and italic print (144). These official intertexts appear in both prose and verse, in Latin, Italian, Greek, and French. For example, "Des cannibales" includes direct quotations from Virgil, Horace, Propertius, and Seneca. Besides these "visible borrowings" (Sayce 34), there are many which might be called "translucent:" translations, references, summaries, and allusions. In "Des cannibales" such sources include Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and other classical philosophers and historians.

It is not Montaigne's text alone which is intertextual. Even today, his house bears the marks of his passion for intertexts. In the library where Montaigne tells us that he wrote all of his Essais, the ceiling beams of this library are inscribed with 57 aphorisms in Greek and Latin, mostly from the Scriptures and classical sources.⁷¹ Even these intertexts display palimpsestic features. Several of the citations from Scripture are painted over earlier quotations. Textual problems arise, complicated by what Cave calls "Montaigne's penchant for misquotation" (148). For example, several of the aphorisms cannot be found in the sources Montaigne gives for them in the body of the Essais. Far from considering sources pure and inviolate, Montaigne felt free to adapt them to suit his own purposes.

Montaigne's use of intertextuality is sophisticated. Cave and others show that to adequately study Montaigne's intertexts, a double process of reading is required. Besides appreciating a borrowing in context in the Essais,

⁷¹ A complete list is available in "Appendice II: Liste des sentences inscrites dans la 'librairie' de Montaigne," Rat II, 612. Translations and sources are also given.

a critic should also examine the original context of the borrowing. When a quotation is replaced in its original context, a meaningful contrast may emerge between the apparent meaning in Montaigne's context and in the original.

For example, the epigraph to the Bordeaux Copy of Book III, viresque acquirit eundo, (literally "gathers strength in going") is interpreted by Sayce to show "Montaigne's growing confidence in the value of his book" (13). And indeed, one of the arguments for the evolution of the Essais is the increased self-confidence and maturity of the third book. This is also attributed to the positive public reception of the Essais, by the time Montaigne added this epigraph.

On the other hand, if we place the epigraph back in its original context,⁷² we find that it comes from one of the most famous episodes from the Book IV of the Aeneid, where Dido, unmindful of fame and reputation, makes love to Aeneas in a secluded cave and covers her crime with name of marriage.⁷³ The epigraph itself appears in the description of the monster Fama, evil Rumor, who immediately sets out through Libya to spread the word of the queen's shame:

Extemplo Libyae magnus it Fama per urbes,
Fama, malum qua non aliud uelocius ullum,
mobilitate uiget *uirisque adquirit eundo*,
parua metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras,
ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.⁷⁴

Virgil's personification of Rumor is remarkable. The growth of this ignoble monster takes place before our eyes. The more damage she does to Dido's reputation, the larger she grows. Evil and size are explicitly linked.⁷⁵ When

⁷² Following the suggestion of Rendell, Distinguo 78-80.

⁷³ "neque enim *specie famae* mouetur / nec iam furtiu[m] Dido mediatur amorem:/ coniugium uocat, hoc praetexerit nomine culpam." Aenied, IV. 170-72. My italics. Latin text from Virgil, Opera (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969).

⁷⁴ IV. 173-176. "Immediately, Rumor runs through the great cities of Libya, Rumor, the swiftest of all evils, who *gathers momentum and strength as she goes*. At first she is small because of fear, soon she lifts herself up into the air and walks on the ground, her head concealed in the clouds." My italics and translation.

⁷⁵ See the discussion of Humbaba in Chapter 4.

we replace the epigraph in its context in Book III, we appreciate the irony it adds to Montaigne's assessment of his increasing reputation and growing strength. There is self-mockery here, as well as the recognition that Fame has its dark side.

Finally, there are also many cases of "invisible" borrowings as well. Montaigne does not always indicate whether he is speaking for himself or conveying some else's ideas. There are even more extreme situations. In "Des cannibales," for example, some of most interesting of Montaigne's borrowings are those he does not acknowledge and even rhetorically denies.

The Essais suit Barthes' description of a text as "a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture."⁷⁶ Again, the critical problem is to evaluate how these borrowings are woven into his own text. Montaigne was devoted to his library, responding at length in the margins of his books. He describes it as a dialogue: "...quelque langue que parlent mes livres, je leur parle en la mienne."⁷⁷ It is equally important that Montaigne does not restrict the "innumerable centers of culture" to literary texts. He also borrows from the famous people and events of his own time, from every-day incidents, and above all, from personal experience. He makes it clear that he considers these events and experiences no less significant or authoritative than the citations from great men of the past or from the Bible. The Essais is built on the leveling of authority that accompanies his experience of life.

3. Form, Formlessness, and Liminality

The openness of the work is strengthened by the extent to which the form of the Essais is a refusal of form: "C'est le seul livre au monde de son espece, d'un dessein farouche et extravagant."⁷⁸ Montaigne frequently uses the metaphor of painting to describe his own unique project. In the following passage, he chooses an example from parietal art. These were not paintings from the cave walls in nearby Dordogne (discussed above in Chapter 3 and

⁷⁶ See page 73 above.

⁷⁷ II.x. Rat I, 460. "...^Afor whatever language my books speak, I speak to them in my own." Frame 305.

⁷⁸ II.viii. Rat I, 422. "^CIt is ^Athe only book of its kind in the world, a book with ^Aa wild and eccentric plan." Frame 278. Note Frame's translation of "farouche" as wild.

unknown in Montaigne's time), but contemporary art, painted at Montaigne's commission in his own property.

Considerant la conduite de la besogne d'un peintre que j'ay, il m'a pris envie de l'ensuivre. Il choisit le plus bel endroit et milieu de chaque paroy, pour y loger un tableau élabouré de toute sa suffisance; et, le vuide au tour, il remplit de crotessesques, qui sont peintures fantastaques, n'ayant grâce qu'en la varieté et estrangeté. Que sont-ce icy aussi, à la verité que crotessesques et corps monstrueux, rappiecez de divers membres, sans certaine figure, n'ayants ordre, suite ny proportion que fortuite?

Desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne. ⁷⁹

*A
C-H III*

Montaigne makes the affinity between these marginal paintings and his own works explicit. He contrasts them with the artist's central painting: "un tableau riche, poly et formé selon l'art."⁸⁰ Both the grotesques and the Essais display the characteristics of liminal symbols as described by Victor Turner.⁸¹ The paintings are fantastic, grotesque, varied and strange: each adjective applies equally to the images of the wild man! The intertext at the end of this passage is from the opening of Horace's Ars Poetica.⁸² Horace compares art works that are poorly assembled to one of the most common of hybrid liminal symbols, the mermaid.⁸³ Not incidentally, the Ars is also the source of the most famous comparison in literary criticism: ut pictura poesis, (l. 360-1) the locus classicus for comparisons between the arts of writings and painting.

It takes an audacious author to compare such marginal, distorted shapes to his own work: "crotessesques et corps monstrueux." Yet Montaigne

⁷⁹ I.xxviii. Rat I, 197-8. "As I was considering the way a painter I employ went about his work, I had a mind to imitate him. He chooses the best spot, the middle of each wall, to put a picture labored over with all his skill, and the empty space all around it he fills with grotesques, which are fantastic paintings whose only charm lies in their variety and strangeness. And what are these things of mine, in truth, but grotesques and monstrous bodies, pieced together of diverse members, without definite shape, having no order, sequence, or proportion other than accidental? A lovely woman tapers off into a fish (Horace)." Frame 135.

⁸⁰ "a rich, polished picture, formed according to art." Frame 135.

⁸¹ See the discussion of Turner on pages 64-67.

⁸² See Chapter 1 for a discussion of the Ars in connection with Cicero's De inventione.

⁸³ Ironically, the Ars has long been indicted for its own lack of coherent form. Coleridge calls "unmethodical miscellany." Gilbert 124.

specifies the similarities on formal grounds. The diverse chapters which make up the Essais are the “membres diverse” of this “corps monstrueux.” The form of the Essais is never solid or certain, and the various pieces are assembled by chance rather than order, logic or decorum. This is a remarkable statement of poetics, and makes it clear why classical aesthetics regarded Montaigne’s work with such antipathy. It is appropriate that Montaigne devotes so much interest to liminal states and figures. In his own conception, the Essais is a liminal work.

Part of the formal challenge of the Essais is evident in the layout of the pages in the original editions. Besides the setting off of verse quotations, the only indication of subordination that Montaigne desired in his early editions was to separate the title from the body of the chapter. This format is illustrated in the opening pages from “Des cannibales” in the 1582 edition. (See Figure 13.) There are no headings or subheadings. With the exception of the chapter “De l’incertitude de nostre jugement,” there is not even any paragraphing in the early editions! (Sayce 16).

Modern editions and translations break the essays up into a more user-friendly form, including paragraphs and footnotes to clarify references and sources. It is important to remember that the paragraphs and many punctuation marks are modern editorial, not authorial choices. Montaigne intended the chapters to be held together by thematically, and by the same token, it is thematic unity which binds the individual chapters to the whole.

Je m’egare, mais plutot par licence que par mesgarde. Mes fantaisies se suyvent, mais par fois c’est de loing, et se regardent, mais d’une veue oblique...Les noms de mes chapitres n’en embrassent pas toujours la matiere; souvent ils la denotent seulement que par quelque marques...J’entends que la matiere se distingue soy-mesmes. Elle montre assez où elle change, où elle conclut, où elle commence, où elle se reprend, sans l’entrelasser de

C H A P. XXXI.

Des Cannibales.

QVad le Roy Pyrrhus passa en Italie, apres qu'il eut recōneu l'ordonnance de l'armée que les Romains luy enuoioit au deuant, ic ne scay, dit il, quels barbares sont ceux-ci (car les Grecs appelloient toutes les nations barbares) mais la disposition de ceste armée, queie voy, n'est aucuneinnet barbare. Autant en dirēt les Grecs de celle que Flaminius fit passer en leur païs. Voilacōment il se faut garder de s'atacher aux opinions vulgaires, & faut iugier les choses par la voye de la raison, non de la voix communie. I'ay eu lō ḡ temps avec moy vn homme qui auoit demeuré dix ou douze ans en c'est autre monde, qui a esté descouvert en nostre siecle en l'endroit ou Vilegainō print terre, qu'il surnomma la France Antartique. Ceste descouverte d'un païs infini de terre ferme, semble de grande consideration. Je ne scay si ic me puis respondre que il ne s'en face a l'aduenir quelqu'autre, tant de grands personnages ayent esté trompez en ceste-ci. I'ay peur que nous auons les yeus plus grands que le ventre, comme on diſt, & le dit on de ceus, ausquels l'appetit & la faim font plus desirer de viande, qu'ils n'en peuuent empocher. Je crains aussi que nous auons beaucoup plus de curiosité, que nous n'auons de capacité. Nous embrassions tout: mais ie crains que nous n'ētreignons rien que du vent. Platon introduit Solon racontant auoit apres des prestres de la ville de Saïs en AĒgypte, que iadis & auant le deluge, il y auoit vā grande Isle nommée Athlantide, droict a la bouche du deſtroit de Gibraltar, qui tenoit plus de païs que l'Afrique & l'Asie toutes deux ensemble: & que les Roys de ceste contrée la, qui ne posseoint pas seulement ceste ile, mais s'estoient estēdus dans la terre ferme si auāt, qui renoint de la largeur d'Afrique, iusques en AĒgypte, & de la longueur de l'Europe, iusque en!

L I V R E P R E M I E R.

187

en la Toscane entreprindrēt d'eniāber iusques sur l'Asie, & subiuguer toutes les natiōs qui bordent la mer Mediterranēe iusques au golfe de la mer Maiour, & pour cest effēt trauerſerent les Espaignes, la Gaule, l'Italie iusques en la Grece, ou les Atheniens les souſtindrent: mais que quelque temps apres & l'es Atheniens & eux & leur iſle furent engloutis par le deluge. Il est bien vray-ſemblable que cest extreme rusage d'eaux ait fait des changemens estranges aux habitations de la terre, comme on tient que la mer a retranche la Sycile d'avec l'Italie, Chypre d'avec la Surie, l'isle de Negrepont de la terre ferme de la Beoce: & ioint ailleurs les terres qui estoient diuisées, comblant de limon & de ſable les foſſez d'entre-deux.

*Steriliſque diſ palus aptiſque remis
Vicinas urbes alit, & grasse ſentit aratrum.*

Mais il n'y a pas grande apparēce que ceste Isle soit ce monde nouveau, que nous venons de descouvrir, car elle touchoit quasī l'Espaigne: & ce seroit vn effēt incroyable d'inundation, de l'en auoir reculée, comme elle est, de plus de douze cēs lieuēs, outre ce q̄ les nauigations des modernes ont des-ia presque descouert, que ce n'est point vne iſle, ains terre ferme & continēte avec l'Inde oriētale d'un coſté, & avec les terres qui font sous les deux poles d'autre part: ou si elle en est ſeparée, que c'est d'yn ſi petit deſtroit

Figure 13. Sample pages from the 1582 Edition of "Des cannibales," showing the single paragraph format. Rpt. from Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, Réproduction photographique de la deuxième édition (Bordeaux, 1582), introd. Marcel Françon (Cambridge: Harvard U, 1969) 185-7.

parolles de liaison et de couture introduictes pour le service des oreilles foibles ou nonchallantes, et sans me glosier moy-mesme.⁸⁴

We see here formal considerations that will prove significant to "Des cannibales." Since the only formal architecture Montaigne provides is the title and text for each chapter, the relationship between the two merits special attention. We are forewarned that the connections may not be obvious! Just as we recognize ourselves obliquely in others, so the obliqueness is valued in literary connections. Digressions are integral part of the formal plan. Any topic is fair game since all topics are linked.

An open work requires the active participation of the reader.⁸⁵ Montaigne demands a great deal of his readers. No weak and heedless ears ("oreilles foibles et nonchallantes") need apply! He continues: "C'est l'indiligent lecteur qui pert mon subject, non pas moy; il s'en trouvera tousjours en un coing quelque mot qui ne laisse pas d'estre bastant, quoy qu'il soit serré."⁸⁶ The reader must make the effort to follow Montaigne's "fantaisies." The reader is expected to chase words and intertexts, and sew the seams which bind the textual fabric.

The common impression of wordiness and digressivity in Montaigne is complicated by his avowed refusal to "se glosier," to gloss himself. Instead Montaigne packs so much into his *texte* that only the tip of the iceberg, the word in the corner, or the heads of his arguments show:

Si suis je trompé, si guere d'autres donnent plus a prendre en la matiere; et, comment que ce soit, mal ou bien, si nul escrivain l'a semée ny guere plus materielle ny au moins plus drue en son papier. Pour en ranger davantage, je n'entasse que les testes. Que

⁸⁴ III.ix. Rat II, 438-439. "B I go out of my way, but rather by license than carelessness. My ideas follow one another, but sometimes it is from a distance, and look at each other, but with a side-long glance...The titles of my chapters do not always embrace their matter; often they only denote it by sign...I want the matter to make its own divisions. It shows well enough where it changes, where it concludes, where it begins, where it resumes, without my interlacing it with words, with links and seams introduced for the benefit of weak and headless ears, and without writing glosses on myself." Frame 761.

⁸⁵ See page 76 above.

⁸⁶ Rat II, 438. "C It is the inattentive reader who loses my subject, not I. Some word about it will always be found off in a corner, which will not be fail to be sufficient, though it takes little room." Frame 761.

j'ay attache leur suite, je multiplieray plusieurs fois ce volume. Et combien y ay-je espandu d'histoires qui ne disent mot, lesquelles qui vouldra esplucher un peu ingenusement, en produira infinis *Essais*.⁸⁷

The *Essais* that the reader holds in hand, the concrete work, is merely a condensed version of a greater, potentially infinite *Essais*, which each reader can create by reading intelligently and imaginatively. It is up to the reader to see the underlying unity which links all the subjects. It is up to the reader to fill in the gaps and construct the literary work as part of the dynamic process of reading, as in any texts, but in the *Essais* more than most.

This process of expansion is not limited to reading the *Essais*. The process of writing the *Essais* was palimpsestic as well. This is a text which refused to sit still. Montaigne continually revised his text, as we see in Figure 14 which shows a page from the Bordeaux Copy. In Montaigne's poetics, revision means that the text is continually enlarged. Like Virgil's *Fama*, the *Essais* grow as they go.

Laisse, lecteur, courir encour ce coup d'essay et ce troisieme alongeail du reste des piéces de ma peinture. J'adjouste, mais je ne corrige pas. Premierement, par ce que celuy qui a hypothecqué au monde son ouvrage, je trouve apparence qu'il n'y aye plus de droict. Qu'il die, s'il peut, mieux ailleurs, et ne corrompre la besogne qu'il a vendue.⁸⁸

Montaigne combines the artistic with an architectural metaphor, and reinforces the contention that there is an overall unity to his construction, despite the continual addition of wings and extensions. He invokes the image of the mosaic in carpentry terms, when he refers to the *Essais* in a succeeding line as "marquetry mal jointe."⁸⁹ The essay, like Montaigne, is in motion.

⁸⁷ I.xl. Rat I, 282. "C Yet I am much mistaken if many other writers offer more to take hold of in their material than I do, and, whether for better or for worse, if any writer has sown his materials more substantially or at least more thickly on his paper. In order to get more in, I pile up only the headings of subjects. Were I to add on their consequences, I would multiply this volume many times over. And how many stories have I spread around which anyone who troubles to pluck them with a little ingenuity will produce numberless essays." Frame 185.

⁸⁸ III.ix. Rat II, 402. "B Reader, let this essay of myself run on, and this third extension of the other part of my painting. I add, but I do not correct. First, because when a man has mortgaged his work to the world, it seems to me that he has no further right to it. Let him speak better elsewhere, if he can, and not adulterate the work he has sold." Frame 736.

⁸⁹ Rat II, 402. "C ill-fitted patchwork." Frame 736.

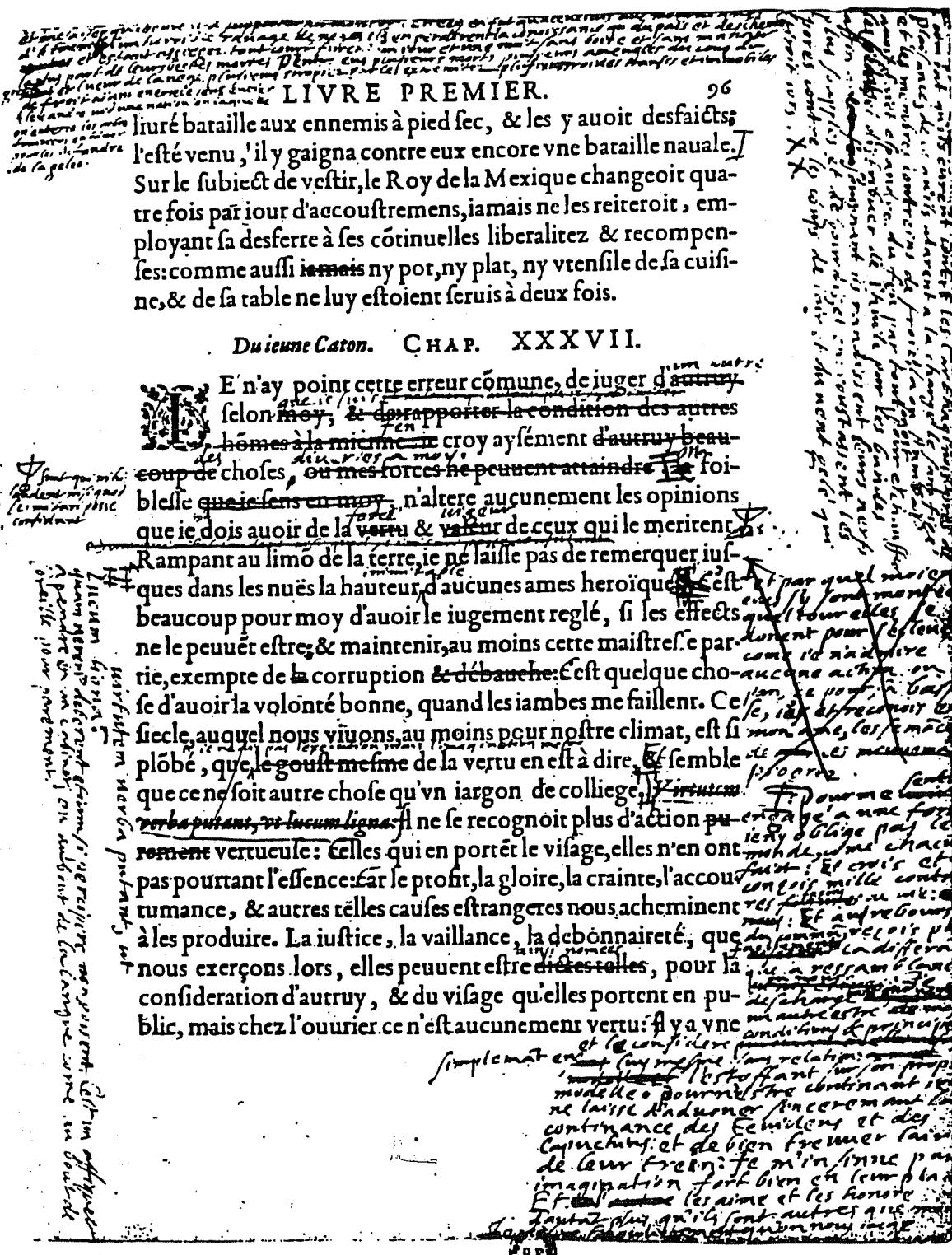


Figure 14. Sample page from the Bordeaux Copy (1588 edition of the *Essais*) showing Montaigne's handwritten additions. Rpt. In Adam, *Littérature française*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Larousse, 1967) 142.

The reader must run along, too, to keep up. Montaigne's embrace of passage makes sense of the contrast between "adjouste" and "corrige": "I add on, but I do not erase or repudiate."⁹⁰ Montaigne prefers to contradict an earlier belief or observation and let the contradiction stand than suppress either belief or option.

First of all, these layers of meaning add a desired "subtilité amibitieuse" (II. 403). The ingenious reader will "catch his drift."⁹¹ Secondly, such an approach reflects Montaigne's epistemology. Who is to say when the next truth will present itself? This is precisely the way he compares the arguments of Copernicus with the prevailing geocentric model of the solar system: "Que prendrons nous de là, sinon qu'il ne nous doit chaloir le quel ce soit des deux? Et qui sçait qu'une tierce opinion, d'icy à mille ans, ne renverse les deux precedents?"⁹² His pledge ("hypothèque") to his readers is not to contradict the truth of his experience, although that experience, like the world, is composed of contraries and contradictions.

Patrick Henry suggests that Montaigne's "obsessive" re-reading and re-writing of his own text is so significant that we should consider the earlier versions of the *Essais* as intertext, rather than intratext.⁹³ This suggestion applies to "Des cannibales" (I.xxi: 1578-80), which becomes an intertext in Montaigne's subsequent treatment of the new world in "Des coches" (III.vi: 1585-88). Montaigne's palimpsest incorporates additions and adjustments into an ever-unfolding, ever-growing *Essais*: "Qui ne voit que j'ay pris une route par laquelle, sans cesse et sans travail, j'iray autant qu'il y aura d'ancre et du

⁹⁰ Compare the use of "corriger" in the passage cited on page 171 above: "Je n'ai pas corrigé...mes complexions naturelles..."

⁹¹ Compare I.xl. Rat I, 283-3. "[Mes histoires] portent souvent, hors de mon propos, la semence d'une matière plus riche et plus hardie, et sonnent à gauche un ton plus delicat, et pour moy qui n'en veux exprimer davantage, et pour ceux qui rencontreront mon air." "[My stories] often bear, outside of my subject, the seeds of a richer and bolder material, and sound obliquely a subtler note, both for myself, who do not wish to express anything more, and for those who get my drift." Frame 185. Follows the passage cited page 197 above.

⁹² II.xii. Rat I, 640. "What do we get out of that, unless that we should not bother which of the two is so? And who knows whether a third opinion, a thousand years from now, will overthrow the preceding two?" Frame 429.

⁹³ Patrick Henry, "Recognition of the Other and Avoidance of the Double," *Stanford French Review* 6 (1982) 176.

papier au monde.⁹⁴ There is no preordained closure to this work, short of the exhaustion of natural resources or the death of the writer. And then there its readers...

Many modern editions draw our attention to the palimpsestic nature of the *Essais* by including superscripts throughout the text to indicate the date of specific passages or words. Following the work of Strowski and Villey at the beginning of our century, editors of the *Essais* have employed geologic imagery—strata and layers—to create a tripartite scheme to indicate which portions of the text were written before 1588 (the A stratum), the 1588 edition (B) or after 1588 (C).⁹⁵ Although these notations, like the brackets and interpolations in *Gilgamesh*, can be distracting to the reader, they underscore the process of writing and reading. The reader has the sense of watching a mind at work. As we read, aware of the superposition of layers, we imagine Montaigne rewriting and adding. We follow the nuances of his thoughts. To select just one of many examples: “^BThe most beautiful lives to my mind, are those that conform to the common ^Chuman ^Bpattern, ^Cwith order, but ^Bwithout miracle and without eccentricity.”⁹⁶ When the strata are marked, our attention is inevitably drawn to the additions “human” and “with order,” and we can reflect on those words as the on-going refinement of Montaigne’s judgment of what a beautiful life should be.

Given this preference for a subterranean, semantic order, it may seem a bit disingenuous to speak of Montaignian essays in terms of genre. In fact, the absence of formal rules becomes one of the essay’s defining features, as in M. H. Abrams’ *Glossary of Literary Terms*: [T]he essay discusses...any subject whatsoever...in nontechnical fashion, and often with a liberal uses of such

⁹⁴ III.ix. Rat II, 381. “^BWho does not see that I have taken a road along which I shall go, without stopping and without effort, as long as there is ink and paper in the world?” Frame 721. Compare Leed’s comments on “travel” and “travail,” p. 183 above.

⁹⁵ Maskell argues that even these indications oversimplify and mislead: “In fact the letter (a) does not indicate the readings of the 1580 edition, but only that a version of the passage can be found in the editions of 1580 or 1582. Similarly, the letter (b) does not necessarily indicate the reading of 1588, but only that a version of the passage occurred for the first time in that edition. Finally, the letter (c) indicates the manuscript additions of the Bordeaux Copy, not the readings of 1595 where these differ from the Bordeaux Copy” (32).

⁹⁶ From “Of experience” 3.13, Frame 857.

devices as anecdote, striking illustration and humor to augment its appeal."⁹⁷ This sounds a good deal like Rosalie Colie's description of paradox: "intermingling of mood, tone, genre, and style...simultaneous creation and recreation, imitation and invention, cutting across the regulations of conventional Platonic and Aristotelian critical theory..." (xii). Laurence Kritzmann's definition insists on the openness of the essay: "The genre of the essay is always in the process of *becoming*; its true essence lies in the reality that it is incapable of completing itself, of establishing a conclusion."⁹⁸ Liminal imagery seems inevitable when the essay is discussed. For example, Rendell attributes "much of the fascination of the Essais to their situation on the borderline between philosophical and literary discourse" (11).

Currently, essays are considered nonfiction. As such, the essay has become the genre of choice in disciplines such as journalism and social sciences, where a tone of objectivity is valued but flexibility rather than closure is in order. For example, Clifford Geertz comments on the appropriateness of the essay form for cultural studies:

Every serious cultural analysis starts from a sheer beginning and ends where it manages to get before exhausting its intellectual impulses...It is for this reason, among others, that the essay, whether of thirty pages or three hundred has seemed the natural genre with which to present cultural interpretations and the theories sustaining them, and why if one looks for systematic treatises in the field, one is so soon disappointed, the more so if one finds any (25).

Any interpretive science, which seeks "the comprehension of the self by the detour of the comprehension of other" in Paul Ricoeur's famous phrase, finds the essay to be a natural form.⁹⁹ Geertz, like Kritzmann, singles out the importance of the essay's lack of closure: "Nor have I gotten anywhere near to the bottom of anything I have ever written about...Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete" (29). The poststructuralist concerns about the nature of writing and authorship have only added to these problems which the

⁹⁷ M. H. Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms, 4th ed. (1981; New York: Holt, 1941) 55.

⁹⁸ Laurence Kritzmann, "My Body, My Text: Montaigne and the Rhetoric of Sexuality," Bloom, Essays 83.

⁹⁹ See, for example, Paul Rabinow, Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco (Berkely: U California P, 1977) 5.

essay's open form encourages. In Works and Lives, Geertz stresses the predicament of the ethnographer who is expected to "sound like a pilgrim and a cartographer at the same time" and possess "the Olympianism of the unauthorial physicist and the sovereign consciousness of the hyperauthorial novelist."¹⁰⁰ The reader is also a major player in the ethnographer's challenge.

The ability of anthropologists to get us to take what they say seriously has less to do with either a factual look or an air of conceptual elegance than it has with their capacity to convince us that what they say is a result of their having actually penetrated (or, if you prefer having been penetrated by) another form of life, of having, one way or another, truly 'been there.' And that, persuading us that this offstage miracle has occurred, is where the writing comes in (Works 4-5).

Judging from Montaigne's example, the balance between objectivity and subjectivity in the essay has always been problematic. This offstage miracle is pertinent to Montaigne's ethnography in "Des cannibales," but it is a broader literary concern as well.

4. The Self-portrait

The Essais demonstrate above all that the author of an essay need not remain hidden. The essay can be as personal as any lyric poem. Montaigne has no intention of hiding behind a mask of objectivity. From his opening address to the reader in the 1580 edition, we are informed that this literary work is to be read as a self-portrait. This aspect of Montaigne's fiction, where the author serves as artist *and* object of imitation, is an extremely important aspect of the originality of the Essais. It distinguishes Montaigne's vision of the essay from precursors such as Plutarch and Machiavelli and immediate successors such as Bacon. Sayce makes the point well:

A grave difficulty, in this as well as other respects, lies in Montaigne's multiplicity: a different result will appear if we seek origins of the discursive form, the self-portrait, the analysis of mental processes (the 'espineuse entreprinse'), the depiction of mo-

¹⁰⁰ Geertz, Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988) 10.

bility, and so on (and of course his full originality can only be appreciated when we take them all together).¹⁰¹

The notice to the reader explains the enterprise as a private, personal one: "aucune fin, que domestique et privée."¹⁰² The work has been created as a gift to family and friends so that the author will be remembered when, as soon must happen, he leaves them. The second part of the address to the reader introduces the painting metaphor previously discussed:

Je veus qu'on m'y voie en ma façon simple, naturelle et ordinaire, sans contantion et artifice: car c'est moy que je peins. Mes defauts s'y liront au vif, et ma forme naïfve, autant que la reverence publicque me l'a permis. Que si j'eusse esté entre ces nations qu'on dict vivre sous la douce liberté des premières loix de nature, je t'asseure que je m'y fusse très-voluntiers peint tout entier et tout nud. Ainsi, lecteur je suis moy-mesmes la matiere de mon livre: ce n'est pas raison que tu employes ton loisir en un subject si frivole et si vain...¹⁰³

This passage brings together the elements we have examined in our exploration of the open qualities in both the style and content of the *Essais*. The analogy with the painted self-portrait inscribes Montaigne's project within in the mimetic tradition. There is no question about object of imitation: "je suis moy-mesmes la matiere de mon livre." The manner of imitation is also specified, in contrasting terms that recur throughout the *Essais*: nature over art, "simple, naturelle, ordinaire, naive," not "contantion" or "artifice." Of course the question remains, is it nature he is after or the appearance of nature? Spontaneity or the appearance of spontaneity? These questions of technique and appearance apply to any mimetic undertaking, such as painting or writing.

¹⁰¹ Sayce 38. It is striking how often Sayce, like Montaigne, makes his strongest remarks in parenthetical asides.

¹⁰² Rat I, 1. "...^Ano goal but a private and domestic one." Frame 2.

¹⁰³ Rat I, 1. "I want to be seen here in my simple, natural, ordinary fashion, without straining or artifice; for it is myself that I portray. My defects will here be read to the life, and also my natural form, as far as respect for the public has allowed. Had I been placed among those nations which are said to live still in the sweet freedom of nature's first laws, I assure you I should very gladly have portrayed myself here entire and wholly naked. Thus, reader, I am myself the matter of my book; you would be unreasonable to spend your leisure on so frivolous and vain a subject." Frame 2.

The problem of decorum is raised when he emphasizes that he has pursued this simple, natural, naive style as far as his respect for public sensibility allows. Note how basic his concern with custom and decorum are. While he is to be the object of imitation, the process of imitation itself is culturally conditioned and limited. The contrast between France and the New World, central to "Des cannibales," is announced in these lines. As he moves into the conditional mode, "si j'eusse été," we travel to the land of the possible. Montaigne's "qu'on dict" has the same quality as Cicero's "quoddam tempus" and Horace's "dictus...dictus," taking us to the mythic land of the homines silvestres. In contrast with Cicero, Montaigne paints the wild-man nation in a positive light. Nature's first laws guarantee sweet freedom, not a brutish existence.

In "De l'usage de se vestir," he addresses the connection between the Golden Age and New World again and expands: "Je divisoy, en cette saison frileuse, si la façon d'aller tout nud de ces nations denierment trouvées est une façon forcée par la chaude temperature de l'air, comme nous disons des Indiens et des Mores, ou si c'est l'originele des hommes."¹⁰⁴ Montaigne argues that wearing clothes is primarily a question of custom: "...comme ceux qui esteignent par artificielle lumiere celle du jour, nous avons esteint nos propres moyens par les moyens empruntez."¹⁰⁵

While the significance of clothing is established here, the contrast between external and internal is suggested as well. Montaigne is sensitive to the need to conform in external matters, such as clothing, while maintaining internal, personal freedom: "...le sage doit au dedans retirer son ame de la presse, et la tenir en liberté et puissance de juger librement des choses; mais quant au dehors, qu'il doit suivre entierement les façons et formes receues."¹⁰⁶ Is clothing then artifice or disguise? Deceit or protection?

¹⁰⁴ I.xxvi. Rat I, 255. "On the custom of wearing clothes" "AI was wondering in this shivery season whether the fashion of going stark naked in these lately discovered nations is forced on them by the warm temperature of the air, as we say of the Indians and the Moors, or whether it is the original way of mankind." Frame 166.

¹⁰⁵ Rat I, 255. "...^Abut like those who by artificial light extinguish the light of day, we have extinguished our means by borrowed means." Frame 167.

¹⁰⁶ I.xxiii. Rat I, 125. "...^Athe wise man should withdraw his soul within, out of the crowd, and keep it in freedom and power to judge things freely; but as for externals, he should wholly follow the accepted fashions and forms." Frame 86.

Montaigne's desire to portrayal himself wholly and frankly might be possible if his readers were comfortable with nudity. Could such aesthetics be possible in nations where clothing is not worn? Or are these nations mythic, a state of mind, an open-mindedness that a reader of any nation, of any time might possess? This combination of ethnology and morality also anticipates "Des cannibales."

This desire to appear nude¹⁰⁷ also stands in contrast with the closing assertion of modesty: "si frivole et vain." The final line can be interpreted in conventional terms as an evocation of the humility *topos*, practiced by Erasmus and DuBellay among others. It may also be the modesty of an explorer, who is aware that he is charting unknown territory. In this sense it is also a warning to the reader: conventional or pedantic readers, those easily offended or in search of frivolity should look elsewhere. For that reason, the address to the reader is also a clue to be on the alert for autobiographical elements in these early essays, where the subject seems to be decidedly elsewhere (Cave 153-4). "Des cannibales" is a good case in point.

The idea of the self-portrait helps determine the shape of Montaigne's explorations, the project of self-knowledge. The essay's formlessness and internal inconsistencies reflect not just Montaigne's external appearance, but all the more his interior features, the psychological dimensions that no painting cannot capture: the passage of thought, the movement of change. The motif (is it figurative or literal?) of the self-portrait is pursued in a later chapter.

Moulant sur moy cette figure, il m'a fallu si souvent dresser et composer pour m'extraire que le patron s'en est fermy et aucunement formé soy-mesmes. Me peignant pour autruy, je me suis peint en moy de couleurs plus nettes que n'estroyent les miennes premieres. Je n'ay plus faict mon livre que mon livre m'a faict, livre consubstantiel à son auteur, d'une occupation propre, membre de ma vie; non d'une occupation et fin tierce et estrangere comme tous autres livres.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ O'Neill discusses the difference between "nudity" and "nakedness" in English (nude and naked are both "nu" in French), invoking John Berger and Kenneth Clark. See 203 and 228n26.

¹⁰⁸ II.xvii. Rat II, 69. "In modeling this figure on myself, I have had to fashion and compose myself so often to bring myself out, that the model itself has to some extent grown firm and taken shape. Painting myself for others, I have painted my inward self with colors clearer than my original ones. I have no more made my book than my book has made me—a book

The process of self-portraiture affects both the painter and the subject. As Colie points out, self-reference is inherently paradoxical: "The reflexive self-reference is, as the term suggests, a mirror image; as in mirror images, self-reference begins an endless oscillation between the thing itself and the thing reflected, begins an infinite regress" (355). We are in a no man's land between fiction and nonfiction here, where the observer observes himself and in observing, changes himself, and records those changes in his observations: "d'autant qu'à point nomé j'escry de moy et de mes escrits comme de mes autres actions, que mon theme se renverse en soy..."¹⁰⁹

A self-portrait in words is, by genre, an autobiography. We accept that an autobiography is "more fictional" than a biography. We do not hold it to the same standards of objectivity, and yet it is only classified as fiction if the autobiographical elements are sufficiently disguised, which is hardly the case here. Montaigne addresses the liminal status of the autobiography. Montaigne the Writer and Montaigne the Character, are two: "The very notion of a self-portrait necessarily implies a doubling of personality or at any rate of functions within the self" (Sayce 71). Starobinski, in particular, is attentive to the theme of the double. He contrasts Montaigne's "retour à soi" (return to oneself, a turning inward), derived from classical philosophy, with the Christian retreat from the world:

En revanche, le repli souhaité par Montaigne ne cheche en soi qu'un interlocutaire spéculaire, il vise à rendre à l'individu mortel le plein exercice de son propre jugement, dans un dedoublement qui tend à instaurer au-dedans de soi un rapport d'égal à égal, sans nulle soumission à une autorité externe.¹¹⁰

Starobinski combines the motifs of the mirror and the double, the visual and verbal. He sets up the relation between Montaigne, the writer/observer, and the portrayed Self, the mirrored conversation partner, as a balanced pair of

consubstantial with its author, concerned with my own self, an integral part of my life; not concerned with some third-hand extraneous purpose, like all other books." Frame 504.

¹⁰⁹ III.xiii. Rat II, 521. "...Cprecisely because I write of myself and my writings as of my other actions, because my theme turns in upon itself..." Frame 818.

¹¹⁰ Starobinski 23. "In contrast, the withdrawal desired by Montaigne only seeks a conversational mirror within oneself; it aims to return the full exercise of one's own judgment to the individual, in a doubling which tends to install within the self a relationship of equals, without any submission to outside authority." My translation.

equals. This is in fact Montaigne's conversational ideal: "La parole est moitié a celuy qui parle, moitié a celuy qui l'escoute."¹¹¹

On the other hand, the two Montaigne's, "je" and "moy" are irremediably linked. It is no simple one-way relation. They act upon each other reciprocally: "le patron s'en est fermy... couleurs plus nettes." The theme of the double is resolved—in a sense—by the adjective "consubstantiel." Taken literally, the consubstantial writer and the figure he has molded in his own image co-exist, they stand together as partners, and observe each other in "infinite regress."

Yet the adjective has a very specific and pertinent religious meaning. It is drawn from ecclesiastical Latin and refers to the mysterious unity of the Holy Trinity and the miraculous presence of the body and blood of Jesus in the eucharistic wine and wafer. This is a remarkable allusion for Montaigne to make. Holy Communion was compared to cannibalism by hostile Protestants. For example, Jean Léry, a French Calvinist missionary to South America compared the practice of eating the raw flesh of Jesus Christ by expedition leader and Catholic Nicolas Villegagnon with the cannibalistic practices of the native groups they encountered.¹¹² This same expedition is the principal source of Montaigne's ethnographic information in "Des cannibales."

Some critics, such as Richard Regosin, see "consubstantiel" as a allusion to the similarity between the writer and God, the author of the Book of Nature as well as the Holy Book.¹¹³ Here is the very author-god the post-structuralists reject. Regosin also points to Montaigne's description of his book as a child as another extension of the metaphor of consubstantiality. We now have material proof in our genes of the "common substance" which children and their parents share. The idea that children recreate their parents had great appeal in the Renaissance, to judge only from the number of times it comes up in Shakespeare's sonnets as a defense against mortality: "And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defense / Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence" (12. 13-14). Montaigne's comments about his own

¹¹¹ III, xiii. Rat II, 543. "Speech belongs half to the speaker, half to the listener." Frame 834.

¹¹² See discussion in Greenblatt, 8 and following.

¹¹³ Richard Regosin, "The Life of the Mind," Bloom, Essays 40-42.

offspring are all the more poignant when we recall that only one of his six children survived infancy:

Et je ne sçay si je n'aimerois pas mieux beaucoup en avoir produict ung, parfaictment formé, de l'acoitance des muses, que de l'acoitance de ma femme. A cettuy-ci [Les Essais], tel qu'il est, ce que je donne, je le donne purement et irrevocablement, comme on donne aux enfans corporels; ce peu de bien que je luy ay faict, il n'est plus en ma disposition; il peut sçavoir assez de choses que je ne sçay plus, et tenir de moy ce que je n'ay point retenu et qu'il faudroit que, tout ainsi qu'un estranger, j'empruntasse de luy, si besoin m'en venoit. Il est plus riche que moy, si je suis plus sage que luy.¹¹⁴

In the end, this reference to a theological miracle seems a most appropriate way to point to the still unresolved enigmas at the heart of the human condition and especially creativity. Has modern science or critical theory offered any fully satisfactory explanation for the miracle of language, of naming and meaning?¹¹⁵ Or for the miracle of life, its distant origins billions of years ago and its renewal with each birth? Georges Bataille spoke of the "miracle" of the art of the Greeks and of Lascaux¹¹⁶ and Clifford Geertz invoked the "off-stage miracle" of effective ethnographic writing. How is it that a book, made of paper and ink, written by a man dead for 400 years can still speak to us, as though we were in his presence? We can receive the Essais as Montaigne did himself, as a gift to which we lend our attention and good will. Is there a more effective vocabulary for these enigmas than the imagery of faith? Coleridge spoke of "the suspension of disbelief." And Montaigne has amply

¹¹⁴ II.viii. Rat I, 442. ^BAnd I do not know whether I would not like much better to have produced one perfectly formed child by intercourse with the muses than by intercourse with my wife. ^CTo this child, such as it is, what I give I give purely and irrevocably, as one gives to the children of one's body. The little good I have done for it is no longer at my disposal. It may know a good many things that I no longer know and hold from me what I have not retained and what, just like a stranger, I should have to borrow from it if I came to need it. If I am wiser than it, it is richer than I." Frame 293.

¹¹⁵ See Percy, Signposts, especially "Is a Science of Man Possible?" and "Naming and Being."

¹¹⁶ See page 92 above.

initiated the exchange. The opening line of the 1580 address to the reader puts it simply, "C'est ici un livre de bonne foy, lecteur."¹¹⁷

There remains one final aspect to consider which reunites the theme of the double and the consideration of the significant demands that Montaigne makes of his "suffisant" or (in modern psychological language) his "good-enough" reader.¹¹⁸ One persistent line of inquiry relates the level of participation that the *Essais* demand to Montaigne's motivation for writing them. In particular, much attention has been paid to the role of the great friendship of Montaigne's life in the genesis of his work. This subject offers compelling parallels with the friendship of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, and suggests once again the interplay between the final rite of passage, death, and the birth of art.

Montaigne met his great friend, Etienne La Boétie during his years at the Bordeaux parliament. His chapter I.xxvii, "De l'amitié," is devoted to Montaigne's profound feelings for his friend and his grief at La Boétie's early death. Just as Enkidu and Gilgamesh formally became brothers when Enkidu was ceremonially adopted by Gilgamesh's mother, Montaigne finds "brother" to be the only adequate term to describe his friendship with La Boétie, so rare as to occur only once every three hundred years: "C'est à la vérité, un beau nom et plein de dilection que le nom de frère, et à cette cause en fîmes nous, luy et moy, nostre alliance."¹¹⁹

La Boétie, like Enkidu, plays the role of the good double, the complement rather than a distorted duplicate. The theme of the double¹²⁰ runs through the essay on friendship: "Car cette parfaite amitié, de quo je parle, est *indivisible*; chacun se donne si *entier* à son ami, qu'il n'y reste rien à

¹¹⁷ "This book was written in good faith, reader." Frame 2. In his translation, Frame shifts the good faith from the book itself to the writer.

¹¹⁸ Compare D.W. Winnicott's "good-enough mother" and Bruno Bettelheim's "good-enough parent."

¹¹⁹ I.xviii. Rat I, 200. "Truly the name of brother is a beautiful name and full of affection, and for that reason he and I made our alliance a brotherhood." Frame 136.

¹²⁰ Starobinski's first chapter, "Pour qui escrivez-vous?" analyzes the theme of the double, and I am following his arguments in this section.

*departir...C'est un assez grand miracle de se doubler...*¹²¹ Montaigne portrays La Boétie's death in terms of doubles and halves: "...les plaisirs mesmes qui s'offrent à moy, au lieu de me consoler, me *redoublent* le regret de sa perte. Nous estions à *moitié* de tout..."¹²²

Like Gilgamesh, Montaigne attended at the bedside of his dying friend, offering him companionship in this ultimate rite of passage. Although Montaigne does not turn to human-animal similes to convey his grief, as did the poet of Gilgamesh, Montaigne's description is no less poetical:

Car, à la vérité, si je compare tout le reste de ma vie, quoy qu'avec la grace de Dieu je l'aye passée douce, aisée et, sauf la perte d'un tel amy, exempte d'affliction poissante, pleine de tranquillité d'esprit, ayant pris en payement mes commoditez naturelles et originelles sans en rechercher d'autres; si je la compare, dis-je, toute aux quatre années qu'il ma été donné de jouyr de la douce compagnie et société de ce personnage, ce n'est que fumée, ce n'est qu'une nuit obscure et ennuyeuse.¹²³

The darkness of night and the ephemerality of smoke are profound images of intangibility for this highly corporeal writer. As Gilgamesh turned his love for Enkidu first into a statue, then into a journey and a stone inscription, so Montaigne turns to travel and art as he confronts his own grief.

First, he was La Boétie's literary executor, inheriting his writings as well as his library. Montaigne himself lends support to the interpretations that his need for communication and self-revelation might have been served by conversation or letters with La Boétie, had his friend lived. Perhaps the *Essais* would never have written. Friendship and grief led to artistic creation. In a passage from the 1588 edition Montaigne wrote, "...luy seul jouyssait de

¹²¹ I.xviii. Rat I, 207-8. "AFor the perfect friendship I speak of is *indivisible*: each one gives himself so *wholly* to his friend that he has nothing left to *distribute* elsewhere..." It is a great enough miracle to be *doubled...*" Frame 141-142. My italics.

¹²² I.xviii. Rat I, 210. "And the very pleasures that come my way, instead of consoling me, *redouble* my grief for his loss. We went *halves* in everything..." Frame 143. My italics.

¹²³ I.xxviii. Rat I, 209. "AFor in truth, if I compare all the rest of my life--though by the grace of God I have spent it pleasantly, comfortably, and, except for the loss of such a friend, free from any grievous affliction, and full of tranquillity of mind, having accepted my natural and original advantages without seeking other ones--if I compare it all, I say, with the four years which were granted me to enjoy the sweet company and society of that man, it is nothing but smoke, nothing but dark and dreary night." Frame 143.

ma vraye image, et l'emporta. C'est pourquoi je me deschiffre moy-mesmes, si curieusement.¹²⁴ He contends that his friends tell him that he has great talent as a letter writer, but that what he has lacked, since La Boétie's death, is an appropriate correspondent: "Et eusse prins plus volontiers ceste forme à publier mes verbes, si j'eusse eu à qui parler. Il me falloit, comme je l'ay eu autrefois, un certain commerce qui m'attirast, qui me soustinst et soulevast."¹²⁵ In this light, Montaigne's nostalgia for his lost friendship, and own practice of diligent and dialogic reading dictates the sort of reader he desires, and helps to explain the demands he places on us.

Critics have recently focused on the positive side of Montaigne's loss. Gilgamesh, following Enkidu's death, found his own death staring him in the face, and set off on a journey to the past, and a journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance. For Starobinski, La Boétie's death freed Montaigne from an orientation towards the future, towards immediate action and towards a goal. This orientation was defined by La Boétie's own variation on the term "essai"—experiamur uterque—the steady movement of the two friends toward the goal of virtue (75). Thus liberated from the future, Montaigne could fully investigate the present, and develop the style congenial to his own temperament:

L'acte à venir n'imposant plus sa tension et n'obligeant plus à ménager le temps, la parole peut se faire sinueuse et sans terme: aucune urgence ne la presse. Comme elle n'a d'autre but que sa propre manifestation, aucune digression ne peut l'égarer. Son temps propre est celui de la plaisir, et non plus celui qui règne sur la vie active et qui impose une stricte économie aux discours de l'éloquence persuasive; c'est celui qui s'étale au-delà ou en deça de la vie pratique: sur la vie privée, sur la mort. Le loisir infini, sous-

¹²⁴ III.ix. Rat II, 425nb. "...he alone possessed my true image and took it away with him. That is why I decipher myself so curiously." Frame 752. Frame speculates that this passage was deleted out of consideration for Montaigne's adopted daughter and literary executrix, Mlle de Gournay.

¹²⁵ I.xl. Rat I, 283. "And I would have prefered to adopt this form to publish my sallies, if I had had someone to talk to. I needed what I once had, a certain relationship to lead me on, sustain me and raise me up." Frame 185.

jacent aux *Essais*, renvoie tout ensemble à l'intimité de la vie et à l'inanité de la mort.¹²⁶

In this interpretation, especially licensed by the autobiographical and psychological nature of the *Essais*, we owe Montaigne's literary examination of passage, his dedication to the "espineuse entreprisne," and his demands on his readers, at least in part to the absence of La Boétie, the loss of his perfect friend and conversation partner.¹²⁷ Instead of carving his story onto stone tablets after a long journey home, like King Gilgamesh, Montaigne composed a monument to the Muses and memorial in his friend's honor in a modern form—ink and paper—as he went along. Although he lost his perfect friend, we are the lucky stand-ins, the beneficiaries of his conversation, his self-revelations, his *Essais*.

The Essay: "Des cannibales"

Montaigne's essay "Des cannibales" is significant in its own right, and has justified his inclusion in the history of anthropology as well as in literary history. However, much is to be gained by considering it as a chapter in the larger work, the *Essais*, that is, by reading it in context. Taking "Des cannibales" out of the context of the *Essais*, or isolating any one passage of the chapter without considering the rest, runs the same risk as taking any part of a paradox out of context. Colie explains, "Even in the ordering of its sentences, a paradox is paradoxical, contradicting itself as it goes along, so that no one of its statements could be extracted from its contradictory context" (35).

¹²⁶ Starobinski 83. Emphasis in the original. "Once the act to come no longer imposes tension and no longer obliges the husbanding of time, the word can become sinuous and limitless: no urgency hurries it. Since it has no other goal than its own manifestation, its time is the time of pleasure and not that which governs active life and imposes a strict economy on persuasive eloquence: it is that time which extends on either side of practical life: the time of private life, of death. The infinite leisure which underlies the *Essais* sends everything back together to the intimacy of life and to the emptiness of death." My translation.

¹²⁷ "C'est une *espineuse entreprisne*, et plus qu'il ne semble, de suivre une alleure si vagabonde que celle de notre esprit; de penetrer les profondeurs opaques de ses replis internes; de choisir et arrêter tant de menus airs de ses agitations." II.vi. Rat I, 414. "It is a *thorny undertaking* and more so than it seems, to follow a movement so wandering as that of our mind, to penetrate the opaque depths of its innermost folds, to pick out and immobilize the innumerable flutterings that agitate it." Frame 273. My italics.

For this reason, this analysis of "Des cannibales" follows Montaigne's argument as it unfolds.

A paradox depends on its audience for fulfillment. Again, Colie explains, "Though paradoxes are in once sense entirely self-sufficient in their self-reference, in another (and paradoxical) sense, they are also unalterably dependent on society, upon what E. H. Gombrich has called the ' beholder's share' " (35). In Montaigne's case, the audience is his reader. He delights in posing challenges to the unwary reader, especially when he wishes to shake the reader free of preconceptions and accepted truths to move towards the real truths about what is natural and what is properly human. Montaigne expects a great deal of his readers. They need to be alert in order to keep their bearings through the meanders of his style and spirit. They should be ready to have their expectations overturned.

"Des cannibales" belongs to no single domain. It is part history and ethnography, part travel writing and moral philosophy. There are also significant elements of autobiography. It is advantageous to read the essay with these multiple allegiances in mind. The guiding and unifying spirit is the one Montaigne proposed in his chapter on the Education of Children, the world as mirror and textbook: "Ce grand monde...est le miroir où il nous faut regarder pour nous connoître de biais."¹²⁸ Eric Leed refers to this idea of gaining knowledge through passage as "philosophic travel." Pointing to the ancient legacy of this tradition, Leed cites Gilgamesh, "who saw mysteries and knew secret things" and Strabo, the Greco-Roman geographer, who stated what was "already proverbial by first century BC: 'The wisest heroes were those who visited many places and roamed over the world; for the poets regard it as a great achievement to have seen the cities and know the minds of men'" (59). The various excursions packed into this round-trip from France to the New World are all explorations into ideas that help us gain wisdom and know the minds of men. In Montaigne's term, this journey will sharpen our reason and judgment, as it takes its multiple approaches to two basic questions: what have we uncovered in the New World and what do these revelations tell us about ourselves.

¹²⁸ "This great world...is the mirror in which we must look at ourselves to recognize ourselves from the proper angle." See page 185 above.

Our explorations of the figure of the wild man offer a valuable perspective on "Des cannibales" as well. The paradox of the essay is built around the terms "barbare" and "barbarie"—"barbaric and barbarous." Montaigne lays bare or defamiliarizes the assumption that the reader knows who the barbarians are: the Others. He does this by playing with the complementary myths that inform the essentially paradoxical wild man: the myths of the noble and ignoble savages. He takes us to visit the wild men out there, and we find out that the Wild Man Out There has much to tell us about the Wild Man Within.¹²⁹

In the ludic spirit inspired by Montaigne's own explorations, I would like to offer an outline of "Des cannibales" in the form of travel prospectus. (See Figure 15.) While recognizing that this violates the formal unity of the single paragraph which constituted this essay's original form, this sort of a detailed breakdown is a useful tool for facilitating the process of analysis. It respects the unfolding of the literary text and offers the reader tangible bearings in a piece that repeatedly and quite willfully defies expectations.

In the simplest terms, this essay offers us a round-trip visit between France and the New World. The round-trip "circuit" suggests the circular form on which the essay is constructed. The circle also echoes the form of the heroic journey, as proposed by Joseph Campbell and undertaken by Gilgamesh. The hero sets out from home and after crossing many a threshold, returns to his point of departure, a changed person. However, Montaigne doesn't propose himself as the hero. This is a journey he has already taken, and this time he offers to take the reader along on this unusual voyage. He offers himself as guide. For no extra charge, the tourist will also benefit from the experience of Montaigne's personal staff and well as a number of other anonymous travelers.

A brief glance at the prospectus reveals that Montaigne does not intend a straightforward trip to the New World and back. Montaigne dispenses with spatio-temporal logic, substituting the logic of passage and thematic association. For each geographical-historical stop, the travel prospectus offers the key words or passwords which are the links in the semantic or semiotic web of

¹²⁹ On the Wild Man Out There and the Wild Man Within, see page 48 and following.

Figure 15. Eyquem Tours: S/S Des Cannibales.

Guide: Michel de Montaigne and Staff

Itinerary: Round Trip—France, Nouveau Monde, France

Excursion/Text	Port (Time/Space)	Passwords
1)extratextual	Opening Lecture.	cannibales
2)Quand... commune.1-12	Antiquity.	barbares; estrangieres raison; voix commune
3)J'ay...vent. 13-23	Contemporary France. Guide #2.	trompez curiosité; capacité
4)Platon...cela. 24-61	Antiquity. Past and present islands.	changemens; estranges isle; deluge
5)Il...païs. 62-82 (B)	Contemporary France.	movemens; agitation renversée; changements
6)L'autre... neufves. 83-100	Antiquity. Carthaginian island.	tesmoignage; descouverte;
7)Ce...incommod- itez. 101-129	Contemporary France.	veritable tesmoigage; simple; fines
8)Or... <u>dedit</u> . 130-193	Lecture 2.	barbarie; sauvage; usage nature; artifice; nul...nul invention; experience
9)Au...plus. 194-267	Contemporary New World. Land, food, people.	artifice; abondance vaillance; amitié
10)C'est... impos ture. (C) 268-79	Divination: Antiquity (Scythians) & Contemporary.	suffisance; imposture
11)Ils... cette-cy. 280-313	Contemporary New World Warfare; Indian/Portuguese.	esmerveillable; en commun; representer
12)Je...trespassé. 313-325	Lecture 3. Contemporary France.	horreur barbaresque aveuglez; pretexte
13)Chrysippus... babarie. 326-42.	Antiquity: Stoics, Gascons.	barbares; desreglée raison
14)Leur...con- stance. 343-85	New World warfare.	naturelles; superflu vertu; vaincus
15)Les...battre. 386-440	Lecture 4: Victory, defeat. Excursions to Antiquity: Hungarians, Thermopolyae.	victoire; vertu vaillance; fortune; perte
16)Pour...nostre. 441-465	Contemporary New World Prisoner's Song.	invention barbarie
17)Les ...pere. 466-484	Marriage: Antiquity (biblical, classical) & Contemporary.	miracle, vertu
18)Et...Grecques. 485-503.	Contemporary New World Love-song	coustume; stupide suffisance; barbarie
19>Trois...aise. 504-546	Contemporary France 1562 Rouen	ignorans; corruptions; admirable; estrange
20>Tout... chausses! 547-8	Final lecture	

MOVEMENT 1

MOVEMENT 2

MOVE- MENT 3.

the text. In addition to "barbarie," prominent passwords include "naturelle, vertu, estrange, raison."¹³⁰

This is to be a journey of the mind, for both guide and reader, rather than a journey of the body. In fact, Montaigne doesn't physically leave Europe as part of this voyage. His actual physical displacement is limited to a trip to northern France. Accordingly, the prospectus displays text-time rather than travel-time. The round trip circuit contains three broad segments as indicated: 1) Antiquity/Contemporary France, 2) the New World, and 3) Rouen. If we examine these segments from the perspective of text-time, we can see that the first movement takes up 35% of the text (approximately 193 lines), the central New World movement 57% (309 lines) and the final movement 8% (47 lines). While the movements are hardly evenly divided and these figures only approximations, it is obvious than any reading which focus only on what Montaigne has to say about the New World excludes over 40% of the essay.¹³¹ Admittedly, the division of the three broad movements into twenty smaller excursions is artificial and oversimplifies. The four basic categories of Self and Others: Europe and Antiquity, the Golden Age, and America, constantly interpenetrate and provide many permutations for Montaigne's relentlessly comparative explorations. At least, the excursion scheme suggests the "yvresse naturelle,"¹³² that characterizes Montaigne's depiction of passage.

Movement 1. Excursions 1 and 2: "Des cannibales" ... la voix commune.

The reader undertakes this trip with a few words of warning from the guide, as assistance in the labyrinth of his open form. He tells the reader elsewhere that "Les noms de mes chapitres n'en embrassent pas toujours la

¹³⁰ "Natural, virtue, strange, reason." See also Caroline Locher, "Primary and Secondary Themes in Montaigne's 'Des cannibales' (I.31)," *French Forum* 1. 119-26.

¹³¹ While we are counting lines, it is interesting do some accounting of the Montaignian palimpsest. 83% of the text is marked A-level. B-level accounts for 5% and C, 12%. The B-level additions include all but one of the Latin verse quotations and Excursion 5 to French rivers. There were quite a few brief additions to the Bordeaux Copy (level C) and several longer ones, including Excursion 10, the account of divination, the visit to Themopolyae in Excursion 15, and the discussion of ancient matrimonial virtues, Excursion 17.

¹³² "natural drunkenness." See entire passage on page 178 above.

matiere."¹³³ The textual strategy of refusing paragraphs makes the relationship between the body of the chapter and its title all the more salient.

Montaigne also hints broadly that although this relation between title and text may not be obvious, that the diligent and ingenious reader will be rewarded for tracing the clues. Because of the significance of the title, it is designated in the travel prospectus as the subject of Montaigne's opening lecture, when in fact, the opening lecture consists entirely of those two words: "Des cannibales." It is from this early point that the reader becomes the hero of the adventure, for the reader must do the work of linking these two words to the rest of essay. Indeed, Montaigne's selection of his title is an audacious tease.

Even if it is only two words long, Montaigne's opening lecture promises an encounter with the wild man. "Cannibales" is the most potent term in the wild man semantic constellation. There is no question that an ignoble savage is on the horizon when the word "cannibal" is pronounced. The word itself points to the contemporary voyages in the Caribbean. As Stanley Robe explains the origins of the term:

The gentle Arawaks of the Bahamas, Cuba, and Haiti expressed constant fear of a fierce, warlike people who lived on islands to the southeast. They made known to Columbus that these vicious people ate human flesh and ate or enslaved their prisoners. They gave various names to these people. Columbus and Peter Martyr refer to their land as Caniba or Canibata and the people as *cannibales*. From a variant form, *Caribata*, the modern term Carib is derived (45).

Despite the topicality of the term "cannibales," the link between the ignoble savage and the dietary consumption of human flesh stretches back into mythic and historical Antiquity.

Diet is one of the most obvious elements for distinguishing between noble and ignoble savages.¹³⁴ Human beings are naturally omnivorous, but noble savages tend to be vegetarians, as ignoble savages tend to be carnivores. The ignoblest of all feed on human flesh. The marvelously horrible painting by Goya, Cronus Devouring his Children illustrates the formative role of cannibalism in the early generations of the Greek gods. (See detail in Figure

¹³³ "The titles of the chapters do not always embrace their matter." Passage quoted on p. 194 above.

¹³⁴ See page 83 above.

8.) Marianna Torgovnick sees the encounter between Odysseus and the man-eating Polyphemus as anticipating all other encounters between the West and the primitive.¹³⁵ We cross into the borderland between fact and fiction, myth and history with Herodotus. Michel de Certeau points to the intertextual significance of Book IV of Herodotus' Histories in the wild-man intertext, as well as Montaigne's essay. Both belong to what Certeau calls "Heterology: Discourse on the Other." Certeau argues that Herodotus' text constitutes "un préalable fondamental (dans une histoire 'archéologique' du Sauvage)."¹³⁶ The Scythians are the subject of Herodotus' fourth Book, and they appear twice in Montaigne's essay in Excursions 10 and 11. Book IV is also where we find the descriptions of the Scythians' neighbors, the Andropophagi.

[A]fter which desert is the country of the Man-eaters , who are a nation by themselves and by no means Scythian, and beyond them is true desert, wherein no nation of men dwells, as far as we know...The Man-eaters are of all men the most savage in their manner of life; they know no justice and obey no law. They are nomads, wearing a dress like the Scythian, but speaking a language of their own; they are the only people of all these that eat men.¹³⁷

If the Scythians represent the Other to the Greeks, then the Andropophagi are doubly Other, for they are even more distant and alien than the nomadic Scythians. The terminology here is reminiscent of Cicero's homines silvestres and pertinent to the entire wild-man intertext. The members of this nation (Ἐθνος; Montaigne will also use the term "nation," different from our modern concept of a nation) are defined and named by their diet: Ἀνδρόφαγοι, literally Man-eaters. Wild men are often named by diet or location, as the Plinian monstrous races also demonstrate. But a name such as Man-eater, unlike Fish-Eaters or Apple-Smellers, ensures that this particular group will

¹³⁵ Torgovnick 23-6. Her own preoccupation is revealed and her credibility somewhat vitiated by the assertion that Montaigne's "Des cannibales" "plays off his favorable impression of Africans against French ethnocentrism" (249n1). For another view of the encounter between Odysseus and Polyphemus which emphasizes the ambiguous nature of the Cyclops' ignobility, see Young 282-297.

¹³⁶ Michel de Certeau, "Le lieu et l'autre. Montaigne: 'Des Cannibales,'" Le Racisme: mythes et sciences, ed. Maurice Oleander (Bruxelles: Editions Complexes, 1981) 188. "...the fundamental prerequisite (in an 'archeological' history of the 'Savage.') My translation.

¹³⁷ Herodotus, Herodotus, trans. A.D. Godley, vol. 2, rev. ed., Loeb Classical Library (1921: London: Heinemann, 1938) 219, 307.

not be viewed sympathetically. Location is also significant here. The Man-eaters are quite marginal geographically, living on the very fringes of the known world, surrounded by uninhabited deserts. A marginal location implies a marginal being. The adjective “ἀγριώτατα” translated here as “most savage” is also a locative term, derived from the Greek ἀγρός, or field, which becomes agrus in Latin, the original location of Cicero’s homines silvestres.¹³⁸ A pattern is suggested here which Montaigne will elaborate: how is it that these adjectives such as savage and wild, which are used pejoratively of human behavior, have their origins in nature, in woods and fields? Indeed, naming will be one of Montaigne’s major concerns in the “Des cannibales.” We should not take the selection of the name cannibal too lightly.

The fact that Montaigne uses “cannibales” rather than the French “anthropophages” suggests a New World context. The literature of the sixteen century was filled with examples of the marvelous and the gruesome that define the appeal of the exotic. The title of Montaigne’s essay leads us to expect a visual portrait such as the celebrated engravings from André Thevet’s Cosmographie Universelle (See Figure 16) or verbal portrait such as the one which follows, of the ignoblest of all the savages in Spenser’s Faerie Queene. The scene is set at the beginning of Canto VIII, “Amoret rapt by greedie lust”:

It was to weet a wilde and saluage man,
Yet was no man, but onley like in shape
And eke in stature higher by a span,
All ouergrowne with haire, that could awhape
An hardy hart, and with his wide mouth did gape
With huge great teeth, like to a tusked Bore:
For he liu’d all on rauin and rape
Of men and beasts; and fed on fleshly gore,
The sign whereof yet stain’d his bloudy lips afore

His neather lip was not like man nor beast,
But like a wide deepe poke, downe hanging low,
In which he wont the relickes of his feast,
And cruell spoyle, which he had spard, to stow:
And ouer it his huge great nose did grow,
And downe bothe sides two wide long eares did glow,

¹³⁸ See page 9 above.

And raught downe to his waste, when vp he stood,
More greate then th'eares of Elephants by *Indus* flood.

His wast was with a wreath of yuie greene,
Engirt about, ne other garment wore:
For all his haire was like a garment seene;
And in his hand a tall young oak he bore,
Whose knottie snags were sharpned all afore,
And beath'd in fire for steele to be in sted.
But whence he was, or of what wombe ybore,
Of beasts, or of the earth, I haue not red:
But certes was with milke of Wolues and Tygres fed (IV.vii.5-7).

Spenser's portrait of the ignoble savage is remarkably complete as befits his encyclopedic intertextual talent. Nearly every wild-man feature is present. The external appearance and accessories on the medieval model are impeccable: huge size, hideous distorted feature, voluminous hair, green ivy twisted around his waist, the oak club. The ambiguity and uncertainty of the wild man's ontology is repeatedly stressed: "Yet was no man, but onley like in shape," "like to a tusked Bore," "not like man nor beast," "But whence he was...Of beasts or of the earth..." Diet is clearly a major factor. His infant formula was the "milke of Wolues and Tygres."¹³⁹ As an adult, he is both a carnivore and a cannibal, murderer and rapist. He violates the lawlines of both sexual and culinary taboos. His lips are stained from the: "rauin and rape/ Of men and beasts." The exotic elements feature primarily in the second strophe: his outsized lip and nose, and ears which hang down farther than an Indian elephant's.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Mothers' milk continues to represent a potent combination of nature and nurture. Compare Enkidu who suckled the milk of wild animals: see pages 127-29 above. Montaigne is also interested in goats who nurse human children in II.viii "De l'affection des peres aux enfans." Montaigne also refers to his own early nourishment in a comment which completes the passage ("Je n'ai pas corrigé, comme Socrates...") cited above p. 171: "Je me laisse aller, comme je suis venu, je ne combats rien; mes deux maitresses pieces vivent de leur grace en pais et bonne accord: mais le lait de ma nourriture a esté, Dieu mercy, mediocrement sain et temperé." III.xii. Rat II, 511. "I let myself go as I have come. I combat nothing. My two ruling parts, of their own volition, live in peace and good accord. But my nurse's milk, thank God, was moderately healthy and temperate." Frame 811. The concept of nourishment in Montaigne is one which merits further study!

¹⁴⁰ Lois Whitney, "The Literature of Travel in the 'Faerie Queene,'" *Modern Philology* 19 (1921) points to parallels from Marco Polo, Mandeville, and Eden concerning the lips and ears. 146-7.

By selecting “Des cannibales” as his title Montaigne has selected a very effective hook to grab his readers’ attention. To judge from current popular literature, the fascination of cannibalism has not notably weakened since the days of Spenser and Montaigne.¹⁴¹ Cannibalism is a topic of heated debate (and some suggest a source of profitable book sales) in academia as well. At one extreme of the debate, we have W. Arens’ The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy, which argues that it is not possible “to isolate a single reliable complete first-hand account of this purported conventional way of disposing of the dead” (181). At the other extreme, Dudley Young, following Freud, argues for a primal scene of cannibalism in our history as a species.¹⁴² There are no cannibals, we are all cannibals.

Montaigne would not be in the least surprised by such contradictory opinions concerning the facts about cannibalism. One of the aphorisms on his library ceiling reads: “Πάντι λόγῳ λόγος ἴσος ἀντίκειται: For every argument, an equal argument can be opposed.”¹⁴³ Montaigne also recognizes the most significant fact which neither Arens nor Freud would dispute: the tremendous power of the idea of cannibalism, a mythic power, both sacred and taboo. In the way he makes use of cannibalism in this essay, Montaigne anticipates Arens’ conclusion:

The most certain thing to be said is that all cultures, subcultures, religions, sects, secret societies and every other possible human association have been labeled anthropophagic by someone... The idea of ‘others’ as cannibals, rather than the act, is the universal phenomenon. The significant question is not why people eat human flesh, but why one group invariably assumes that others do (139).

Montaigne makes an analogous distinction in his essay “Que le goust des biens et de maux depend en bonne partie de l’opinion que nous en avons”: “Les hommes (dit une sentence Grecque ancienne) sont tourmentez par les

¹⁴¹ For example, consider the popularity of historical instances of survival cannibalism, such as the 1846 Donner Pass party in the American West or the 1972 plane crash in the Andes which Steven Rendell alludes to in “Dialectical Structure and Dialectics in Montaigne’s ‘Of Cannibals,’ Pacific Coast Philology 12 (1977) 57. For popular interest one need only mention supermarket tabloids and fictional arch-fiend Hannibal Lecter, featured in The Silence of the Lambs.

¹⁴² Young 102. For a summary of the debate, see also Togovnick 258n47.

¹⁴³ #38 from Sextus Empiricus, Hypotheses I, 6 and 27. Rat II, 617.

opinions qu'ils ont des choses, non par les choses mesmes."¹⁴⁴ Although the "thing" Montaigne has in mind in that context is death, the aphorism also conveys Montaigne's strategy for undermining our expectations about cannibalism. He will play our "opinions" of cannibalism against the "thing itself."

Our expectations are stirred up by the opening lecture and the promise of cannibals, but they are reversed before we even set sail. The title leads us to expect a portrait such as Spenser's, set in the New World. Instead, a glance at the travel plan reveals that we will reach our ninth port of call, more than one-third of the essay, before we set foot in the New World. The act of eating human beings is not described until Excursion 11. The reader will need a long and flexible thread to sew the seams of this essay! In fact the word "cannibal" will not appear in the essay again. "Cannibal" has already served its purpose of attracting the reader's attention and generating expectations.

Let us look in some detail at the first paragraph of "Des cannibales" to apply at first-hand what we have suggested about Montaigne's method and to see how rapidly the expectations generated by the title are overthrown.

Quand le Roy Pyrrhus passa en Italie, après qu'il eut reconneu l'ordonnance de l'armée que les Romains luy envoyoient au devant: «Je ne scay, dit-il, quels barbares sont ceux-ci (car les Grecs appelloient ainsi toutes les nations estrangieres), mais la disposition de cette armée qye je voy n'est aucunement barbare. «Autant en dirent les Grecs de celle que Flaminius fit passer en leur païs, et Philippus, voyant d'un terte l'ordre et distribution du camp Romain en son royaume, sous Publius Sulpicius Galba. Voylà comment il se faut garder de s'atacher aux opinions vulgaires, et les faut juger par la voye de la raison, non par la voix commune.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ I.xiv. Rat I, 47. From "That the taste of good and evil depends in large part on the opinion we have of them": "Men, says an old Greek maxim are tormented by the opinions they have of things, not by the things themselves." Frame 33. This is another of the aphorisms on Montaigne's library ceiling. #45 Rat II, 618.

¹⁴⁵ I.xxxi. Rat I, 230-1. "When King Phyrus passed over into Italy, after he had reconnoitred the formation of the army that the Romans were sending to meet him, he said: 'I do not know what barbarians these are' (for so the Greeks called all foreign nations), 'but the formation of this army that I see is not at all barbarous.' The Greeks said as much of the army that Flaminius brought into their country, 'And so did Philip, seeing from a knoll the order and distribution of the Roman camp, in his kingdom, under Publius Sulpicius Galba. Thus we should beware of clinging to vulgar opinions, and to judge things by reason's way, not by popular say.' Frame 151. All citations from "Des cannibales" are from these editions, and from this point on, I

The reader expects to be in the New World facing live cannibals, and instead finds herself transported back to Antiquity, via Plutarch and Livy, inspecting armies! This paragraph is typical of Montaigne's use of historical example. He feels free to travel through time and space to juxtapose diverse historical incidents all linked by a common theme. Here the theme is announced in the final sentence. The readers will learn to distinguish between "la voix commune" and "la voie de la raison," an opposition which recalls the distinction from the opening lecture between opinions and the things themselves.

The selection of these historical examples is by no means arbitrary. Military matters are of great interest to Montaigne in the opening essays of Book I.¹⁴⁶ The topic of warfare and military victory comes into play in the second movement of the chapter, especially where the topic of cannibalism resurfaces. Here the question of judgment is raised in the context of warfare. Just as people are judged largely by appearance, so a society is judged by its institutions. This was the essence of Cicero's condemnation of the homines silvestres: "they did nothing by the guidance or reason...there was as yet no ordered system of religious worship nor of social duties."

The army is selected here as the social institution by which one society may judge another. Each example undercuts the common assumption ("opinion vulgaire") that the societies which the Greeks encounter are barbaric. Considering the accomplishments of the Roman empire, and Montaigne's own intense feelings of admiration for classical Rome, it is ironic that it is the Roman army which provides the examples of barbarism.¹⁴⁷ Instead of visiting the New World, as we expected, Montaigne takes us to Antiquity and plays the two pillars of classical civilization, the Greeks and the Romans, against each other. This makes it relatively easy for the reader to agree with the conclusions of Pyrrhus and Philippus that the Romans are not the barbarians they are reported to be.

will only give the page references from Rat and (Frame). Since the majority of the essay is A-level, I will only include strata markers in the notes if the text is not A-level.

¹⁴⁶ See Thomas Greene, "Dangerous Parleys—*Essais* 1.5 and 6," Bloom, Montaigne 155-176. Greene links military concerns with the questions of influence and imitation.

¹⁴⁷ With characteristic irony, Montaigne includes a copy of the decree making him an honorary Roman citizen in his chapter "On Vanity." II.ix "De la vanité," Rat II, 445.

The links between the title and text are, as Montaigne has warned us, subtle and oblique. As Arens suggested, the problem posed by cannibals is not the act but the idea: why is it we believe the others are cannibals. Montaigne presents it as a problem of naming and judging. To paraphrase King Pyrrhus: "These people are called barbarians, but I see nothing barbaric about the way their army is organized." The king compares his vision to what he has been told about the Romans. To make a sound judgment, received opinion should be balanced by eyewitness observation, and corrected if necessary. The opposition between visual and verbal is captured in Montaigne's *paronomasia* in final sentence, "*la voix commune*" opposed to "*la voie de la raison*," "the common voice" and "the path or vision of reason."¹⁴⁸ The evidence of our eyes, our reading eyes and our seeing eyes, is crucial part of our exploration of the world with its diverse "humours, sectes, jugements, opinions, loix, costumes."¹⁴⁹ What else might dislodge our preconceptions concerning others?

This problem of naming and judging faces every traveler. How do we describe those we encounter? What words are available to us? Mary Campbell sees it as the essential problem of travel writing:

[T]he traveler's medium is language, and the language he uses has evolved as an envelope specific to its region and culture. It has no words for what is alien—at least no words that do not contain and express their roots in the state of alienation (as in the abstractions 'heathen,' 'barbarian,' 'outre-mer,' 'unheimlich,' Mandeville's 'that other half,' our own 'Far East,' or any of the cuisine-linked names given by early Greek traders to distant peoples: *Ictyophagi*, *Anthropophagi*, and so on (179-80).

Modern anthropology does not seem to have solved the problem, as the controversial term "primitive" demonstrates.¹⁵⁰ Marianna Torgovnick argues against jettisoning the term:

¹⁴⁸The noun "voie" and verb "voir" have different Latin roots, but are homophones in French. Frame's translation attempts to capture the play on words here with a rhyme: "reason's way...popular say."

¹⁴⁹ From I.xvi, see page 185 above.

¹⁵⁰ See page 7 above.

[B]efore we could do that we would need a viable term to designate the kinds of societies it describes. Currently we do not, since all its synonyms are either inexact or duplicate in various ways the problematics of the term *primitive* itself. And here I include savage, pre-Columbian, tribal, third world, underdeveloped, developing, archaic, traditional, exotic, 'the anthropological record,' non-Western, and Other...All take the West as the norm and define the rest as inferior, different, deviant, subordinate, and subordinatable. We simply do not have a neutral, politically acceptable vocabulary (21).

In addition to the problem of language and alienation, Torgovnick stresses the element of disparity of power. Would it be possible to create such a "neutral, politically acceptable" vocabulary? The semantic constellation of the wild-man intertext returns to this very problem over and over again. Perhaps the best one can do is to be aware of what goes on when we name, to sound the depths of the iceberg that lies submerged beneath every term in the wild man's semantic constellation. That is certainly the approach Montaigne's voyage suggests.

Montaigne's parenthetical explanation of the Greek term "barbare" brings the problems of naming and judging together. He explains that the Greeks use the term "barbares" for all "nations étrangères." We are on a descending scale of intensity: from cannibal to barbarian to stranger.¹⁵¹ The term barbarian is especially interesting because of its linguistic associations. In a compelling and pertinent account of strangers though history, Etrangers à nous-mêmes, Julia Kristeva examines the history of the term barbarian.

Le terme "barbare" devint alors fréquent pour désigner les non-Grecs. Homère appliquait le mot de 'barbarophone' aux indigènes d'Asie Mineure combattant avec les Grecs, et semble avoir forgé le terme à partir d'onomatopées imitatives: *bla-bla*, *bara-barra*, *bredouillis* inarticulés ou incompréhensibles... Les Barbares sont excentriques à cet univers par leurs discours et leur accoutrement démesurés, par leur adversité politique et sociale.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹Frame's English translation, "foreign," is weaker still.

¹⁵²Julia Kristeva, Etrangers à nous-mêmes, ([Paris]: Librairie Arthème Fayard-Gallimard, 1988) 75-76. "The word 'barbarian' then becomes frequently used to designate non-Greeks. Homer applied the word 'barbarophone' to the natives of Asia Minor who fought with the Greeks, and seems to have forged the term from such onomatopoeia as *bla-bla*, *bara-barra*, inarticulate or incomprehensible mumblings...The barbarians are eccentric to this universe because of their outrageous speech and dress, their political and social contrariness." My translation.

The term “barbare” reproduces the linguistic fact that we can’t hear separate words in a language we don’t understand. In this context, recall Montaigne’s critique of the hierarchy of the Great Chain, and his suggestion that the beasts might consider us beasts for our inability to speak their language and understand them. Kristeva’s term “excentrique” nicely captures the image of the outsider who is excluded from a circle defined by customs such as dress and language. The same pattern we observed with “agrestus,” “wild,” and “savage” operates with “barbarian.” Invoking the same Greco-Roman encounter as Montaigne, she goes on to trace the inevitable slippage of “barbarian” as a description of linguistic difference to a term which is morally charged and unequivocally pejorative.

Pour [Sophocle, Eschyle et Euripide], ‘barbare’ signifie ‘incompréhensible,’ ‘non grec,’ et enfin ‘excentrique’ ou ‘inférieur.’ Le sens de ‘cruel’ que nous lui donnons devra attendre les invasions barbares de Rome pour se manifester. Cependant, chez Euripide déjà, ‘barbare’ indique une dimension d’infériorité incluant l’infériorité morale, le mot ne se référant plus à la nationalité étrangère, mais exclusivement au mal, à la cruauté et à la sauvagerie.¹⁵³

The semantic space outlined here in Kristeva’s commentary about Euripides—from incomprehensibility to inferiority to a moral savagery which transcends nationality—constitutes the field where Montaigne plays out his barbaric paradox. For the moment, he merely suggests, following the Greeks, that societies which have recognizable and organized institutions, such as the Roman armies, may not be barbaric despite what has been said about them. The next step is to suggest that the nations which contemporary Europeans call barbaric may not be barbaric either. The third step, in the third movement of his voyage, will be to bring the paradox home and turn the passageway into a mirror.

¹⁵³ Kristeva 76. “For [Sophocles, Aeschylus, and Euripides], ‘barbarian’ means ‘incomprehensible,’ ‘non-Greek’ and finally ‘eccentric’ or ‘inferior.’ The meaning ‘cruel’ that we give to it will have to wait until the barbarian invasions of Rome to manifest itself. Nonetheless, already in Euripides, ‘barbarian’ indicates a dimension of inferiority that includes moral inferiority; the word no longer refers to a foreign nationality but exclusively to evil, cruelty, and savagery.” My translation.

Excursion 3: J'ay eu...du vent.

In the first excursion, Montaigne moved from historical discourse to philosophic discourse in the final line. Here he shifts gears again into autobiographical discourse, introducing the New World in a subordinate clause by reference to his own personal experience: "J'ay eu long temps avec *moy* un homme qui avoit demeuré dix ou douze ans en cet autre monde..."¹⁵⁴ He insists on his personal connection to this "other world," even if it is indirect.¹⁵⁵ There is an emphasis in Montaigne's interventions which suggests more than organizational strategy. Just as Enkidu's trip to the city required the mediation of the Stalker and the temple-priestess, so Montaigne requires various go-betweens to take the reader to the New World.

This man, our second guide, remains in the shadows. The verb of possession "avoir" is taken to indicate that our informant is one of Montaigne's servants. Steven Greenblatt points out that this question of possession is historically pertinent. His study of the way in which fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europeans represented the New World is aptly titled Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World, to stress the European enterprise of conquest and colonization. Greenblatt speculates that the servant may have been invented to function as an authoritative eyewitness. By inventing or just utilizing this particular mediator, Greenblatt suggests that Montaigne is "going out of his way to register a class-specific interpretation of the New World" and notes throughout the essay a "particular insistence on the absence of class structure in the New World and on the misery of oppression in the Old World that is subtly associated" with his servant.¹⁵⁶ This man is never named, and the number of years he has spent in the New World is left vague, ten or twelve. On the one hand, this vagueness is typically of Montaigne's cavalier attitude towards facts and numbers, even in regard to how many children he has or to La Boétie's age. On the other hand,

¹⁵⁴ 231. "I had with *me* for a long time a man who had lived for ten or twelve years in this other world..." (150). My italics.

¹⁵⁵ See J. M. Blanchard, "Of Cannibalism and Autobiography," Modern Language Notes 93 (1978) 654-676. For Certeau (188), these "marques énonciatives," such as "j'ay eu," "j'ai vu," "c'est évident," suggest Herodotus' narrative style rather than autobiography.

¹⁵⁶ Greenblatt 148-9. Compare the readings which emphasize Enkidu's subordinate status to Gilgamesh, p. 136n30 above.

Montaigne seems to be taking a deliberate attitude towards naming, connected with the procedure of judging.

For example, consider the terms he uses here for New World: "cet autre monde...en l'endroit où Villegaignon print terre, qu'il surnomma la France Antartique."¹⁵⁷ The reference to Villegagnon alludes to the explorer's expedition in 1557, and permits us to identify the destination of our tour as current Brazil and the people we finally meet in Excursion 9 as the Tupinamba. Although modern readers take these identifications for granted, it is worth noting that Montaigne is very careful not to name either the location or the people in any but the most general of terms. He uses "nation, monde, pays, contrée" for the place and impersonal pronouns, principally "ils," (they) for the inhabitants. His verb "surnomma" expresses some reservations about Villegagnon's name "La France Antartique." It suggests that this is an extra, superfluous name.

Greenblatt describes the process of taking possession of the New World as: "the performance of a set of linguistic acts: declaring, witnessing, recording" (57). He quotes one of Columbus' letters: "And there I found very many islands filled with people innumerable, and of them I have taken possession for their highnesses, by proclamation made and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me" (52). Columbus, unlike other travelers such as Marco Polo or Mandeville, insisted on renaming the lands he encountered (82). Greenblatt draws the parallel between the replacing of native names with Christian ones and the christening a child: "the erasure of the alien, perhaps demonic, identity—and hence a kind of making new; it is at once an exorcism, an appropriation, and a gift" (83). In contrast, Montaigne takes a much more cautious view. As befits a man who lost all but one of his children in infancy, he is reluctant to give names. In a parenthetical comment in a later essay, he clarifies his reluctance to name and criticizes the behavior of the conquistadores:

Certaines nations des nouvelles Indes (on n'a que faire d'en remarquer les noms, ils ne sont plus; car jusques à l'entier abolissement des noms et ancienne cognissance des lieux s'est

¹⁵⁷ 231. "that other world...in the place where Villegaignon landed, and which he called Antarctic France" (150).

estandue la desolation de cette conquete d'un merveilleux exemple et inouy)...¹⁵⁸

Montaigne displays prescience here in light of the arguments surrounding the quincentennial of Columbus' voyage. He has a profound desire to know about the New World, this "paüs infini." He wants to identify it and explain its presence. But such a desire for knowledge is not a desire to possess. He is reluctant to name.

This hesitancy is also part of Montaigne's epistemological uncertainty, expressed concisely in the final lines of this passage. His position before Truth is a cautious and humble one. For many, the discovery of the New World, tarnished the prestige of the Ancients. For Montaigne, it is another lesson in humility: "tant de personnages plus grands que nous ayans esté trompez en cette-cy."¹⁵⁹ It is proof of the limits of human knowledge: "plus de curiosité que de capacité."¹⁶⁰ His return to philosophical discourse here displays the characteristic mixture of figurative and literal. The contrast between our desire and our capacity is elaborated in two simple but vigorous statements. "Nous embrassons tout, mais nous n'étreignons que du vent"¹⁶¹ suggests slapstick comedy, for Montaigne finds human presumption humorous when he isn't angered by it. The wind symbolizes the intangible; the wind is an invisible yet powerful embodiment of passage. It also recalls the comparison between Gilgamesh's vain search for the wind and immortality and Montaigne's description of his grief after La Boétie's death. Similarly, "Les yeux plus grand que le ventre"¹⁶² has a proverbial ring. Allusions to food and eating are among Montaigne's favorites, and must not be ignored in an essay concerning cannibals.

¹⁵⁸ II.xviii. Rat II, 71. "Certain nations of the new Indies (there is no use mentioning their names, which are no more, for the desolation of their conquest—a monstrous and unheard of case—has extended even to the entire abolition of the names and former knowledge of the places)..." Frame 505-6.

¹⁵⁹ 231. "so many personages greater than ourselves having been mistaken about this one" (150).

¹⁶⁰ 231. "more curiosity than capacity" (150).

¹⁶¹ 231. "We embrace everything, but we clasp only wind" (150).

¹⁶² 231. "We have eyes bigger than our stomachs" (150).

Excursion 4: Platon introduit... nommee isle pour cela.

Before taking us to visit the New World, Montaigne turns to the greats of the past for help in identification without annexation. This passage provides a good example of his use of intertextuality. He wants to rule out the possibility that the New World is one of two islands discussed by Plato and Aristotle. The first allusion, to Atlantis, is direct reference to Plato's *Timeus*. The suggestion that the New World might be Atlantis, on the other hand, has been traced to a contemporary writer, Chauveton, who made the suggestion in additions to his 1579 translation of Benzoni's *Histoire des Indes*. Thus, what appears to be a simple intertextual reference to Plato, is merely the uppermost layer of a complicated and unacknowledged system of borrowings.¹⁶³ It is not my intention here to plumb the depths of Montaigne's invisible borrowings in the essay, but it is important to show how complex they are.

The allusion to Atlantis also sends us on the path back into the mythical past of the Greeks, just as Gilgamesh set off into the past in his search for the land of time before the flood. Montaigne does everything he can to make Plato's lost island seem real. In contrast with vague terms in the previous section, this excursion is replete with seventeen concrete geographical terms, from "Saïs" to "Athenians." This excursion ends with other precise examples of islands and bodies of water. The theme which relates all these examples is one of passage: the "estrangements" (strange changes) which have the power to alter the landscape of our planet. The connection with the cannibals is oblique, but we can follow the traces. The adjective "estranges" here links back to "nations estrangière." Wherever we go, we encounter many strange things. But, Montaigne concludes, it doesn't seem that the New World is Atlantis. The new world is too far away and doesn't seem to be an island after all.

¹⁶³ See for example, Pierre Villey and V.-L. Saulnier eds., *Les Essais de Michel de Montaigne*, rev. ed., vol 1. (1924; Paris: Presses universitaire de France, 1965) 202. Also Bernard Weinberg, "Montaigne's Readings for 'Des Cannibales,'" *Renaissance and Other Studies in Honor of William Leon Wiley*, ed. George Bernard Daniel III, University of North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures 72 (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1968) 262. See also Gérard Defaux, "Un cannibale en haut de chausses: Montaigne, la différence et la logique de l'identité," *Modern Language Notes* 97 (1982) 937.

Excursions 5 and 6: Il semble qu'il...nos terres neuves.

Even if the New World is not Atlantis, there are two ideas here that Montaigne wanted to hold on to: the idea of change, and the possibility of a lost Golden Age island. The first is reinforced in Excursion 5, a tour of the river banks and sea coast near Montaigne's home. It was added in the 1588 edition of the *Essais*. Montaigne reminds us passage is not only around us but within us. He begins this excursion with a brief comparison between the microcosm and macrocosm, the continents and human bodies: "il y aye des movements... en ces grands corps comme aux nostres."¹⁶⁴ He continues to take charge of this tour. The next examples of the changing boundaries of land and water come from his own personal observations of the Dordogne river and his brother's eyewitness account from nearby Médoc. Montaigne insists on the complexity of passage. He see enough change around him to extrapolate and imagine how much change is theoretically possible. "[J]e vois bien que c'est une agitation extraordinaire: car, si elle fut toujours allée de ce train ou deut aller à l'advenir, la figure du monde seroit renversée."¹⁶⁵ Again the link with the cannibals is oblique, but Montaigne is carefully preparing the reader that things may be quite different on the other side of the world.

In Excursion 6, Montaigne returns to Antiquity to rule out another identification of the New World. Montaigne hedges his bets on the authenticity of this Aristotelian intertext: "si ce petit livret...est à lui."¹⁶⁶ The thematic links with the preceding and succeeding passages are the idea of the witness (*tesmoignage*) and discovery (*descouverte*). He provides specific geographical details, and at the same time, introduces the idea of the Golden Age. This is important because Montaigne needs the positive associations of the Golden Age to overturn the negative mythic associations of the term "cannibales." The Carthaginian island has certain features of a locus amoenus. It doesn't just have trees and rivers. It seems especially designed for beauty: "revestüë

164 232. "^BIt seems that there are movements, ^Csome natural, others ^Bfeverish, in these great bodies, just as in our own" (151).

165 232. "^BI clearly see that this is an extraordinary disturbance; for if it had always gone at this rate, or was to do so in the future, the face of the world would be turned topsy-turvy" (151).

166 232. "if this little book...is his" (151).

de bois et arroisée de grandes et profondes rivieres."¹⁶⁷ The island is especially attractive for its remoteness and "la bonté et fertilité du terroir."¹⁶⁸ But a note of danger comes in with the reaction of the Carthaginian rulers. For them, it is more important to maintain power and security than to encourage the colonization of this marvelous island. Although the New World is not likely to be this island either, the potential for conflicts of interest between those who rule and those who are ruled is clearly raised.

Excursion 7: Cet homme...grandes incommoditez.

Despite all these travels back and forth between Antiquity and France, Montaigne is not quite ready to take us across the Atlantic. First we must address the problem of "veritable tesmoignage." What makes a witness reliable and credible? In the preceding excursions, the importance of first-hand observation was stressed. Montaigne advocated the on-going process of judgment implied by his title Essais, the willingness to make continuing comparisons between what is seen and what has been said.

With a nearly word-for-word repetition "Cet homme que j'avoy," the reader returns to Montaigne's servant, our guide to the New World. The verb "avoy" points again to the relationship of the two men as one of possession. Like the Stalker in Gilgamesh, Montaigne's man is an intermediary between civilized and uncivilized worlds. First on the physical level, he is the go-between, he has lived in both worlds. Secondly, he is a servant. His traveling companions who also serve as witnesses of the New World are "matelots et marchans."¹⁶⁹ They represent the intermediate social classes. Finally, the servant's traveling experience and his social status are associated with qualities which make him a good witness: "simple et grossier," "tres-fidelle," and again "simple."¹⁷⁰ Certeau even identifies him with the savages we have not yet encountered: "L'homme qui est 'demeuré dix ou douze ans en cet autre

¹⁶⁷ 233. "all clothed in woods and watered by great deep rivers..." (151).

¹⁶⁸ 233. "the goodness and fertility of the soil..." (151).

¹⁶⁹ 233. "sailors and merchants" (151).

¹⁷⁰ 233. "simple, crude," "very honest," "simple" (152).

monde' a les mêmes vertus que les sauvages. Ce qu'ils sont là-bas, il l'est ici."¹⁷¹

On the other side of the aisle, Montaigne places a second category of witnesses. These are "les gens fines" (clever people) whose learning gets in the way of what they write:

...pour faire valoir leur interpretation et la persuader, ils ne se peuvent garder d'alterer un peu l'Histoire...et pour donner credit à leur jugement et vous y attirer, prestant volontiers de ce costé là à la matiere, l'alongent et l'amplifient.¹⁷²

For these reasons, Montaigne concludes, he has not consulted them: "Ainsi je me contente de cette information, sans m'enquérir de ce que les cosmographes en disent."¹⁷³ This decision seems perfectly logical, but, unfortunately, it also appears to be completely untrue! Here is where Montaigne's complex practice of intertextuality complicates the issue to the point of sheer confusion.

The expert on Montaigne's sources, Pierre Villey, took Montaigne at his word: "Conformément à sa déclaration, il paraît parler des cannibales uniquement d'après des témoignages oraux."¹⁷⁴ Other critics, such as Gilbert Chinard were more skeptical as early as 1911.¹⁷⁵ More recently, Bernard Weinberg has compared texts side by side to show that Montaigne not only read the cosmographies, including Thevet, Barré and Léry, but that the second movement of the essay depends heavily upon those very sources!

There is no question that travel writing has a long tradition of mediators, both acknowledged and unacknowledged. Mary Campbell writes:

¹⁷¹ Certeau 193. "The man who 'had lived ten or twelve years in that other world' has the same virtues as the savages. What they are over there, he is here." My translation.

¹⁷² 233. "clever people...to lend weight and conviction to their interpretation, they cannot help altering history a little...to give credence to their judgment and attract you to it, they are prone to stretch it out and amplify it" (152).

¹⁷³ 233-34. "So I content myself with this information, without inquiring what the cosmographers say about it" (152).

¹⁷⁴ Villey 202. "In accordance with his declaration, he seems to base his discussion of the cannibals uniquely on oral testimonies." My translation.

¹⁷⁵ Gilbert Chinard, L'exotisme américain dans la littérature française au XVI^e siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1911).

The three most famous and influential works of this kind in the Western corpus—Marco Polo's Description of the World, Mandeville's Travels, and the Journal of Christopher Columbus—are also secondhand accounts, one way or another. Marco Polo dictated his adventures to his cell mate, a Frenchman; Mandeville plagiarized most of his material; and the journal of Columbus' first voyage has only reached us as edited, abridged, and partly summarized by Las Casas (34).

Weinberg points to a similar problem with determining what Montaigne borrowed from Barré and Léry, because those two are so indebted to Thevet! (278). Yet Montaigne seems to be taking this intertextual game one step further. He draws our attention to these hidden texts by denying that he has consulted them. Hasn't he taken the reluctance to name just a bit too far?!

It is not just an "invisible borrowing," a reluctance, or a hesitancy. It is lying. But it is also lying which draws attention to itself. In the middle of a paradoxical essay which seeks to overthrow orthodox views on barbarians, the reader must first cross through a version of the famous Liar paradox: Montaigne exaggerates (or lies) when says he won't consult the cosmographers because they exaggerate (or lie). The questionable behavior Montaigne attributes to "les fines gens," the inclining, masking, and amplification, is a fair description of what Montaigne, as tour guide, provides for the reader! We have already followed him to antiquity and the banks of the Dordogne to see the sights he has carefully selected for us. He complains about the "topographes" who write about places they have never been. This would of course eliminate him from writing about the New World!

Montaigne makes it quite clear in his essay "Des Livres" that he finds the whole game of hunting for sources quite amusing. Here he offers a challenge, in the context of his borrowings from the Ancients.

Es raisons et inventions que je transplant en mon solage et confonds aux miennes, j'ay à escient ommis parfois d'en marquer l'autheur, pour tenir en bride la temerité de ces sentences hastives qui se jetent sur toute sorte d'escrsits, notamment jeunes escrits d'hommes encore vivant... Je veuz qu'ils donnent une nazade à Plutarque sur mon nez, et qu'ils s'échaudent à injurier Seneque en moy... J'aimeray quelcun qui me sçache deplumer...¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ II.x. Rat I, 448. "In the reasonings and inventions that I transplant into my soil and confound with my own, I have sometimes deliberately not indicated the author, in order to hold

Two points are especially important here. One is the open defiance that Montaigne offers the reader: "You play the game—I promise to make it hard." Looking at "Des cannibales" in the context of the Essais can provide some clues. As Gérard Defaux points out:

Il suffit encore de remarquer au passage que Montaigne a fort ingénieusement inséré son essai "Des cannibales," essai dans lequel il affiche une ignorance pleine et entière des Cosmographes, entre deux essais dans lesquels il démontre au contraire sa familiarité avec leurs écrits.¹⁷⁷

A liar who says he's lying is, paradoxically speaking, not a liar. Secondly, the key word "invention" indicates precisely those aspects Montaigne rejects in the cosmographers: "Or il faut un homme très-fidelle, ou si simple qu'il n'ait pas de quoy bastir et donner de la vray-semblance à des *inventions* fauces..."¹⁷⁸ As Weinberg establishes, Montaigne has borrowed many details from his eyewitnesses, including the acknowledged servant and the unacknowledged cosmographers. What he doesn't borrow are the parts of the essay, the "philosophical disquisitions" (278) which are his own "argumens et inventions." Furthermore, he never asserts that he is telling the Truth about the Whole World, as the cosmographers tended to do. His approach to the Truth is more cautious. In "Des cannibales" he doesn't hesitate to invoke or respectfully contradict the Ancients. The game has shifted now to the cosmographers and Montaigne. Here Montaigne plays the anti-cosmographer, but he uses their experiences for his own purposes.

There is no simple way to deal with these revelations. In the midst of overturning the reader's notions about barbarians, the reader's trust in the tour guide risks being overturned as well. But this is the essence of the Essais: the on-going, never-ending process of questioning, distinguishing, sharpening, and moving on. Of all the critics who read "Des cannibales," Gérard

in check the temerity of those hasty condemnations that are tossed at all sort of writings, notably recent writings of men still living...I want them to give Plutarch a fillip on my nose and get burned insulting Seneca in me...I will love anyone who can unplume me..." Frame 296-7.

¹⁷⁷ Defaux 939. "In passing, it is sufficient to note that Montaigne has ingeniously inserted his essay 'On Cannibals' in which he parades a full and complete ignorance of the Cosmographers in between two essays in which he demonstrates, on the contrary, his familiarity with their writings." My translation.

¹⁷⁸ 233. "We need a man either very honest, or so simple that he has not the stuff to build up false *inventions* and give them plausibility..." (152). My italics.

Defaux is the most alert to this aspect of Montaigne's method and its implication for the reader. An essay's function is not just to illustrate a theme, but "un prétexte à l'exercice du jugement non seulement de celui qui le tient, mais encore de celui qui le reçoit."¹⁷⁹ Defaux continues:

Rien alors de plus logique que le lectuer *essaye* en même temps son propre jugement. Rien de plus logique encore que cet essai de son propre jugement amène le lecteur non seulement à questionner Montaigne, mais aussi bien à se questionner, pour dépasser, en fin de compte, le type de lecture quasi canonique auquel généralement il se tient.¹⁸⁰

The reader can, of course, read the essay naively and accept Montaigne's word that his description of the New World is based on the testimony of his servant and traveling companion. This will not undo his basic paradox. But Montaigne challenges our comfortable assumptions about reading as well as about cannibals.

As for Truth in general, so for the hunt for sources and intertexts:

L'agitation et la chasse est proprement notre gibier: nous ne sommes pas excusables de la conduire mal et impertinemment; de la faillir à la prise, c'est autre chose. Car nous sommes nais à quester la vérité; il appartient de la posséder à un plus grande puissance. ¹⁸¹

Montaigne offers this hunting metaphor in the context of his own practice of reading. He wants a suspicious, active reader. And here the "suffisant" reader has been alerted, awakened roughly, not by gentle music. We will take what he has to say with the same open-minded skepticism with which he confronts his own material. We watch how he amplifies. We read warily. We will be partners, not just passive tourists.

¹⁷⁹ Defaux 935. "a pretext for the exercise of judgment not only for the one who holds it but for the one who receives it..." My translation.

¹⁸⁰ Defaux 935. "Nothing could be more logical than for the reader to *essay* his own judgment. Nothing could be logical than for this essay of his own judgment to lead the reader not only to question Montaigne, but also to question himself, to go beyond, finally, the sort of canonical reading that he generally holds to." My translation. Along similar lines, see Rendall "Dialectical."

¹⁸¹ III.viii. Rat II, 362. "Agitation and the chase are properly our quarry; we are not excusable if we conduct it badly and irrelevantly; to fail in the quest is another thing. For we are born to quest after truth; to possess it belongs to a greater power." Frame 708.

Excursion 8: Or, je trouve...*primum dedit.*

Now that the reader is shaken, questioning not only received opinion but Montaigne himself, here comes the core of the argument: Lecture 2. The semantic web of the essay is pulled tightly together. All the key words in the essay are contained here. In contrast with what has just been said, or paradoxically drawing attention to it, Montaigne opens this excursion with an unusually obvious rhetorical transition: "Or, je trouve, pour revenir à mon propos..."¹⁸² Return? The official announced topic is "Des cannibales," and we still have several pages to go before cannibalism will be discussed. But his topic is really the paradox of the barbarian as adumbrated at the end of the first excursion: the process of reason and judgment opposed to the "facts" of rumor and preconceptions, the method by which we approach the things itself and separate them from our opinions.

As King Pyrrhus recognized that the Romans might not be barbaric, now Montaigne states his reversal of the orthodox opinion: "il n'y a rien de barbare et de sauvage en cette nation..."¹⁸³ This assertion is not based on facts of their appearance or behavior, which still remain to be examined, but because the terms "barbare and sauvage" are themselves relative, dependent not on things themselves, but on opinions and customs. Here Montaigne makes the decisive shift, from "je" to "nous," which Camus echoes in his own book on judgment, La Chute: "Alors, insensiblement, je passe dans mon discours du 'je' au 'nous.'"¹⁸⁴ This is essential preparation for the third and final movement of the essay, the return to the self, for both guide and reader.

In a essay which shifts endlessly from here to there, Montaigne now sets up a distinction between "cette nation" and "[le] païs où nous sommes."¹⁸⁵ Human beings tend to base opinions on local "opinions et usances," opinions and customs. As Leach observed of common opinion, "Culture may be defined as the way of life which we humans experience in

¹⁸² 234. "Now to return to my subject..." (152).

¹⁸³ 234. "There is nothing barbarous and savage in that nation..." (152).

¹⁸⁴ Camus 1547. "Then, imperceptibly I move in my speech from 'I' to 'we'." My translation.

¹⁸⁵ 234. "that nation" "the country we live in" (152).

our society and Nature is everything else.”¹⁸⁶ But where the reader expects “here” to be the basis for all our experience, Montaigne locates it “there”: “Là est toujours la parfaite religion, la parfaite police...”¹⁸⁷ Montaigne shifts the reader’s attention over *there*: Where do we find the perfection of the Golden Age? Surely not here, but there.

Similarly, Montaigne shifts the relativity of the word “barbare” onto the word “sauvage” and plays on the full range of its semantic field.¹⁸⁸ In French “sauvage” not only bears the connotations of our “savage,” but maintains the ambiguity of the English “wild,” especially as we use it in compounds: “wildfire,” “wildflower,” and of course “wild man.” For example, Michael Meade, a mythologist in the men’s movement, distinguishes the wild man from the savage:

There is a key distinction, though, between the wild man and the savage. People consider whatever is wild to be primitive. But when people think of the primitive they also think of brutality and savagery, and so those things get mixed up. The wild man is aware of his woundedness. The savage man doesn’t know he’s wounded and therefore keeps wounding other people.

No poet can continue to write without some contact with this wild man or wild woman. Poetry is wild. It erupts just like wildflowers do when the waters hit the desert in spring, and all of a sudden what was dry is colors and flowers, and you can almost see the sound of them coming through the ground. That’s wild. But it’s not savage (9).

Meade’s commentary touches many of the points in Montaigne’s passage here: brutality, savagery, wildness, common opinion, and poetic invention. In French, on the other hand, “sauvage” still covers the whole semantic territory. This is apparent if we look at the cover of Claude Lévi-Strauss’ La Pensée sauvage where there is a photograph of a wild pansy (*pensée*). The translated title, The Savage Mind, misses the word play entirely.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ See page 39 above.

¹⁸⁷ 234. “*There is always the perfect religion, the perfect government...*” (152). Emphasis in Frame’s translation.

¹⁸⁸ See the discussion of the etymology of “savage,” page 53 above. See also Sinclair.

¹⁸⁹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, La Pensée sauvage, Paris: Plon, 1962. An intertextual analysis of Lévi-Strauss and Montaigne would be fascinating. His name comes up frequently in discussions of “Des

Montaigne moves similarly from people to fruit to make his own point.

Ils sont sauvages, de mesme que nous appellons sauvages les fructs que nature, de soy et de son progrez ordinaire, a produictes: là où, à la verité, ce sont ceux que nous avons alterez par nostre artifice et detournez de l'ordre commun, que nous devrions appeller plutost sauvages. En ceux là sont vives et vigoureuses les vrayes et plus utiles et naturelles vertus et proprietez, lesquelles nous avons abastardies en ceux-cy, et les avons seulement accommodées au plaisir de nostre goust corrompu.¹⁹⁰

On this less controversial ground, discussing fruit and food before turning to people, Montaigne sets forth his essential oppositions: "naturelle" and its alliterative companions: "vive, vigoureuses, vraye, vertu" and, on the other hand, "artifice, abastardie, corrompu."¹⁹¹ In so doing the relativity of the term savage becomes clear. He proposes that Europeans use it for themselves—"nostre gout"—because European customs have distorted and corrupted nature. Montaigne also points toward the agricultural roots of the modern term "culture" when he remarks that our taste is not irreparably corrupt. We are still children of "nostre grande et puissante mere nature," in that we are able to appreciate the "fruits de ces contrées-là sans culture."¹⁹² It is likely that "sans culture" applies to both the fruits and the countries.¹⁹³

Montaigne recalls his critique of the cosmographers in the previous section by linking agricultural and artistic invention here. There is no question that Montaigne takes the side of nature in the commonplace Renaissance opposition between art and nature: "Nous avons tant rechargé la

cannibales." See, for example, White 32-33, Levin 79-80. Geertz (Works) and Torgovnick also devote chapters to Lévi-Strauss.

¹⁹⁰ 234. "These people are wild, just as we call wild the fruits that Nature has produced by herself and in her normal course; whereas really it is those that we have changed artificially and led astray from the common order, that we should rather call wild. The former retain alive and vigorous the genuine, their most useful and natural virtues and properties, which we have debased in the latter in adapting them to gratify our corrupted taste" (152).

¹⁹¹ "natual" "alive, vigorous, true, virtue" "artifice, debased [bastardized], corrupted" (155).

¹⁹² 234. "Aour great and powerful mother Nature..." "Cuncultivated fruits of those countries..." (152).

¹⁹³ Compare "és nations moins cultivées," (in the nations least cultivated by art,) discussed below p. 263n255.

beauté et richesse de ses ouvrages par nos inventions, que nous l'avons tout estouffée."¹⁹⁴ Once again, the "suffisant" modern reader can appreciate an ironic counterpoint. Montaigne compares human efforts unfavorably to nature's inventions: "le nid de moindre oyselet, sa contexture, sa beauté et utilité de son usage, non pas las tissure de la chetive arraignée."¹⁹⁵ But Montaigne's own Essais are renowned examples of this very term "contexture," which evokes the imagery of textual critics.¹⁹⁶ The intricate weaving of his web in this essay is worthy of admiration, too.

Next comes the final thrust of this central lecture. Montaigne is ready to move from fruits and nests to people. What can my weak and imperfect art do? It can break down the barriers of custom. And since custom holds that the inhabitants of the New World are savages and barbarians, he accomplishes this reversal by "inventing" the myth of the noble savage. Montaigne no more "invented" the noble savage than Columbus "discovered" the New World. In the rhetorical sense of the term inventio, both uncovered and displayed to the world something, a mythical figure in the first case, a continent, in the second, which had already existed for many thousands of years.

Another link between the discoveries of Montaigne and Columbus is that both are based on belief in a myth which is related to the noble savage figure: the myth of the Golden Age. Henry Levin situates us historically:

The Middle Ages had buried the golden age under the concept of Eden; the Renaissance not only revived the original conception, but ventured forth on a quest to objectify it. When its locus shifted from the temporal to the spatial, it became an attainable goal and a challenge to explorers...The discoverer who has looked upon *terra incognita* must explain it in terms which those who have never been there can readily comprehend. Furthermore, human awareness is conditioned to single out familiar sights and sounds, and often to confuse the unfamiliar with what may fit more easily into our preexisting scheme of things. Even if our eyes and ears have seen and heard correctly, the results of our observation must be

¹⁹⁴ 234. "We have so overloaded the beauty and richness of her works by our inventions that we have quite smothered her" (152).

¹⁹⁵ 35. "...the nest of the tiniest bird, its contexture, its beauty and convenience; or even the web of the puny spider" (152-53).

¹⁹⁶ Compare Roland Barthes' vocabulary p. 74n5.

reported in language, and language is the creature of convention (59).

The European explorers carried with them contradictory images affiliated with the complementary sides of the wild-man image. They were drawn by the allure of the Golden Age and the Promised Land on the one hand, and fearful of the marginal monstrous races they expected to encounter. These images created the vocabulary and the categories within which the inhabitants of the New World were encountered and described.

These contradictions coexisted uneasily in the various representations of these encounters, from Columbus' letters to the engravings of André Thevet's Singularitez de la France Antartique and Cosmographie Universelle. (See Figure 16.) Frank Lestringant discusses the two engravings which he has pointedly juxtaposed. He analyzes their differences while stressing the common element of the ax. It should be noted that the engraving on the left is included in the Rat edition of the Essais with a sentence from Excursion 11 of "Des cannibales" as a caption: "Chacun rapporte pour son trophé la teste de l'ennemy qu'il a tué, et l'attache à l'entrée de son logis."¹⁹⁷

La hache est destinée à s'abattre ici sur un tronc d'arbre et là sur des membres humains. Dans le premier cas, le sauvage est un bûcheron au service du négociant européen, en échange d'un salaire dérisoire... Dans le deuxième gravure, le Tupinamba n'est livré qu'à lui-même et à la bestialités de ses appétits anthropophages... L'incohérence même de ses représentations plastiques—ou littéraires—, et leur caractère évidemment contradictoire, traduisent un rapport fondamental à l'Histoire:—Bon—en termes esthétiques, beau—Sauvage, dans sa relation positive à l'Européen; Sauvage bestial—c'est-à-dire caricature du Sauvage—dans l'exercice de pratiques dont les sens qui reste obstinément opaque à l'observateur. En tant que tel, le Sauvage de la Cosmographie constitue un objet complexe, susceptible de lectures simultanées et contradictoires.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ 238. "Each man brings back as his trophy the head of the enemy he has killed, and sets it up at the entrance to his dwelling" (155). Also compare the role of the disembodied head in the wild-man continuum (Green Man, Orpheus, Medusa, John the Baptist, etc). See p.33 above.

¹⁹⁸ Frank Lestringant, "Les Représentations du sauvage dans l'iconographie relative aux ouvrages du cosmographe André Thevet," Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance 40 (1978) 592. "The ax is intended to cut down a tree here and to cut human limbs there. In the first case, the savage is a woodsman in the service of a European business man, in exchange for a derisory salary. In the second engraving the Tupinamba is abandoned only to himself and to the



Figure 16. Two engravings from André Thevet, Cosmographie universelle, (1575). "Comme les Sauvages rotissent leurs ennemis," t. II, f. 946 r°. "Comme ce peuple coupe et porte le Brésil és navires," t. II, f. 950 v°. (Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris). Rpt. in Lestringant 590-591 with the titles: "L'homme à la hache: le cannibale." (Man with ax: the cannibal). "L'homme à la hache: le bûcheron." (Man with ax: the woodcutter).

bestiality of his anthropophagic appetites...The very incoherence of the plastic—or literary—representations, translates a relationship fundamental to History—the Noble—in aesthetic terms, beautiful—Savage, in his positive relationship to the European; the bestial Savage—that is to say the caricature of the Savage—in the exercise of practices which remain opaque to the observer. As such, the Savage of the Cosmographie constitutes a complex object, susceptible to simultaneous and contradictory readings." My translation.

These complexities, so well observed by Lestringant, originate in the liminal nature of the wild-man figure. Montaigne's audacious invention consists in separating these competing images. He sets up expectations for one in the title and delivers the other in the text, all the while playing with the words which link these contradictory and complementary conventional images. It is not possible to overturn a myth with mere facts. Indeed it is probably impossible to overturn a myth at all. What you can do is to call attention to it, stand it on its head, and stretch opinion so far in one direction that the tourist-reader will have to sit down in exhaustion and reflect. Moreover, Montaigne has some original ideas for ways to view the act of cannibalism so that it does not remain "opaque".

Montaigne evokes the culturally endorsed connection between the New World and Eden/Golden Age, and takes this connection as far as he can. Just as Gilgamesh and Cicero traveled into the mythic time of the past, so now Montaigne crosses the Atlantic and goes back in time. The inhabitants of the New World are "voisines de leur naïveté originelle" (close to their original naturalness) or, in words borrowed from Seneca, viri a diis recentes— "men fresh from the hands of the gods." As other passages in the Essais suggest, Montaigne seems to have sincerely believed that the nations of the New World were very close to being governed by natural law, just as Columbus believed he had reached the Indies. His beliefs do not preclude what Hayden White calls his "fictive" use of these same myths (Dudley 32). His paradoxical method is to mix myths and beliefs, and play them against each other.

The manner in which Montaigne pursues his argument here is extravagant and ironic. He has just finished mocking the idea that we consider our own customs and societies to be perfect, and now he speaks in the same superlatives about another country.

...il me semble que ce que nous voyons par l'expérience en ces nations là, surpassé non seulement toutes les peintures de quoy la poésie a embelli l'âge doré et toutes ses inventions à feindre une

heureuse conditions d'hommes, mais encore la conception et le desire mesme de la philosophie.¹⁹⁹

How seriously can the reader take this? "My golden age is better than yours?" Is it not comical to say that something is better than a utopia—"esloignée de cette perfection?"²⁰⁰ Montaigne admits elsewhere that he loves to exaggerate and will say anything in an argument:

Moy-mesme, qui faicts singuliere conscience de mentir et qui ne me soucie guiere de donner creance et autorité à ce que je dis, m'apperçoy toutesfois, aux propos que j'ay en main, qu'estant eschauffé ou par la resistance d'un autre, ou par la propre chaleur de la narration, je grossis en enflé mon sujet par vois, mouvemens, vigeur et force de parolles, et encore par extension et amplification, non sans interest de la verité nayfve. Mais je le fais en condition pourtant, qu'au premier qui me remeine et qui me demande la vérite nue et cruë, je quitte soudain mon effort et la luy donne, sans exagération, sans emphase et remplissage. La parole vive et bruyante, comme est la mienne ordinaire, s'emporte volontiers à l'hyperbole.²⁰¹

This is a capital passage for comparison with the textual strategies of "Des cannibales." It addresses the elements of truth and falsehood, authority and credence, exaggeration and hyperbole. Montaigne is in the first phase—magnification and amplification—at this point in the essay. His larger purpose justifies the artistic liberties he so gleefully takes here: "Ce qui poind, touche et esveille mieux que ce qui plaist. Ce temps n'est propre à nous amender qu'à reculons, par disconvenance plus que par accord, par difference

¹⁹⁹ 235. "...it seems to me that what we actually see in these nations surpasses not only all the pictures in which poets have idealized the golden age and all their inventions in imagining a happy state of man, but also the conceptions and the very desire of philosophy" (153).

²⁰⁰ 236. "far from this perfection" (153).

²⁰¹ III,xi. Rat II, 475. "I myself, who am singularly scrupulous about lying and who scarcely concern myself with giving credence and authority to what I say, perceive nevertheless that when I am excited over a matter I have in hand, either by another man's resistance or by the intrinsic heat of the narration, I magnify and inflate my subject by voice, movements, vigor and power of words, and further by extension and amplification, not without prejudice to the simple truth. But I do so, however, on this condition, that for the first man who catches me up and asks me for the naked and unvarnished truth, I promptly abandon my straining and give it to him without exaggeration, without overemphasis or padding. A lively and noisy way of speaking, such as mine ordinarily is, is apt to be carried away into hyperbole." Frame 786.

que par similitude."²⁰² Montaigne has a moral obligation to use extreme tactics in order to shatter his readers' comfortable preconceptions.

The opposition of experience and invention recalls the earlier passage where Montaigne denied having read the cosmographers.²⁰³ Was this a wink to the reader to be attentive to Montaigne's own invention? Here he readily admits that the golden age is an artistic embellishment or a philosopher's dream. Now he contends that a country (which he has never visited) offers even more ideal conditions. If Plato would not have believed it, why should we?

As though to press our credulity even further, the reader is not only referred to Plato's texts, but Plato himself. Time travel works in both directions, and the Greek philosopher becomes the next client of the Eyquem travel agency. What Plato would actually see in the New World ("voyons par expérience") is not in fact drawn from concrete observation, but from the poetic tradition Montaigne has just repudiated. As noted in connection with Cicero's De inventione, description by negative has been a feature of the myth of the golden age and the wild-man intertext since the days of the Sumerians.

Montaigne's list patently belongs to this tradition: "C'est une nation diroy je à Platon, en laquelle il n'y aucune espece de trafique, nul cognoissance de lettres, nul science de nombres..."²⁰⁴ This extended series of negatives is perhaps Montaigne's most famous passage in "Des cannibales," thanks to Shakespeare's intertextual appropriation of it in The Tempest.²⁰⁵ Since Montaigne has already set up the contrast between us and them, our corrupted taste and their uncorrupted laws ("abastardies" vs. "corrompu"), this lengthy enumeration has a double effect. As Sayce remarks, "[T]he four-

²⁰² III.viii. Rat II, 356. "What stings, touches and arouses us better than what pleases. The times are fit for improving us only backward, by disagreement more than by agreement, by difference more than similarity." Frame 703.

²⁰³ De Lutri calls attention to this crucial opposition in "Montaigne's 'Des cannibales': invention / experience," Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance 38 (1976): 79-82.

²⁰⁴ 235. "This is a nation, I should say to Plato, in which there is no sort of traffic, no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers..." (153). The topic of literacy vs. illiteracy is of much interest. See, for example, Greenblatt on Todorov and the European "literall advantage" (9 and following). Certeau argues that Montaigne's servant is an European illiterate (193).

²⁰⁵ Time and space require that I defer my own investigation of this intertextual adventure for another study.

teen negatives taken together offer a very positive picture of the life and character of the American Indians, but equally important in the condemnation of European society: they are not what we are" (307). Montaigne's extravagance has been enlisted to move the reader towards that self-recognition. Like Camus' judge-penitent, Montaigne seeks an accomplice, a fellow criminal-victim.

...[J]e navigue souplement, je multiplie les nuances, les digressions aussi.....[J]e fabrique un portrait qui est celui de tous et de personne. Un masque en somme, assez semblable à ceux du carnaval, à la fois fidèles et simplifiés, et devant lesquels on se dit 'Tiens, je l'ai rencontré, celui-là.' Quand le portrait est terminé, comme ce soir, je le montre, plein de desolation: 'Voilà, hélas! ce que je suis.' Le réquisitoire est achevé. Mais, du même coup, le portrait que je tends à mes contemporains devient un miroir.²⁰⁶

Camus' words here are an appropriate description of Montaigne's method. The nuances, digressions, and skillful navigation are celebrated aspects of Montaigne's style. The legal motifs and the liminal image of the carnival mask are especially pertinent. The masks are self-portraits and mirrors at the same time. As the first movement of the essay comes to a close, Montaigne's tour does finally set sail from France. The reader's attention shifts to the New World, but Montaigne's gaze never leaves the mirror in which both he and the reader are reflected.

Movement 2. Excursion 9: "Au demeurant...on ne le void plus."

"Au demeurant" marks an abrupt transition to a new location and a new tone. Like Montaigne's other obvious transitional phrases, such as "Or, pour revenir à mon propos" above, there is ironic force. Apparently, here is the ostensible subject of the essay, the Cannibals. But by introducing this movement with "au demeurant" ("for the rest"), he suggests that what follows is merely a remainder, supporting details. And in a sense this is true, for the core of Montaigne's argument has just been delivered. But he shifts

²⁰⁶ Camus 1547. "I navigate gracefully, I multiply nuances and digressions...I construct a portrait which belongs to everyone and to no one. A mask, in short, rather like those carnival masks which both faithful and stylized, and seeing them people say: 'Why, I've met this one!' When the portrait is finished, as it is this evening, I show it with great sorrow: 'This, alas, is what I am!' The prosecutor's final speech comes to a close. But at the same time, the portrait I offer to my contemporaries becomes a mirror." My translation.

now to the alternative textual strategy: "Je quitte soudain mon effort et la luy donne, sans exagération, sans emphase et remplissage."²⁰⁷ He abandons the extravagant ironic tone of the previous excursion. In this central movement, he leads us down the path of experience, in a calm, unobtrusive style, so unobtrusive in fact that his intertextual sources remain obscured. There is continuity with the previous movement as well. He reiterates the central paradox of barbarity and continually reinforces the comparison between "us"—an "us" which includes reader and Montaigne—and "them."

In contrast with the previous flight into poetic exaggeration, Excursion 9 adheres to ethnographic convention. Although this is precisely the part of the essay which owes most to the cosmographes, the polemics of "invention" recede in the background. He stresses the reliability of the unnamed witnesses, "à ce que m'ont dit mes témoings...m'ont assuré...", but their presence is minimized.²⁰⁸ The passage begins with a description of the climate and the geography. In keeping with contemporary travel description, the golden-age motifs continue along with this new, more measured tone. The exaggerations are, in fact, still present, but in comparison with the previous section, they are modest and even plausible. The climate is not just pleasant and temperate, but "très-plaisant et bien temperée."²⁰⁹ It is not enough to mention that the people are healthy. The observers report in absolute terms: "*aucun* tremblant, chassieux, édenté."²¹⁰ The description by negation and absence continues, as my italics indicate. As in the "nul...nul" passage above, we do not see there what we do see at home. In the same way, their food is unlike ours "*aucune* ressemblance aux nostres" and as befits a paradise it is "abondant" and requires little preparation: "*sans autre artifice* que de les cuire."²¹¹ All these absences reinforce the picture of a Golden Age, but this one seems entirely real.

²⁰⁷ "I promptly abandon my straining and give it to him without exaggeration, without overemphasis or padding." See page 245 above for the entire passage.

²⁰⁸ 236. "according to my witnesses...assured me..." (153).

²⁰⁹ 236. "very pleasant and temperate" (153). An intensifier is lost in translation.

²¹⁰ 236. "*never saw one* palsied, bleary-eyed, toothless, or bent with age" (153). My italics.

²¹¹ 236. "*no* resemblance to ours," "*with no other artifice* than cooking" (153). My italics.

The first evocation of a liminal figure in the New World is not a cannibal or a native at all, but a European whom the natives mistake for a centaur: "Le premier qui y mena un cheval...leur fit tant d'horreur en cette assiette, qu'ils tuerent à coups de traict, avant que le pouvoir recognoistre."²¹² Montaigne does not present "them" as strange. Indeed, despite the title, not a single native American has been described. Instead, it is the European on horseback who is the unrecognizable monster and who pays with his life for the horror he inspires.

We are in a liminal zone between fact and fancy. Montaigne would enjoy the observations of Jacob Bronowski in The Ascent of Man, where he compares the German tanks crossing the Polish horizon in 1939 to the first glimpses of the horsed riders that invaded peoples have witnessed throughout history. In the following passage, Bronowski meditates on the image of the horseman:

For the rider is visibly more than a man: he is head-high above others, and he moves with bewildering power so that he bestrides the living world. When the plants and the animals of the village had been tamed for human use, mounting the horse was a more than human gesture, the symbolic act of dominance over total creation. We know that this is so from the awe and fear that the horse created in historical times, when the mounted Spaniards overwhelmed the armies of Peru (who had never seen a horse) in 1532. So, long before, the Scythians were a terror that swept over the countries that did not know the techniques of riding. The Greeks when they saw the Scythian riders believed the horse and rider to be one; that is how they invented the legend of the centaur. Indeed that other half-human hybrid of the Greek imagination, the satyr, was originally not part goat, but part horse; so deep was the unease that the rushing creature from the East inspired.²¹³

It is quite fitting that Bronowski brings the Scythians and the Spanish together here, and connects them by their guise as centaurs. He points to the

²¹² 236. "The first man who rode a horse there, though he had dealings with them on several other trips, so horrified them in this posture that they shot him dead with arrows before they could recognize him" (153).

²¹³ Jacob Bronowski, The Ascent of Man (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973) 80. Montaigne himself was an avid horseman. "*Me si fata meis paterentur ducere vitam Auspiciis, je choisiros à la passer le cul sur le selle...*" III.ix. Rat II, 429. "If fate permitted me my life to guide/ As I myself decide, (Virgil) I would spend it with my rear in the saddle." Frame 755.

interplay between history and mythology which is perfectly suited to the heterological discourse of "Des cannibales." While Bronowski's assertion that the Greeks "invented" the centaur belies a rather rational interpretation of mythology, it is quite appropriate to Montaigne's own use of the word "invention" or "descouverte."

As Bronowski observes, the horse played a significant role in the conquest of the New World. The invaders were well aware of its importance. "Again and again in European chronicles of the Encounter period echoes the sentiment 'after God, we owe the victory to the horses.'"²¹⁴ The text from Thevet which Weinberg juxtaposes to Montaigne's mentions that horses were unknown and that they had an ignoble reputation: "...ces cheuaux, qui leur estoient incogneuz, & reputez comme bestes rauissantes..."²¹⁵ Montaigne, on the other hand, presents an encounter where the figure and ground are reversed: the European is the monster. He owes nothing to Thevet in this. This reversal anticipates the final movement of the essay, which is devoted to how the French appear to the strangers from the New World. The idea that it is the Europeans who are strange and savage is adumbrated here.

A comparison with the myth of cannibalism is instructive. Arens stresses the universal nature of the accusation of cannibalism. Most societies accuse some other group of such behavior. It is not uncommon for two groups to make the accusation against each other. For example, Arens cites the Korean belief that the Chinese were cannibals and the Chinese conviction that the same was true of the Koreans (vi). In another example, closer to home, one of the most stereotyped Western myths about Africa involves cannibalism and white missionaries in simmering cauldrons. The reader may be surprised to learn that when the hero of Alex Haley's *Roots*, Kunta Kinte, is captured in Africa by slave-traders, his greatest fear is not the dangerous sea voyage or his future life as a slave, but his conviction that he will be eaten by

²¹⁴ Deb Bennett and Robert S. Hoffmann, "Ranching in the New World," Viola and Margolis 105.

²¹⁵ "...these horses, which were unknown to them, and reputed to be ravishing beasts..." My translation. Thevet cited by Weinberg 266.

the white cannibals at the end of his journey.²¹⁶ Similarly, Montaigne activates the reciprocal element in heterological discourse when he describes the fate of this European centaur. Like Montaigne, Arens is strongly critical of a Western double standard: “*a priori* dismissal of the existing reports on cannibalism for Europeans and the acceptance of every report for non-European people (21).”

Meanwhile, Montaigne’s inventory of life in “*cette contrée de païs*” continues. He describes buildings, beverages, furniture, and daily activities. Details borrowed from the cosmographers or his other mediators are woven into a catalog of descriptive facts along with Montaigne’s own additions. The latter include comparisons from the ancients, “comme Suidas dict de quelques autres peuples d’Orient,” from French custom “à la mode de noz granges,”²¹⁷ and from his own personal experience. Authentic artifacts, such as their beds, can be found in many places outside of the New World, “et entre autres chez moy.”²¹⁸ Of their bread, he attests “J’en ay tasté: le goust en est doux et un peu fade.”²¹⁹

The same statement could be made of Montaigne’s style here. Having overwhelmed the reader in Excursion 8 by a sudden inundation, he is now undermining received ideas by more gradual erosive methods. For example, in keeping with his tactic of replacing the ignoble savage with a noble figure, Montaigne evokes the motif of hairiness. In contrast with Spenser’s wild and savage man whose “haire was like a garment seen,” they—still no names or proper nouns, only indefinite pronouns—are not only clean shaven, they are much less hairy than we are: “Ils sont ras par tout, et se font le poil beaucoup plus nettement que nous, sans autre rasouer que de bois ou de pierre.”²²⁰ If

²¹⁶ Alex Haley, *Roots*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976). For example, “Kunta lay numbly, in a kind of stupor. It came into his mind that when they finally ate his flesh and sucked his bones, his spirit would have already escaped to Allah” (191).

²¹⁷ 236. “Like some other Eastern peoples, of whom Suidas tells us...in the manner of some of our barns” (153-54).

²¹⁸ 237. “several places, including my own house” (154).

²¹⁹ 237. “I have tasted it; it tastes sweet and a little flat” (154).

²²⁰ 237. “They are clean shaven all over, and shave themselves much more cleanly than we, with nothing but a wooden or stone razor” (154).

their razors are technologically inferior to ours, and hairiness is associated with bestiality, then who might the real savages be?

The details of the beds and beverages confirm the observation that King Pyrrhus first suggested. Like us, these people sleep and drink. Their artifacts and institutions are different but comprehensible, recognizable. The differences are marvelous, rather than monstrous, according to the distinction made by Philip Ashworth:

But a curious thing happened in the 1550's and later, especially with regard to the monstrous races. When new *animals* were discovered in the East and West, they proved to be even more remarkable than the mystical marvels of old, the unicorn, the basilisk, the phoenix. When new *humans* were discovered, they proved to be much *less* monstrous than the cyclops and scipods of medieval lore...In other words, scipods were monstrous because they looked so different; New World natives were not monstrous, because they looked human, but they were deemed marvels, because they did not behave at all like Europeans.²²¹

Montaigne illustrates this general movement from monstrous to marvelous, and he takes it to its limits. His opinion on monsters comes as no surprise to the reader who is sensitive to Montaigne's appreciation of liminal themes and images: "Ce que nous appelons monstres ne le sont pas à Dieu, qui voit en l'immensité de son ouvrage l'infinité des formes qu'il y a comprises..."²²² Montaigne's God here recalls Spenser's Adonis, the Father of all forms.

Montaigne is more interested in human behavior than in marvelous artifacts. O'Neill describes his overriding concern in the *Essais* as "ethical anthropology" (120). Between his lengthy descriptions of the artifacts derived in large part from the cosmographers, he inserts more of his own inventions: an account of the simple moral principles on which this society is based (Weinberg 268-69). There is a simple sentence which a village elder recites to the community as part of the daily routine: "Il ne leur recommande que deux

²²¹ William B. Ashworth, Jr., "Remarkable Humans and Singular Beasts," Kenseth 134. His emphasis.

²²² II.xxx: "D'un enfant monstrueux." Rat II, 118. "Of a monstrous child: "What we call monsters are not so to God, who sees in the immensity of his work the infinity of forms that he has comprised in it." Frame 539.

chooses: la vaillance contre les ennemis et l'amitié à leurs femmes.”²²³ The simplicity of this moral system is reiterated in the next paragraph, and repeated in the same way that the people heard it each morning: “...toute leur science éthique ne contient que ces deux articles, de la résolution à la guerre et affection à leurs femmes.”²²⁴ These two principles are slipped in between discussions of beverages and beds, but in fact, they serve as the source of thematic amplification upon which the rest of this second movement depends. In connection with the theme of “vaillance” et “résolution,” Montaigne will discuss war and cannibalism. The topic of how women are to be treated leads to the defense of polygamy in Excursion 16 and 17.

Certeau recognizes the centrality of these concerns, and shows how they inscribe “Des cannibales” within the traditions of travel literature and cultural criticism:

La peinture de la société sauvage se rattache par un autre trait aux récits de voyage. Elle s'organise autour de deux questions stratégiques, l'anthropophagie et la polygamie. Ces deux différences cardinales mettent en jeu le rapport de la société sauvage avec son extériorité (la guerre) et avec son intérieurité (le mariage), en même temps que le statut de l'homme et celui de la femme. Montaigne s'inscrit dans une longue tradition (avant et après lui) lorsqu'il mue ces deux ‘monstrosités’ en forme d'une ‘beauté’ relative au service du corps social.²²⁵

These two taboo subjects will be shown to be relatively reasonable by means of the gentle, gradual transitions and accumulations Montaigne employs in this section to move from step to step, from one observation to the next. This permits him to confront the taboo subjects of cannibalism and polygamy much as he does shaving. It would not help his argument to avoid the worst

²²³ 237. “He recommends to them only two things: valor against the enemy and love for their wives” (154).

²²⁴ 237. “...their whole ethical science contains only these two articles: resoluteness in war and affection for their wives” (154).

²²⁵ 189. “The picture of savage society is tied to travel accounts by another trait. It is organized around two strategic questions, cannibalism and polygamy. These two cardinal differences bring into play savage society's relation to its exteriority (war) and to its interiority (marriage), as well as the status of men and of women. Montaigne inscribes himself within a long tradition (before and after himself) when he transforms these two ‘monstrosities’ into forms of ‘beauty’ relative to their utility to the social body.” My translation.

possible accusations against these "savages." Taking on the extreme test cases, he will show how their behaviors are marvelous rather than monstrous and, what is more, link such behavior with our own.

Before discussing warfare—American, Ancient, and French—he pursues the topic of spirituality. This topic also serves as preparation for the inexorable move towards his most subversive and astounding comparison between the most monstrous of the practices of the Indians and the French civil wars of religion. Montaigne is concerned with the relation between religion and the unity of the social body, to use Certeau's term. In contrast with the picture of social unity he has painted thus far, the fate of those considered false prophets anticipates the violence, dismemberment, and disappearances to come: "il est haché en mille pieces...on ne le void plus."²²⁶

Excursion 10. C'est don de Dieu...leur imposture.

The problem of false prophecy is no slight consideration for a writer who has assured his readers of the "bonne foy" (good faith) of his book and who has just been observed lying about the sources for this part of his essay. This C-level excursion to the Scythians is an examination of divination, to be sure, but it can also be read as an attempt by Montaigne to justify his own behavior and distinguish himself from the false prophets or the cosmographers: "ces autres qui nous viennent pipant des assurances d'une faculté hors de nostre cognoissance..."²²⁷ Montaigne may exaggerate, but he never claims absolute knowledge. Therefore, his faults and lies are excusable, "sujette à la conduite de l'humaine suffisance."²²⁸ Whatever he is guilty of, it is not "imposture."

His extravagant praise of the New World inhabitants is not intended to encourage his readers to abandon civilized life and flee to the tropics. As Hayden White puts it, "[E]ven in his most depressed moments Montaigne does not suggest that his readers ought to release the beast or cannibal within" (Dudley 28). He certainly does not invoke the myths of noble and ignoble

²²⁶ 238. "he is cut into a thousand pieces...never seen again" (154).

²²⁷ 238. "Cthese others who come and trick us with assurances of an extraordinary faculty that is beyond our ken..." (155).

²²⁸ 238. "Csubject to the control of human capacity" (154).

savages to justify Christian imperialism as many Europeans of his time did. What he does commend is introspection. We don't need to travel to the New World to see marvels:

Noz yeux ne voient rien en derriere. Cent fois du jour, nous nous moquons de nous sur le subject de nostre voisin et detestons en d'autres les defauts qui sont en nous plus clairement, et les admirons, d'une merveilleuse impudence et inadvertance.²²⁹

Montaigne wants his readers to turn this capacity for wonder and amazement towards themselves. He wants the portrait of the savages to be seen for the mirror it is. This self-reflexive movement is crucial to "Des cannibales" and fundamental to the Essais as a whole.

Les autheurs se communiquent au peuple par quelque marque particuliere et estrangere; moy, le premier, par mon estre universel, comme Michel de Montaigne, non comme grammerien, ou poëte, ou jurisconsulte. Si le monde se plaint de quoy je parle trop de moy, je me plains de quoy il ne pense seulement pas à soy.²³⁰

Montaigne's extravagance is a stylistic and temperamental trait which comes to him naturally, and which he indulges in heartily, in his speech and writing. There is no end or limit to the process of self-knowledge. Any tool that proves helpful in this life-long apprenticeship is worth using. These trials should not be confused with false prophecy or imposture.

Excursion 11 and 12: Ils ont leurs guerres...est trespassé.

Now we come to the crux of the matter: the long deferred question of cannibalism. It is raised obliquely, in connection with "their" warfare.

Montaigne focuses his amazement on the manner in which their military conduct embodies the first of their two lessons of moral science: "C'est chose esmerveillable que de la fermeté de leurs combats..."²³¹ The practice of eating

²²⁹ III,viii. Rat II, 364. "Our eyes see nothing behind us. A hundred times a day we make fun of ourselves in the person of our neighbor and detest in others the defects that are more clearly in ourselves and wonder at them with prodigious impudence and heedlessness." Frame 709.

²³⁰ III.ii. Rat II, 223. "Authors communicate with the people by some special extrinsic mark; I am the first to do so by my entire being, as Michel de Montaigne, not as a grammarian or a poet or jurist. If the world complains that I speak too much of myself, I complain that it does not even think of itself." Frame 611.

²³¹ 238. "It is astonishing what firmness they show in their combats..." (155).

their prisoners-of-war is treated matter of factly. It is just one in a series of steps which constitute their custom for dealing with prisoners. The killing and consumption of the prisoners is given less detail than the way they are tied. "Cela fait, il le rotissent, et en mangent en commun et en envoient des lopins a ceuz de leurs amis qui sont absens."²³² The ritual aspect of this communal meal is stressed. The gruesome dismembered bodies in Thevet's engraving are overshadowed here by the emphasis on social unity and community, both for the prisoners and their captors: "grande assemblée de ses cognossans," "au plus chers de ses amis," "en presence de toute l'assemblée," "en commun," "les amis absens."²³³

This process of normalizing cannibalism continues the comparative methods used throughout the essay. In contrast with the Scythians, who resorted to cannibalism because of hunger, this cannibalism is a symbolic act, "pour representer une extreme vengeance."²³⁴ This mimesis will be further elaborated in Excursion 16, in conjunction with the prisoner's song.

For the moment, Montaigne returns to the agricultural theme of corruption. He compares the "savage" way of treating prisoners with a more brutal Portuguese method. The cannibals note that the Portuguese "*avoyent semé la connoissance de beaucoup de vices*" among their opponents, and desire to follow suit.²³⁵ This is a good example of the way in which Montaigne brings the noble savage and golden age myths come together. These men may be fresh from the hands of god, but they are human after all. They are not incorruptible. In a strange but all too recognizably human fashion, they seek their own corruption.

What is it they are learning from their exposure to Europeans?

Je ne suis pas marry que nous remerquons l'horreur barbaresque qu'il y a en une telle action, mais ouy bien dequoy, jugeans bien de leurs fautes, nous soyons si aveuglez aux nostres. Je pense qu'il y a

²³² 238. "This done, they roast him and eat him in common and send some pieces to their absent friends" (155).

²³³ 238. "great assembly of his acquaintances," "his dearest friend," "in presence of the whole assembly," "in common," "absent friends" (155).

²³⁴ 238. "to betoken an extreme vengeance" (155).

²³⁵ 239. "*had sown* the knowledge of many vices" (155). My italics.

plus de barbarie à manger un homme vivant qu'à le manger mort, à deschirer par tourmens et par geénes un corps encore plein de sentiment, le faire rostir par le menu, le faire mordre et meurtrir aux chiens et aux porceauz (comme nous l'avons non seuelement leu, mais veu de fresche memoire, non entre ennemis anciens, mais entre voisins et concitoyens, et, qui pis est, sous prétexte de pieté et de religion) que de le rostir et manger après qu'il est trespassé.²³⁶

The masks are off, games and joking over. Montaigne is in earnest now: "Et ce que j'auray pris à dire en battellant et en me moquant, je le diray lendemain serieusement."²³⁷ He has prepared his argument at length and with care. The depth of his convictions outweighs the dangers he courts here in taking such a stand in a time and place where, as he points out, men are tortured and mutilated by their neighbors and countrymen because they are Catholic not Protestant, or Protestant not Catholic.

Themes elaborated throughout the essay are pulled together here in a tight weave. He saves his fiercest anger for the "imposture" of the combatants in the civil wars. Religion serves them as a pretext for barbarities which far exceed those of the New World savages. Whereas New World cannibalism was described as practically a variant form of Holy Communion, Montaigne now puts before the reader the image of European victims, tortured on the rack by Europeans, torn and bitten by European dogs and pigs, all on the pretext of holiness.

Montaigne defends his status as a true witness vehemently. He testifies to experiences which he can confirm from his reading and, more significantly from his own eyes: "non seulement leu, mais veu..."²³⁸ He insists on visual imagery. "La voye de la raison" does not permit continued that we remain

²³⁶ 239. "I am not sorry that we notice the barbarous horror of such acts, but I am heartily sorry that, judging their faults rightly, we should be so blind to our own. I think there is more barbarity in eating a man alive than in eating him dead; and in tearing by tortures and the rack a body still full of feeling, in roasting a man bit by bit, in having him bitten and mangled by dogs and swine (as we have not only read but seen within fresh memory, not among ancient enemies, but among neighbors and fellow citizens, and what is worse, on the pretext of piety and religion), than in roasting and eating him after he is dead" (155).

²³⁷ III.v. Rat II, 304. "And what I have begun to say in sport and in jest I will say seriously the next day." Frame 668.

²³⁸ "not only read but seen..." The emphatic rhyme is lost in translation.

blind—"aveuglez"—to our own faults. The veracity of his testimony is amplified by "de fresche memoire" (within fresh memory). Thematically, "fresche" recalls the delicate and flavorful "savage" fruits of the New World and its inhabitants "fresh from the hands of the gods." Montaigne will raise the problems of time and memory in the final movement of the essay, for these are crucial questions for any autobiographer or historian of current events. Here the short duration between witnessing and writing reinforces the accuracy of his observations. We travel around this textbook of a world in order to view ourselves more clearly, and Montaigne wants his readers to confront their reflections squarely.

Excursion 13: Chrysippus... toute sorte de barbarie.

If a Frenchman looks back into the mirror of his past, he will see that his ancestors did not hesitate to eat to human flesh, when it was a question of survival during war. Stoic philosophy and Gascon history attest that the thing itself, cannibalism, should not inspire horror. Montaigne makes an intriguing shift to the topic of medical doctors who routinely violate the sanctity of the body for its own good. Common opinion does not object to this either. Then, an outburst: "*mais il ne trouva jamais aucune opinion si desreglée...*"²³⁹ In a world of diverse opinions, Montaigne reserves his use of absolutes for a position so deranged that it attributes reason and order to the horrors committed around him, before his very eyes. Nothing justifies such cruel, treacherous, and disloyal behavior. How dare Europeans be horrified by cannibalism? Ordinary human vices are so much more horrible.

Montaigne rests his case: "Nous les pouvons donc bien appeler barbares, eu égard aux règles de la raison, mais non pas eu égard à nous, qui les surpassons en toute sorte de barbarie."²⁴⁰ Here is another version of the barbaric paradox and clear statement of the Montaigne's celebrated relativism. Norris Johnson argues that it is not cultural relativism in the technical anthropological sense (6-11). Montaigne's purpose is not to try to understand how cannibalism functions within a given cultural system. By no means is he

²³⁹ 239. "But there never was any opinion so disordered..." (156). My italics.

²⁴⁰ 240. "So we may well call these people barbarians, in respect to the rules of reason, but not in respect to ourselves, who surpass them in every kind of barbarity" (156).

suspending moral judgment. Instead, he shows the universality of barbarity and compares two cultures with regard to transcendent laws of reason: "regles de la raison." Johnson argues that instead of cultural relativism, Montaigne espouses "metacultural absolutism...where it is nature rather than culture that is archetypal" (20, 21). The facts about cannibalism, the thing itself, are not at issue. Learning about diverse practices is illuminating. But the final goal is not to illuminate facts. Neither the learning nor the facts should distract us from the real human tasks, living life naturally, humanly, appropriately, and reasonably. In "Des cannibales" as in his other essays, Montaigne displays his qualifications for serving as the preeminent wild-man philosopher of his time, for bringing the wisdom of the message of the wild-man figure into his works. In Montaigne's metaculturalism, the reader encounters the profound recognition that Nature is not an Other, but "the matrix from which we came, of which we are, and with which we must cooperate."²⁴¹

Excursions 14 and 15: Leur guerre...non à battre.

We return to the topic of "their" warfare. Montaigne has left no doubt about his opinion of warfare at home. Extending the medical terminology from the previous excursion ("les medecins ne craignent pas"), Montaigne refers to war as "cette maladie humaine," that universal human disease. Once again we have a third reference point, nature and more particularly human nature, to which both European and American cultures are referred. Once again, their barbarity is a relative form of the same disease that we suffer from, a symptom of the disorder of human nature from Mother Nature. They are not monsters. They are marvelous men, noble and generous even in war, but men in any case, subject to the same maladies.

This excursion highlights the fragility of this beautiful Golden Age nation while it continues the unflattering comparison with European powers. *Their* wars are not motivated by the needs and desires which motivated European expansion into all the other old worlds of the planet. "Ils ne sont pas en débat de nouvelles terres, car ils jouissent encore de cette liberté naturelle qui les fournit sans travail et sans peine de toute choses

²⁴¹ See page 61-62 above. The quote from Crook is cited on page 80.

necessaires..."²⁴² The contrast between necessity and superfluity extends to the ethical dimension. The laws of reason and nature are harmonious here: "Ils sont encore en cet heureux point, de ne ils ne desirer qu'autant que leurs nécessitez naturelles leur ordonnent; tout ce qui est au delà est superflu pour eux."²⁴³

This Golden Age is one which anyone might attain, though very few do. The pursuit of virtue is a desirable human quality, whether or not it is attained. Virtue is revealed by behavior, not found in superfluous possessions. Throughout these excursions, warfare is presented in terms of social and moral ideals. It is a meditation on valiance and virtue, not victory. Montaigne takes us on side trips to visit Tacitus and Themopylae. Once again his themes trancend temporal and spacial logic. As Gerard Dufaux astutely observes:

Le Cannibale, ce n'est pas vraiment le Tupi, c'est bien plutôt Caton échappant au tyran, Ischolas courant héroïque à sa perte, Leonides au défilé... Tous ces glorieux vaincus, que rejoint Montaigne, et avec lesquels ce dernier se confond. Doubles de ce même qui au fond seul importe.²⁴⁴

Montaigne is not frightened of either the Wild Man Out There or the Wild Man Within. He creates a positive and instructive encounter between these two, or rather the many, all fellow creatures out there and within. All serve as fictive models or experimental selves,²⁴⁵ with which Montaigne creates his own multivalent self portrait: "je suis moy-mesme la matière de mon livre."²⁴⁶ This leads to the next variation on the theme of cannibalism.

²⁴² 240. "They are not fighting for the conquest of new lands, for they still enjoy that natural abundance that provides them without toil and trouble with all necessary things..." (156).

²⁴³ 240. "They are still in that happy state of desiring only as much as their natural needs demand; anything beyond that is superfluous to them" (156).

²⁴⁴ Defaux 955-6. "The Cannibal is not really the Tupi, it is rather Cato escaping the tyrant, Ischolas running heroically to his loss, Leonides at the pass...All these glorious vanquished, whom Montaigne brings together, and with whom he mixes himself. Doubles of this same one who is, at bottom, the only one who counts." My translation.

²⁴⁵ To recall Milan Kundera's term, page 79.

²⁴⁶ From the address to the reader. "I am myself the matter of this book." See page 202 and following.

Excursion 16: Pour revenir...leur forme et le nostre.

"Pour revenir" opens the next excursion, and the obvious transition marker leads the reader to ponder exactly which story Montaigne is resuming. The discussion of warfare continues. The situation of the prisoners of cannibal warfare fits in seamlessly with Montaigne's praise of the virtuous behavior of the vanquished.

But now, for the first time, we hear the voice of the other, as a direct quote. It is, in fact, the song that speaks, for there are no personal details given about the individual speaker who represents the valiant prisoners. The song, not the prisoner, is now in Montaigne's possession: "J'ay une chanson..."²⁴⁷ Through this song, the prisoner taunts his captors. He calls them poor fools ("pauvres fols") because when they eat him, they will be feeding on the flesh of their own fathers and ancestors, whom he has already consumed.

«Ces muscles, dit-il cette chair et ces veines, ce sont les vostres, pauvres fols que vous estes; vous ne recongonoissez pas le substance des membres de vos ancetres s'y tient encore: savourez les bien, vous y trouverez le goust de vostre propre chair.»²⁴⁸

Montaigne appreciates the effectiveness of this artistic invention. The facts of cannibalism are not at issue. Just as Montaigne plays with the myths of noble and ignoble savages in "Des cannibales," so a cannibal here plays with the symbolic idea of cannibalism. The prisoner's song, Montaigne's intertext, turns the act of violence back on those who would commit it: "if you consume me, you consume yourself." The act of vengeance becomes an act of self-destruction as well as violence against one's ancestors. Montaigne approves the tenor of this tactic: "Invention qui ne sent aucunement la barbarie."²⁴⁹

It is also possible to see parallels between this song and Montaigne's own intertextual practice. Montaigne makes extensive use of digestive im-

²⁴⁷ 242. "I have a song..." (158).

²⁴⁸ 243. "'These muscles,' he says, 'this flesh and these veins are your own, poor fools that you are. You do not recognize that the substance of your ancestors' limbs is still contained in them. Savor them well; you will find in them the taste of your own flesh'" (158).

²⁴⁹ 243. "An idea that certainly does not smack of barbarity" (158).

agery when discussing education and his own preferred manner of reading and writing.²⁵⁰ Montaigne deplores pedantic education which is merely the recycling of undigested material:

Nous ne travillons qu'à remplir la memoire, et laissons l'entendement et la conscience vuide. Tout ainsi que les oyseaux vont quelquefois à la queste du grein et le portent au bec sans le taster, pour en faire bechée à leur petits, ainsi nos pedantes vont pillotant la science dans les livres, et ne la logent qu'au bout de leurs lévres, pour la dégorger seulement et mettre au vent.²⁵¹

In the following pages, he opposes his own ideal for learning, his goal in the composition of the *Essais*. He proposes a different ethic of digestion and recycling:

Nous prenons en garde les opinions et le sçavoir d'autruy, et puis c'est tout. Il les faut faire nostres. Nous semblons proprement celuy qui, ayant besoing de feu, en iroit querir chez son voisin, et, y en ayant trouvé un beau et grand, s'arresteroit là à se chauffer, sans plus se souvenir d'en rapporter chez soy. Que nous sert-il d'avoir la panse pleine de viande, si elle ne se digere? si elle ne se trans-forme en nous? si elle ne nous augmente et fortifie?²⁵²

Like the cannibal prisoner, Montaigne has consumed, absorbed, and transformed his food. It is now his. Humphries argues that Montaigne sees "reading and writing as metaphorically cannibalistic," thereby putting the entire concept of influence into question (16). This form of recycling emphasizes the assimilation of old material into something new. Ownership passes on.

²⁵⁰ For critical appreciations of this imagery see, for example, Bauchatz on Montaigne and Du Bellay 269-272; O'Neill, Chapter 5 "Writing and Embodiment" 82-99; Jefferson Humphries, *Losing the Text, Readings in Literary Desire*, (Athens GA: The U of Georgia P, 1986) 3-20.

²⁵¹ I.xxv. Rat I, 145. "We labor only to fill our memory, and leave the understanding ^Cand the conscience ^Aempty. Just as birds sometimes go in quest of grain and carry it in their beak without tasting it to give a beakful to their little ones, so our pedants go pillaging knowledge in books and lodge it only on the end of their lips, in order to merely disgorge it and scatter it to the winds." Frame 100.

²⁵² I.xxvi. Rat I, 146. "We take the opinons and the knowledge of others into our keeping, and that is all. We must make them our own. We are just like the man who, needing fire, should go and fetch some at his neighbor's house, and having found a fine big fire there, should stop there and warm himself, forgetting to take any back home. What good does it do us to have our belly full of meat if it is not digested, if it is not transformed into us, if it does not make us bigger and stronger?" Frame 101.

In this essay, as in others, Montaigne has tasted, chewed, and swallowed texts that once belonged to others—the cosmographers, the servant and the prisoners alike—to create his own matter, the *Essais*. But the process does not stop there. The reader is the next link in the food chain. The reader digests “Des cannibales,” consuming Montaigne in turn. From this perspective, Arens’ complaint that Montaigne is a poor anthropologist misses the point. Montaigne does not intend to question or establish the facts of New World cannibalism. It is opinions which ultimately concern him, and symbolic cannibalism interests him above all. This is the sort of cannibalism he demonstrates in this very essay. Montaigne overthrows the reader’s expectations of who the ignoble savages are and where they are located. The greater barbarity occurs at home, not abroad.

Excursions 17 and 18: Les hommes...terminaisons Grecques.

Having consumed cannibalism, Montaigne makes short work of polygamy. There is a demonstrable link between the savage’s noble behavior at war and his marital status, since the number of wives a man has is directly related to his “reputation de vaillance.”²⁵³ The contrast with the European institution of marriage presents no obstacle at this stage in Montaigne’s presentation. He supports his argument by appealing to precedents in Biblical and classical antiquity. As additional proof, he returns to the idea of the tyranny of custom: “simple et servile obligation,” “impression de l’autorité.”²⁵⁴ Montaigne employs another intertextual demonstration to prove that this “matrimonial virtue” is another case of “suffisance,” not a miracle, nor passiveness or stupidity.

His argument is at once ludicrous and to the point. How could a love song justify polygamy? On the other hand, this second cannibal intertext demonstrates that their literary productions resemble our own. The importance of gifts and the value given to emotional attachments between men and women are recognizable social conventions. The aesthetic links between the colors in the serpent’s pattern and the woven belt, the promise of immortality for the snake who serves as a mimetic model—each of these elements recall

²⁵³ 243. “reputation for valor” (158).

²⁵⁴ 243. “simple and servile bondage” “pressure of authority” (158).

the complex interplay between art and nature raised in Excursion 8: "Toutes choses, dict Platon..."

Montaigne suggests an idea here which is basic to the study of comparative literature. The first step in seeing the Other as more than a stereotype, a caricature, or an inferior is to grant that other a language. From there comes the possibility of hearing and listening to others, and endowing them with the reciprocal attention.²⁵⁵ His final assessment of this love poem recalls his commentary on the prisoner's song: there is "rien de *barbarie* en cette imagination—nothing *barbarous* in this fancy." His comparison with the Greek "c'est un doux langage...retirant aux terminaisons Grecques," is clearly a compliment. "It's Greek to me" is high praise coming from the humanistically trained Montaigne.²⁵⁶ He urges his reader to appreciate their art and language, not to consider them indistinct murmurings. Returning to the observation of King Pyrrhus: "la disposition de cette armée/cette chanson que je voy n'est aucunement barbare."²⁵⁷

Another sort of transition is suggested here as well. Eric Leed offers a compelling argument concerning the impact of the Renaissance practice of history on the emerging discipline of anthropology:

Anthropology thus inherited the functions of Renaissance history in providing a gallery of 'models of man'—distant in time but ever present and observable—that could be used in judging modernity. Ultimately, the anthropological model of primitive man replaced the classical world as a repository of cherished norms and has come to provide a new classicism especially tailored to an industrial age (172-73).

²⁵⁵ Compare his comments concerning his cat (p. 180 above) and the following passage from Lxxv., which comes between the two passages on digestion cited above. "Nature, pour montrer qu'il n'y a rien de sauvage en ce qui est conduit par elle, fait naître les nations moins cultivées par arts des productions qui luttent les plus artistes productions. Comme sur mon propos, le proverbe Gascon est-il délicat..." Rat I, 145. "Nature, to show that there is nothing barbarous in what is under her guidance, often brings forth, in the nations least cultivated by art, productions of the mind that vie with the most artistic productions. How nice for my purpose is the Gascon proverb..." Frame 100.

²⁵⁶ The corresponding expression in French is "C'est du chinois pour moi." One can only imagine which languages the Greeks and Chinese choose as models of unintelligibility.

²⁵⁷ "I see nothing barbaric in the disposition of this army / this song."

In this light, Montaigne's transcription of a love-song is more than literary appreciation or rhetorical amplification. It also points to Montaigne's liminal role as a writer who bridges history and anthropology and inaugurates the modern age.

Still, hearing the other, even absorbing the other, does not require becoming the other. This is part of the lesson of the wild man. Gilgamesh did not remain a wild man, although he did pass through a liminal wild-man phase, absorbing Enkidu's identity to become a worthy rather than a tyrannical king. Just as Gilgamesh returns to Uruk, so Montaigne returns next to France in the final movement of the essay. Montaigne does not advocate the destruction of Western civilization. He does advocate that we recognize that human institutions are not necessarily or inherently natural or reasonable. Our voyage to the New World has been a tour de force, rather than a conventional tour. The reader hasn't actually *encountered* a noble savage or even a "character" in the conventional sense that Enkidu fulfills. But the reader has fully encountered the mythic implications of both noble and ignoble savage. The reader has been shown human strangeness and savagery on both sides of the ocean. Just how difficult and valuable these lessons are becomes even more clear in the final movement of the essay.

Movement 3. Excursions 19 and 20: Trois d'entre eux...haut de chausses.

This final movement of the essay not only brings us back to France, but finally provides the authentic eyewitness travel account the reader anticipated in the first place. Once again, Montaigne leads a journey through time and space. The displacement here is minimal in comparison with the excursions to Antiquity and the New World. Montaigne travels to Rouen, in northern France. The trip takes place in 1562, less than twenty years before the publication of the essay.

The real travelers in this movement are the savages themselves, three visitors from the New World. Their supposed savagery has been annihilated by Montaigne's irony, and their humanity is reinforced again here. Their journey is metaphoric as well as physical. Montaigne predicts another fall, like Adam's, for these travelers. If there is original sin in Montaigne's theology, it is the human weakness mentioned in the opening pages of essay: "Nous avons plus de curiosité que de capacité"—we want to know more and

possess more than we can handle. The final proof of the humanity of these travelers is that they have the same flaws as the rest of humankind, particularly the desire for novelty: "se laisser piper au desir de la nouvelleté."²⁵⁸ Ignorance and innocence are no lasting protection from the knowledge they will acquire from the European side of the ocean. It was a relative Golden Age, after all. Montaigne's words are marked by the sorrow and compassion which temper his recognition of the inevitability of this fall. He is as modern here as anywhere in the *Essais*.

On the other hand, the relative freshness and ignorance of the visitors to the New World is instructive. Here, Montaigne highlights another literary tradition as important as his "invention" of the noble savage, the perspective of the foreign visitor, such as Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* or de Toqueville's *De la Démocratie en Amérique* offer. Outsiders have much to tell us about ourselves; before the lessons were oblique, now they come directly. For Montaigne, these travelers are not captives or showcased displays, but valued observers. They are not the source of marvels, instead they marvel. The Europeans are the centaurs once again: "quelqu'un...voulut sçavoir d'eux ce qu'ils trouvoient d'admirable?"²⁵⁹ The visitors respond in kind: "Ils trouvoient...fort estrange..."²⁶⁰

Montaigne's personal commentary here is intriguing. It returns the reader to the level of autobiographical discourse, for he is one of the many curious who have come to Rouen to see the "savages." In any case, it points to the complexity of eyewitness testimony and heterological discourse: "...ils respondirent trois choses, d'où j'ay perdu la troisième, et en suis bien marry, mais j'ay encore deux en memoire."²⁶¹ The question of Montaigne's memory, its reliability or unreliability, is critically problematic, for it relates to his controversial intertextual practices such as the suppression of the cosmographers in the second movement. Intratextually, the adjective "marry" is significant as well. It has a prominent position in Lecture 2, where Montaigne dis-

²⁵⁸ 244. "...tricked by the desire for new things" (158).

²⁵⁹ 244. "...someone...wanted to know what they had found the most admirable" (159).

²⁶⁰ 244. "they thought it very strange..." (159).

²⁶¹ 244. "They mentioned three things, of which I have forgotten the third, and I am very sorry for it; but I still remember two of them" (159).

cussed cannibalism and the vicious consequences of the French civil wars: "Je ne suis pas *marry* que nous remarquons l'horreur barbaresque..."²⁶² Here as well the focus is turned towards the reader, and the lesson is the importance of facing up to our own faults. Is his regret here an indication of his ineptness as an anthropologist or his idiosyncratic honesty? It may also stand as a sort of buffer before the very serious social and political criticism which the visitors offer.

The distinction between conventional nobility and the noble savage is raised by the two observations Montaigne does recall. First of all, the outsiders don't understand European principles of leadership. In contrast with King Pyrrhus, what they see does not impress them. The foreigners have trouble reading European signs. For them, the height, clothing and beards of the king's Swiss Guards indicate that they should be in charge. Why do they submit to a child? The proper order of things is topsy-turvy. Is it coincidental that the profile of the ignoble savage includes his stature, strength, clothing, and hairiness?

The second observation of the "savages" cuts to the quick. Throughout the second movement of the essay, Montaigne emphasized the communal aspect of daily activities in the New World, including cannibalism. In contrast, European society, its strict hierarchy reinforced by the Great Chain of Being, justified the unequal distribution of wealth. Here Montaigne mentions that social equity is built into their language: "ils ont une façon de leur langage telle qu'ils nomment les hommes moitiés les un des autres."²⁶³ The hermaphrodites of Plato's Symposium or Montaigne's description of his friendship with La Boétie offers similar imagery.

What the savages find strange is how marvelously dissimilar these halves appear. How is it that some men are "pleins et *gorgez* de toutes sortes de commoditez" and their other halves beg at their doors? How do the needy halves suffer this injustice without taking the rich "à la gorge."²⁶⁴ The "suffisant" reader can follow Montaigne's drift here. Why is cannibalism

²⁶² 239. "I am not *sorry* that we notice the barbarous horror..." (155). My italics.

²⁶³ 244. "they have a way in their language of speaking of men as halves of one another" (159).

²⁶⁴ 244. My italics. The motif of the throat ("gorge") is not repeated in the translation: "full and gorged with all sorts of good things" "take them by the throat" (159).

across the sea a scandal, but local poverty and hunger invisible? Human rights abuses are committed elsewhere, not at home. These insinuations are as apt today as in Montaigne's day. Arens' aphorism is doubly à propos: "The cannibals, like the poor, will always be with us."

And finally, the encounter. At last, Montaigne records for us his conversation with a wild man. At the same time, he records the problems of real-life as opposed to fictional encounters. The problems of language and mediation which he has suggested throughout the essay, now take concrete form in the person of his interpreter: "mais j'avois un truchement qui me suyvoit si male et qui estoit si empesché à recevoir mes imgainations par sa bestise, que je n'en peus tirer guiere de plaisir."²⁶⁵ How different this is from the experience of Cicero's great and wise man whose eloquence raised the savages from their beastly state. Or the suddenness with which Enkidu learned to speak to the temple-prostitute. On the other hand, Montaigne's frustrations are utterly believable to anyone who has tried to communicate in a foreign language, especially through a third party. The word he uses for interpreter, "truchement," with its similarity to the verb "tricher" (to trick) recalls the Italian proverb: "tradduttore, traditore"—"translator, traitor."

The problem of the interpreter has historical pertinence as well. Along with disease, horses, and Montezuma's mistaken belief that he was the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, Hernando Cortés also owes his successful conquest of Mexico to his interpreter, Doña Marina. Her Indian name, Malinche, has come to mean traitor in Spanish.²⁶⁶ She spoke Aztec, Mayan, and Spanish fluently, and lived in each of these three cultures in turn. Greenblatt tells her fascinating story in his chapter on "The Go-between," and shows how she has become a liminal symbol in her own right:

Object of exchange, agent of communication, model of conversion, the only figure who appears to understand both cultures, the only person in whom they meet...Already in contemporary accounts, Doña Marina has some of the attributes of a mythic figure, and it is

²⁶⁵ 245. "...but I had an interpreter who followed my meaning so badly, and who was so hindered by his stupidity in taking my ideas, that I could get hardly any satisfaction from the man" (159).

²⁶⁶ Jane MacLaren Walsh and Yoko Sugiura, "The Demise of the Fifth Sun," Viola and Margolis 39.

not surprising that she has continued to function in our own time as a resonant, deeply ambivalent symbol, half-divinity, half-whore, the savior and betrayer (143).

Montaigne's translator possesses neither Malinche's beauty nor her intelligence, but then Montaigne's goal was not one of conquest, but simple comprehension. Surprisingly, conquest was more easily achieved.

Montaigne does not ask his informants about cannibalism or poetry. Combining the observations of King Pyrrhus with the agricultural imagery of Excursion 8, he asks one of the visitors to describe "quel fruct il recevoit de la superiorité qu'il avait parmi les siens," what "fruit" or profit he received for his social superiority. Perhaps the question reflects on Montaigne's concerns as a nobleman overseeing a hundred men on his own estate, or perhaps the problems of national leadership during the French civil wars. At long last, the wild man speaks. However, his response is given only in indirect discourse. His name, too, is given only as "Capitaine" and "Roy," terms of European military and political rank. But the answer does comes: his profit was not material, but social and spatial. In wartime, he had the privilege of leading the warriors, as many as could fill up a French league. Even outside of war, people cleared a space for him so that he could pass through the brush easily.

The final sentence of "Des cannibales" is justly famous: "Tout cela ne va pas trop mal: mais quoy, ils ne portent point de haut de chausses!"²⁶⁷ In an essay full of irony, this is the most ironic statement. In an essay with abrupt changes in tone, this is the most abrupt. As Colie points out, putting closure to an inherently open-ended paradox is a challenge by definition. Her comments about the end of the Praise of Folly apply equally here: "The discourse stops certainly, but in such a way as to stimulate further thought in the reader, even further speculation..." (20). Montaigne marks the end of his interview and the end of his essay with an vibrant exclamation that resounds like a slap. The flamboyance of the final line almost requires body language. For Defaux, it is "un dernier gifle au visage de son siècle."²⁶⁸

Montaigne addresses the reader directly now, as he has been doing implicitly all along, with his lecture series and repeated references to the

²⁶⁷ 245. "All of this is not too bad—but what's the use? They don't wear breeches" (159).

²⁶⁸ Defaux 934. "a final slap in the face of his century." My translation.

inclusive "nous." In characteristic open-ended form, the antecedent of "Tout cela" is not immediately apparent. Is he referring to the critique of the three visitors from the New World or the entire essay? The colloquial force of "mais quoy" is very strong. The reader can practically see the Gallic shrug, the pout of the lips that typically accompany this nonchalant, dismissive expression. Montaigne's final ironic comment that "We can't take them seriously, since they aren't dressed properly," implicates the larger questions of judgment and decorum. How can we avoid judging by externals and appearances? These processes are wired into our neural circuits. It also recalls his assertion in the letter to the reader that he would like to have portrayed himself "tout entier et tout nud" (entire and wholly naked).

Finally, "haut de chausses" is a marvelously ironic choice as the garment with which to judge a person's value. As Harry Levin points out:

[It] reverberates to provoke an afterthought; the comparative nakedness of the Amerindians is juxtaposed to the ridiculous foppery of the breeches and hose then worn by French courtiers; and it is quite uncertain which has the last laugh, America or Europe (78).

There are historical implications as well. Levin continues, "The fashionable small clothes of the eighteenth century were to be discarded by the revolutionary *sansculottes*" (78). For the modern reader, the "haut de chausses" is just as foreign and outlandish as any other costume. The options in the selections from Vecellio's costume book (Figure 6) are essentially equidistant from contemporary fashions. And while our modern clothing codes are no less complicated than those of the sixteenth-century, and if the possibilities for choice are now more open, the tendency to read clothing and judge by appearances does not seem to have diminished greatly. Montaigne's lesson that each person must examine his own prejudices before judging others transcends time. Julia Kristeva's reflections on uncanny strangeness are especially pertinent for this man who recognized, portrayed, and embraced the strangeness of the human condition, three centuries before Freud: "Désormais, nous nous savons étrangers à nous-mêmes, et c'est à partir de ce seul appui que nous pouvons essayer de vivre avec les autres."²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ Kristeva 250. "From now on, we know that we are foreigners to ourselves, and it is by relying on this support alone that we can try to live with others." My translation.

In closing, let us return to the comparison which opened Montaigne's essay about La Boétie, "De l'amitié," just three chapters before "Des cannibales." Montaigne compared his *Essais* to the grotesque figures that surrounded a richly polished, decorous painting on his wall. Those "grotesques," painted and written, also correspond to the liminal figures on the edges of the medieval *mappa mundi*.²⁷⁰ Montaigne's essay on the cannibals played and continues to play a significant historical role in the movement from the monstrous to the marvelous, the recognition that these other races, which those liminal figures represented to the medieval mind, are not monsters at all but humans. Throughout the essay, Montaigne stresses human universality, and reminds his reader that distortion is in the eye of beholder, American or European. Furthermore these distortions are written into the ways we perceive and describe. Liminality and intertextuality are two of the tools he uses to accomplish this. He invokes the myths of the Golden Age as well as the noble savage and ignoble savage. At the same time, he convinces the "suffisant" reader of his belief that these others, call them what you will, are fully human and that their fragile fading life is less savage and barbaric than contemporary European life.

In Montaigne's original plan, the central literary text which was to serve as the rich and polished central painting around which Montaigne's Protean essays would cavort, was La Boétie's youthful essay, *Le Discours de la servitude volontaire*. As it turned out, Montaigne changed his mind about including this impassioned attack on tyranny out of prudence, for fear that it would be used as a weapon in the polemics of the civil war. This change in plans offers a marvelous example of the ways in which Montaigne's open text invites varied critical readings.

Some find this missing central painting as a trope for textual absence, Montaigne's *aporia*.²⁷¹ Instead, I find there a presence which emerges from the *Essais* and is far more important. Montaigne recognizes the problematic nature of man and his creations, including language, but that inspires rather than silences him. There is a presence which takes the place of La Boétie's

²⁷⁰ See page 50 above.

²⁷¹ See, for example, the interpretations of Wilden and Butor discussed in O'Neill (163) and following or deconstructionist readings such as Cave's or Humphries'.

missing essay, as it replaces oikumene of the medieval mappa mundi with something new, something modern. The Essais and "Des cannibales" in particular, are sufficiently effective critiques of tyranny—political, philosophical, and literary—to fill the empty space. (See Figure 17.) This presence which the reader encounters is intangible. It is the consubstantial miracle of creative art that Montaigne alludes to, "livre consubstantiel à son auteur." It is the ludic space, the sacred meeting ground between writer and his reader. What emerges from the Essais, when the reader accepts Montaigne's offer of good faith and meets him halfway, "moitié à moitié," is the creation of a joint self-portrait. In the glass of Montaigne's diverse and contradictory portrait of himself and the window he offers on his diverse and contradictory world, his readers may find themselves reflected. This is the final liminal transformation, of this essay at least, where Montaigne's many passages become a door, the door becomes a window, and the window, finally, becomes a mirror.



Figure 17. Title page from *Essais* (1588 edition) with liminal figures and central panel. (Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris.) Rpt. in Moreau, Tetel, Figure 3.

CHAPTER VI: EPILOGUE (UPON REREADING)

When I began this project nearly ten years ago, I anticipated a final product quite different from the one which has emerged. There was to be an introductory chapter on the wild man, to be sure, but the main focus was to be the comparison of three literary texts from the Renaissance: Montaigne's "Des cannibales," Book VI of Spenser's Faerie Queene, and Shakespeare's Tempest. This was a promising topic from the comparative point of view. Spenser and Shakespeare are frequently partnered in studies, and the intertextual link between the Tempest and "Des cannibales" is well-established. Once I began my research and writing, however, my investigations led me down a slightly different path.

Two major theoretical problems attracted my interest from the beginning. First, in order to compare Montaigne's use of the wild-man figure with the more conventional literary characters in Spenser and Shakespeare, my definition of the wild man would have to be carefully crafted so as to embrace the anthropological aspects of "Des cannibales." Secondly, I began by writing on Spenser. I soon realized that the Faerie Queene included not just a handful but dozens of "salvage" creatures. These figures were tied to complementary themes of "salvagesse" and "finesse" and ran the gamut from noble goddesses such as Belphoebe to the monstrous cannibal who attempts to rape Amoret. Not only was the range of figures astonishing, but Spenser repeatedly links them with contrasting or ascending degrees of wildness, such the Lion, the Fauns and Satyrs, and Sir Satyrane who take on the defense of Una in Book I. While meditating on that episode, the notion of a continuum of wild-man images was born.

As I continued to read and proceed with my daily life (including watching Star Trek and such movies as Mary Poppins and Wizard of Oz with my children), the more wild-men figures I recognized. It became apparent that none of the existing critical explorations of the wild man—primitivist, mythological, or anthropological—could account for the tremendous variety of images or the common thematic elements that bound them. I would have

to create my own blend. A breakthrough came when I read an article by Edmund Leach, "Fishing for Men at the Edge of the Wilderness."¹ This was my first encounter with the idea of liminality. I began to imagine how to deal with the paradox that had attracted me to the topic in the first place: how can the wild man be both noble and ignoble? Liminality suggests that such a paradox is not only possible but inevitable. My readings in anthropology, history, psychology, and mythology fell together. The wild man represents the boundary between nature and humanity. His presence often calls forth a meditation on human nature, which may take philosophical, mythological, scientific or literary forms. The difficult task of translating these insights into scholarly form is the story of the second chapter. Conceiving and writing this chapter was by far the most strenuous leg of the long journey of this dissertation.

Creating a satisfactory definition of the Wild Man was only the beginning. The archeological complexity of the wild-man palimpsest is daunting and an adequate account would exceed the scope of any single dissertation. As part of my research I explored those deepest layers of the palimpsest often neglected in literary studies: what do we know or think we know about our human ancestors and their creativity. Concern with origins and originality dictated the course of the third chapter. Next, I chose two literary texts to illustrate the vast wild-man palimpsest. Gilgamesh and Montaigne's "Des cannibales" offered themselves as appropriate starting and ending points. The field in between these two works remains vast. At one point I envisioned chapters on each of the major intervening strata. Such a work might include the encounter between Odysseus and Polyphemus in the Odyssey, the god Dionysus (the Classical Strata); the story of King Nebuchadnezzar from the Old Testament and the Baptism of Jesus from the New Testament (the Biblical Strata); and Marie de France's Guigemar, Chrétien de Troyes' Yvain, Valentine and Orson (the Medieval Strata). And beyond the Renaissance, of course, the wild man's presence is hardly diminished. Future studies await: Rousseau, Mr. Hyde, Tarzan, Darth Vader... The wild man beckons.

¹ Edmund Leach, "Fishing for Men at the Edge of the Wilderness," Alter and Kermode, 579-99.

WORKS CITED

- Abrams, M. H. A Glossary of Literary Terms. 4th ed. 1941. New York: Holt, 1981.
- . The Mirror and the Lamp. 1953. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979.
- Adam, Antoine, Georges Lerminier, and Edouard Morot-Sir, eds. Littérature Française. Vol. 1. Paris: Larousse, 1967.
- Adams, Douglas, and Mark Carwardine. Last Chance to See. New York: Harmony, 1990.
- Allard, Claude. L'enfant-machine: Les enfants de demain seront-ils des robots? [Paris]: Balland, 1986.
- Alter, Robert. The Pleasures of Reading in an Ideological Age. 1989. New York: Touchstone, 1990.
- Alter, Robert, and Frank Kermode, eds. The Literary Guide to the Bible. Cambridge: Belknap P, 1987.
- Anderson, William, and Clive Hicks. Green Man: The Archetype of our Oneness with the Earth. London: HarperCollins, 1990.
- Arens, W. The Man-eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy. New York: Oxford UP, 1979.
- Ashworth, William B., Jr. "Remarkable Humans and Singular Beasts." Kenseth 113-144.
- Auerbach, Erich. Mimesis. 1946. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968.
- Avalle-Arce, Juan. "The Marvelous and the Spanish Conquistadors." The Exotic, The Bizarre and the Wonderful lecture series. North Carolina Museum of Art, 19 Feb. 1992.
- Barkan, Leonard. The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism. New Haven: Yale UP, 1986.
- Barnes, Julian. The History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters. 1989. New York: Vintage, 1990.
- Barthes, Roland. Image, Music, and Text. New York: Hill & Wang, 1977.

- . "From Work to Text." Harari 73-81.
- . "Texte (Théorie du)." 1973. Encyclopaedia Universalis. 1975.
- Bataille, Georges. La Peinture préhistorique: Lascaux ou la naissance de l'art. Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1980.
- Bauschatz, Cathleen. "Montaigne's Conception of Reading in the Context of Renaissance Poetics and Modern Criticism." The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation. Eds. Susan Suleiman and Inge Crossman. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980. 264-91.
- Bennett, Deb, and Robert S. Hoffmann. "Ranching in the New World." Viola and Margolis 90-110.
- Bernheimer, Richard. Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment and Demonology. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1952.
- The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts. Ed. and trans. T. H. White. 1954. New York: Perigree, 1980.
- Bettelheim, Bruno. The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales. 1976. New York: Vintage, 1977.
- Biedermann, Hans. Dictionary of Symbolism: Cultural Icons and the Meanings Behind Them. Trans. James Hulbert. 1989. New York: Facts on File, 1992.
- Blanchard, J. M. "Of Cannibalism and Autobiography." Modern Language Notes 93 (1978): 654-676.
- Bloom, Harold, ed. and introd. Michel de Montaigne. Modern Critical Views. New York: Chelsea House, 1987.
- . Michel de Montaigne's Essays. Modern Critical Interpretations Ser. New York: Chelsea House, 1987.
- Bly, Robert. Iron John: A Book about Men. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1990.
- Bower, Bruce. "Erectus Unhinged." Science News. 20 June, 1992: 408+.
- Bradley, Marion Zimmer. The Mists of Avalon. 1982. New York: Ballantine, 1984.
- Bronowski, Jacob. The Ascent of Man. Boston: Little, Brown, 1973.

- Campbell, Joseph. The Hero with a Thousand Faces. Bollingen Series 17. 2nd ed. 1949. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968.
- . The Masks of God. 2nd ed. 4 Vols. 1959-1987. New York: Penguin, 1976.
- Campbell, Mary. The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing 400-1600. 1988. Cornell: Cornell UP, 1991.
- Camus, Albert. Théâtre, Récits, Nouvelles Paris: Gallimard, 1962.
- Cave, Terence. "Problems of Reading in the Essais." MacFarlane. 133-166.
- Certeau, Michel de. "Le lieu et l'autre. Montaigne: 'Des Cannibales.'" Le Racisme: mythes et sciences. Ed. Maurice Oleander. Bruxelles: Editions Complexes, 1981. 187-200.
- Chiapelli, Fredi, ed. First Images of America. 2 vols. Berkeley: U of California P, 1976.
- Chinard, Gilbert. L'exotisme américain dans la littérature française au XVI^e siècle. Paris: Hachette, 1911.
- Cicero. De inventione. De optimo genere oratorum. Topica. Trans., H. M. Hubbell. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1949.
- Colie, Rosalie. Pardoxica Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1966.
- Crook, John Hurrell. "Consciousness and the Ecology of Meaning: New Findings and Old Philosophies." Robinson 203-223.
- Culler, Jonathan. On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982.
- . Structuralist Poetics. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1975.
- Danforth, Loring. The Death Rituals of Rural Greece. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1982.
- Dante. The Divine Comedy. Trans. John D. Sinclair. Vol. 1. 1939. New York: Oxford UP, 1961.
- Defaux, Gérard. "Un cannibale en haut de chausses: Montaigne, la différence et la logique de l'identité." Modern Language Notes 97 (1982): 919-957.

- De Lutri, Joseph. "Montaigne's 'Des cannibales': invention / experience." Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance 38 (1976): 79-82.
- Dennett, Daniel. Consciousness Explained. Boston: Little Brown, 1991.
- Diamond, Jared. "The Arrow of Disease." Discover Oct. 1992: 64-73.
- Douglas, Mary. Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. 1966. London: Ark, 1984.
- Dudley, Edward, and Maximilian Novak, eds. The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1972.
- Eisenstein, Elizabeth. The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983.
- Encyclopedia of World Mythology. 1970-71. New York: Galahad, 1975.
- Erasmus. "The Philosophy of Christ." Rpt. in The Renaissance: Maker of Modern Man. Washington, DC: National Geographic Society Book Service, 1970.
- Estés, Clarissa Pinkola. Women Who Run With Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype. New York: Ballantine, 1992.
- Falk, Eugene. The Poetics of Roman Ingarden. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1981.
- Fish, Stanley. "Rhetoric." Lentricchia 203-222.
- Foucault, Michel. Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason. Trans. Richard Howard. 1961, 1965. New York: Vintage, 1973.
- . "What is an Author?" Harari 141-160.
- Frame, Donald. Montaigne: A Biography. New York: Harcourt, 1965.
- Freud, Sigmund. "The 'Uncanny.'" Trans. James Strachy. The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud. Vol. 17. London: Hogarth, 1953-74. 219-252.
- Friedman, John Block. The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981.

- Furlong, Iris. "The Mythology of the Ancient Near East." The Feminist Companion to Mythology. Ed. Carolyne Larrington. London: Pandora Press, 1992.
- Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- . Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988.
- Genette, Gérard. Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré. Paris: Seuil, 1982.
- Gerbi, Antonello. The Dispute of the New World: The History of a Polemic, 1750-1900. Rev. and enlarged ed. Trans. Jeremy Moyle. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh Press, 1973.
- Gilbert, Allan H., ed., Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1962.
- Gilgamesh: Translated from the Sîn-lequî-unnî version. Trans. John Gardner, John Maier, and Richard A. Henshaw. 1984. New York: Vintage, 1985.
- Gould, Stephen Jay. The Panda's Thumb: More Reflections in Natural History. New York: Norton, 1980.
- . Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History. New York: Norton, 1989.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Greene, Thomas. "Dangerous Parleys—Essais 1.5 and 6." Yale French Studies 64 (1983). Rpt. in Bloom, Montaigne 155-176.
- Guerard, Albert, ed. Stories of the Double. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1967.
- Haley, Alex. Roots. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976.
- Haley, Gail. The Green Man. New York: Scribners, 1979.
- Hampden-Turner, Charles. Maps of the Mind: Charts and Concepts of the Mind and its Labyrinths. 1981. New York: Collier, 1982.
- Harari, Josué, ed. Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1979.

- Hardison, O.B. "The Orator and the Poet: The Dilemma of Humanist Literature." Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies 1 (1971) 35-38.
- Hayden, Hiram. The Counter-Renaissance. New York: Scribner, 1950.
- Heninger, S. K., Jr. Sidney and Spenser: The Poet as Maker. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1989.
- Henry, Patrick. "Recognition of the Other and Avoidance of the Double." Stanford French Review 6 (1982): 175-88.
- Herodotus. Herodotus. Trans. A.D. Godley. Vol. 2. Rev. ed. Loeb Classical Library. 1921. London: Heinemann, 1938.
- Horace. Opera. Ed. Edward C. Wickham. Oxford Classical Text. 1901. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1967.
- . Ars Poetica. Trans. Edward Henry Blakeney. Rpt. in Gilbert 125-143.
- Huber, Richard. Treasury of Fantastic and Mythological Creatures: 1,087 Renderings from Historic Sources. Dover Pictorial Art Series. New York: Dover, 1981.
- Huizinga, Johan. Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture. Boston: Beacon P, 1950.
- The Human Dawn. Alexandria, VA: Time Life Books, 1990.
- Humphries, Jefferson. Losing the Text, Readings in Literary Desire. Athens GA: The U of Georgia P, 1986.
- Husband, Timothy. The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980.
- Itard, Jean-Marc. The Wild Boy of Aveyron (Rapports et mémoires sur le sauvage de l'Aveyron). Trans. George and Muriel Humphrey. New York: Century Co., 1932.
- Janson, H. W. Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Studies of the Warburg Institute 20. London: Warburg Institute, 1952.
- Johnson, Barbara. "Writing," Lentricchia 39-49.
- Johnson, Norris. "Cannibals and Culture: the Anthropology of Michel de Montaigne." Dialectical Anthropology. Forthcoming.

- Kahn, E. J. "Jungle Botanist." New Yorker 1 June 1992: 35-58.
- Keen, Sam. Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man. New York: Bantam, 1991.
- Kenseth, Joy, ed. The Age of the Marvelous. Hanover NH: Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, 1991.
- Kirk, G. S. Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures. Cambridge and Berkeley: UP and U California P, 1970.
- Kristeva, Julia. Etrangers à nous-mêmes. [Paris]: Librairie Arthème Fayard-Gallimard, 1988.
- . Semiotikè: Recherches pour une sémanalyse. Paris: Seuil, 1969.
- Kritzmann, Laurence. "My Body, My Text: Montaigne and the Rhetoric of Sexuality." Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies 13. 1 (1983). Rpt. in Bloom, Essays 81-95.
- Kundera, Milan. The Art of the Novel. Trans. Linda Asher. 1986. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.
- Lambert, David and the Diagram Group. The Field Guide to Early Man. New York: Facts on File, 1987.
- Lane, Harlan. The Wild Boy of Aveyron. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1974.
- Langer, Suzanne. Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1957.
- Leach, Edmund. Culture and Communication: An Introduction to the Use of Structural Analysis in Social Anthropology. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976.
- . "Fishing for Men at the Edge of the Wilderness." Alter and Kermode. 579-99.
- Leake, Roy E. Concordance des Essais de Montaigne. 2 vols. Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance No. 188. Genève: Droz, 1981.
- Leed, Eric. The Mind of the Traveler: From Gilgamesh to Global Tourism. N.p.: Basic Books, 1991.
- Lentricchia, Frank, and Thomas McLaughlin, eds. Critical Terms for Literary Study. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1990.

- Leroi-Gourhan, André. Treasures of Prehistoric Art. Trans. Norbert Guterman. New York: Abrams, n.d.
- Lestringant, Frank. "Les Représentations du sauvage dans l'iconographie relative aux ouvrages du cosmographe André Thevet." Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance 40 (1978): 583-595.
- Levenson, Jay, ed. Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration. Washington and New Haven: National Gallery of Art and Yale UP, 1991.
- Levin, Harry. The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance. 1969. New York: Oxford UP, 1972.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. La Pensée sauvage. Paris: Plon, 1962.
- Locher, Caroline. "Primary and Seconday Themes in Montaigne's 'Des cannibales' (I.31)." French Forum 1.2 (1976): 119-26.
- Lovejoy, Arthur. Essays in the History of Ideas. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1948.
- . The Great Chain of Being. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1936.
- Lovejoy, Arthur, Gilbert Chinard, George Boas, and Ronald Crane. A Documentary History of Primitivism and Related Ideas. Vol. I of Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins P, 1935.
- Luthy, Herbert. "Montaigne, or the Art of Being Truthful." Encounter 1.2 (1953). Rpt. in Bloom, Montaigne 11-28.
- MacDonald, Margaret Read. Peace Tales: World Folktales to Talk About. Hamden, CN: Linnet Books, 1992.
- Majer, Irma. "Montaigne's Cure: Stones and Roman Ruins." Modern Language Notes 97.4 (1982). Rpt. in Bloom, Montaigne 117-133.
- Malson, Lucien. Wolf-Children and the Problem of Human Nature. 1964. New York: New Left Books, 1972.
- Maskell, David. "The Evolution of the Essais." McFarlane 13-34.
- May, Rollo. The Cry for Myth. New York: Norton 1991.

Maybury-Lewis, David. Millenium: Tribal Wisdom and the Modern World.
New York: Viking, 1992.

McCrone, John. The Ape that Spoke: Language and the Evolution of the Human Mind. 1990. New York, Morrow, 1991.

McFarlane, I. D., and Ian Maclean, eds. Montaigne: Essays in Memory of Richard Sayce. Oxford: Clarendon, 1982.

Meade, Michael. Interview. "On Being a Man: An Interview with Michael Meade." Sy Safransky. The Sun April 1989: 2-10.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. Les Relations avec autrui chez l'enfant. 1951. Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1975.

---. Signes. Gallimard, 1960.

Milner, Richard. The Encyclopedia of Evolution: Humanity's Search for Its Origins. New York: Facts on File, 1990.

Mintz, Sidney. "Pleasure, Profit, and Satiation." Viola and Margolis 112-129.

Montagu, Ashley, ed. The Concept of the Primitive. New York: Free P, 1968.

Montaigne, Michel de. Essais. Ed. Maurice Rat. 2 Vols. Paris: Garnier Frères, 1962.

---. Essais. Introd. Marcel Françon. Réproduction photographique de la deuxième édition (Bordeaux, 1582). Cambridge: Harvard U, 1969.

---. The Complete Works of Montaigne: Essays, Travel Journal, Letters. Trans. Donald Frame. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1948.

Moureau, Francois. "Le Sens du titre: Typographie et gravure dans les premières éditions des Essais." Tetel 13-16.

Morowitz, Harold J. "Balancing Species Preservation and Economic Considerations." Science 16 Aug. 1991: 752-4.

Morris, Desmond. Bodywatching. New York: Crown, 1985.

Nash, Gary. "The Image of the Indian in the Southern Colonial Mind." Dudley 55-86.

New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. Trans. Richard Aldington and Delano Ames. 1959. Hamlyn: London, 1968.

- Novak, Maximilian. "The Wild Man comes to Tea." Dudley 183-221.
- O'Neill, John. Essaying Montaigne: A Study in the Renaissance Institution of Writing and Reading. London: Routledge, 1982.
- Ornstein, Robert. The Evolution of Consciousness: Of Darwin, Freud, and Cranial Fire—The Origins of the Way We Think. New York: Prentice Hall, 1991.
- Ornstein, Robert, and Paul Erlich. New World, New Mind: Moving Toward Conscious Evolution. 1989. New York: Touchstone, 1990.
- Ovid. Metamorphoses. Ed. William Anderson. Leipzig: Teubner, 1977.
- Paglia, Camille. Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson. 1990. New York: Vintage, 1991.
- Pascal, Blaise. Pensées. Paris: Livre de poche, 1972.
- Percy, Walker. Lost in the Cosmos. New York: Farrar, 1983.
- . Signposts in a Strange Land. New York: Farrar, 1991.
- Pfeiffer, John. The Creative Explosion: An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion. New York, Harper & Row, 1982.
- Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni. "Oration on the Dignity of Man." Trans. Elizabeth Livermore Forbes. The Renaissance Philosophy of Man. Eds. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall, Jr. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1948.
- Porter, Roy. Mind-Forg'd Manacles: A History of Madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1987.
- Potts, Richard. "Untying the Knot: Evolution of Early Human Behavior." Robinson 41-59.
- "Primitivism." Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics. 1974 edition.
- Rabelais, François. Gargantua and Pantagruel. Trans. J. M. Cohen. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955.
- . Oeuvres Complètes. Ed. Pierre Jourda. Vol. 1. Paris: Garnier Frères, 1962.

The Reader's Encyclopedia. Ed. William Rose Benét. New York: Crowell, 1948.

Reiner, Erica. "City Bread and Bread Baked in Ashes." Languages and Areas: Studies Presented to George Bobrinskoy. Chicago: U of Chicago, 1967. 116-120.

Regosin, Richard. "The Life of the Mind." From The Matter of My Book: Montaigne's Essais as the Book of the Self. U of California P, 1977. Rpt. in Bloom, Essays 41-60.

Rendall, Steven. "Dialectical Structure and Dialectics in Montaigne's 'Of Cannibals.'" Pacific Coast Philology 12 (1977): 56-63.

---. Distinguo: Reading Montaigne Differently. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1992.

Riffaterre, Michel. "L'intertexte inconnu." Littérature 41 (1981): 4-7.

Robe, Stanley. "Wild Men and Spain's New World." Dudley 39-53.

Robinson, Michael, and Lionel Tiger, eds. Man and Beast Revisited. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution P, 1991.

Rymer, Russ. "A Silent Childhood (I)." New Yorker 13 April 1992. 41+. "A Silent Childhood (II)." 20 April 1992: 43+.

Rushdie, Salman. "Out of Kansas." New Yorker 11 May 1992: 93-103.

Sacks, Oliver. Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf. Berkeley, U of California P, 1989.

Sandars, N.K., trans. and ed. The Epic of Gilgamesh. Rev. ed. 1972. London: Penguin, 1973.

Sasson, Jack M. "Some Literary Motifs in the Composition of the Gilgamesh Epic." Studies in Philology 69 (1972): 259-79.

Sayce, R. A. The Essays of Montaigne: A Critical Exploration. N.p.: Northwestern UP, 1972.

Scully, Vincent. The Manmade and the Artificial. New York: St. Martin's, 1991.

Schaller, Susan. A Man Without Words. New York: Summit, 1991.

- Segal, Robert A. Introduction. In Quest of the Hero. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990.
- Shakespeare, William. Shakespeare's Sonnets. Eds. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Lamar. New York: Pocket-Simon, 1967.
- . "Venus and Adonis." The Narrative Poems. Eds. Richard Wilbur and Alfred Harbage. Rev. ed. New York: Penguin, 1974.
- Shattuck, Roger. The Forbidden Experiment: The Story of the Wild Boy of Aveyron. New York: Farrar, 1980.
- Sheridan, Ronald and Ann Ross. Gargoyles and Grotesques: Paganism in the Medieval Church. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975.
- Shreeve, James. "The Dating Game." Discover September 1992: 76-83.
- . "The Deepening Conundrum of Neanderthal Man." Smithsonian December 1991: 113+.
- Sinclair, Andrew. The Savage: A History of Misunderstanding. London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1977.
- Spenser, Edmund. Spenser: Poetical Works. Eds. J. C. Smith and E. de Selincourt. 1912. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979.
- Starobinski, Jean. Montaigne en mouvement. Paris: Gallimard, 1982.
- Tetel, Marcel, and G. Mallary Masters, eds. Le Parcours des Essais: Montaigne 1588-1988. Paris: Aux amateurs de livres, 1989.
- Thomas, Lewis. The Fragile Species. New York: Scribner's, 1992.
- Tigay, Jeffrey. The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1982.
- Tillyard, E. M. W. The Elizabethan World Picture. New York: Vintage, 1943.
- Torgovnick, Marianna. Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1990.
- Trivers, Robert. "Deceit and Self-Deception: The Relationship between Communication and Consciousness." Robinson 175-191.
- Turner, Victor. "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage." In The Forest of Symbols. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1967. Rpt.

in Betwixt and Between: Patterns of Masculine and Feminine Initiation.
 Eds. Louise Mahdi , Stephen Foster, and Meredith Little. La Salle, IL.:
 Open Court, 1987. 3-19.

Vecellio's Renaissance Costume Book, All 500 Woodcut Illustrations from
 the Famous Sixteenth-Century Compendium of World Costume by Cesare
 Vecellio. Dover Pictorial Art Series. New York: Dover, 1977.

Verano, John W. and Douglas H. Ubelaker. "Health and Disease in the Pre-
 Columbian World." Viola and Margolis 209-223.

Villey, Pierre, and V.-L. Saulnier, eds. Les Essais de Michel de Montaigne.
 Rev. ed. Vol 1. 1924. Paris: Presses universitaire de France, 1965.

Virgil. Opera. Ed. R. A. B. Mynors. Oxford: Clarendon, 1969.

Viola, Herbert J. "Seeds of Change." Viola and Margolis 11-15.

Viola, Herman J., and Carolyn Margolis, eds. Seeds of Change: A
 Quincentennial Commemoration. Washington: Smithsonian Institution
 P, 1991.

Walsh, Jane MacLaren, and Yoko Sugiura. "The Demise of the Fifth Sun,"
 Viola and Margolis 17-41.

Weinberg, Bernard. "Montaigne's Readings for 'Des Cannibales'"
Renaissance and Other Studies in Honor of William Leon Wiley. Ed.
 George Bernard Daniel III. U of North Carolina Studies in the Romance
 Languages and Literatures 72. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1968.
 261-279.

White, Hayden. "The Forms of Wildness: Archeology of an Idea." Dudley 3-
 38.

---. Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism. Baltimore: Johns
 Hopkins UP, 1978.

Whitney, Lois. "The Literature of Travel in the 'Faerie Queene.'" Modern
 Philology 19 (1921): 143-162.

Will, Gary. Book review. "Man of the Year" New York Review. 21
 November, 1991. 12-18.

Wilson, Edward. The Diversity of Life. Cambridge MA: Belknap, 1992.

Young, Dudley. Origins of the Sacred: The Ecstacies of Love and War. New York: St. Martin's, 1991.

Zipes, Jack. The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood: Versions of the Tale in Sociocultural Context. South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 1983.