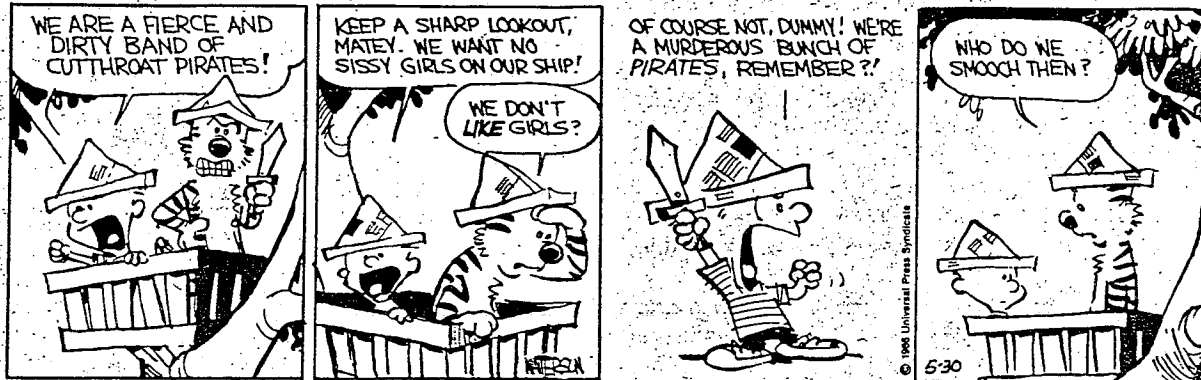


Love and Death in the *Männerbund*: an Essay with Special Reference to the *Ejarkamál* and the *Battle of Maldon*

CALVIN AND HOBBS by Bill Watterson



1. Some names and titles mentioned or alluded to, more or less in order of the presentation:

Sighvatr Þórðarson (c. 995-1045), Bersoglisvísur

Emile Benveniste, Indo-European Language and Society

Heinrich Schurtz, Altersklassen und Männerbünde: Eine Darstellung der Grundformen der Gesellschaft (1902)

Hans Blüher, Die Rolle der Erotik in der männlichen Gesellschaft (1917)

Lily Weiser, Altgermanische Jünglingsweihen und Männerbünde (1927)

Otto Höfler, Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen (1934)

Friedrich Kauffmann, Deutsche Altertumskunde (1913)

Lionel Tiger, Men in Groups (1969).

Männerbünde--Männerbände: Zur Rolle des Mannes im Kulturvergleich, ed. Gisela Völger and Karin v. Welck, 2 vols. (Cologne: Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum Köln, 1990), I, 93-102;

Bernd Widdig, Männerbünde und Massen: Zur Krise männlicher Identität in der Literatur der Moderne (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991)

Klaus Theweleit's vast literary meditation Männerphantasien, its two volumes published in Germany (1977-78) and in America (1987-89)

Gefolgschaft, Gefolgschaftsälteste

Hans Kuhn, "Die Grenzen der germanischen Gefolgschaft"

Reinhard Wenskus, Stammesbildung und Verfassung: Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes (Cologne and Graz: Böhlau, 1961)

Halfréðr vandræðaskáld's Óláfs Erfidrápa (Tryggvasonar).

lausavísa, Ibn Fadlan, Sigurðarkviða in skamma

Rosemary Woolf, "The Ideal of Men Dying with their Lord in the *Germania* and in *The Battle of Maldon*," Anglo-Saxon England 5 (1976), 63-81

2) Some of the passages alluded to, more or less in order of presentation:

Syni Áleifs biðk snúðar,
síð kveða aptans biða
óframs sök (meðal okkar
alt's háligt), svá mála;
Erum Magnús vér vægnir;
vildak með þér mildum
(Haralds varðar þú hjörvi
haukey) lifa ok deyja!

Christina Ranisch - Boy
Bjarkamal - Condemned
mythos
father

Sighvatr Þórðarson (c. 995-1045), Bersögisvísur

(I wish the son of Olaf thus a good turn in things; they say that the affairs of the man who holds back will wait till late in the evening; between us two all is holy. I give way, Magnús--you who guard with sword Norway, the hawk-isle of Harald--with you, generous one, it is my wish to live and die.)

Anaximander

Bjarkamál, st. 3 (Heusler-Ranisch):

Vekka ek yör at víni (I wake you not to wine nor to the whispers of a
né at vífs rúnun, woman; rather I wake you to the hard game of
heldr vek ek yör at hǫðum Hild [Hild is a valkyrie, her game is war]
Hildar leiki.

Saxo's Bjarkamál (Heusler-Ranisch and Fisher)

Non ego virgineos iubeo cognoscere ludos
Nec teneras tractare genas aut ducia nuptis
Oscula conferre et tenues astringere mammas, etc.

(I do not ask you to learn to sport with young/ girls and stroke their tender cheeks,
or give/ a bride sweet kisses and squeeze her delicate breasts,/ drinking bright wine
as you rub your hand on her smooth/ thigh and cast your glance at her snow-white
shoulders./ No, I rouse you to the bitter contests of war.)

Snorri Sturluson, Ólafs saga helga, ch. CCX (Heimskringla, ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson)

Konungr þakkaði honum skemmtan sína. Síðan tók konungr gullhring, er stóð hálfá mörk, ok gaf Þormóði. Þormóðr þakkaði konungi gjof sína ok mælti: "Góðan eigum vér konung, en vant er nú at sjá, hversu langlífir konungr verðr. Sú er þen mín, konungr, at þú látir okkr hvártki skiljask lífs né dauða." Konungr svarar: "Allir munu vér saman fara, meðan ek ræð fyrir, ef þér vilið eigi við mik skiljask." Þá mælti Þormóðr: "Þess vætti ek, konungr, hvárt sem friðr er betri eða verri, at ek sjá nær yör staddr, meðan ek á þess kost, hvat sem vér spyrjum til, hvar Sigvatr ferr með gullinhjaltann." Síðan kvað Þormóðr:

Þér munk eðr, unz qðrum,
allvaldr, náist sköldum
--nær vættir þú þeira?--
þingdjarfr, of kné hvarfa.
Braut komumsk vér, þó at veitim
valtafn frekum hrafni,
víksk eigi þat, vága

viggruðr, eða hér liggjum.

(Poem: "Still I will linger before your knee, battle-bold king, until other skalds approach [i.e., until Sighvatr comes]--when do you expect them [i.e., him]? We shall leave this place, though we grant a sacrifice of carrion to the bold raven, or else we shall lie here; that can't change [one of the two will happen], oh tree-of-the-
steed-of the waves (oh seafarer).")

Sighvatr's Erfidrápa for St. Olaf (c. 1040) [Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson]:

Björn frák auk af ærnium
endr stollurum kenndu
hug, hvé halda dugði,
hann sótti framm, dróttin.
Fell í her með hollum
hann verðungar mǫnnum,
leyfðr es, at hilmis hǫfði
hróðrauðigs, sá dauði.

(St. 18: Frák auk B. kenndu endr stollurum af ærnium hug, hvé halda dugði dróttin; hann sótti framm. Hann fell í her með hollum verðungar mǫnnum at hǫfði hróðrauðigs hilmis; leyfðr es sá dauði. [I have also heard that Björn long ago instructed the retainers with great courage how to keep faith with one's lord. He advanced in battle. He fell there in the host along with the loyal men of the king's bodyguard at the head of his famous lord. That death is praised.])

Arnórr jarlaskáld,
Eigi varð ens ægja
auðligr konungs dauði;
hlífðut hlenna svæfi
hoddum roðnir oddar;
heldr kuru meir ens milda
mildings, an grið vildi,
of folksnaran fylki
falla liðsmenn allir.

(St. 15: Eigi varð dauði ens ægja konungs auðligr; hoddum roðnir oddar hlífðut hlenna svæfi; allir liðsmenn ens milda mildings kuru meir heldr fall of folksnaran fylki an vildi grið. [The death of the fear-inspiring king was not easy. Points red with treasure did not spare the foe of robbers. All the retainers of the generous prince chose rather to fall around the war-quick king than that they would wish peace.])

He læg ðegenlice ðeodne gehende

fram ic ne wille,
ac ic me be healfe minum hlaforde,
be swa leofan men, licgan þence.

Arch -
Naturally cultured
like now...

Remember

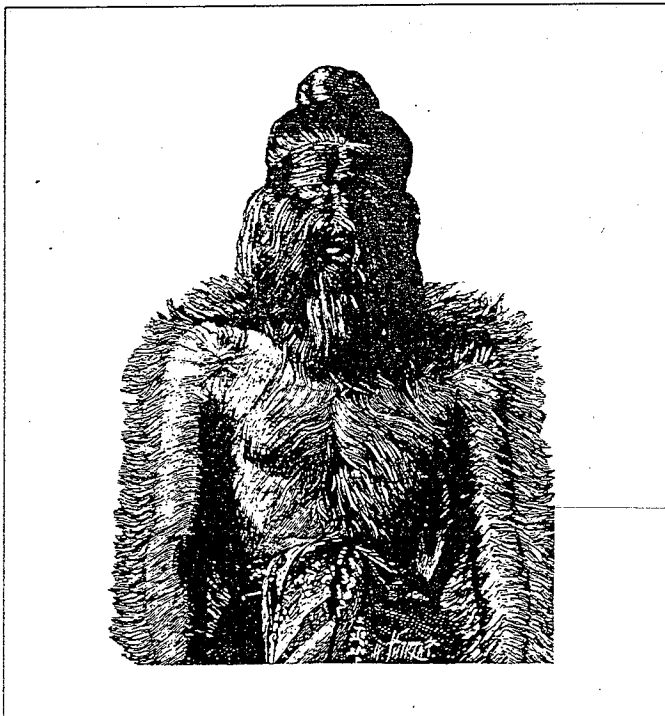
Struck down I shall die at the head of my slain leader,/ and you will drop face-foremost at his feet,/ so that one who views body on body may see/ how we make return for the gold received from our master . . . Though fearless in war it is proper that earls should fall,/ and embrace their illustrious king in a common death

Magnúss saga ins góða, ch. 7; Heimskringla, III, ed., Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, 15; Finnur Jónsson, B1, 251 (with a different interpretation oflátinn).

Sigvatr gekk einn dag um þorp nokkut ok heyrði, at einn hvern húsbóndi veinaði mjök, er hann hafði misst konu sinnar, barði á brjóst sér ok reif klæði af sér, grét mjök, segir, at hann vildi gjarna deyja. Sigvatr kvað:

Fúss læzk maðr, ef missir
meyjar faðms, at deyja.
Keypt es óst, ef eptir
oflátinn skal gráta.
En fullhugi fellir
flóttstygg, sás varð dróttin,
vårt torrek lízk verri,
vígtór, konungs órum.

(Second helming: En flóttstygg fullhugi, sás varð dróttin, fellir vígtór; vårt torrek lízk konungs órum verri. [The man says he is eager to die if he loses the embrace of the woman. Love is dearly bought if (even) a proud man must weep after (the dead). But the unretreating hero who has lost his lord sheds tears of war-fury; our unavengeable loss seems worse to the men of the king.])



THE HAIRY MAN THAT LIES DEEP IN ALL OF TODAY'S ACCOUNTANTS