May 2019

Un Miroir De Mariage: an Iconological Analysis of the Bal Des Sauvages and Combat Des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers Tapestries

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AN ICONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE *BAL DES SAUVAGES* AND *COMBAT DES HOMMES SAUVAGES ET CHEVALIERS* TAPESTRIES

by

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A Thesis Submitted in

Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in Art History

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

May 2019

ABSTRACT

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The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2019
Under the Supervision of Professor Richard Leson

The enigmatic fifteenth-century tapestry fragments *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* from the Château Saumur depict curious scenes of Wildfolk and humans. These fragments have received relatively little scholarly analysis. My thesis seeks to discern the subject matter and historical context of the *des Sauvages* tapestries in order to ascertain a clearer understanding the pieces. I accomplish this first by considering the *des Sauvages* tapestries' historiography and examining the veracity of the various scholarly hypotheses put forth regarding the works and their subject matter. Chapter II of this thesis considers the tapestry medium and provides brief but necessary foundational information for my subsequent analysis of the *des Sauvages* tapestries' context of creation and display. The third and fourth chapters consider the Wildman motif and its history in art, literature, and society, before and during the fifteenth century. The final chapter is an in-depth analysis of the *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestries, from which various conclusions are drawn. Among the more significant conclusions is that, while a specific narrative referent for the *des Sauvages* tapestry remains unknown, the *Bal des Sauvages* certainly depicts a scene of nuptial celebration. I argue that the tapestries' deeper theme is likely an allegory for fifteenth-century aristocratic marriage and its accompanying morals and anxieties. This research, finally, allows me to make informed speculation about the original circumstances of the *des Sauvages* tapestries, their creation, ownership, original intent, and interpretation.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis' completion would not be possible without the assistance and support of the Department of Art History at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. A special thanks to Dr. Richard Leson, my advisor and Dr. Kay Wells. A heartfelt thank you to Jeffery R. Hayes, his widow, and the award in his name so generously offered to graduate students. Thanks to the assistance of the Jeffrey R. Hayes Graduate Student Travel Award, I was able to conduct research in France and see the tapestries that are the subject of this thesis in person.

During my travels in France I was assisted greatly by the *Conseil General de Maine-et-Loire's Conservation Départementale du Patrimoine* and their *conservateur du patrimoine*, Monsieur Etienne Vacquet as well as by the staff of the *Château de Saumur. Je voudrais à remercier profondément Monsieur Vacquet, Madame Nathalie Halgand et Madame Estelle Geraud pour leur gentillesse, leur hospitalité et leur aide au cours de mes recherches.*

INTRODUCTION

Three enigmatic fifteenth-century tapestry fragments are housed at the Château Saumur in the Loire Valley, France. The pieces, entitled *Bal des Sauvages* (figure 0.1) and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* (figures 0.2 and 0.3), depict Wildfolk interacting with courtly men and women. The *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry fragment is three meters high by five meters long and displays well-dressed, courtly men and women cavorting with Wildfolk at an outdoor fête. *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* comprises two smaller rectangular fragments. The left fragment measures about three meters by three meters and the right fragment measures about two and a half meters by one and a half meters. The fragments, which join together, both portray armed and mounted knights engaging in battle against Wildmen (0.4). The tapestries date circa 1450 and were likely produced in Lille, France.[1] Despite their compelling subject matter, they have received relatively little scholarly attention. The *des Sauvages* tapestries, as they have come to be known, are referenced in various works on medieval tapestry but are rarely considered in depth or in tandem, even though they are certainly part of a larger narrative cycle. This thesis, therefore, seeks to discern the subject matter and historical context of the *des Sauvages* tapestries in order to ascertain a clearer understanding of the meaning of the pieces.

My thesis accomplishes this first by considering the *des Sauvages* tapestries' historiography and examining the veracity of the various scholarly hypotheses put forth regarding the works and their subject matter. I create a clearer account of the tapestries' history that mitigates much of the confusion and unfounded claims surrounding the works. Chapter II considers the tapestry medium and provides brief but necessary foundational information for my subsequent analysis of the *des Sauvages* tapestries' context of creation and display. The third and fourth chapters consider the Wildman motif and its history in art, literature, and society, before and during the fifteenth century. This analysis leads to conclusions about the mysterious Wildfolk and what their inclusion in the *des Sauvages* tapestries potentially indicates. The final chapter is an in-depth iconological analysis of the *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes*

[1] Charron, Pascale, *Le Maître Du Champion Des Dames*, (Paris, Institut National D'histoire De L'art, 2004), 379.

Sauvages et Chevaliers tapestries, from which various conclusions are drawn. Among the more significant conclusions of this chapter is that, while a specific narrative referent of the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry remains unknown, the work certainly depicts a scene of nuptial celebration. I argue that the tapestries' deeper theme may be an allegory for fifteenth-century aristocratic marriage and its accompanying morals and anxieties. This research, finally, allows me to make informed speculation about the original circumstances of the *des Sauvages* tapestries, their creation, ownership, original intent, and interpretation.

CHAPTER I

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The purpose of this chapter is to disentangle the historiographic 'threads' of the scholarly literature in order to weave a clear picture of what has been said about the mysterious *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestries, currently of the Château Saumur, formerly of Notre-Dame de Nantilly. It had been previously held that the first recorded mention of the *des Sauvages* tapestries came from a 1776 contract (figure 1.1).[2] That record, from the *Archives Départemental du Maine-et-Loire,* states that two guardians, Jean Augustin Thibault and his wife, Marguerite Brizeau, were appointed by the Church of Notre-Dame de Nantilly on October 14th of that year.[3] The document includes a collective reference to the church's tapestries but unfortunately neither proper title nor provenance is supplied for any of the works.[4]

While there were tapestries at Notre-Dame de Nantilly in 1776, we cannot be certain that the *des Sauvages* tapestries were counted among them. During the turmoil of the French Revolution (circa 1789-1799), aristocratic property was either spirited away to refuge with the émigrés or seized, stored, or sold by revolutionaries. After the revolution, seized property was reshuffled and sent to various châteaux, with no guarantee that items ended up where they originally belonged.[5] So while the *des Sauvages* tapestries belonged to Notre-Dame de Nantilly eventually, we cannot say with certainty when and how they entered the church's collection. As we will see, mystery and confusion continue to follow the tapestries throughout their recorded history.

By way of preface to this survey, it is important to consider the history of another tapestry fragment that belonged to the Church of Notre-Dame de Nantilly, that of the *Prise de Jérusalem*. Like the *des Sauvages* tapestries, the *Prise de Jérusalem* belongs to the Château Saumur collection, as does

[2] Following Charron, my use of the term "*des sauvages*" will refer to both the *Bal des Sauvages* and the surviving components of the *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestries.
[3] G2325, Archives Departmental du Maine et Loire. See figure 1.1.
[4] Charron, *Le Maître,* 379.
[5] Information provided by the Director of Patrimony for the Loire Valley, Monsieur Etienne Vacquet.

another tapestry known as the *Couronnement de Vespasien*. All of these tapestries were transferred to Château Saumur from Notre-Dame de Nantilly in 1965.[6] The *Prise de Jérusalem* and the *Couronnement de Vespasien* are in fact two distinct episodes that belong to a larger series titled the *Vengeance de Notre Seigneur.*[7] Other tapestries from a similar *Vengeance* series are now in Vienna at the Museum für Angewandte Kunst and in Florence at the National Museum of the Bargello.[8] Unfortunately, at some point—when, is not entirely clear—Saumur's two fragments of the *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* became associated with its two tapestries from the *Vengeance* series, the whole erroneously referred to as the *Prise de Jérusalem* or Siege of Jerusalem series.[9] As all of the tapestries shared the same provenance, this association seemed logical to the first scholars to discuss the works at Château Saumur. So, we must also consider mentions of the "*Prise de Jérusalem*" in the historiography of the Saumur *des Sauvages* fragments because the *Combat* fragments are sometimes conflated with that (erroneously titled) work. This would account for why so many sources that mention the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry do not address its obvious companion fragments, the *Combat*; those sources wrongly associate the latter with a "*Prise de Jérusalem*" series rather than its appropriate pendant, the *Bal des Sauvages*.

The *des Sauvages* tapestries are mentioned by name for the first time in a historical monuments report of March 19th, 1897, which reveals that at that moment, on account of their secular subject matter,

[6] Charron, *Le Maître,* 379.
[7] According to an object label at Château Saumur.
[8] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art / Adolfo Salvatore Cavallo,* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993), 198-209. Current scholarly opinion is that three, distinct versions of the *Vengeance de Notre Seigneur* tapestries exist. The fragments from Saumur, Vienna and Florence derive from an iconographically related version of the series. The Bargello fragment is a smaller version of the *Prise de Jérusalem* from Saumur, while the piece in Vienna depicts an episode not found at Saumur, that of Pilate and the Messenger. Two fragments from Tournai comprise another version of the series, and the Lyon and Geneva fragments represent a third version. There is also a tapestry at the Metropolitan Museum, New York that comprises three different fragments from a *Vengeance de Notre Seigneur* series, which have been joined to form one hanging. All versions of the *Vengeance* series, however, ultimately emanated from Tournai.
[9] The "*Prise de Jérusalem"* series will here refer to the two tapestries *Prise de Jérusalem* and *Couronnement de Vespasien*, that have on occasion been erroneously conflated with the *Combat* tapestry fragments but in fact belong to a separate series, the *Vengeance de Notre Seigneur.*

the tapestries were "rolled."[10] This did not prevent the French art historian and director of the Manufacture des Gobelins, Jules Guiffrey from publishing the first notice on one of the tapestries, the *Bal des Sauvages,* the very next year in the *Revue de l'Art Acien et Moderne*.[11] In fact, Guiffrey reported that in all his many visits to Notre-Dame de Nantilly he had never seen *Bal des Sauvages* hung, this due to its profane nature.[12] He mentioned that the church was recently restored, a restoration probably coincident with the report of 1897. It is likely that Guiffrey learned of the tapestry through that report, which inventoried the treasures of the church.[13]

Interestingly, Guiffrey did not mention the two *Combat* fragments. Presumably, he had not seen them, or he would have made the obvious connection between that work and *Bal des Sauvages.* Clearly, however, Guiffrey had closely examined *Bal des Sauvages,* as he noted important details of the tapestry's condition, steps taken to repair and conserve it (such as small holes stitched together and joined border elements) and made observations about technique. He noted, for example, that the tapestry was rendered with threads of only three colors but achieves diverse tonal range through hatching. It was well-preserved due to the limited colors (that prevented uneven fading) and its extended time in storage.[14]

On stylistic grounds, Guiffrey associated *Bal des Sauvages* with the fifteenth-century schools of the Loire valley and compared the figures to those painted by Loire illuminators.[15] With patriotic fervor, he credited the tapestry to similar late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century works by "those masterful

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[10] Charron, *Le Maître,* 379.
[11] Guiffrey, Jules, "Un Bal de Sauvages: Tapisserie du 15e Siècle," (Paris, *Revue de l'Art Acien et Moderne,* 1898), 76-82.
[12] Guiffrey, "Un Bal," 76.
[13] The same inventory may lie behind a reference to the *Bal des sauvages* in a report of the *Congres Archeologique National de Anger-Saumur,* where the tapestry is counted among the collections of the Church of Notre-Dame de Nantilly along with other, unnamed tapestry fragments. Since this publication tends to identify separate components of discrete tapestry series, for example the *Life of the Virgin* from Notre-Dame de Nantilly, we can conclude that the *Combat* was not conflated with the *Prise de Jérusalem* in the inventory and was likely counted among the various fragments designated as secular subject matter. See Société Française d'Archéologie, *Guide Du Congrès D'Angers Et De Saumur En 1910,* (Caen: Delesques, 1910).
[14] Guiffrey, "Un Bal," 80. *Bal des Sauvages* is listed as having several *"anciennes conversions"* in documents from Chevalier Conservations kindly provided by Monsieur Vacquet. These documents also indicate that *Bal des Sauvages* was restored by Gobelins in 1898 and 1927. Chevalier Conservation undertook the most recent restoration of *Bal* and *Combat* in 2000.
[15] Ibid., 82.

illuminators from the Loire valley who have yet to be identified."[16] He assigned similar dates to other tapestries in the Notre-Dame de Nantilly collection (regardless of their subject matter, religious or secular) and praised all as invaluable examples of developments in French tapestry production during its most brilliant period.[17] In dating the *Bal des Sauvages* to the mid-fifteenth century Guiffrey relied on Jules Quicherat's *Costume History.* His analysis rested on a careful study of the Wildwomen's headdresses, which are actually complex hair styles formed to resemble turbanesque hats known to have been worn by court ladies for the occasion of a masque. Similar examples of this style are also found in the Musée de Cluny's *La Dame et la Licorne* tapestry series of the early sixteenth century (figure 1.2).[18]

Perhaps Guiffrey's most valuable contribution, however, concerned the tapestry's iconographic content. He referred to the Wildfolk as "costumed figures."[19] In other words, he believed the 'sauvages' were humans dressed as Wildfolk. Guiffrey characterized the tone of the tapestry as solemn, the figures wandering gravely and silently to the raucous orchestra.[20] The center-left figure, a woman dressed in an ermine-trimmed ball gown, he described as an old woman extending her hand in sharp disapproval of the debauchery (figure 1.3). The only emotion he detected is displayed by the figure of the mad, bald fool and the Wildwoman he forcefully embraces (figure 1.4). Guiffrey found the fine cloaks and hats of the Wildfolk served to emphasize their nakedness in comparison to the ostentatiously garbed courtiers.

As for the subject matter, Guiffrey quickly determined that the *Bal des Sauvages* does not depict the *Bal des Ardents*—arguably the most famous moment in French history associated with Wildmen, which took place during the troubled reign of Charles VI—but rather, "one of these quite frequent orgies at the licentious fifteenth-century court."[21] He provided various iconographic details that disagree with the

[16] Guiffrey, "Un Bal," 82. Guiffrey, for whom the tapestry was "*franciase, et bien francaise,"* was writing at a time of increased nationalistic fervor and pride in France and its art. In just a few years, a grand exposition of all French art will be held in Paris at the World's Fair.
[17] Ibid., 76. The majority of the tapestries Guiffrey referenced have similarly woeful provenance.
[18] Ibid, 78.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid., 76. *"Cette scène comme la représentation de l'une de ces orgies assez fréquentes à la cour licencieuse du XVe siècle."* The historical episode known as the *Bal des Ardents* occurred in 1393 in Paris at the Hotel Saint-Pol.

documented details of the *Bal des Ardents*. For example, nearly half of the depicted characters in the tapestry are Wildfolk as opposed to the six costumed Wildmen mentioned at the *Bal des Ardents*; the women are Wildfolk; the setting is outdoors; the Wildfolk do not wear masks; et cetera.

Guiffrey's analysis did not end with costume. He posited that the heraldic banners brandished by the musicians charged with, "*trois croissants de gueules accompagnent une étoile centrale,"* are reminiscent of the fictional banners of Clovis, King of the Franks (b. 466 - d.511), prior to his conversion.[22] Legend holds that prior to his conversion and adoption of the fleur-de-lis, Clovis' arms comprised three frogs arranged in triangular position, a configuration reminiscent of the tapestry's crescent banner (figure 1.5).[23] If Guiffrey's observation is correct, the tapestry's imagined heraldry harkens back to a legendary moment in French history, but as the heraldic elements belong to the standard vocabulary of northern French heraldry the banners are more likely a generic decoration.[24]

Shortly after Guiffrey's article appeared, *Bal des Sauvages* was exhibited in public for the first time at the 1900 *Exposition Universelle* in Paris. It was one of 83 tapestries hung at the Petite Palais as part of a retrospective of masterpieces of French art. *Bal des Sauvages* appears in the catalogue for the exposition as, *"*#3165 Le Bal des Sauvages XVIe siècle – Eglise N.-D. de Nantilly à Saumur."[25]

The tapestries in the catalogue are listed in chronological order. It is notable that the *Combat* fragments do not appear immediately after *Bal des Sauvages*. Other tapestries from Notre-Dame de Nantilly are mentioned including "#3172 Siege du Jerusalem XVIe siècle – Eglise ND de Nantilly à

King Charles VI, known for his tenuous hold on sanity, and five members of the French nobility, masqueraded as Wildmen during the wedding of a lady-in-waiting, the twice widowed Catherin de Fastaverin. The Duc d'Orleans approached the masked Wildmen with a torch to discern their identity but accidentally lit the group (and their highly flammable costumes) on fire. Charles VI was saved by his aunt, the Duchess du Berry, and one of the noblemen jumped in a vat of wine to douse the flames. The other four men burned alive in front of the French court. See: Froissart, Jean. *Froissart's Chronicles / Translated and Edited by John Jolliffe, (*London, History Book Club 1968), 343-346.

[22] Guiffrey, "Un Bal," 80.

[23] Stager, Walter, *Tall Bearded Iris (fleur-de-lis) a Flower of Song,* (Illinois, Hardpress Publishing, 2012), 74.

[24] The heraldry in that tapestry is similar to that of Ruffey-lès-Echirey, a commune in the Côte-d'Or department in eastern France, but this is probably coincidental.

[25] Baschet, Ludovic. *Exposition Universelle de 1900...* (Paris, *Imprimries University Lemecerier,* 1900).

Saumur."[26] It is likely that this listing refers to the *Prise de Jérusale*m. Because the two bellicose fragments of the *Combat* would later be conflated with the *Prise* (and hence the *Vengeance de Notre Seigneur* series), it is possible that they were in Paris at this moment, incorrectly identified as episodes of a *Prise* series. Unfortunately, photographs of only five of the 83 tapestries, including *Bal des Sauvages,* appear in the catalogue. The *Prise de Jérusalem* is not pictured so we cannot confirm if the entry for that work refers to one or multiple hangings.[27]

After its appearance at the *Exposition Universelle*, references to *Bal des Sauvages* appeared intermittently in tapestry survey books and it was frequently lent for exhibition. Most of the discussions of the tapestry in these publications are cursory and rarely offer new information. [28] *Bal des Sauvages* was included in these sources because it was a significant representative of an early period in French tapestry development. Curiously, in all of these sources, the obvious iconographic and stylistic relationship between *Bal des Sauvages* and the *Combat* fragments at Saumur is not addressed. Similarly, while many of the publications list the *Prise de Jérusalem,* it is difficult to discern what that designation means: the large fragment from Saumur identified by some as the 'Siege of Jerusalem,' or the bellicose fragments of the *Combat* sometimes mistakenly included with that other work in the erroneously titled *Prise de Jérusalem* series.

[26] Baschet, *Exposition Universelle*, 303.
[27] Walton, William, Saglio, André, and Champier, Victor, *Exposition Universelle, 1900: The Chefs-d'œuvre,* (Philadelphia, G. Barrie & Son, 1900), 45. A separate book, published in 1900 by William Walton et al. considers the masterpieces shown in Paris during the exposition. It includes *Bal des Sauvages* and considers it evidence that the famous *Bal des Ardents* was not the only Wildman masquerade of its type. The book quickly moves on to tapestries of the late sixteenth century without mentioning the *Combat* or the *Prise de Jérusalem.*
[28] See, for example,
Migeon, Gaston, *Les Art du Tissu,* (Paris, H. Laurens, 1929).
Ackerman, Phyllis, *Tapestry, the Mirror of Civilization*, (Oxford University Press: 1933), 84.
Jarry, Madeleine, *World Tapestry, from Its Origins to the Present,* (New York, Putnam, 1969).
Coffinet, Julien, *Métamorphoses De La Tapisserie,* (Genève, Éditions Du Tricorne, 1977).
Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries,* 124-128.

In 1928, Marthe Crick-Kuntziger suggested that the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry depicted a yet to be identified courtly romance, one perhaps lost to us through time.[29] She is cited by later scholars as the first to suggest this solution to the question of the tapestry's subject matter. As of yet, no romance has come to light that agrees with the narrative elements of the *Bal des Sauvages* and the *Combat*. However, the Wildman mythology is salient to medieval literary culture. The motif appears in many tales, such as the Arthurian cycle (twelfth century), the *Duke of Savoy* (fifteenth century), *Valentine and Orson* (fourteenth century), *Der Buzzard* (fifteenth century), Peter of Provence (fifteenth century), and *Lailoken* (late sixth century). It is therefore reasonable to assume that a potential narrative source for the Saumur *des Sauvages* tapestries has yet to be discovered.

Also in 1928, the Manufacture des Gobelins exhibited sixty gothic tapestries in Paris.[30] The exhibition catalogue, which includes beautiful color and black and white lithographs, lists multiple pieces from Saumur. It also has the unfortunate distinction of being the first publication to clearly conflate the *Bal des Sauvages* or *Combat* tapestries with tapestries from the *Vengeance* series. Four fragments from Saumur (two *grand*, two *petit*) are collectively treated as a series titled "*Prise de Jérusalem.*" The two *grand* fragments can be identified, based on the given description, as the *Prise de Jérusalem* fragment and the *Couronnement de Vespasien.* The two *petit* fragments collected under the *Prise* rubric were actually the two portions of the *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers*. One of these fragments is described as belonging to the same series as the two *grand* fragments and said to represent a combat featuring a knight carrying the banner of a "*melusine.*"[31] The other *Combat* fragment is described as "*curieuse*" due to the characters and harnesses of the horse. The corresponding lithographs confirm that the tapestries

[29] Charron, *Le Maître*, 387. I have not been able to locate the publication in which Crick-Kuntziger made this claim, so I am unaware of if her theory took into account the *des Sauvages* tapestries as a group or just the *Bal des Sauvages.*

[30] Musée de la Manufacture Nationale des Gobelins, *La Tapisserie Gothique*:…, (Paris, Musée de la Manufacture Nationale des Gobelins, 1928).

[31] A melusine, the term used in the Gobelins' catalog, is a female freshwater spirit who is a serpent or fish from the waist down. See: Gobelins, *La Tapisserie Gothique*, 12-13.

described were indeed the left and right fragments of the *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestry (figures 1.6 and 1.7).

For its part, *Bal des Sauvages* also appeared in the 1928 exhibition. It is mentioned well after the *Combat* fragments and described as a court *fête.* The relevant entry describes persons wearing elegant costumes of the time and others wearing a thick fleece that exposes some parts of the body.[32] Like the other four loans from Saumur, the tapestry is illustrated in the catalog with a black and white lithograph (figure 1.8).

In 1946 *Bal des Sauvages* appeared in another major tapestry exhibition, *La Tapisserie Française du Moyen Âge à Nos Jours* in Paris.[33] The brief entry states that the tapestry's subject matter is reminiscent of the *Bal des Ardents,* with Guiffrey cited as the principle bibliographic source. A tapestry titled the "*Prise de Jérusalem*" was also included but it is not immediately clear to which hanging the entry refers. However, since the dimensions of the piece titled *"Prise de Jérusalem"* are listed as three meters high by two and a half meters long, and the left fragment of the *Combat* is 2.9 by 2.10 meters and the right fragment is 2.54 by 1.65 meters, it cannot be either *Combat* fragment. The measurements given in the catalogue of the 1946 exhibition approximate those of Saumur's *Prise de Jérusalem* from the *Vengeance* series. Evidently, the confusion of 1928 did not recur in 1946.

The Englishman George Wingfield Digby wrote two articles about the 1946 Paris exhibition. The first, for the publication *Country Life*, briefly mentions *Bal des Sauvages* as a record of the curious fad of dressing up as Wildmen at the fifteenth-century French court, using the *Bal des Ardents* as a historical

[32] Gobelins, *La Tapisserie Gothique*, 15. *"Fête du court ou la moitié des personnages est un costumes élégants de l'époque, tandis que d'autres ne portent qu'une epaisse toison laissent découvertes les parties sallientes du corps."*

[33] *La Tapisserie Française du Moyen Âge à Nos Jours, (*Paris, Edition des Musees Nationaux: 1947). The 1946 exhibition corresponded to a revival of interest in French tapestry, a largely nationalistic phenomenon that promoted patriotism through display and recreations of classical and medieval tapestries. A version of the exhibition traveled to New York, Chicago, Brussels and other cities. The catalogues from these other cities do not include *Bal des Sauvages* or the *Prise de Jérusalem*; it therefore appears that the pieces from Saumur never left France. This was probably due either to the fragility of the tapestries or to the preferences of the Church of Notre-Dame de Nantilly.

example.[34] The second, published in New York's *The Connoisseur*, pictured the left fragment from *Combat* with the incorrect label "Panel from a Series of Tapestries at Saumur depicting the Capture of Jerusalem by Titus: mid fifteenth century."[35] The source of Digby's confusion was probably the 1928 *Gobelins* catalogue. Since it is likely that only one piece of the four tapestry fragments associated with the erroneously-titled "*Prise de Jérusalem"* series appeared in the Paris exhibition—the tapestry that actually depicts the Siege of Jerusalem—we may conclude that Digby erred in thinking that one of the *Combat* fragments was displayed (at that time assumed to be part of the "*Prise de Jérusalem"* series), when rather the large fragment of the siege of Jerusalem was the piece included in the exhibit. In Digby's acknowledgements for the article, he cited no sources and thanked the *Archives Photographiques de Paris* for the image of the *Combat*.

In 1952, the *Bal des Sauvages* figured in Richard Bernheimer's seminal work on the Wildman in medieval art, life, and folklore.[36] His monograph considers many aspects of the Wildman including his theatrical or performative representation. In chapter four, Bernhiemer outlined the *Bal des Ardents* and described the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry as a similar aristocratic masquerade. Bernheimer believed that the tapestry depicts a charivari, a raucous, wedding serenade featuring costumed Wildmen. As Bernheimer showed, the tradition of charivari grew from pagan fertility rituals and developed into a form of community censure that discouraged widows from remarrying. As Wildmen lost their fearsome aspect in the fifteenth century, dressing up as Wildmen and engaging in a diluted version of charivari became a fun and mischievous event at an aristocratic wedding.[37] Bernheimer's argument for a marriage context centers on the couple in the middle of the tapestry who appear about to clasp hands as a sign of their union and the inclination of the hands of other figures who offer felicitations to the newlyweds.[38] While Bernheimer's suggestion of charivari is ultimately disproven, he is the first to discern the marital

[34] Digby, George Wingfield, "French Tapestries in Paris," *Country Life, (*London, 1946), 760.
[35] Digby, George Wingfield, "French Tapestries at the Paris Exhibition," *Connoisseur,* (New York, 1947).
[36] Bernheimer, Richard, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1952).
[37] Bernheimer, *Wild Men*, 67.
[38] Ibid.

connotations of the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry. Bernheimer's lengthy and detailed formal analysis suggests that he saw the work in person, perhaps at one of the recent expositions in Paris. The *Combat* is not mentioned in Bernheimer's book, though many of the Swiss and German Wildmen tapestries are discussed. It is possible that he was unaware of the two fragments of the *Combat* at Notre-Dame de Nantilly and hence unable to make the connection to the *Bal des Sauvages*.

Bal des Sauvages is briefly mentioned in a 1958 article by Gertrude Townsend written in honor of a new tapestry acquired in that year by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.[39] The recent acquisition was a fifteenth-century Southern German Rhinelander tapestry depicting a Wildman. Townsend contrasted the appearance of the Wildmen in the Boston acquisition with those in Saumur's *Bal des Sauvages*, arguing that the latter depicted a fancy-dress ball. She referenced the *Bal des Ardents* and another similar event in Dublin from 1815 as examples of the longstanding cultural practices of dressing as Wildfolk.[40]

Another French tapestry survey, published in 1962 by Roger-Armand Weigert, mentions *Bal des Sauvages* as an important early work in the history of tapestry.[41] In a section on Franco-Flemish tapestry from 1450 onwards, Weigert discussed the curious subject of the tapestry. He followed Guiffrey in rejecting the *Bal des Ardents* association, instead supporting Crick-Kuntziger's hypothesis that the subject was most likely an as yet unknown courtly romance, perhaps lost to us through time. Weigert also referenced a tradition—the source of which is unclear—that the text on the hem of one of the *Bal des Sauvages* figures referenced the prominent Tournai citizen Lambert le Féve (circa 1450) and that other tapestries of Wildmen were recorded in an inventory of the abbey of Saint-Waast at Arras in 1597. The source of both of Weigert's claims has yet to be located; unfortunately, he did not provide a clear bibliography.[42]

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[39] Townsend, Gertrude. "A South German Tapestry*," (Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts*, 56 303:1958), 5-17.
[40] Townsend's article also made important distinctions between Franco-Flemish Wildman tapestries like *Bal des Sauvages* and Swiss and German Wildman tapestries that show analogous subjects.
[41] Weigert, Roger-Armand, *French Tapestry.]*, (Newton, CT Branford, 1962), 65-66.
[42] Professor Carol Symes, an expert on Arras, did not know the source of these claims and the cartularies she suggested for further reference did not include any mention that corresponded to Weigert's claims.

Weigert did not connect *Bal des Sauvages* to Saumur's two *Combat* fragments. However, he grouped the individual *Prise de Jérusalem* tapestry with three other fragments, including the scene of the *Couronnement de Vespasien*, which he placed under the heading "Capture of Jerusalem."[43] The remaining two fragments to which he referred were likely the *Combat* pieces. The content of the largest of the four fragments is described as, "warriors with grotesque faces, in the strange architecture which passed at that time for Oriental."[44] As there is no architecture in either *Combat* fragment, this visual statement can be firmly associated with the *Prise de Jérusalem* fragment. The description of the Jewish soldiers faces as grotesque makes it easy to conflate the two battle fragments of the *Combat* with the *Prise de Jérusalem* fragment as both seem to display the narrative of Europeans battling an ethnic other. Weigert noted that museums in Lyon and Vienna also hold fragments from a "Capture of Jerusalem" series, which, as we have seen, were actually components of different versions of the *Vengeance* series.

Sacheverell Sitwell's *Gothic Europe,* also from 1969, mentions *Bal des Sauvages* among a discussion of gothic tapestry.[45] The author waxed poetic when describing the tapestry and called it, "a faded testament to the dazzling brilliance of the courtly middle ages…we hear the rustle of the skirts much louder than the music of the wind band."[46] The majority of his analysis is dedicated to examining the fashion and the *Bal des Ardents* is mentioned as a potential source for the subject matter. Sitwell, however, also repeated the mistaken belief that the *Combat* belonged to a *Prise de Jérusalem* series. It is clear from his description of a tapestry that he believed was an episode in Titus's siege that he was in fact dealing with the right fragment of the *Combat*. However, he did note the curious detail that the opponents of the supposed Romans wear fur, even if this feature disagrees with the subject of Titus's siege.[47] It is indeed odd that both Sitwell and Digby before him were unable to make the iconographic connection

[43] Weigert, *French Tapestry,* 52.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Sitwell, Sacheverell, *Gothic Europe*, (New York, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1969), 149.
[46] Sitwell, *Gothic Europe,* 149.
[47] Ibid., 144.

between Saumur's *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat* fragments, despite the fact that each seems to have viewed both tapestries.

Also in 1969, G. T. van Ysselsteyn proposed an imaginative but ultimately incorrect interpretation of *Bal des Sauvages* and two other Franco-Flemish Wildman tapestry fragments that belonged to other collections.[48] However misguided, Ysselsteyn appears to have been the first since Guiffrey to undertake an iconographic examination of the *Bal des Sauvages*. He grouped it with two fragments of fighting Wildmen (neither of which belong to the *Combat*) in the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs*. His hypothesis is that the three tapestries together illustrate the *Anticlaudian*, a Latin epic poem of the battle of the virtues and vices written in 1184 by the Franco-Flemish cleric, Alain de Lille. According to Ysselsteyn, the two tapestries now in the *Musée des Arts Décoratif* represented assistants of the vice Discordia attacking a random, single man identified by the author as Homo because he "looks rather innocent."[49] He claimed that *Bal des Sauvages* showed Homo (the central male figure in armor) standing among the Wildfolk, or the vices, while the courtiers represent the virtues. Ysselsteyn examined the writing on the Wildman's hem, which spells "EGERE" (with the 'E's being variants of each other). He believed this a variation of the spelling of 'Magaere', a fury (a figure who usually appears as a woman). Without much evidence, Ysselsteyn claimed that the fur coverings of some figures served to separate the virtues from the vices. This theory cannot stand for many reasons, perhaps the most important being that all of the subjects in the *Anticlaudian* are female with the exception of Homo, and *Bal des Sauvages* shows both men and women. It is also a problematic claim that the edge of the cloak displays a variant spelling of 'Magaere'. Not only is the spelling a poor match but the fury is always depicted as female, not a Wildman.[50] Regardless of these problems with Ysselsteyn's hypothesis, his work remains important for bringing two previously unknown Wildman tapestry fragments to public knowledge and laying the

[48] Ysselsteyn, G. T. van. *Tapestry*, (The Hague, van Goor Zonen, 1969), 78.
[49] Ysselsteyn, *Tapestry*, 78.
[50] See Charron, Chapter IV for full argument.

foundation for what would ultimately become the correct association of *Bal des Sauvages* with Saumur's two *Combat* scenes.[51]

Subsequent to Ysselsteyn more scholars have shown interest in the question of the precise subject matter of the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry. The mystery was discussed, for example, in a large French tapestry survey penned by Pierre Verlet and others in 1978.[52] In the introduction to this work, multiple potential sources for the subject of *Bal des Sauvages* are proposed. The *Bal des Ardents* is of course considered but Swiss and German Wildman tapestries are considered as potential influences. Verlet also offered tapestries of the Portuguese Conquests and travels in the Indies as potential sources for *Bal des Sauvages.* Ultimately this does not seem plausible since the tapestries in question, which are today held in the Caramulo Museum in Portugal, depict scenes from Portugal's contemporary forays into the Indies. The figures in the Portuguese Conquests tapestries are not represented as hirsute Wildmen but rather as exotic eastern figures riding longnecked camels and unicorns and transporting cages of fantastic beasts. The *des Sauvages* hangings depict true Wildmen, rather than exotic foreigners, and relate to the longstanding mythology of the Wildman that developed during pagan times in the European Alps rather than to fantastical interpretations of foreigners in far-off lands. Verlet's catalogue included a series titled the *Capture of Jerusalem* from Notre-Dame de Nantilly, listed as "fragments." Here we can assume the *Combat* pieces were once again mistakenly grouped with the *Couronnement de Vespasien* and the *Prise de Jérusalem*.

Two years later, in 1980, an exhibit organized by Timothy Husband at the Cloisters Museum in New York traced the motif of the Wildman through history.[53] Item 39 in the catalogue is an illuminated

[51] The *Combat* fragments from Notre-Dame de Nantilly are not mentioned by Ysselsteyn. This is probably again because they were erroneously considered companion pieces to the *Prise de Jérusalem* rather than to *Bal des Sauvages.* The Capture of Jerusalem series from Saumur is included in the book, however only the *Couronnement de Vespasien* fragment is examined.
[52] Verlet, Pierre, *The Book of Tapestry: History and Technique*, (New York, Vendome Press: 1978).
[53] Husband, Timothy, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism,* (Metropolitan Museum of Art: 1980). Husband refers to the tapestry as a Burgundian work, which is ultimately correct given the range of the Duchy of Burgundy at the time, but the term Franco-Flemish is a more appropriate classification.

manuscript page of the *Bal des Ardents* from Froissart's *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*. Husband discussed the historic event and how its theme was fashionable at the close of the fourteenth century. He suggested that the *Bal des Ardents* is proof that the Wildman had lost his fearsome aspect because the French nobility saw fit to masquerade as their social opposite. Husband argued that the disastrous *Bal des Ardents* actually promoted the fad of the Wildman masquerade, and he finds the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry to be evidence of this. Most likely, he held, the subject matter for the tapestry is a charivari, especially since the *Bal des Ardents* itself was a charivari. Husband did not associate the *Combat* with the *Bal des Sauvages*, and curiously the *Combat* is not listed in his survey of works featuring Wildmen.[54]

Bal des Sauvages appears as a recent comparison image in a catalogue of European tapestries at the Art Institute of Chicago.[55] The Art Institute's *Camel Riders* fragment depicts two cloaked Wildmen riding camels in a nature scene. It dates to 1475-1510 (figure 1.9). The piece is compared to two Franco-Flemish Wildmen tapestry fragments now in the Rijksmuseum (figures 1.10 and 1.11). The latter fragments, while Franco-Flemish, appear to draw on Swiss and German Wildman themes such as the wild family and the *hortus conclusus.* They do not appear to have the iconographic specificity that raises the questions of a particular narrative like *Bal des Sauvages* and the *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestries. The *Camel Riders* fragment is also compared to tapestries depicting the Indies, but due to the presence of a merchant's mark on the camel's baggage, this tapestry, like *Bal des Sauvages,* is clearly based on the European Wildman of Alpine tradition, rather than exotic foreigners.[56] *Bal des Sauvages* is used as a comparison piece to document the fad of the Wildman masquerade and is described as a tapestry of a wedding feast, which is an astute observation and closer to the intended spirit of the tapestry. The *Combat* is not included as comparison material.

[54] Interestingly, the 1980 exhibition did not include any Wildman tapestries, despite the fact that the Metropolitan owned a few Swiss and German Wildman tapestries and the presence of several Franco-Flemish Wildman tapestries in other American collections.
[55] Brosens, Koenraad, *European Tapestries in the Art Institute of Chicago*, (Chicago, Yale University Press, 2008).
[56] Brosens, *European Tapestries,* 43.

The most recent and most accurate writing on the *des Sauvages* tapestries comes from Pascale Charron of the University of Tours.[57] Her *mémoire de maîtrise*, dissertation, and book all center on the illuminator known as the Master of the Champion of Ladies (active in Lille, France 1450-1475). The book, published in 2004, includes a chapter considering the Master as a tapestry cartooner and potential tapestries that may be attributable to him. The *des Sauvages* tapestries are among this group and Charron makes a strong case through stylistic analysis for their attribution to the artist known as the Master of the Champion of Ladies. Most important, Charron appears to be the first to consider all of the Wildman tapestries at Château Saumur—*Bal des Sauvages* and both fragments of *Combat*—as a group.

Charron's chapter examines the early history of the *des Sauvages* tapestries, including the contract appointing Notre-Dame de Nantilly's guardians, the historic monuments report and Guiffrey. She drew on Bernhiemer's seminal work (and Husband's later work) on the Wildman to further understand the historical context of the pieces. While she addressed those authors' connection of the tapestry to charivari, she did not find it an adequate explanation for the scenes in the Saumur tapestries. Charron likewise examined Ysselsteyn's proposal of the tapestries as an illustration of the *Anticlaudian* and found it incorrect. As noted above, the theory is suspect due to the mixed gender of the figures, the incorrect reading of the hem, as well as the fact that the poem itself does not include a meeting of the virtues and vices that recalls the courtly and civilized tone of the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry. Charron cited Marthe Crick-Kuntziger as the source of the most likely theory of the subject matter of *Bal des Sauvages*, which is to say an illustration of an unidentified courtly romance. Charron also offered the example of the *Pas d'Armes de la Femme Sauvage*, a work in which a Wildwoman heals a member of a quest and is joined by a troop of Wildmen and Wildwoman carrying banners and riding horses, as a contemporary example of Wildfolk appearing in courtly literature.[58]

[57] Charron, *Le Maître*, 5.
[58] Charron, *Le Maître*, 387. "Leaving the country of Childhood to enter the Youth, the Companion of the Joyous Quest, wounded in a tournament, is healed by the Wild Woman, and puts herself at his service, while a troop of wild men carrying banners and trumpets, leading wild women up palfrey white, and naked under their long blond hair."

In Charron's stylistic analysis, she convincingly and firmly attributes the cartoons of both the *Combat* and *Bal des Sauvages* to the Master of the Champion of Ladies. Strong similarities indeed can be drawn between figures illuminated by the Master and the figures in the tapestries. The corporeality of the figures, their calves and pointed toes, the women's long commissures and small red lips, as well as the women's high spherical breasts, oval heads and thin necks all match with illuminations by the Master of the Champion of Ladies.[59] While it is difficult to place exactly where the tapestries were woven, Charron placed creation of the cartoons, along with the Master's career, in Lille. Lille was an active center for tapestry commissions during the mid-fifteenth century. Charron's book thus elucidates and clarifies much of the confusion regarding the creation of the *des Sauvages* tapestries. However, the narrative source of the tapestries' subject matter still remains undiscovered.

This historiography, which particularly focuses on the proposals for the subject matter of the *des Sauvages* tapestries, has included all extent sources known to this author that discuss the *Bal des Sauvages* and the *Combat* tapestries. With the confusion mitigated, we can now move forward to consider tapestry production in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the mythology of the Wildman, an iconological account of the *des Sauvages* tapestries, and, finally, attempt to reach a deeper understanding of the tapestries' curious subject matter.

[59] Charron, *Le Maître,* 382.

CHAPTER II

Tapestry in the High Middle Ages

When studying tapestry, it is important to note that this medium was first and foremost a serviceable wall covering, and that its pictorial form was second to that purpose.[60] The physical, practical and economic constraints of the medium dictated its pictorial qualities. Adolfo Salvatore Cavallo reminds us that, "tapestry is a logical decoration of a flat surface, like wall painting and stained glass."[61] It was, therefore, produced with both practical and artistic purposes in mind.[62] In what follows, I briefly summarize tapestry's development as a medium in the High Middle Ages, focusing on its creation, patronage, and dissemination. This section will also consider tapestry's practical and intangible uses. This will provide a basic foundation for the forthcoming analysis of the *des Sauvages* works.

Tapestry creation was a complex process that required many participants and material resources. In the Middle Ages, the tapestry medium rose to prominence in the early 1300s in the regions of northern France (modern day Picardy) and Flanders (Belgium), with major centers in Arras, Tournai, Paris, Oudenarde, Antwerp, and Lille.[63] The inception of a tapestry began with decisions regarding material and pictorial subject matter. Once these matters were decided upon, a tapestry cartooner created a cartoon. A tapestry cartoon was a color-blocked painting on canvas or paper that served as the model for the subject matter and largely determined a tapestry's subject matter. Medieval cartooners had a special understanding of the tapestry medium and were able to compose cartoons that anticipated the tapestry medium's limitations and that exploited its visual potentialities.

After a cartoon was completed, it was placed under the loom for low warp (looms placed horizontally to the ground) and behind the loom on a wall for high warp (looms that stood vertically)

[60] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries,* 38.
[61] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries*, 11.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Delmarcel, Guy, *Flemish Tapestry Weavers Abroad,* (Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2000), 1.

tapestries. This way the weavers saw the portions of color they were weaving at any given time and were able to follow the pattern of the design as it emerged. The weavers (usually a master weaver and his apprentices), wove colored weft threads of wool, silk, and sometimes gold and silver, across plain colored warp threads, which were stretched across the loom. The colored weft threads wove across the warp threads encasing them entirely and creating the colors and shapes that constituted a tapestry's final composition. Aside from the members of a master weaver's atelier (cartooner, master weaver, assistant weavers) many secondary industries were involved in tapestry creation, all of which fell under the fabric economy. Wool and silk needed to be sourced and dyed and gold and silver needed to be procured.[64] Thus, multiple participants, steps, and industries were crucial to the production of a medieval tapestry.

Throughout tapestry's development and rise to popularity, the subject matter changed and developed as well. Tapestry designs from 1300 to 1350 privileged decorative and repetitive patterns, like heraldic tapestries. They resembled the patterned silks and damasks in vogue during the early fourteenth century.[65] By 1350, however, inventories of various royal collections show an increase in tapestries with narrative and figural subjects, as opposed to earlier examples that featured heraldry or ornamental designs.[66] These tapestries with narrative subjects and figural imagery were consistently larger in size to provide space for the details required when depicting multiple human figures. The figural tapestries conveyed stories, which provided an opportunity for tapestry patrons to commission and display mythological and historical tales with which they wished to be associated and to commemorate their ancestors' military and political accomplishments.[67]

Many factors influenced standard features of tapestry, in both the pattern-oriented examples of the early fourteenth century and later figural works. First, the initial idea for a tapestry's subject matter

[64] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries,* 18-25.
[65] Ibid, 38.
[66] Campbell, Thomas, *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence*, (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), 14.
[67] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance,* 16.

was often based on artistic models drawn from manuscript painting.[68] Popular artistic conventions of book painting were then altered to suit the physical and economic realities of the tapestry medium.[69] Medieval tapestry cartooners and weavers had to grapple with the many challenges of representing patterns, figures, and space on a much larger scale and in a different medium.

The constant changes that could alter a tapestry's design, pre- and post-production, were a second factor that influenced the characteristics of medieval tapestry design. A tapestry commission was subject to change during production and afterward.[70] During their execution, tapestries were altered for a myriad of reasons: a room's dimensions, a patron's taste, a cartooner's expertise, a weaver's input, or economic factors like size, number of figures, types of thread, etc. Once finished, tapestries' compositions might be altered according to the requirements of the environments in which they were placed. Tapestries could be folded, tucked, and cut to fit the room they adorned. Part of a finished tapestry could be obscured by furniture or other impediments in the room.[71] These interventions, before and after a tapestry's creation, influenced elements integral to tapestry creation.

Due to the changeable environment of a tapestry's display, the whole surface of a tapestry needed to be strong and visually engaging, as some of it could be obscured. Ideally, a tapestry's composition would not have a single focal point or narrative element, as that portion of the composition could be blocked when the tapestry was moved to a different space.[72] Tapestries needed to have bold colors, interesting and elaborate ornamental elements, and compositions that lent themselves to length rather than height, as they often spanned the length of a chamber, in one or multiple panels. The pictorial compositions also needed to be easily understood from multiple angles, as the tapestry could be draped around a room and viewed from various perspectives.[73]

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[68] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries,* 45.
[69] Ibid.,38.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 27.
[72] Ibid., 38.
[73] Ibid., 36.

After a tapestry's design and creation, ateliers and merchant middlemen facilitated a sale. These actors were intermediaries between the ateliers and the wealthy burghers, nobles, and royals who could afford to purchase tapestries.[74] As tapestry was a medium specific to certain locations' reputations and expertise, and the middlemen travelled between the tapestry centers and the wealthy patrons.[75] The middleman could select designs or subject matters from an atelier's stock for their clients. Tapestries and cartoons in stock were often generic *millefleur* tapestries or patterned pieces.[76] In the case of a special commission, a middleman explained the patron's desired tapestry, including subject matter, size, colors, and even specific thread materials. Some special commissions could make use of elements from existing cartoons combined to make a custom hanging, rather than requiring an entirely new cartoon commission. *Millefleur* tapestries were often created in this fashion as they lacked iconographic and spatial continuity, so it was easy to create new compositions from existing cartoon elements.[77] After settling on a design, a middleman negotiated the necessary contract, timeframe for completion, and provided a down payment.[78] Middlemen might periodically check in on the progress of the atelier during the production process to observe the completion of the cartoon or the weaving's progression.

In coordination with the ateliers, middlemen exported tapestries as far away as Stockholm, Lisbon, and Marsala. Both middlemen and weavers traveled to such foreign courts to promote the market for tapestries and to establish foreign workshops. The most famous of these still conducting business today are the *Real Fábrica de Tapices y Alfombras de Santa Barbara* in Madrid and the Manufacture des Gobelins in Paris.[79] Despite the foundation of workshops in Budapest, London, and Avignon, the Netherlandish, Belgian and French ateliers continued to dominate the tapestry trade as these regions

[74] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 29.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid., 30. *Millefleur*, French for a thousand flowers, refers to tapestries characterized by a background motif of tiny flowers.
[77] Ibid., 30.
[78] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries*, 38.
Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 16.
[79] Delmarcel, *Flemish Tapestry Weavers*, 2.

already had in place a fabric economy, a requisite industry necessary for tapestry production.[80] As such, tapestry production was a diverse activity that took place simultaneously in many different urban centers (some more prestigious than others).[81] The burgeoning demand for tapestry led to a product that transcended regional boundaries, was truly transnational, and was disseminated and valued everywhere.[82]

The Valois princes are often credited as the instigators of the growing demand for tapestry among the nobility, along with the merchant middlemen they employed. Tapestry middlemen were first and most famously used by the sons of King John II, the princes Philip the Bold (1342-1404), Louis Duke of Anjou, (1339-1384), Charles V (1338-1380), and John Duke of Berry (1340-1416). These princes propelled the medium of tapestry to its lauded place among the late medieval and early Renaissance nobility.[83] They commissioned tapestries woven with thinner wefts made up of high-quality dyed, woolen threads or even silk, gilt-silver and gold threads. Only the very high nobility, like the Valois princes, or very wealthy members of the court, could afford extravagant tapestries of this quality.[84]

Due to the popularity brought about by the patronage of the Valois, tapestry gained traction as a medium of prestige and became a coveted accessory for any noble. Following tapestry's rise to popularity under the Valois, tapestry began to find a market among the aristocracy and merchant classes. These consumers could afford lower quality tapestries, roughly woven with thicker threads and smaller in overall size. Such works were cheaper, produced with semi-mechanical means to expedite production, and sold at tapestry fairs in the major weaving centers.[85]

Tapestries were used in many ways by those who could afford them. Not only did they adorn chambers, churches, streets, military tents and more, but tapestries and their subject matter asserted great

[80] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 31.
[81] Delmarcel, *Flemish Tapestry Weavers,* 2.
[82] Ibid.
Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 32.
[83] Ibid., 14.
[84] Ibid., 24.
[85] Ibid.

influence over the emotional experience of a space. In the first place, tapestry served a decorative purpose: hangings were used to outfit the various homes of the wealthy. Tapestry was an economical choice for this purpose. Many nobles traveled on royal processions, for political reasons, and in accordance with changing seasons. As such nobles possessed many houses, it would have been a great expense to decorate each house individually, especially when some houses were used infrequently. Tapestries could be moved easily from residence to residence as they were more durable than the popular silks and damasks used to ornament domestic spaces in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[86] Most noble residences were outfitted with hooks on their walls specifically for hanging tapestries. As can be seen in manuscript painting of the fifteenth century, tapestries that hung on these hooks might cover the walls of an entire chamber, from floor to ceiling (figures 2.1-2.3).[87] Manuscript paintings also record the appearance of tapestry chambers, rooms outfitted entirely in tapestries with matching cushions, bed hangings, and wall coverings (figure 2.4).[88] Once hung, tapestries instantly domesticated these large interior spaces, rendering them inviting, opulent, and perfectly adorned for the arrival of a noble.[89]

As mentioned above, tapestry was subject to change during the high middle ages.[90] Part of this change was due to the various purposes for which they were used. Tapestries did not just adorn the walls of different noble residences but were often brought out in the open air to line the streets during religious and noble processions. The feast day of Corpus Christi, along with other holy days, was often commemorated with parades where routes were lined with tapestries, religious or otherwise, simply for the sake of lavish decoration.[91] In some cases, tapestry cartoons were displayed in place of completed

[86] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries*, 27.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., 28.
[89] Ibid. A tapestries subject matter dictated where it was displayed (though there are always exceptions to the rule). Tapestries for quotidian use hung in private chambers. These were millefleur pieces of hunting, hawking, feasting and other aristocratic past times. Narrative tapestries were hung in public rooms, like banquet halls, throne rooms, etc.
[90] By the 16th and 17th century, tapestry does become a more stationary medium, with the hangings remaining in the room they were intended for.
[91] Ibid., 29. Religious tapestries adorned secular and holy spaces. Most religious tapestries could be hung anywhere in the church and served to informally educate those who saw them. Some religious tapestries were displayed on certain feast days, and others still were brought outside for parades and processions.

tapestries during these processions.[92] In 1380, for example, when Charles VI returned to Paris, and later in 1431, when Henry VI entered Paris, the routes they took through the city were lined with tapestries, with some hung on scaffolding and others hung higher up on buildings.[93]

The multipurpose use of tapestry extended to travel. Nobles brought tapestries with them when they traveled to the residences of others or to temporary residences as a means to impress and flaunt their wealth.[94] Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy (1396-1467) visited Paris in 1461, accompanied by a portion of his vast collection of tapestry sets to adorn his temporary lodgings in the Hotel d'Artois. It was said that the richness of the duke's lodgings was greater than even that of the king of France, and Parisians of all ranks lined up for a chance to view the duke's chambers and were provided wine by his aides.[95] Tapestry also became an integral aspect of noble transportation. Sedan chairs, carriages, and even boats were adorned with tapestry hangings, pillows, and benches.[96] Indeed, tapestry was an impressive trapping of wealth that followed nobles everywhere to denote status, even while in transit.

Tapestries also ventured into battle where they adored the tents of nobles to provide warmth, decoration, and to confer status upon the occupant of a tent.[97] Tapestries brought to war could change ownership at the outcome of the battle, with the victor acquiring the property of the defeated, as in 1476 when Charles le Téméraire's tapestries were carried off by Swiss forces upon his defeat.[98] Tapestries were

[92] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries*, 31. Pierre de Los (f. 1448 to 1466), the first weaver from Lille to gain international notoriety, owned a stock of tapestry cartoons painted on cloth, which he lent to the city of Lille every year as decorations for the feast of Behourt. Charron also notes that tapestries were lent by the alderman for the decoration of the feast of Behourt.
[93] Ibid., 29. Pageants often accompanied these grand outdoor festivals and processions lined with tapestries. Wildfolk appeared in many of these pageants (see Chapter III). Sometimes pageant organizers were also tapestry cartooners who drew inspiration for their tapestries from their pageants or vice versa, as was the case for Jean Perreal, court painter to Charles VIII and tapestry cartooner. Other cartoon designers who observed the pageants could borrow the figures and settings of these allegorical and laudatory performances.
[94] Ibid, 31.
[95] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 18.
[96] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries*, 31.
[97] Ibid., 29.
[98] Ibid.

even used in the ransom payment of Jean sans Peur of Burgundy who offered "fine clothes of Arras" to Sultan Bayezid I in 1396 after his defeat at Nicopolis.[99]

Off the battlefield, tapestry was an object of exchange among the noble class. The magistrates of Tournai continuously gave tapestries to the new rulers of France, England, and the Holy Roman Empire during the sixteenth century to curry political favor and maintain alliances.[100] Tapestries featured as parts of dowries and were given as wedding gifts. Philip the Bold included five hunting and pastoral tapestries in his daughter's dowry and gave her husband a history tapestry for their nuptials.[101] These expensive weavings were also an important aspect of inheritance, with each Valois prince leaving their vast collections to their progeny.[102] Clearly, tapestry acted as an adornment beyond just a stationary wall covering.

So far, this examination has only considered tapestries' modes of display and its dissemination, but even more meaning is conferred upon these lavish hangings when their subject matter and interpretation are considered. Tapestry was a wealthy and courtly art form, meant to be stimulating as well as decorative. Art, as displayed at prestigious courts across Europe, was intended to be admired and contemplated by its noble viewers as they pondered and discussed a work's deeper associations and meanings. Tapestry was an excellent and large-scale medium in which to weave surreptitious themes. As mentioned above, figural tapestries in particular served as an opportunity for patrons to associate themselves with impressive ancestors, mythological, religious, and historical heroes, and as well as allegorical tales of exemplary behavior.[103]

Popular stories for tapestry compositions included the biblical tales Nebuchadnezzar, the lives of Christ and the Virgin, and the lives of various popular saints. Mythical stories were popular as well, like

[99] Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries,* 31.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance,* 15.
[102] Ibid., 14.
[103] Ibid., 16.

the story of Alexander, the Trojan War, and Hercules' labors.[104] Medieval *romans* were also popular choices for tapestry compositions, and widespread examples included the Swan Knight and episodes from Arthurian tales.[105] Allegorical compositions depicted the Nine Worthies (and their less popular counterpart, the Nine Female Worthies), various interpretations of the battle between the virtues and the vices, and other, more vague allegories with less specific literary precedents, like the Swiss *Minne Allegoriks*. Some subjects, like the *Vengeance de Notre Seigneur* series discussed above, were based on a combination of biblical, mythical, and new elements. Lastly, tapestry compositions also depicted more recent, and in some cases even contemporary, historic events.[106] All of these stories provided moralizing referents with which a patron could be associated.

Upon further examination of a tapestry's initial composition, its hidden themes could be surmised. For example, in a Swiss tapestry depicting the Annunciation, one piece in a series of the Life of the Virgin, a unicorn lies its head on Mary's lap within an enclosed garden (figure 2.5). To an educated medieval audience, the enclosed garden, or *hortus conclusus*, would have been immediately understood as a reference to Mary and her purity. The unicorn upon Mary's lap represented purity during this era and also stood as an allegory for Christ.[107] The Hunt of the Unicorn, which can be found in the Met Cloister's famous multi-paneled series, was also an allegory of Christ, specifically of his Passion (figure 2.6). The Labors of Hercules, although ultimately a subject from classical mythology, were similarly interpreted as an allegory for Christ's Passion.[108] These brief examples, among many other tapestries, illustrate how deeper themes and associations were discernible in tapestries upon close inspection. Patrons were aware that audiences would understand these themes and associate the tapestries and their owners not only with the splendid characters on the tapestries but also with their hidden moral referents.

[104] The compositions of the mythical stories were based on the circulating medieval editions of the classical tales, not their Latin or Greek originals.
[105] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance,* 20.
[106] Ibid., 17.
[107] Lyall, Sutherland, *The Lady and the Unicorn,* (Parkstone Press, London, 2000), 95.
[108] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance,* 24.

Tapestry compositions based on more recent historic events served propagandistic functions while commemorating the accomplishments of a great leader. One of the first and most famous instances of a tapestry depicting a contemporaneous event was Philip the Bold's *Battle of Roosebeke* tapestry. In 1382, Philip's forces subdued the rebellious towns of Ghent, Bruges and Ypres. In 1384, Philip commissioned an enormous tapestry from Arras (five meters by 41 meters) of his victory. He is known to have commissioned other propagandistic tapestries including *The King of France and his Twelve Peers* and the *Victories of Bertrand du Guesclin*.[109] England also recognized tapestry's potential as propaganda, as evident in Henry VII's (1457-1509) commissions of two historical tapestries, *Henry's Defeat of Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth* and another work that represented a royal marriage, likely that of Henry and Elizabeth of York, a union held to have marked the end of the War of the Roses.[110]

Propagandistic history tapestries continued to gain popularity through the Late Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, where they often depicted multi-paneled scenes of the lives of rulers. Tapestry's monumental size and its expected interpretation rendered it the perfect medium for associating oneself with opulence, exemplary characters, and moral themes. It was also an ideal medium to commemorate one's own victories and depict oneself on the same level as those exemplary characters.

The pictorial content or subjects of tapestries, and specifically the interpretation of their themes, had great influence on the experience of the settings these works graced. Tapestries were designed and displayed with awareness that their compositions created an environment imbued with the sentiments depicted on these woven panels. An example of this is provided by *The Battle of Roosebeke* tapestry. When meeting with Philip the Good in Calais in 1393, the Duke of Lancaster insisted *The Battle of Roosebeke* be taken down and replaced with a tapestry set featuring subject matter more appropriate to the

[109] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance,* 16.
[110] Ibid., 20.

discussions of peace at hand.[111] This anecdote demonstrates the strong affect tapestry could have on a noble environment, beyond just a display of opulence.

Another example of the affect of tapestries is found in the accounts of the *Story of Gideon* tapestry set commissioned by Philip the Good in 1449. The hangings were intended to be the backdrop for the ceremonies pertaining to the Order of the Golden Fleece, of which Gideon was the patron saint. The splendid tapestries were universally admired and utilized during the order's ceremonies as well as other ducal events.[112] The depictions of Gideon brought religious legitimation to the activities of the order and the actions of the duke. In fact, Gideon's victory over the Mideonites served as a moral example of Philip's ambition to capture the Holy Lands from the Turks. Upon deeper reflection on their themes, the magnificent Gideon tapestries (thought to be the most expensive artistic endeavor of the era) provided religious justification for Philip's current political ambition and lent religious approval to his order.[113]

Tapestry's importance lies not only in its significance as an indicator of wealth or in its modes of creation and dissemination. A tapestry's subject matter and themes—of worthiness, triumph, holiness, humanity—are arguably where its greatest significance lies. These hangings had the power to transform a space, physically, and their themes had the power to influence a setting emotionally. While the exact narrative referent of the *des Sauvages* hangings may be lost to us, the tapestries can still be examined with respect to larger themes which, as demonstrated above, were crucial to the reception of the messages conveyed by these woven works.

[111] Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 20.
[112] Ibid., 19.
[113] Ibid.

CHAPTER III

The Wildfolk Before and During the Fifteenth Century

The Wildman has enjoyed a place in popular imagination for the whole of human history. Essentially, he serves as a commentary on human nature. As observed by D. A. Wells, the Wildman can be at once humanity's antithesis and complement.[114] Whether positive or negative, he represents the absence of civility. Examining the Wildman's lineage, embodiment, and appearances in literature and art will provide a basis for understanding Château Saumur's *des Sauvages* tapestries and could help to refine a proposal for the subject and theme of a missing narrative source.

The Wildman as a metaphor for humanity's animal nature is evident in literature throughout world history. He appears as Enkidu, who lives in harmony with nature, untouched by society, in the epic of Gilgamesh. He is also found in the ancient Greek tale of the Centauromachy, a story which captured the notion of wild versus civilized beings and presented the half-human half-equine centaurs as the antithesis of Greek civilization. In the biblical book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar embodies a different kind of Wildman commentary, that of the redemptive sinner. Anticipating characters in medieval *romans,* Nebuchadnezzar is cast out of society for his sins and devolves into a Wildman. He later finds clarity and transcendence is this removal from society. Nebuchadnezzar and the heroes of medieval *romans* who are cast out from society as a consequence of their actions—for example Lancelot— are figured as crawling Wildmen because they only inhabit a wild state temporarily.[115] When their redemption arc is complete, they return to their natural, human state. On the other hand, anchorite saints and the benevolent Wildmen of folklore, who are often represented as hairy bipedal creatures, reflect humanity unspoiled by the ills of

[114] Wells, D.A., *The Wildman in the Epic of Gilgamesh to Hartmann von Aue's Iwein: Reflections on the Development of a Theme in Literature,* (Belfast, Queen's University Press, 1975).
[115] Rapp Buri, Anna, et al., *Zahm Und Wild: Basler Und Strassburger Bildteppiche,* (Mainz, Von Zabern, 1990), 60. Book of Daniel 4:33 "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws."

society. This duality of the Wildman represents the positive and negative aspects humans can take on when removed from the framework of society.

While the Wildman has several precursors in pagan Europe, the pre-Carolingian demon Orcus is likely the source of his mythology in northern, continental Europe, specifically in France, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and Italy (particularly in the Tyrol). Orcus appears to have possessed a dual nature: he was a representative of death and ghosts as well as a representation of fertility and the earth.[116] Orcus' bipolar nature mirrors the earth's rhythm of the seasons and the later duality in the Wildman's nature. Orcus was worshiped by rural peasants and lacked an organized cult, which made it more difficult to be targeted by early Christian reformers. This contributed to the cult's survival through the Carolingian period of religious upheaval.[117]

Aspects of Orcus' cult anticipate later themes synonymous with the Wildman, most notably, paganist enactments of social dissent associated with carnality, fertility or marriage rites. One of the earliest references to Orcus is found in a Spanish document copied from a Frankish source dated to the ninth or tenth century.[118] It prescribes penance for lapsed Christians who engage in pagan rites associated with Orcus. It reads, "for those who dance and carry on the monstrous fiction of being Maia [a benevolent nature goddess] and Orcus, or for those who engage in similar practices, one year penitence."[119] Richard Bernheimer posited that this dance may have been a descendant of the *hieros gamos,* a symbolic reenactment (and sometimes sexual ritual) of the wedding ceremony of pagan gods.[120] The participants in such ceremonies carried on the monstrous fiction of *being* deities, meaning they costumed themselves to resemble non-human entities.

[116] Bernheimer, *Wild Men,* 64.
[117] Ibid., 43.
[118] Ibid., 64.
[119] Ibid., 43.
[120] Ibid.

Eventually, older figures of European folklore like Orcus were absorbed into the popular culture of the High Middle Ages and were replaced by the trope of the Wildman. Like Orcus, the Wildman appeared in association with weddings or in the context of Christian festivals like Twelfth Night (the Epiphany celebration), Carnival (pre-Lenten celebration), and Pentecost (all of these festivals indicate a calendrical transition).[121] The Wildman, or a bear, was the subject of a mock hunt held as part of these celebrations.[122] Such hunts likely began as pagan rituals rooted in the liminal forest. Accounts of their condemnation are found as early as the ninth and tenth centuries and it is probable that, like Orcus, the hunts carried pagan connotations.[123]

In general, these traditions seem to have involved a man disguised as a Wildman or bear who was "hunted" by villagers, captured and playfully killed.[124] An important aspect of the fierce and unpredictable Wildman of the festival hunts was his association with winter. His ritual killing and "death" brought about spring, hence his association with Christian feasts that indicate a change in liturgical seasons.[125] In certain cases, the Wildman or bear was captured or "tamed" through the intervention of a woman who likely signified spring.[126] This is probably the subtext of Pieter Brueghel the Elder's *The*

[121] Bernheimer, *Wild Men*, 59.

[122] Wildmen are also associated with the Wild Horde, though this time they are the perpetrators, not the victims, of a hunt. The Wild Horde draws from Nordic mythology and became absorbed into German folkloric tradition (as identified by Jacob Grimm in his 1835 *Deutsche Mythologie*). In continental Europe, the Wild Horde is led by the club-wielding demon Hellekin (who himself was amalgamated with Orcus) or Woden and sometimes accompanied by a female counterpart of Bertcha or Holda. The Wild Horde was a violent procession through a community where men dressed as Wildmen, demons, or devils would charge through towns chanting, raging, and destroying everything in their path. Bernheimer supposes the communities subjected to the Wild Horde tolerated it as the ritual appeared to embody the spirit of death (be it Woden, Hellekin, Orcus, or some other demon), and appeasing the spirit served to ward off ghosts and death.

[123] Ibid., 55.

[124] Ibid. Sometimes, however, the ruse was quite dramatic and included actual violence and real or dramatized bloodshed. According to Bernheimer, such dangers may have led to a decline in interest in the Wildman play tradition, as volunteers to portray the monster were increasingly hard to find.

[125] Ibid., 56.

[126] The Wildman of the Wild Horde also carries connections to marriage and love as his fearsome hunt is sometimes co-led by a spouse, Bertcha or Holda. Bertcha (Alpine) and Holda (Bavarian) are Germanic goddesses who likely share a common origin with Freya. Both goddesses were associated with calendrical shifts at the winter solstice and possessed a retinue of fearsome demons who assisted them in enforcing appropriate protocol during holidays (such as not spinning during Yule (and later, the Twelve Days of Christmas)). Both goddesses are described as either beautiful, hibernal woman or haggard and terrifying. When either goddess heads the Wilde Horde, she takes on the latter physical appearance and lead as a tandem pair with the demon Wildman (Hellekin, Wodin etc.).

Fight Between Carnival and Lent of 1559, now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (figure 3.1). The painting shows a man dressed as a woman who entices a Wildman with a ring, while an emperor and executioner creep up behind the Wildman to capture and kill him.

Eventually, these themes of fertility, carnality, romantic love inherent in the Wildman hunts made their way into medieval poems and *romans* in which Wildmen served as a means to comment on themes of courtly love and marriage. The Wildman of Germanic courtly literature is usually described as gigantic in size, shaggy (with sometimes black fur), long claws, a large mouth, sharp teeth, and armed with a club or uprooted tree. Here, Wildmen often appear in the company of giant Wildwomen. Together the creatures live alone or in small family groups.[127] While such giant Wildfolk are great enemies to the heroes of epic poetry, their tales are still propelled by themes of love. Many plot points are driven by the hero's slaying of a giant Wildman and a giant Wildwoman wife subsequently seeking revenge for her slaughtered lover. Other plots center on the Wildwoman's insatiable desire for the male human hero. We can find such gigantic Wildfolk couples in the Germanic epics *Wigamur, Garel, Heldenbuch, Eckenlied, Wolfdietrich, Wigalois, Diu Crône, Dietrichs Flucht, Goldemar, Sigenot, Lailoken and Kentigern, Alexanderlied, Troja, Kudrun,* and others.[128] In all of these stories, the Wildfolk are metaphors for humanity's uncivilized, carnal impulses and desires.

The Wildman's connection to romantic pursuits is a theme in some of the famous Arthurian tales that enjoyed great popularity in France and England. Among these was *Yvain, le Chevalier au Lione*, written by Chrétien de Troyes around 1180. Yvain's story follows the knight-errant trope. After avenging his cousin, Yvain marries the wife of his defeated enemy but quickly leaves her for chivalric adventure. When Yvain fails to return to his wife, Laudine, within the appropriate timeframe, she rejects him. At the loss of Laudine's love, Yvain goes mad with grief and devolves into a crawling Wildman, like the biblical

[127] Lecouteux, Claude, *Les Monstres Dans La Littérature Allemande Du Moyen Age*, (Göppingen, Kümmerle, 1982), 99-107.
[128] Unfortunately, neither these tales nor those listed in Lecouteux's survey of Wildfolk in Germanic literature provide a narrative match for the action of the *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestries.

Nebuchadnezzar. Yvain is eventually cured by a noblewoman and continues his chivalric adventures, this time with the noble goal to regain his wife. This new chivalric quest, based on a goal of love and marriage, confirms Yvain's ascent from madness and his return to a civilized world of courtly love.

Romantic or courtly love, marriage, and women are thus important factors in rehabilitating a Wildman. Yvain's devolution into a Wildman was a penance brought on by his broken marital promise and the loss of his ladylove. Yvain's madness correlates to the perils of humanity without chivalric society, which is represented by his love, Laudine. Yvain's wild state was the temporary, crawling condition of the redemptive Wildman and therefore Yvain does not correspond to the bipedal Wildfolk of the *des Sauvages* tapestries. However, the tale *Yvain, le Chevalier au Lione,* continues the tradition of love and marriage as central aspects to the Wildman's mythology, and as such anticipates the *Bal des Sauvages'* depiction of a nuptial dance, procession, or celebration.[129]

In other courtly love poems and stories, a ferocious Wildman (rather than a hero who has entered a temporary, wild state) kidnaps the heroine. Artistic works like the marginal illustrations in the Taymouth Hours, carvings on ivory and wooden caskets, and a tomb plate from Schweirn Cathedral reflect these various tales, all of which share the same basic iconographic elements (figures 3.2-3.5).[130] Bernheimer observed that during the fourteenth century, the tales of Wildmen abductions became a moral example of the codes of romantic love and chivalric behavior at contemporary courts.[131] Bernheimer's ultimate interpretation of the Wildman's role in abduction stories is that the Wildman represents unruly passion, while the knight is his opposite. The noble lady is presented with a choice- her rescuer knight or

[129] Regarding other Arthurian Wildmen: Aspects of Merlin and the Green Knight from the auxiliary Arthurian tales *Vita Merlini* and *Gawain and the Green Knight* also resemble those of Wildmen but have less to do with marriage and love. Merlin's wild state most closely relates to the anchorite saints, as Merlin chooses throughout the tale to return to seclusion and benefits from it. The Green Knight is a nobleman temporarily transformed into a large green figure who carries a holly branch (known for its protective properties) and while the description of large size and leafy attributes is similar to the Wildman, he remains distinctive from the hairy Wildman of medieval Europe.
[130] The Arthurian tale *Gismirante* by the Antonio Pucci features the Wildman kidnapping motif. During the knight Gismirante's adventures, he encounters and saves a beautiful lady who is later abduct by a Wildman. She is taken to the Wildman's castle where she must pretend to lay with the Wildman in order to learn the fortress' secrets so that she can divulge them to Gismirante and be saved.
[131] Bernheimer, *Wild Men,* 121.

her Wildman kidnapper- and the story's moral hinges on whom she chooses. When the knight is chosen, it reinforces the norms of courtly love. When the Wildman succeeds, as depicted, for example, on the caskets from Cologne and Hamburg, carnal desire triumphs over courtly love (figures 3.4 and 3.5).[132] The triumphant Wildman and his sensuous desires are tamed by the noblewoman, as was the case in *Yvain* and *Der Busant*. In other words, the Wildman is subjected to the courtly woman's civilizing and ennobling influence, often represented by fetters or ribbons (figure 3.6).[133] The Wildman's act of kidnapping in these stories is not motivated by a desire for rape or murder but by the goal of romantic love.[134] Once again, despite his fearsome nature, we see that the Wildman has a strong connection to love, marriage, and noblewomen in medieval literature.

Wildmen were likewise a popular figure in Middle High German romance literature, for example in the poem *Der Busant* (*The Buzzard*). This work's earliest written version dates to 1432, but it was likely in circulation prior to that point, as its origins draw from the earlier, more obscure French version, *Pierre de Provence*.[135] In *Der Busant* an English prince and a French princess fall in love and abscond to avoid her unwanted engagement to the prince of Morocco. A buzzard swoops down and steals one of the princess' gold rings. As the English prince chases after it, his clothes are torn, and he becomes lost and enters a quadrupedal wild state. As in *Yvain*, *Der Bussant's* English prince's descent into wild madness is brought on by a separation from his ladylove, and this separation represents the devolution of humanity without society.

[132] Bernheimer, *Wild Men,* 122.
[133] Ibid., 123.
[134] In these kidnapping tales, the Wildman always attempts to bring the captive maiden to his home, in the mountains or in the forest. The mode of marriage by kidnapping is not exclusive to the Wildman. Very often in fairytales ogres, dwarves, giants, elves, mermen and other creatures act on their desire to gain mortal spouses by kidnapping and whisking them away to an otherworld. An early example of a tale like this is found in the Greek myth of Hades and Persephone and continues to more modern tales like *Thumbelina*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Forsaken Merman* and even in Dreamwork's *Shrek.*
[135] Ibid, 15.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Medieval Tapestries,* 42.

The abandoned princess finds work as a seamstress but is recognized as a woman of noble blood by a visiting duchess. The princess lives with the duchess, whose husband goes hunting one day and captures the prince in his Wildman state. The duchess subsequently cures the wild prince. Like the unnamed noblewoman in *Yvain,* an intervention by a female representative of the court is required to cure the madness of the prince and heal him of his quadrupedal, wild state. Just as the loss of a courtly woman brings about the wild state for Yvain and the English prince, the intervention of a courtly woman, a representation of society, cures their madness. The cured prince must prove his claims of nobility by engaging in the courtly art of falconry. The prince catches a buzzard, bites its head off, and tells his tale. The princess recognizes him and the couple lives happily ever after. Like *Yvain,* the prince's madness is a stage on his ultimate journey to true, chivalric love. The prince, in his crawling wild state, is woven into an Upper Rhenish tapestry from 1480 in the collection of the Met Cloisters (figure 3.7).[136] Indeed, scenes from *Der Busant* were a popular choice for many tapestries of Swiss and German origin.[137]

Before concluding this brief examination of the European Wildman, we must consider the motif of Wildwomen in Late Medieval literature. The Wildwoman appears in the aforementioned German works as a fearsome and hideous creature with a voracious sexual appetite and a penchant for violence, revenge, rape and baby eating. Her unnatural appearance mirrors her unnatural aspects of sexual appetite, dominating violence, and absence of maternal qualities.[138] She is a summary statement of everything a member of her gender should not be.[139] This earlier Wildwoman does not correspond to the refined Wildwomen of the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry. However, Michelle Molesley-Christian, who has studied the Wildwoman motif, identified a shift in the Wildwoman 's representation, which corresponds more closely to the Wildwomen of *Bal des Sauvages*: in the fifteenth century, the Wildwoman was remodeled

[136] Metropolitan Museum of Art, 45.
[137] Tapestries of *Der Busant* can be found at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Cologne, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, and at the Musee des Arts Decoratifs in Paris.
[138] Moseley-Christian, Michelle, "From page to print: the transformation of the 'wild woman' in early modern Northern engravings," (*Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry,* 2012), 429-442.
[139] Moseley-Christian, "From page to print," 431.

as a beautiful, maternal figure of domesticity who takes on a softened, sensual connotation.[140] This new Wildwoman represented female propriety and was associated with Eve and Mary Magdalene, both reformed temptresses.[141] One can find the Wildwoman cast as Eve, for example, in a Franco-Flemish tapestry from circa 1500 (figure 3.8).[142] Molesley-Christian convincingly argues that this change coincided with the rising middle class of northern Europe and a growing need for women to serve as domestic role models. This new Wildwoman, who exists in art more than in literature, is closer in spirit to the Wildwoman of *Bal des Sauvages* than the fearsome, gigantic Wildwoman of earlier German literature. Yet like her more fearsome version, she maintains strong connections to themes of fertility, love (albeit a new aspect of sensuality rather than carnality) and marriage, like her counterpart, the Wildman.

Related to this "domestication" of the Wildfolk are High and Late Medieval representations of unkempt Anchorite saints wearing animal skins who serve as signs of humanity unspoiled or saved from the evil effects of society. Like Wildfolk, such hermit saints lived alone in caves and were covered in hair. Chief among these hirsute saints are Mary Magdalene and St. John the Baptist.[143] Along with their Old Testament forebear Elijah the prophet, the Magdalene and the Baptist inspired a tradition of hermetic saints who sought redemption and religious purity outside the bounds of proper society. Much like the fifteenth-century Wildfolk discussed by Molesley-Christian, they represented a humanity unspoiled by society and represented the ideal potential of humanity when removed from the evils of society. For example, medieval tradition held that, after the death and resurrection of Jesus, Mary Magdalene retreated to the mountains of Sainte-Baume in southern France where she lived in a cave as a penitent for thirty years. Mary Magdalene as hermit appears either entirely covered in hair or with very long hair. In both

[140] Moseley-Christian, "From page to print," 432. According to Moseley-Christian, this shift occurred primarily in art, and did not inspire literary tales of this new type of Wildwoman.
[141] Eve and Mary Magdalene are both commonly depicted as hairy Wildwomen in art. See figures 3.8-3.11. The character of temptress is an important aspect to the Wildwoman as she is often associated with sirens, mermaids and other mythical women with seductive natures, both in literature and in pageants.
[142] This work is known to us only through a study image from the Getty Research Institute's Study Images of Tapestries database and it is identified as an allegorical scene of virtues and vices.
[143] Other hirsute saints: St Wilgefortis, St. Onuphrius, Mary of Egypt (also a repentant temptress like Eve and Mary Magdalene), St. Theodore Trichinas.

cases the Magdalene is depicted as very beautiful and sensual, often barely clothed or naked, save her hairy fur, and with her mouth agape as if wailing or crying (figures 3.9-3.11). This Magdalene is the reformed temptress after whom the sensual Wildwoman of the fifteenth-century is modelled. Likewise, St. John the Baptist is depicted as hirsute, though more often than not he wears a camel-hair tunic (which inspired the penitent hair shirt of medieval ascetics). He is described in the Bible as "wearing clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, his food was locusts and wild honey."[144] John wandered the wilderness preaching redemption and people would follow him into the River Jordan to be cleansed of their sin. This is not unlike the idyllic fifteenth-century Wildfolk, depicted in harmony with the wilderness, free from sin and evils brought about by civilized humanity.

In this limited consideration of the various folkloric, cultural and literary manifestations of the Wildman, one can see that, in addition to his fearsome aspect, he also retained his earlier, pagan associations with fertility, carnality (later, romantic love), and marriage. The Wildman's person and conduct served as a foil for proper and chivalric love, reasserting that chivalric culture was humanity's ideal state. The Wildmen of the early Germanic tales, Arthurian romance, and later courtly poetry would have been known by the designers or patrons of fifteenth-century tapestry. Although none of the narratives I have examined fit the iconography of the *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestries, the common threads of fertility, carnality, romantic love and marriage connect the Wildmen of the *des Sauvages* tapestries to these medieval cultural practices and literary works and brings us to a better understanding of how the tapestry was understood in its original context and, perhaps, the circumstances for which it was produced.

[144] The Bible, Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1, Luke 3.

CHAPTER IV

The Cultural Function of the Wildman in Fifteenth-Century Europe

Now that the Wildman's mythology has been examined, we can consider his manifestations in the art and culture of fifteenth-century Europe. As his popularity grew, the Wildman appeared often at courtly events and pageants, and in various artistic media, specifically Swiss and German allegorical tapestries. Examining the Wildman's appearance in culture and art helps establish an understanding of why the Wildfolk were included in the *des Sauvages* tapestries and how their presence may have been interpreted.

Any consideration of the figure of the Wildman in fifteenth-century Europe must take into consideration his strong association with the tradition of charivari (or shivaree). Rooted in the ancient pagan and Christian festival traditions discussed above, charivari is described as a raucous procession of dissonant music made by pots and pans, sometimes performed by wild, costumed townsfolk as a form of censure against someone who has transgressed a social norm.[145] Not surprisingly, by the fifteenth century charivaris were often held as part of wedding celebrations, specifically those of widows or for a couple with a great difference in age. If a widow or widower remarried, it removed them from the village's marriage pool and threatened the inheritance of the previous children. The same was true if an older person remarried someone young and the subsequent union did not produce children (because of the advanced age of one of the spouses); this likewise threatened village stability. As such issues of inheritance and marriage could have a potentially negative effect on a town's younger population, charivari became a favored tool for their expression of disapproval.[146]

[145] Charivaris still happen today, most recently in Argentina and Iceland. Wedding related charivaris still have bearing on marriage practices in modern day America. Charivari combined through the various immigrant cultures of the Midwestern United States and produced wedding activities common today, like the tying of tin cans on the bride and groom's vehicle to create a ruckus.

[146] Loretta Johnson, "Charivari/Shivaree: A European Folk Ritual on American Plains," (*Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1990), 373.

Charivari was also used against people who had transgressed other social norms, like domestic abuse, which sometimes incurred the wrath of the villagers.[147] In such cases persons costumed as Wildfolk or the opposite gender would destructively march through town to raucous music and seize and shame the offending person. The goal of the charivari was not to stop the marriage or other infraction immediately but rather to exert so much shame and humiliation that it isolated the offending parties from the community and discouraged others from committing the same infraction.[148]

By the fifteenth century, the upper echelons of European society had appropriated the ritual of charivari. As such, Wildman dances were performed at multiple courtly weddings and other celebratory events.[149] The episode in French history known as the *Bal des Ardents* is the most famous courtly charivari. It occurred in January of 1393 when Queen Isabeau's lady in waiting, Catherine de Fastaverin, married for the third time. King Charles VI, known for his tenuous hold on sanity, and five members of the French nobility, masqueraded as Wildmen during Catherine's wedding. The Duc d'Orleans approached the masked wildmen with a torch to discern their identity but accidentally lit the group (and their highly flammable costumes) on fire. Charles VI was saved by his aunt, and one of the noblemen jumped in a vat of wine to douse the flames. The other four men burned alive in front of the French court. Despite the tragic outcome of that evening, many scholars argue that its fame was the chief catalyst behind the fad for masquerading as Wildfolk in European court culture in the late Middle Ages and Early Modern periods.[150] We know, for example, that Wildfolk were portrayed in Italy at the weddings of Annibale Bentivoglio to Lucrezia d'Este in 1487 and Constanza Sforza to Camillo of Aragon in 1576. Both weddings were the first marriage for these women, so it stands to reason that the original function of the charivari, as an act of censorship against remarriage, did not persist or had transformed.

[147] Johnson, "Charivari/Shivaree," 376.
[148] Rod Dubey, *The Mocking Serenade: Charivari and the Politics of Humiliation*, (Uxbridge, ON, 2015), 22.
[149] Bernheimer, *Wild Men*, 59.
[150] Husband, Timothy, *The Wild Man*, 149.

After the *Bal des Ardents*, Wildfolk appear increasingly at aristocratic events, specifically in celebratory, royal processions. When Henry VI of England visited Paris in 1431, a scaffold was erected and outfitted as a forest where Wildmen fought during the procession.[151] When Holy Roman Emperor Charles V visited Bruges in 1431, a similar structure held Wildmen aloft. At the Council of Basel in 1435, twenty-three people costumed as Wildfolk performed a dance that culminated in the "death" of the Wildfolk.[152] In 1437, Charles VII's arrival in France was celebrated by a grand festival that included a play of Wildmen and Wildwomen battling as well as girls dressed as beautiful sirens.[153] Citizens of Valenciennes arrived for the tournaments at Lille (the place of origin for the *des Sauvages* tapestries' cartoons) dressed entirely as Wildmen, garbed in hides and sticks and carrying clubs. Even the horses are described as being outfitted in foliage and animal hides, much like the Wildmen's horses in *Combat*.[154] Wildfolk appeared in Milan in 1491 in a festivity directed by Leonardo da Vinci for Galeazzo San Severin, in sixteenth-century England at a dance held for King Henry VIII, in seventeenth-century Dresden at the Court festival of Arch-Elector Friedrich August of Saxony, and elsewhere across Europe in various masked balls, pageants and festivals.[155] As Bernheimer observed, such courtly Wildfolk masques or performances were strongly discouraged by ecclesiastics but, not surprisingly in light of the motif's history, when the Wildfolk's appearance was not related to a marriage or royal procession it was almost always be linked to religious festivals.[156]

The records from various festivals and processions indicate that those costumed as Wildmen were often given jobs of heavy lifting, usually associated with the fireworks displays, likely because the tallest, strongest (and scariest) men were chosen to embody Wildmen.[157] In Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote*,

[151] Bernheimer, *Wild Men,* 69. This is the same event as the previously discussed procession in which the route was lined with tapestries.
[152] Bernheimer, *Wild Men,* 70.
[153] Ibid., 69.
[154] Bernheimer, *Wild Men,* 70-72. Bernheimer does not indicate when this occurred or what tournament it was for, but it may relate to a longstanding tradition of the feast of Behourt (a medieval tournament of mock battle) that appears to have been important in Lille, as indicated by a yearly loan of tapestry cartoons for decoration.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid., 66.
[157] Ibid., 65.

we find Wildmen given the laborious task of building the castle of love.[158] Eventually the Wildman's brute strength was applied to heraldry where he can be found supporting the arms of the kingdoms of Denmark and Prussia and the dukedoms of Pomerania and Hanover. The Wildman also appears as the central figure in heraldic devices for cities and inns.[159] Bernheimer suggests that the Wildman conveyed sturdiness, strength and fecundity in his heraldic role, and also served an apotropaic function (figures 4.2 and 4.3).[160]

The Wildman's inclusion in plays, Christian events (both weddings and liturgical holidays), and courtly activities indicates that he gradually lost his fearsome power and that his pagan connotations became less problematic. Eventually, the image of the Wildman became that of a noble savage who lived in peace and harmony with nature.[161] In fact, the term *homme sauvage,* used to describe the figures in the tapestries at Saumur, is by definition a specific courtly adaptation of the older amalgamated pagan deities.[162] It seems this shift to the Wildman as a noble savage is related to the shift identified by Moseley-Christian, which occurred during the fifteenth century. Molesley-Christian noted that the Wildfolk of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were examples intended to demonstrate ideal concepts of love, family, and conduct.[163] In the fifteenth century, therefore, despite losing his fearsome connotations, the Wildman retained his strong associations with fertility and marriage, as evidenced by the above historic events. It is this version of the Wildman, I will argue, who figures in the many tapestries of the fifteenth century, including those of Chateau Saumur.

By the time of the fifteenth-century shift in artistic representations of Wildfolk described above, they were already an established subject for secular Swiss and German tapestries. While stylistically these works appear markedly different from the Franco-Flemish hangings at the core of this study, all tapestries

[158] Ibid., 67.
[159] Ibid., 176. Bernheimer estimates some 200 noble families adopted the Wildman into their coat of arms.
[160] Bernheimer, *Wild Men,* 178.
[161] Charon, *Le Maître,* 381.
[162] Lecouteux, *Les Monstres,* 91. *Homme sauvage* translates directly to wild man.
[163] Moseley-Christian, "From page to print," 436.

that include the Wildmen motif developed from similar pagan folklore and traditions that emanated from the European Alps and thus deserve notice here. Some of the Swiss and German Wildfolk tapestries depict identifiable narratives like *Der Busant* or *The Duke of Savoy* (figures 3.7 and 4.4).[164] More commonly, the Swiss and German Wildfolk tapestries depict allegorical scenes that, while comprehensible, do not relate to a particular story. Much like the re-envisioned Wildwoman as discussed by Mosely-Christian, Anna Rapp Buri and Monica Stucky-Shurer's catalogue identifies the allegorical Wildfolk of Swiss and German tapestries (distinguished by their upright gait) as ideal beings whom offer the viewers of these works new models of conduct and identity, not unlike the anchorite saints.[165] Buri and Shurer also cautioned that the Wildfolk in Swiss and German tapestries never represent a masquerade of humans dressed as Wildfolk, but rather true Wildfolk.[166]

The Wildfolk represented in these tapestries are peaceable figures with the idealized purity of the anchorite saints and also serve as a courtly example of appropriate conduct, specifically with respect to love. Tapestries of this kind demonstrate an ideal model for how courtiers should behave and in what activities they should engage. Paradoxically, these Wildfolk are meant to represent humanity in complete control of its inherently wild or 'animal' nature. The Wildfolk's control is underscored by their beastly chimera companions, monstrous creatures tamed by the touch of the Wildfolk, guided by reigns or even by the tongue (figure 4.5).[167] The Wildfolk are sometimes depicted engaging in noble activities together with human courtiers. One such tapestry, *Edelleute und Wildleute auf der Falkenjagd* (Nobleman and Wildfolk on the Hawk Hunt) from the Historiches Museum in Basel, displays courtiers and Wildfolk giving proper instruction in falconry (figure 4.6). Buri and Shurer find this to have a deeper allegorical meaning concerning men and women who, on account of their morality, unite to tame the wild world and

[164] Rapp Buri, *Zahm Und Wild*, 60. The duke of Savoy is visited by angels and offered eternal damnation or 10 years of earthly misery. He chooses the latter. The duke and his family lose all their worldly possessions and become like Wildfolk as flee destitute from their attacked lands. The duke must sell his wife, he then devolves into a deeper wild state. The duke returns to humanity during the search for his wife, who he finds by winning a courtly tournament.
[165] Rapp Buri, *Zahm Und Wild*, 52.
[166] Ibid., 53.
[167] Ibid., 55. The tongue holding motif is likely related to the fettered Wildman, restrained by chains or ribbons.

hunt for the best conditions for loyal love.[168] *Höfische und Wilde Leute bei Jagd, Essen und Spiel* (*Courtiers and Wildfolk Hunting, Eating and Playing*) from the Musée de l'Œuvre Notre-Dame Strasbourg also shows scenes of courtiers and Wildfolk cavorting together (figure 4.7). In this hanging they feast, hunt and socialize in a meadow outside a castle near a fountain.[169] The Wildfolk of these nonspecific, allegorical tapestries of peaceful courtly pastimes are abstracted versions of humans removed from the problematic nature of the real world. They create idyllic examples of humans, living in harmony with nature, who have mastered the untamed, beastly side of man.[170]

More specific allegories, *Minneallegoriks*, are also depicted in the Swiss and German tapestries. These allegories feature Minne, the personification of love, and other virtues, like Lady Honor. *Sinnbilder fur Hoffnungsvolle und Enttauschte* (*Symbols for the Hopeful and Disappointed*), a tapestry from the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection presents the virtues of love and honor as embodied by Wildfolk (figure 4.8). The banderoles that surround each vignette convey the tapestry's subject. Minne and Lady Honor lament the lack of virtuous love at court. Minne warns that love is fleeting and dominated by deception at courts. Young Wildfolk in love accompany them and a carry out various allegorical tasks (like grafting a branch onto an elderberry tree) to underscore that true, noble love has been mastered by the Wildfolk. The Wildmen are accompanied by their tamed chimeras, which represent the Wildmen's taming of their own wild desires.[171]

The conquest of Minneburg (the 'castle of love') is another kind of *Minneallegorik.* Seen in the *Wilde Manner Esturmen eine Burg* (*Wildmen Siege of a Castle*) tapestry from the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, this type of allegory resembles the scenes on earlier French gothic ivories of the storming of the castle of love (that in turn draw from the *Roman de la Rose*), but in this case refers not to

[168] Ibid., 188-121.
[169] Ibid., 302.
[170] Rapp Buri, *Zahm Und Wild*, 59.
[171] Ibid., 161.

a specific scene described in a text (figures 4.9).[172] The tapestry portrays Frau Minne, as a Wildwoman, on a regal pavilion. Minne calls on the men to conquer the castle with arrows of lilies just as she calls on men to win the hearts of women. Wildmen mounted on mythical creatures attack the castle, defended by other Wildmen, at her command. Buri and Shurer interpret this scene and others like it to represent the obstacles one must surmount to be worthy of noble love.[173]

These Minneallegorik scenes, though from a Germanic tradition, seem to share a similar spirit to the *des Sauvages* tapestries from Saumur. The Minneallegorik scenes provide examples of courtiers and Wildfolk fêteing in peace and of Wildfolk at war. Chapter I discussed Van Ysselstyn's proposal of the allegorical *Anticlaudian* poem as the potential literary source for *Bal des Sauvages* and two other tapestries of Wildmen. While his hypothesis was ultimately disproven, it is possible that these German Minneallegoriks or a text like them spurred an allegorical tale that corresponds to the *des Sauvages* tapestries.

Two Franco-Flemish Wildman tapestries from the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam dated to 1500 and 1550 appear to follow the Germanic allegorical Wildfolk tradition (figures 1.10 and 1.11). These pieces show Wildfolk garbed in courtly attire, accompanied by their mythical beasts and hawks, in an enclosed garden. Another tapestry from the Art Institute of Chicago shows two Wildmen on camels in a thicket (figure 1.9). One of the camels carries a pack inscribed with an imagined merchant's mark. These scenes from the Rijksmuseum and Art Institute of Chicago lack the myriad figures and interactions depicted in the *des Sauvages* tapestries, which seem to indicate a narrative. The Wildfolk tapestries from Amsterdam and Chicago likely draw their subject matters and themes from the German and Swiss tapestries, which

[172] Ibid., 296. The *Roman de la Rose* was written in two parts by Guillaume de Lorris circa 1230 and Jean de Meun in 1275. The allegorical poem tells of a courtier trying to woo his lady love in an enclosed garden, other prominent figures include embodiments of various virtues. Ivory caskets like Walters 71264 depict the allegorical spirit of the *Roman de la Rose,* but not necessarily identifiable scenes.
[173] Rapp Buri, *Zahm Und Wild,* 298.

depict Wildfolk as idealized beings who have mastered restraint and demonstrate appropriate courtly decorum.

Another Franco-Flemish Wildman tapestry belongs to the Germanisches Nationalmuseum. The mysterious hanging dates to 1530 and is briefly mentioned in Heinrich Göbel's *Wandteppiche,* titled as *Episode Aus Einem Ritterroman* (*Episode from a Roman*) (figure 4.10).[174] Like Crick-Kuntziger's hypothesis for *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers,* this tapestry is thought to depict a scene from an unidentified medieval romance. The black and white image is of poor quality, but some fifteen Wildmen and Wildwomen inhabit an enclosed garden with a fountain in the center. A strange fish-knight has captured one of the Wildwomen and holds his sword aloft. The Wildmen brandish their clubs and arrows toward him while the Wildwomen throw their arms up in terror. This tapestry, like the *des Sauvages* tapestries, features subject matter and details that seem to evoke a narrative. Even though it is an unidentified scene, the tapestry suggests that there are as-yet-unknown *romans* that feature Wildfolk in conflict with knights and that these stories were illustrated in narrative tapestries.

As the above discussion shows, the Wildman enjoys a long history in Europe. He was embodied in performance and appeared in literary and artistic representations.[175] By the fifteenth century, Wildfolk are no longer the terrifying giants of Germanic epic poetry or even the heroes of romance cast from society and in search of redemption from the *romans*. Rather, the Wildfolk are something more akin to a nuanced commentary on civilized, courtly conduct. It is through this lens that we must approach the subject matter of the Saumur tapestries.

[174] Göbel, Heinrich, *Wandteppiche,* (Leipzig, Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1923).
[175] A contributing factor to the Wildfolk's appearances in tapestry may have been the texture of their fur, which provided ample opportunity for weavers to demonstrate their skill of rendering multiple textures.

CHAPTER V

The Chateau Saumur Tapestries in Context

Aside from Guiffrey's work in 1898, no extensive analysis has been carried out on the pictorial subject matter of the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry. This chapter will iconographically analyze the *des Sauvages* tapestries to discern their overt subject matter and iconologically analyze the tapestries to discern their implicit, deeper themes, in order to recreate how they were perceived by a fifteenth-century audience. From these tentative conclusions regarding subject matter, theme, and potential reception, I will offer informed suppositions regarding the context of the tapestries' creation, display, ownership, and original intent.

It is important to recall that the *des Sauvages* tapestries exist in a fractured state, missing many of their original aspects. The *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry is trimmed down from an unknown original size and many elements of the composition, including potentially key iconographical elements, are lost to us as a result. The *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestry is also severely cut down from its original state. It exists in two fragments that connect at the waist of the golden knight who spans the two pieces (legs in the left fragment and torso in the right).[176] Moreover, whatever story or allegory is being conveyed by these tapestry hangings was not done in a set of only two panels. There were certainly more panels to the set, evidently lost, which we can only hope remain intact in some forgotten dusty cupboard of a château.[177] Ultimately, due to the tapestries' losses, every perspective on their original appearances and impacts are speculative. These complex works of art cannot be fully understood without their literal missing pieces. The conclusions I reach are tentative, given the incomplete nature of my subjects, but

[176] It is also important to note that this tapestry includes a number of later additions, chief among then a cityscape in a thicker weave in the upper right-hand corner, and two added heads in the lower left and right corners (figure 4.16).
[177] Based on existing tapestry series, I would hypothesize that this series featured five to seven panels. Given French attics' penchant for turning up significant and forgotten works of art and Weigert's mysterious mention of a 1597 inventory of the abbey of Saint-Waast at Arras which mentioned tapestries featuring Wildmen rolled in a cupboard, while it is wishful thinking, it is not entirely out of them realm of possibility that more fragments of the *des Sauvages* tapestries may survive.

these conclusions do offer the best, logical answers to some of the questions posed by the mysterious *des Sauvages* tapestries.

The first step to understanding the *des Sauvages* tapestries is considering their potential narrative created by the hangings. We must consider if each tapestry presents a continuous narrative scene or one single moment. Based off what survives of *Combat*, it is likely one single moment from a battle. Perhaps in the rest of the *Combat* tapestry, more aspects of the same battle with the same figures played themselves out, or these existed in the different panel. *Bal des Sauvages'* potential narrative is a more difficult matter. Given some of the narrative factors that will be discussed below, I believe that aspects of the *Bal* present a continuous narrative. Few figures appear to be repeated in the surviving fragment, but the overall story I have discerned indicates the passing of time, hence the tapestry itself shows different moments of time in one scene.

Unfortunately, I have not found a specific narrative tale that these tapestries could illustrate in my survey of medieval literature featuring Wildfolk. As the shift identified by Mosely-Christian is rooted in artistic manifestations, it is entirely possible that the Wildfolk of the *des Sauvages* tapestries do not have a specific literary referent. They may be an example of the new artistic representation of Wildfolk as a projection for domestic and noble ideals, like the Swiss and German Wildfolk tapestries. While some have suggested that the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry depicts a courtly charivari or other aristocratic Wildfolk masquerade, this is not the case, as I find the Wildfolk in the tapestry are true wild people, not costumed humans. Despite my belief that the Wildfolk in the tapestry are true wild people, they do share the same lavish, celebratory spirit of some of the pageants with costumed Wildfolk mentioned previously.[178] As noted, the some of the royal pageant coordinators were also tapestry cartooners and the pageant scenes inspired tapestry design and vice versa. Regardless of what source inspired the subject matter of the tapestries, the pieces are certainly meant to be read as a narrative, with a moralizing allegory. The moralizing allegory in the hangings, which will be explored in depth below, relates to the

[178] See Chapter IV, page 41.

codependent relationship of marriage and peace, as depicted in the *Bal des Savages* wedding scene and the battle scene of *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers*.

Before considering the allegory and its implied deeper themes, I will analyze of each of the tapestries to discern their pictorial subject matter. The subject matter of the *Combat* is more easily discernible than that of the *Bal,* given that it is plainly a battle scene. The chaotic battle scene shows us the clash of two peoples, wild and civilized (figure 5.1).[179] The faces of 21 knights are visible, in gold, silver, red or gold and silver full battle armor. Seven human musicians who carry the banner of a demon sun, accompany these knights. Using cannons, lances, pikes, and straight swords the armored knights attack thirteen Wildmen. The Wildmen are outfitted in primitive armor of bark breastplates, helmets, and shields. One Wildman astride a horse in the lower right corner is struck with a lance and about to fall off his horse. The Wildmen's three horses are reined and bridled with vines, while the knights' horses are caparisoned in ornate armor. The Wildmen in the *Combat* tapestry harken back to the pre- fifteenth-century Wildman and his older connotations of an "other" with ferocious power, continuously in conflict with humanity.

Certain details in the battle scene appear to convey text (figure 5.2). Portions of the horses' armor, two yellow pennants, and one red pennant seem to bear discernable letters. Upon closer inspection these letters do not spell or convey anything sensical. Instead, they are likely Pseudo-Kufic, an imaginative or decorative script ultimately based on the appearance of Arabic.[180] A banner carried by a knight at the center of the right-hand side appears to read "IH" and may once have read "IHS," an abbreviation for Jesus. While this is a tempting jump to make, given that the rest of the letters in this tapestry (and later in *Bal des Sauvages*) do not convey any real words, it is dangerous to assume that this

[179] The plants in the meadow are some of the same featured in the *Bal des Sauvages*, namely oak, daisies, and petunias.
[180] This is suggested by M. Etienne Vacquet. An example of Pseudo-Kufic in tapestry can be seen in the War of Troy tapestry from the V&A museum.

banner does. The generic spirit of these decorative details in the tapestry support the possibility that the tapestry's referent was a non-specific allegory rather than a particular medieval *roman.*

The *horror vacui* (fear of the void), characteristic of fifteenth-century tapestries, forces the viewer to look closely and disentangle the embattled figures from one another to determine the victor. Though we do not have all of the parts of this tapestry, it is almost conclusive that the knights will win their battle against the Wildmen. The knights' superior battle technology—armor, cannons, swords, lances and pikes—will triumph against the Wildmen's bark armor, curved swords with branch handles, and their bows. The Wildmen also carry more shields than the knights, which puts them firmly on the defensive. In the surviving fragments of the tapestry, the only dead figure (aside from the later additions of severed heads) is the dying Wildman, struck while astride his horse (figure 5.3). The knights are the victors of this battle.

However, while the knights triumph over the mythical beast of the Wildman, they carry the banner of another mythical creature, the mermaid (figure 5.4).[181] The mermaid, identified by the bestiary as a symbol of pride, luxury and vanity, indicates that these knights may not be entirely the pure-hearted heroes of chivalric literature. While these Wildmen are more related to their older, violent precursors in this battle scene, the knights do not correlate to their precursors from romance literature, the champions who we call today, "knights in shining armor." The mermaid certainly indicates some element of humor, but more importantly it renders the battle an ambiguous contest between two forces, neither of which are entirely good. The mermaid banner prompts the question: who is truly good in this battle? Perhaps no one is pure of heart in the vainglorious affair of battle. Before continuing to examine the deeper meaning of the *Combat* tapestry, its fellow hanging, the *Bal des Sauvages*, must be considered.

The *Bal des Sauvages* presents more questions (and arguably offers more answers) than the *Combat* (figure 5.5). The subject matter of this tapestry is a marital scene that acts as a commentary upon

[181] Called Melusine in the Gobelins description. The mermaid appears in frequent connection with Wildfolk, at the pageants, in the earlier literature, and in the tapestry of an unidentified *roman* at the Germanisches museum (figure 3.20).

fifteenth-century aristocratic marriage. We must first establish surface subject matter of the *Bal des Sauvages* by examining the iconographic details that indicate a nuptial scene. Upon establishment of this nuptial theory, we can attempt to discern elements of the narrative taking place and then consider the deeper themes (of *Bal des Sauvages* alone and in tandem with *Combat*) via an iconologic examination.

Though many things cannot be said with certainty about this tapestry, I can confidently say that the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry conveys a wedding celebration between two radically different groups of people. This has only been tentatively indicated by other scholars based on the suggestion of charivari and the inclination of figures' hands. Elements within the composition indicate the nuptial context, specifically the arrangement of figures, the musicians, the figures' hand gestures, and the setting. In particular, the figures' distinctive, interconnected arrangement is likely intended to convey a specific kind of courtly dance, the *basse danse* (low dance) that was often performed at nuptial celebrations.[182] *Basse danse* refers to a graceful, slow-gliding, processional dance in which the feet remain on the floor, as opposed to livelier, leaping dances.[183] The *basse danse* was popular at European courts in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and particularly in the Duchy of Burgundy, whose influential court dictated aristocratic fashions of the day, as discussed above with respect to tapestry production.[184]

We can identify the processional dance in *Bal des Sauvages* as a *basse danse* based on iconographic similarities to other know depictions of this courtly dance. Daniel Heartz, a musicologist, identified the Italian adaptation of the *basse danse* on the famous Adimari Panel from circa 1450 (figure 5.6).[185] This panel has been identified by multiple scholars as depicting a wedding procession.[186] The panel is a *spalliere,* which, like a *cassone* (wedding chest), was a common gift for brides and the nuptial

[182] Wangermée, Robert, *Flemish Music and Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,* (New York, F.A. Praeger, 1968), 164.
[183] Heartz, Daniel. "Hoftanz and Basse Dance." *Journal of the American Musicological,* 13.
[184] Heartz, "Hoftanz and Basse Dance," 13.
The court of Burgundy's effect upon the courtly fashion and past times in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, and England is well documented.
[185] Ibid., 16-17.
Adimari Panel is currently located at the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, Italy.
[186] Wangermée, *Flemish Music,* 164.

couple in Italy. These furnishings for the newlywed's chambers featured instructional depictions of themes related to love and marriage. Common narratives included biblical and mythical couples, scenes of conquest and triumph, and scenes based on works by modern and ancient authors like Ovid, Petrach, and Boccaccio.[187] These moralizing scenes offered instructional examples for the newlyweds and promoted values such as beauty, virtue, purity, duty and fertility.[188] Like *Bal des Sauvages*, the Adimari Panel features noble couples joined by the hand (not by the veil of the henin, as different millinery was popular with Italian noblewomen), a festive atmosphere, an outdoor setting, a canopy, and a raised platform for shawm musicians.[189]

Another depiction of a marital *basse danse* was identified by musicologist Robert Wangermée, on folio 117 verso of MS 5073 at Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris, France (figure 5.7).[190] This folio, painted by Loyset Liédet (circa 1420-1479), depicts the fictional marriage of Renaud de Montaubon to Clarisse, the daughter of the King of Aquitaine.[191] The nuptial couple, in gold, red, and blue, stand before a raised platform of musicians (in hats and doublets similar to those of the courtly musicians in *Bal des Sauvages*), who play two shawms and a trumpet. The bride and groom—who notably stand in front of a plain blue tapestry—hold a small piece of gauzy fabric (in this case not attached to the bride's henin) in their left and right hands respectively.[192] Five elegant courtly couples process behind them, paired and holding hands. Berheimer, among the first to discern the marriage connotations of *Bal des Sauvages*, observed that the couples of *Bal des Sauvages* incline their hands toward the central couple in a congratulatory nature. In this respect, they resemble the manuscript illumination of Renaud and Clarisse. They are therefore probably joining in the festive *basse danse* to congratulate the tapestry's central

[187] Bayer, Andrea, *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy, (*New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008), 64.
[188] Bayer, *Art and Love*, 64.
[189] It also features the popular wedding colors of blue, red, and gold
[190] Wangermée, *Flemish Music,* 164.
[191] The Renaud de Montauban cycle comes from the Old French *chanson de geste*, *Quatre Fils Aymon*, and dates to late 12th century. In this scene, Renaud has escaped his pursuers with the help of the King of Aquitaine, who gives his daughter Clarisse and the castle of Montauban to Renaud.
[192] The presence of this tapestry, despite being non-figural, prompts the interesting thought that the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry may have witnessed the very dance it depicted.

couple. These components—the *basse danse*, procession, musicians, festive atmosphere, and joining of hands—provide strong evidence that the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry depicts a nuptials celebration.

Regarding the music that accompanied the oft-marital *basse danse,* Johannes Tinctoris (circa 1435 – 1511), a Renaissance composer and musical theoretician from the Duchy of Burgundy, wrote in his *De Inventione et Usu Musicae,* that, "numerous [shawm players] flourish in this our age and are sometimes heard in churches at great feasts, but most often at weddings."[193] Heartz identifies shawm players on raised platforms in many visual representations of noble banquets and feasts, particularly in an early sixteenth-century tapestry from Tournai (figure 5.8).[194] A surviving letter from Beatrice d'Este to her sister, Isabella, also documents the presences of shawm players and raised platforms at weddings. Beatrice wrote on November 30th, 1493 to her sister and described the wedding of her niece Bianca Maria Sforza, to Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor that, "at the ends of the choirs were two raised platforms, one for the singers, and the other for the trumpeters and musicians."[195] Along with the *basse danse*, the shawm players' historical popularity as wedding entertainers who played for the guests on an elevated platform likewise supports the probability that *Bal des Sauvages* depicts a nuptial celebration.

More evidence of the tapestry's wedding connotations can be found in the joined hands of the various couples in the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry. The henin veils and cloaks that are grasped by the figures in the tapestry are likely a dilution of the ancient tradition of handfasting. Rooted in Germanic and Celtic cultures, handfasting solidified oaths and was absorbed regionally into the Catholic wedding ceremony, in which priests would wrap or place their stoles on the united hands of the bride and groom.[196] This tradition can be glimpsed in medieval art contemporaneous to *Bal des Sauvages,* including the miniature that illustrates Renaud and Clarisse's wedding in MS 5073 (figure 5.7). Religious depictions of the handfasting can be found in the central panel of *The Life and Miracles of Saint Godelieve Altarpiece*

[193] Heartz, "Hoftanz and Basse Dance," 15.
[194] Heartz, "Hoftanz and Basse Dance," 15.
[195] Sizeranne, Robert de la, *Beatrice d'Este and Her Court*, (London, Berntano's, 1924), pp. 208-212.
[196] Stevenson, Kenneth, *Nuptial Blessing: A Study of Christian Marriage Rites*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1983), 45.

and in the illustration of the marriage of King John of Portugal to Philippa of Lancaster on folio 284 recto of the British Royal Library's *Chronique d'Angleterre*, both from the late fifteenth century (figures 5.9 and 5.10). This ancient motif is echoed and perhaps parodied by the clasping of fabric instead of hands that sometimes is seen in the secular marital *basse danse*.

This is not to say that figures do not actually clasp hands in the tapestry. The joined hands of the figures in the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry are very likely a reference to the medieval wedding ceremony and its attendant iconography. The handfasting, like the medieval marriage as a whole, signified legal transfer of the bride to the groom, presided over by her father and a priest in the presence of witnesses.[197] The groom took the bride's hand in his hand while the priest performed the ceremony. At one point the words "to couple and knyt these two bodyes togyder," were recited over their joined hands, which visually echoed the physical, legal, and spiritual "knyt"-ing (or weaving) of the bride and groom together.[198] Joined hands, with or without a fabric element, present in various fifteenth-century marriage depictions (figures 5.6-5.7, 5.9-5.11). The joined hands in the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry, beyond just an indication of the fifteenth-century *basse danse* sometimes performed at weddings, convey a key element of the medieval Catholic wedding ceremony and tradition.

Another element that links the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry to the medieval wedding celebration and ceremony is its outdoor setting. Most medieval weddings took place outside the entrance or on the porch of a church.[199] This outdoor tradition is visualized in the *Pèlerinage de vie humaine* (BNF Fr. 376, fol. 6v) in an illustration of the sacrament of marriage (figure 5.11). When the wedding ceremonies of the wealthy occurred outside the church, canopies and pavilions were erected, as seen in the Adimari panel. Indeed, of Bianca Sforza's wedding in 1493, Beatrice d'Este wrote, "a porch had been erected before the principal church in the city of Milan, with columns on each side bearing a violet canopy embroidered with doves."[200]

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[197] Yalom, Marilyn, *A History of the Wife*, (New York, HarperCollins, 2001), 47.
[198] Yalom, *A History of the Wife*, 54-57.
[199] Ibid., 53-54.
[200] Sizeranne, *Beatrice d'Este and Her Court*, pp. 208-212.

Beatrice went on to describe another central element of wealthy weddings of the fifteenth century: the procession. She related that "each of us went in procession from the door of the Cathedral…and an awning of white edged with ermine was made ready, under which the Queen rode."[201] Wedding processions, like that Beatrice described and the one depicted in the Adimari Panel, were common. They often included movable canopies that sheltered the party as they processed through the streets to the groom's home, followed by the bride's dowry goods.[202] Beatrice recorded the procession's extravagance beyond just a canopy, "On both sides of the street the houses were decked with satin, with the exception of those houses that have recently been decorated with the frescoes…which are no less handsome than tapestries."[203] Much like the royal and religious processions mentioned in Chapter II, a prestigious marriage also warranted textile decorations along its processional route. Like the wedding ceremony outside the church, such celebratory events were opportunities to create temporary structures of ornate fabric, like the tents seen in *Bal des Sauvages.*[204]

The wild couple and courtly couple enjoying a bowl of wine under the pavilion tent on the far-left side of the tapestry may also indicate a common element of the medieval marriage celebration: the feast (figure 5.12).[205] Sharing a meal between the two unified families is an important element in an aristocratic union that served to quell any residual qualms about marriage contracts and dowries. In the *Bal des Sauvages*, the sharing of wine could also resonate with the Eucharistic ritual, an element that also occurred during the Catholic wedding ceremony. Another panel in this tapestry series may have depicted the wedding feast, or perhaps it was originally included in this panel and was at some point cut off.[206]

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[201] Ibid.
[202] Roush, *The Medieval Marriage Scene,* 167.
[203] Beatrice's letter suggests that when frescoes were not completed (or possible due to climate) it is likely that tapestries adorned the streets for an aristocratic wedding, as they did for processions.
[204] Sizeranne, *Beatrice d'Este and Her Court*, pp. 208-212.
[205] Roush, Sherry, and Cristelle Louise Baskins, *The Medieval Marriage Scene: Prudence, Passion, Policy*, (Tempe, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 167.
[206] Roush, *The Medieval Marriage Scene,* 167. In French wedding feasts, the couple customarily used a toasting cup called a *coupe de mariage*. This tradition began when a small piece of toast was literally dropped into the couple's wine to ensure a healthy life. In southwestern France, it is customary to serve spit roast wild boar at the wedding. This consummation of boar at the wedding feast could be potentially symbolic. According to bestiaries, the boar is wild and know for aggressive copulation. The death and eating of the boar at wedding feasts could symbolize marriage's civilizing influence on man.

The final evidence I will present for a marriage scene is painting from the Burgundian court which I came across late during the competition of this thesis. This painting seems to convey the same celebratory, nuptial spirit as the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry. The painting, *Country Fair at the Court of Philip the Good* (figure 5.18), is copy of a painting of the sixteenth century inspired by an original painting dating to early fifteenth century from the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon. Another version of it exits at the Musée du Château de Versailles, entitled, *Fête en le Jardin d'Amour*. Various events have been suggested as a match for its subject matter including: the wedding of Isabella of Portugal and Philip the Good in January 1430, a celebration on the occasion of the marriage of two courtiers in June of 1431, André de Toulongeon and Jacqueline de la Trémoille, the marriage of Marie of Burgundy with Adolphe de Cleves in 1415.[207] The festive atmosphere, arrangement of figures, feast, and outdoor setting of *Country Fair at the Court of Philip the Good* correlates to marital elements of the *Bal des Sauvages* and suggest that both pieces depict a Burgundian nuptial celebration.

Setting, décor, and gesture: all of these features indicate that the *Bal des Sauvages* was intended to represent a wedding celebration.[208] Now that the subject matter has been firmly established, I will assemble an iconological understanding of the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry and its narrative as based on the significant symbols and their relationships to each other.

Beginning on the right-hand side of the tapestry, a monkey holds its child against its chest, an action which is mirrored by the Wildwoman above her (figure 5.13).[209] This Wildwoman is not in courtly

[207] Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon, "Fête champêtre à la cour de Philippe le Bon," pp. 1-2.
[208] It is important to note that no ring (on the hand of or presented to someone) appears in this tapestry, despite the other ornate jewelry. The wedding ring was an established tradition by this time and its absence is curious. Perhaps the ring featured prominently in the other lost panels.
[209] The details of the flowers and vegetation that appear in the meadow, which sometimes carry meaning, have yet to be investigated. Here, I offer some preliminary observations. Orange trees were associated with the exotic and sometimes with the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden. A fern or evergreen grows on top of the cave near the orange tree, bearing either pinecones, a symbol of eternity, or pineapples, a symbol of the exotic. Varieties of oak appear in the tapestry, which signified strength, faith, and endurance. Holly leaves represented Jesus's crown of thorns and his blood. Roses are often associated with Mary and the Garden of Eden. Daisies represented purity, innocence and loyal love. Pansies represented merriment. It is likely that the most educated audiences of the tapestries understood such meanings of the depicted flowers and fruits and that this symbolism figured in discussions of the meaning of the works.

garb but nude except for her hairy fur, as is her child. In the bestiary, the monkey usually carries its young upon its front and back, but one falls off and is lost to it.[210] As the monkey holds only one spawn, it could perhaps indicate that the fallen child evolved into the Wildwoman who has produced her own child. The growth of this wild family continues in the larger wild child seated next to the wild mother and her infant. This group of figures, atop a primordial cave, may indicate some sense of evolution or progression among this wild race.[211] As one's eyes move right to left across the tapestry, the Wildfolk continue to progress into courtly, refined Wildfolk, no longer in caves but surrounded by ornate pavilions and garbed ostentatiously like the courtiers with whom they cavort.[212]

The progression of the Wildfolk is prompted by the interaction between the figures in the top cave entrance. Four Wildmen emerge from this cave and are greeted by three noblemen (figure 5.14). The most prominent Wildman in the group wears a simple red cloak and grasps the hand of the lead nobleman while making gestures that suggest discussion. This is likely a conversation about an alliance between these two peoples, courtly and wild. Given the details in the rest of the tapestry, this formation of an alliance hinges upon a marriage between the Wildfolk and courtiers, which unites these two diverse peoples. In keeping with the male-dominated marital transactions of the fifteenth century, no women (wild or courtly) are present for this important discussion.

The culmination of this marital alliance is seen in the figures who emerge from the lower cave entrance (figure 5.15). A Wildwoman with brown fur and her hair styled to appear as a henin encrusted with jewels hold the hand of a small wild child standing at her side. Behind the Wildwoman, a man places his hand on her shoulder in a gesture of procession. This Wildwoman and her child may indeed be the Wildwoman and her child who sit upon the cave. I believe that elements of *Bal des Sauvages* indicate the

[210] According to medieval bestiaries, the ape is often depicted carrying its young with one child on the back and one on the front, the mother ape loves one but not the other. It is curious that she is depicted with only one child here. Much like the Wildfolk, apes provide a mirror for humanity's negative characteristics in medieval art.
[211] The notion of a progressing, evolutionary scene was suggested by M. Vacquet.
[212] It's a bit unnatural to read something right to left but the narrative details of the tapestry prompt this. Guiffrey found the Wildfolk's clothes to highlight the disparity between the wild and courtly peoples, but I find them to induce a sense of equality

passing of time and a continuous narrative, like the Wildwoman and her child, but beyond that I find little evidence that any particular figure is repeated elsewhere. Rather, I think the tapestry displays the all the elements necessary to the formation of a marriage alliance and the enactment of it, events that occurred at different times, without specifically repeating many key characters.[213]

Next to the Wildwoman and her child, a blue-furred Wildwoman has already emerged from the cave, garbed in an ornate, jeweled cloak and a turbanesque hairstyle. The Wildman at her side, in a sumptuous blue and red cloak and ermine hat, makes a gesture of offering as the blue Wildwoman's hand is held by that of a courtier.[214] The attire of these four Wildfolk is increasingly more ornate than the previous figures discussed, perhaps again indicating a civilizing progression brought about by the marital alliance of these groups. The courtier and the blue Wildwoman's joined hands and the gesture of offering from the Wildman indicate marriage. The courtier's sword hangs phallically from his belt, an indication of the intent of any marriage, consummation.

Throughout the tapestry, the Wildfolk sport their new, ornate courtly fashions and pair off with various nobles, through hand holding and holding cloaks and henin veils. These couples seem to surround a central pairing, identified by the nuptial couple by previous scholars, Bernheimer and Husband (5.16). A fabulous Wildwoman in a red and gold brocade cloak steps confidently toward a knight who holds a sash of fabric which entwines with her hands. The knight's phallic sword again indicates the intended consummation of this union of two different groups.

Above the central couple, the delicate peace achieved by marriage between these two inherently opposed people (wild and civilized) begins to shatter. A mad, bald fool forcefully embraces a Wildwoman (figure 5.17). The fool represents evil according to the Bible, for he rejects God.[215] This rejection of what

[213] During this period of tapestry when characters are repeated, we see their names indicated. However, in other medieval art, like book painting, characters can be repeated without names, with many different outfits, and with varied appearances. It is ultimately impossible to conclusively decide if this tapestry displays a continuous narrative of repeated figures or a single scene without knowing the explicit narrative rather than the loose one I have inferred from my observation and research.
[214] The hem of his Wildman's cloak appears to bear the letter "aegere," but this is probably Pseudo-Kufic, like the textual details in the *Combat.*
[215] The Bible, Psalm 51-52.

is good and holy demonstrates his madness and the madness of humanity without God. The fool in this scene could represent man, removed from his ideal and reverent state, giving into his baser urges and attacking the Wildwoman, a representation of the ideal woman, as identified by Mosely-Christian. The tenuous peace between the wild and courtly peoples and the civility imposed by their union may devolve further as indicated by the seven emerging helmets of an approaching army.

The best conclusion I can arrive at given the available evidence is that *Bal des Sauvages* displays the notion of a marriage alliance and all the elements necessary to the formation and enactment of it. Regardless of discovering a specific literary referent (which may or may not exist), the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry is meant to convey the elements necessary for a nuptial alliance and marriage's associated deeper themes as understood by a fifteenth-century audience.

Bal des Sauvages' subject of a marriage alliance formed between two different peoples, celebrated, and then shattered needs to be considered in tandem with the *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* to complete the potential narrative between the surviving pieces. The most pressing question to consider is in what order were these tapestries intended to be read? It could be a either a wedding that ends in war, a war that ends in wedding, or a war that ends in wedding that returns to war. If the *Combat* occurred first, the narrative of the two tapestries could be read as a conflict between the wild and civilized peoples that ended with a marriage alliance, which in turn exerted its civilizing force upon the ferocious Wildfolk.

However, given the sense of rising action and narrative details in the *Bal des Sauvages*, I believe the marriage alliance occurred first and was followed by the *Combat*. The emergence of the Wildfolk from caves indicates the beginning of the Wildfolk, peaceful and harmonious in their idyllic state, removed from the perils of society, but also uninitiated into the civility of the courtly societal ideal. The marriage alliance between the wild and noble people introduces the Wildfolk to courtly society and its accompanying perils. The dangers of human society are represented by the fool and his assault on the idealistic Wildwoman. The approaching soldiers and the pikes and lances in the distance indicate that conflict is imminent between these two groups. The aggression that initiates this conflict appears to come

from the humans, as the soldiers are human and the human fool's assault on the Wildwoman may have shattered the peace. Because the Wildfolk have been introduced to noble society, its benefits and downfalls, they too, like the knights in the *Combat* have developed the pride and vanity that plagues humanity (represented by the mermaid). This has led to a loss of the social stability represented by the marriage alliance and shattered the peaceful union of these two very different groups.

There is another narrative possibility. The *Combat* could occur before the *Bal,* the marriage alliance bringing an end to the war. Then the approaching army and weapons in the background of the *Bal* may foreshadow a different battle, played out in a lost panel. Each of these theories is plausible, but I cannot assert any one narrative sequence with certainty. Based on the evidence I have presented, I believe that the second theory, that the *Bal* occurs before the *Combat,* is the most probable.

To the best of my ability, I have surmised the subject matter of both these tapestries and the narrative sequence they may form. Now we may attempt to interpret the underlying theme of this curious nuptial union between the civilized and the wild. Beyond the iconographic details which convey a marriage, the iconological analysis of these tapestries examined the relationship of the symbols and assembles them in a way that speaks to a larger theme. The *des Sauvages* tapestries convey more than a marriage between two very different people, that will be consummated, a marriage that coincided with the civilizing of these wild creatures, a marriage that arose from an agreement and ended in conflict; they contain a deeper theme which is where a tapestry's greatest significance lies. While the tapestries masquerade as a story, their details can be understood as a grander allegory of aristocratic marriage in the fifteenth century and its accompanying anxieties.

During the fifteenth century, marriage was a civilizing and socially stabilizing force. Marriage exerted its civilizing force over man and woman, bringing them into a respectful and unified state.[216] Just as chivalric love represented the courtly ideal, marriage represented the ideal of social stability. Marriage secured the reproduction of the race and acted as a civilizing force. Marriage's civilizing power extended

[216] Yalom, *A History of the Wife,* 47.

beyond just its assumed effect on a husband and wife. It also served to familially, religiously, legally and civilly unify families and their associated businesses, territories, or political entities. Marriage, first and foremost, exercised its civilizing influence on the husband and wife. During the fifteenth century, women were usually married around the age of fourteen to ensure their virginity. Marriage removed them from worldly temptations and kept them "safe" under the control of men, passing from father to husband. Men married around the age of thirty.[217] This age disparity left men with ample time to carry out liaisons with women of lower classes and prostitutes.[218] Marriage, ostensibly, brought about an end to such behavior. The woman tamed the man and quelled his base nature through the institution of marriage. Much like the civilizing power of the noblewoman in tales like *Yvain, Chevalier au Lione* and *Der Bussant*, the intercession of a noblewoman could tame man's inner beast. In *Bal des Sauvages*, courtly marriage and women tame the inner beast in noblemen and the visible beast of the Wildman who has already somewhat suppressed his older, violent and carnal associations.

In the *Bal des Sauvages* hanging, the Wildfolk are subjected to marriage's civilizing influence which is brought about by the marital alliance struck between the Wildmen and nobles at the top cave entrance. The marital alliance which occurs in the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry suggests that an equilibrium has been reached within each group, the noble humans and Wildfolk have both attained a certain idyllic level, by the suppression of their baser instincts and unite, as they each have something to gain from the other. Upon this agreement, the Wildfolk's older, negative attributes are further subdued and they begin to evolve across the tapestry, as indicated by the progression of the Wildfolk's attire, behavior, intermingling, and the juxtaposition of the caves to the pavilions. Through this evolution, the Wildfolk are introduced into human society, represented by a noble court, and assimilate and acquire the positive aspects of human society via marital union.[219] However, the Wildfolk are also introduced to the perils of

[217] Ibid.
[218] Roush, *The Medieval Marriage Scene,* 49.
[219] Much like how a marital union with or the intercession of a noblewoman cured the redemptive Wildman of chivalric literature.

humanity society, as indicated by the evil fool, the approaching army, and the vainglorious battle in the *Combat*.

Fifteenth-century marriage also exerted its civilizing influence upon the families of the bride and groom. Beyond unifying a bride and groom, marriage joined two separate families through law, religion, and societal expectations. As a result, these groups became beholden to each other socially and forged loyalties, affection and obligation.[220] Beyond uniting two families, marriage's stabilizing influence can unite the territories or political entities of these two families, sometimes bringing an end to great wars, like Henry VII and Elizabeth of York's union was seen to end the War of the Roses (which was commemorated in a now-lost tapestry). This politically unifying aspect of marriage is visible in the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry as it harmoniously joins the two disparate groups of Wildfolk and noble humans.

The marriage in the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry is not the perfect aristocratic union depicted in the Adimari Panel. Instead it is a complex marriage alliance which has subdued the negative aspects of both parties. There is (nearly) no conflict between these two very different groups, human and wild, who have been traditionally opposed: the ferocious Wildman, who used to frequently kidnap the noblewoman and force marriage, and the knight, who killed the Wildman. In this tapestry, these peoples are united despite vast differences and have achieved peace and harmony (momentarily) through marriage. Marriage alliances, like the one in *Bal des Sauvages,* rest on a fulcrum between order and chaos which requires adherence to social contracts to maintain the order's dominance. This relationship between order, chaos, and marriage can be read on an immediate level: between with couple themselves, where sexuality must be tamed on constrained to within the union. It can also be read on a larger level: between the two parties being unified in the marriage alliance, where baser human instincts, like violence, must continue to be restrained by the alliance, lest they shatter the peace and induce war. In the tapestry, these underlying anxieties about war emerge, in the evil fool's violent action, the approaching army, and the (evidently)

[220] Yalom, *A History of the Wife*, 47.

ensuing battle, which indicate a fixation on the tenuous balance of control, its potential loss, and the ensuing the loss of civility and social stability between these two groups.

The impending troubles foreshadowed in the *des Sauvages* tapestries mirror the many anxieties which accompanied fifteenth-century marriage alliances. Such alliances were fraught with uncertainties like: will the union be harmonious (socio-politically and on a personal level for the couple)? Will they procreate and provide a male heir who ensures a peaceful transition in the line of succession? Will the wife assimilate well into her new family and country? Will the families continue to honor their social bond? Will the dowry be paid? Will both parties respect the stipulations of the alliance? If so, for how long? What happens if they do not? These deep-rooted anxieties were a constant concern for parties of a marriage alliance.

The *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevalier* tapestries visualize these anxieties and provide a moralizing account of a marriage alliance possibly gone awry, meant to serve as a cautionary tale. The tapestries warn and advise to put aside vanity and violence for the sake of peace, social stability, our families, our regions, our politics. They instruct viewers to subdue the negative, base instincts and unite with these different, less refined creatures, to consummate the marriage and produce children for the sake of political stability. Do not give into the human or beast like tendencies that will break the alliance and result in war. Pride and vanity (human pitfalls) as well as violence (the Wildman's negative trait) pose the largest threat to the delicate social stability achieved through marital alliances. In short, marriage alliances are tenuous connections between disparate peoples and political entities, rife with anxieties. The surest way to maintain the delicate peace is to overcome the negative aspects of man and his mirror, the Wildman. This deeper theme of the tapestries is intended to prompt serious and intellectual conversation for those who considered it. My analysis helps us to understand these incomplete tapestries to the best of our ability, regardless of the (potential) lost narrative.

Based on the information I have gathered regarding history of the *des Sauvages* tapestries, the tapestry medium and its uses, the Wildfolk, and the tapestries' subject matter and themes, I am able to

conclude with some insight into the circumstances of these works. It can be stated definitively that the *Combat* and *Bal des Sauvages* tapestries date to between 1450 and 1460, thanks to the precisely defined stylistic criteria discerned by Jean-Paul Asselbreghs and Fabienne Joubert and applied to these works by Charron.[221] The classification of the works as Franco-Flemish means they could have been woven at any of the tapestry centers between Burgundian-ruled Picardy and the tapestry centers in the county of Flanders (also Burgundian-ruled).

Created between 1450 and 1460, it is most likely that these tapestries were a custom commission of more than two panels that told a narrative or popular allegory. The subject matter seems quite specific and so it is likely not to have been a stock option at tapestry ateliers. If it had been a stock option, more hangings from different editions would survive. Due to the quality of the tapestry, it was likely commissioned by a wealthy nobleman. However, the patron was not too wealthy as the threads in both tapestries are dyed wool, rather than wool with gilt silver or gold or dyed silk. The size of the existing panels (3 x 5 meters, 2.99 x 2.10 meters, 2.54 x 1.65 meters) and the probable existence of more panels, necessitate a large display area like a main hall, long gallery, or banquet hall in a chateau or large manor home. Given their size, quality, subject matter and probable number it is likely that these works were a specific commission from a well-off nobleman.

Continuing to follow the creation of the pieces, Charron has firmly attributed the cartoons to the Master of the Ladies Champion, an illuminator and cartooner, who was active in Lille from 1450-1475.[222] Given that Lille was a prominent tapestry center at this time, it is likely that the tapestries were woven at an atelier who worked with the Master of the Ladies Champions. A nobleman from anywhere could have made the special commission from the Lillian atelier via a merchant middleman. Due to the Wildfolk's popularity in France in courtly pageants and balls, as well as the noble *Homme Sauvage* depiction of the Wildfolk, it is most likely that the patron hailed from France or Burgundy. Though the *des Sauvages* tapestries first appear in the historical record at Notre-Dame de Nantilly in 1897, it is uncertain when or

[221] Charron, *Le Maitre*, 386.
[222] There is evidence that the Master of the Ladies Champion was also active in Tournai and Arras.

how they came there. During and after the French Revolution, aristocratic property was shuffled, stored, sold and lost. It is possible that a nobleman in the Loire Valley commissioned these tapestries and donated them to Notre-Dame de Nantilly, but it is more likely that these secular hangings ended up at the church due to the shuffling of the French Revolution.

The patron could even have been from Lille itself as the city seems to share a special connection with Wildfolk. Bernheimer notes that a Valenciennes contingent marched to a tournament in Lille (at an unspecified date) garbed entirely as Wildmen. Charron notes records of tapestries being lent to decorate the Hall during the festival of Behourt, a chivalric fighting event at tournaments. It is also noted that tapestry cartoons on canvas were lent for this event. Perhaps this tradition of Behourt is the tournament the Valenciennes arrived at in the guise of Wildmen. Given Wildfolk's popularity at pageants and processions, they could have played a role during the feast of Behourt. Lille could have had an oral tradition (or lost a literary one) that inspired (or was inspired by) the fashionable Wildfolk's potential presence at this important yearly festival. Lille's tenuous connection to Wildfolk could have contributed to the patron's commission or the Master of the Ladies Champions' cartoon or both.

Though the narrative source remains a mystery, the conclusions I was able to draw about the tapestries' deeper theme of a moralizing account of a marriage alliance seems plausible given the demonstrated evidence. In all probability, the tapestries were likely commissioned by a nobleman for the occasion of an important wedding and marital alliance. Without the probable missing panels in the tapestry series it is difficult to identify which scene was a main point in the narrative, but the nuptial connotation of the *Bal des Sauvages* scene seems prominent enough that marriage could have been a larger theme for the overall series. Given the lack of specific heraldry, these tapestries could be used at any significant wedding to convey a moral, celebratory, nuptial atmosphere. The theme of the *des Sauvages* tapestries allows them to transcend the need for any one, specific historical union and rather serve as a moralizing allegory appropriate to any marital alliance.

Much like a tapestry is woven from different threads, so too is a marriage created by the "knyt"ing or weaving of two different people and their associated entities, now woven together by social

convention, religious rites, and legality. The materiality of the medium renders it the perfect nuptial gift and décor. As was demonstrated by the Valois, tapestry was an appropriate dowry and gift for brides and grooms. The hangings were also appropriate and fashionable décor for a wedding. Beatrice's letters and other noble processions indicate tapestry often lined the streets for wedding processions. In the painting of Renaud and Clarisse, a tapestry (albeit non-figural) hangs behind the bride and groom during the courtly nuptial *basse danse*. This prompts the interesting thought that the *Bal des Sauvages* tapestry may have witnessed the *basse danse* it depicted. Much like the Italian *spallieri* and *cassoni*, the *des Sauvages* series could have acted as an instructional nuptial gift, that played a role in the celebration.

There is an unignorable element of humor in the *des Sauvages* tapestries, as indicated by the sub-human Wildfolk. Their inclusion could be read as a surreptitious joke, hidden between the warp and weft of a seemingly appropriate wedding gift, allowing each family to see themselves as the more civilized entity. This humor hints at a deeper anxiety, as humans often make light of what truly scares them. Any marital alliance is delicately balanced between order and chaos, war and peace, with marriage as the civilized force that kept the balance tipped in favor of order and peace.

To answer the questions of who these panels were made for, I would need to consider fifteenth century marriage, the state of European political affairs in the fifteenth. Given more time I would like to try to read *Bal* through the lens of the fifteenth century Burgundian court and marriage alliances at the time, especially given the painting *Country Fair at the Court of Philip the Good*, which likely commemorates a similar Burgundian nuptial celebration. Tapestry records for Lille and more detailed research into the oeuvre and surviving documents of the Master of the Ladies Champion would be beneficial as well. Unfortunately, these questions fell beyond the scope and time constraints of this thesis.

When these impressive tapestry panels were hung, they certainly would have influenced the space they adorned. On a surface level, they would have communicated the opulence, wealth and prestige that the tapestry medium was known to indicate. The figural aspect of the Wildfolk would serve to associate the patron and owners with the fashionable, courtly interest in Wildfolk. Wildfolk were also a symbol for fecundity and fertility and could offer well wishes to the newlyweds as they endeavored to achieve the

desired outcome of a medieval marriage, a male heir. At a wedding celebration, these pieces would imbue a festive atmosphere. The tapestries also would have displayed a knowledge or understanding of what ever allegory or *roman* the panels depicted. On a deeper level, the tapestries could have been instructional tools for a newlywedded couple and the aligning entities. The tapestries reminded the participants of the union what was at stake and encourage right behavior and discourage inappropriate actions that threaten the stability of the alliance. These pieces would have prompted serious intellectual conversation and parallels to the union at hand, to be discerned by those knowledgeable enough to discern them.

Ultimately, these conclusions are difficult to support definitively. Given the literal and figurative missing pieces, it is unlikely the mystery of these tapestries will ever be unwoven, however my research and analysis and provided important information and suppositions regarding the potential nature of the *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers* tapestries. Most significantly, I was able to glean an understanding of the cultural function of the *des Sauvages* tapestries without knowing their narrative referent or patron, which constitutes a significant contribution.

EPILOGUE

In this thesis I have examined the mysterious *des Sauvages* tapestries and the Wildfolk they feature. Without finding a definitive narrative referent, I have outlined logical conclusions of what these tapestries' function and meaning was to a medieval audience. Outside of the woven bounds of the *des Sauvages* tapestries, real life Wildmen retain their storied connections to carnal love and marriage in the modern day. Across Europe, in all the Wildman's regions of influence, small mountain towns still preserve elements of the Wildman's calendrical rituals to herald the arrival of spring via a love connection between a Wildman and human woman.

In Arles-sur-Tech in the Pyrenees of Andorra, an ancient Wildman hunt play is still enacted in which a bear or Wildman (played by a costumed human) is captured as he attempts to connect with his love interest, Rosetta (a floral name befitting the woman as a representation of spring). The Wildman is caught, chained, shaved (to induce humanity) and brought to the town square where a plaster cave is erected. The Wildman and Rosetta enjoy cake and wine in the cave while the spectators rejoice over the "wedding." Then the Wildman is shot to death, but immediately resuscitated by a doctor, so the Wildman may continue to lavish his comical and clumsy attentions on Rosetta. The play closes when the Wildman lunges at Rosetta and is shot once again and dies.[223]

Despite the Arles-sur-Tech Wildman's attempt to unite with the civilized world through marriage, he is defeated by the villagers when his wild nature cannot be tamed. Like the story I have inferred from the *Bal des Sauvages* and *Combat* ends with the inevitable defeat of the Wildfolk, so too is the bear or Wildman of Arles-sur-Tech defeated. These ancient calendrical rituals, still enacted today, indicate the gravity of the connection between the Wildman, spring, marriage and civilization. Spring brings an end to the savagery of winter, much like marriage civilizes couples and their associated groups. This connection between spring, marriage and the Wildman exists for us today residually, diluted over years of transfer

[223] Bernheimer, *Wild Men*, 54. Bernheimer notes that the marriage of a girl to a bear is a common element in fairytales, specifically Grimm's Snow White and Rose Red.

through art, literature, and oral histories. The connection can be seen in the *des Sauvages* fragments, in old fairytales like *Thumbelina* and *Beauty and the Beast*, in new fairytales like Dreamworks' *Shrek*, and in a myriad of present-day European festivals. The Wildman heralds calendrical shifts as Schnappviecher (snapping beast) on Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras) in Italy, as Macidulas on New Year's Day in Poland, as the bear during the La Fete de l'Ours in France, as Zezengorri at Carnival in Spain and in many other iterations. Like Arles-sur-Tech and the *des Sauvages* fragments, the Wildman of these festivals is often pursing or uniting with a woman in marriage.

Violet Alford, an expert in Pyrenean folklore, identifies the Arles-sur-Tech ritual and others like it as an attempt to control the uncontrollable: nature's seasonal changes. Marriage in the fifteenth century also attempted to control nature, the baser side of human nature. The *des Sauvages* tapestries as an allegory for fifteenth-century marriage alliances relates to an innate human desire to exert control over natural forces that are seemingly terrifying if left unrestrained, i.e. sexual desire. Much like how the ancient and modern-day Wildman calendrical rituals express human anxieties over the changing seasons, the *des Sauvages* tapestries represent human anxieties over sexuality and marriage and its associated consequences.

FIGURES

Introduction

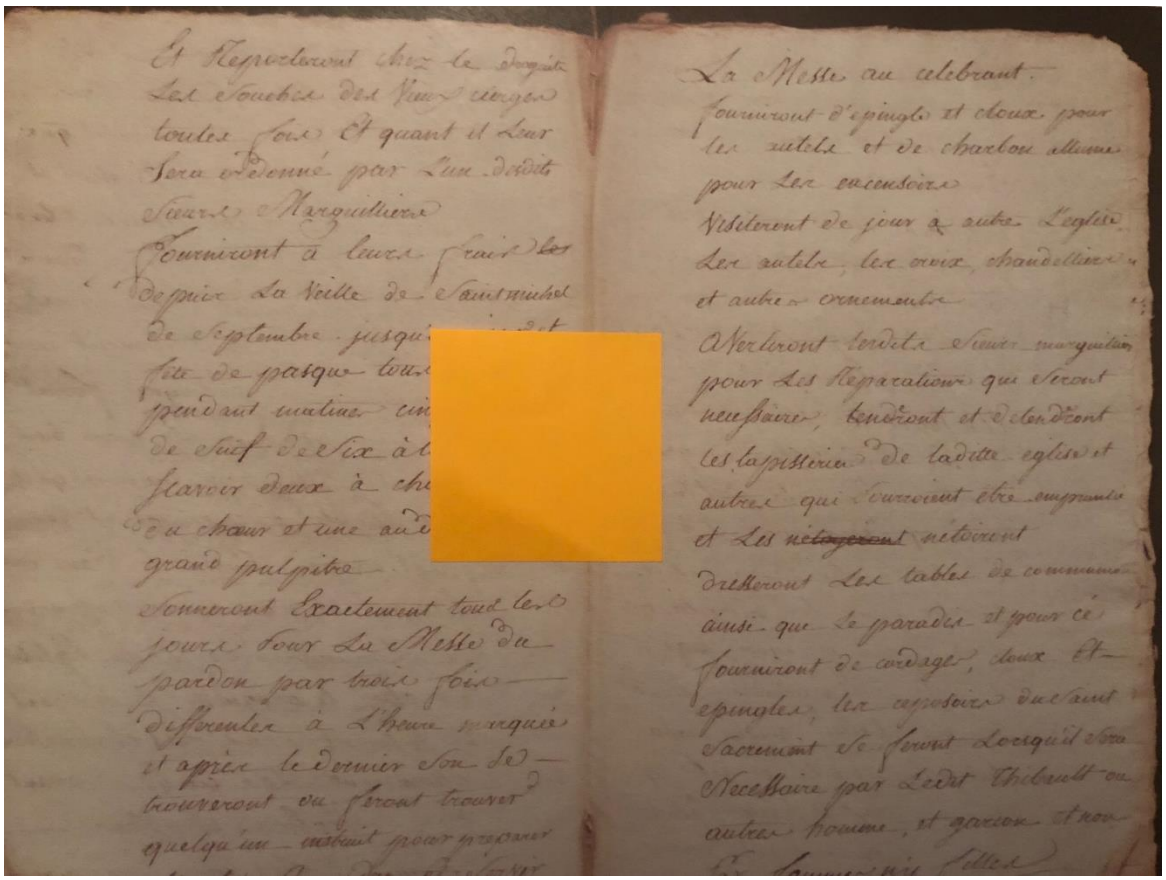
0.1 *Bal des Sauvages*, ca. 1450-1460, Chateau Saumur, France. Image provided by M. Etienne Vacquet. 3 x 5 meters.

0.2 *Le Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers*, left fragment, ca. 1450-1460, Chateau Saumur, France. Image provided by M. Etienne Vacquet. 2.99 x 2.10 meters.

0.3 *Le Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers*, right fragment, ca. 1450-1460, Chateau Saumur, France. Image provided by M. Etienne Vacquet. 2.54 x 1.65 meters.

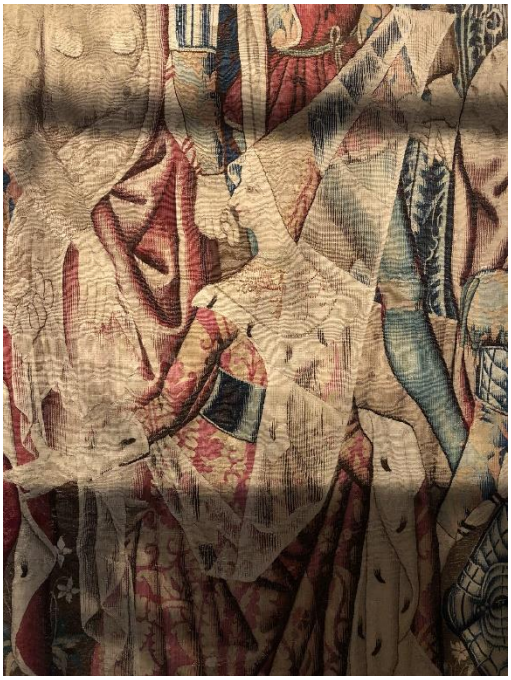
0.4 Proposed matching of the left and right fragments of *Le Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers.*

Chapter I



1.1 Page from 1776 contract for church guardians. G2325, Archives Departmental du Maine-et-Loire.

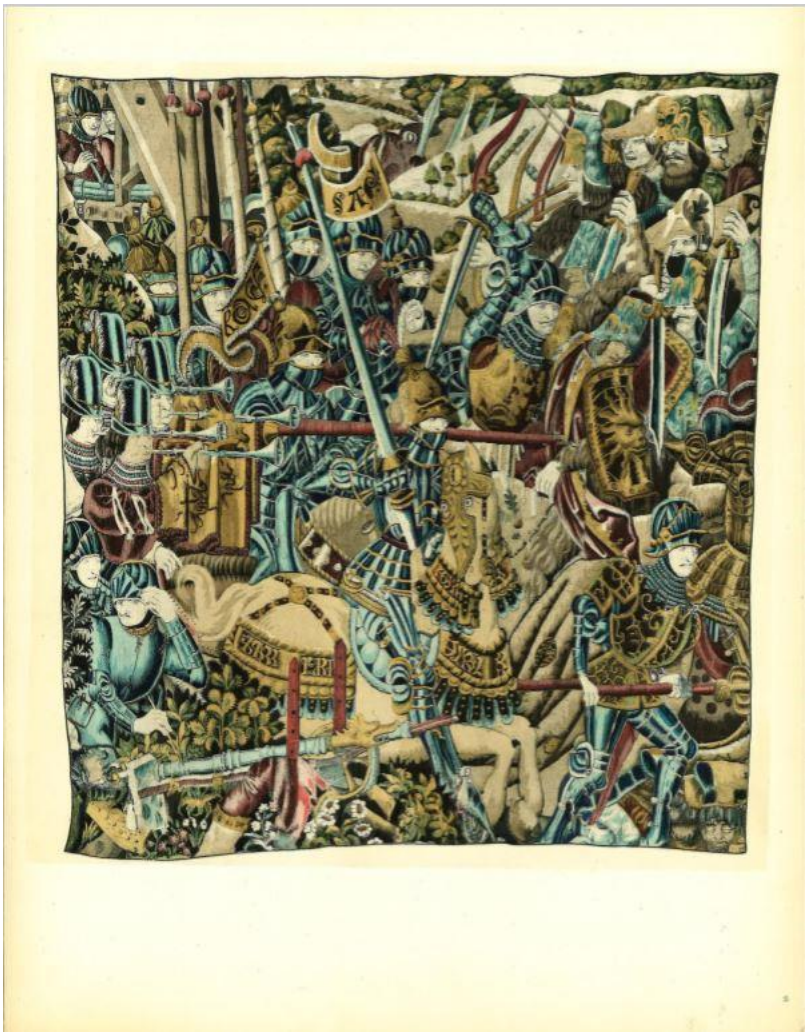
1.2 Details of hairstyles from the Lady and the Unicorn tapestry series, circa 1500, Parisian cartooner, woven in Flanders the Musée National du Moyen Âge.



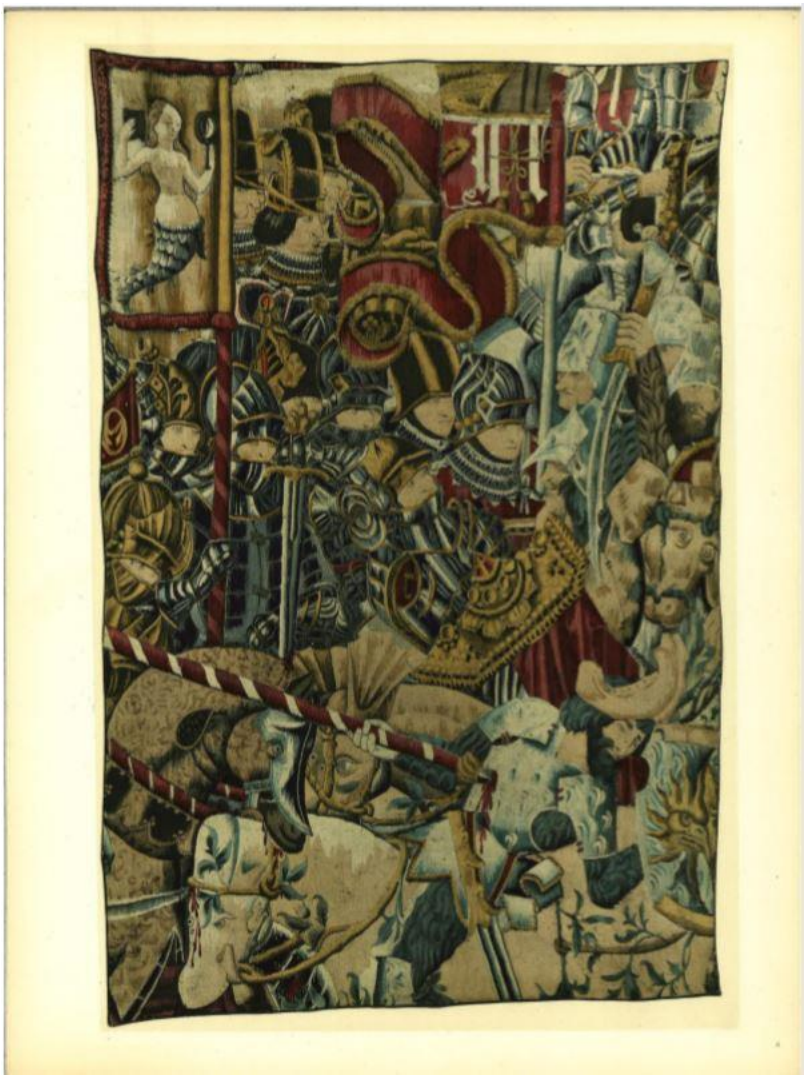
1.3 Lady in Ermine detail, from *Bal des Sauvages*.

1.4 Conflict Couple, jester and Wildwoman, from *Bal des Sauvages*.

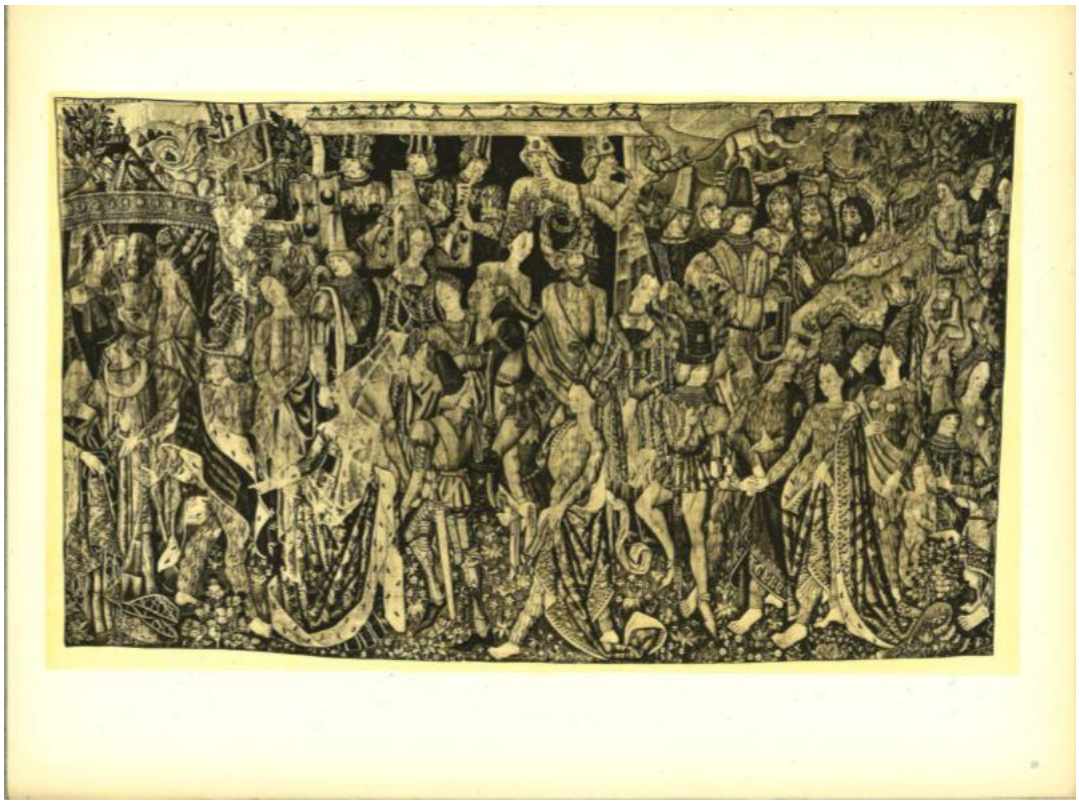
1.5 Heraldry in *Bal des Sauvages* and Clovis' heraldry from 'l'Histoire du Fort Roy Clovis' tapestry, circa 1450, Arras or Tournai, Palais du Tau, Reims, France.



1.6 Color lithograph of *Le Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers*, left fragment, from Musée de la Manufacture Nationale des Gobelins, *La Tapisserie Gothique*, Paris, 1928.



1.7 Color lithograph of *Le Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers*, right fragment, from Musée de la Manufacture Nationale des Gobelins, *La Tapisserie Gothique*, Paris, 1928.



1.8 Black and white lithograph of *Bal des Sauvages*, from Musée de la Manufacture Nationale des Gobelins, *La Tapisserie Gothique,* Paris, 1928.

1.9 Camel Riders, presumably from a Wild Man series, 1475/1510, Franco-Flemish, Art Institute of Chicago.

1.10 A Wild Man and a Wild Woman in an Enclosed Garden (fragment). Franco-Flemish, 1550/20, Wool: 265 x 200 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

1.11 Wild Folk Family and Animals in a Landscape (fragment). Franco-Flemish, c. 1500. Wool: 262 x 217 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Chapter II

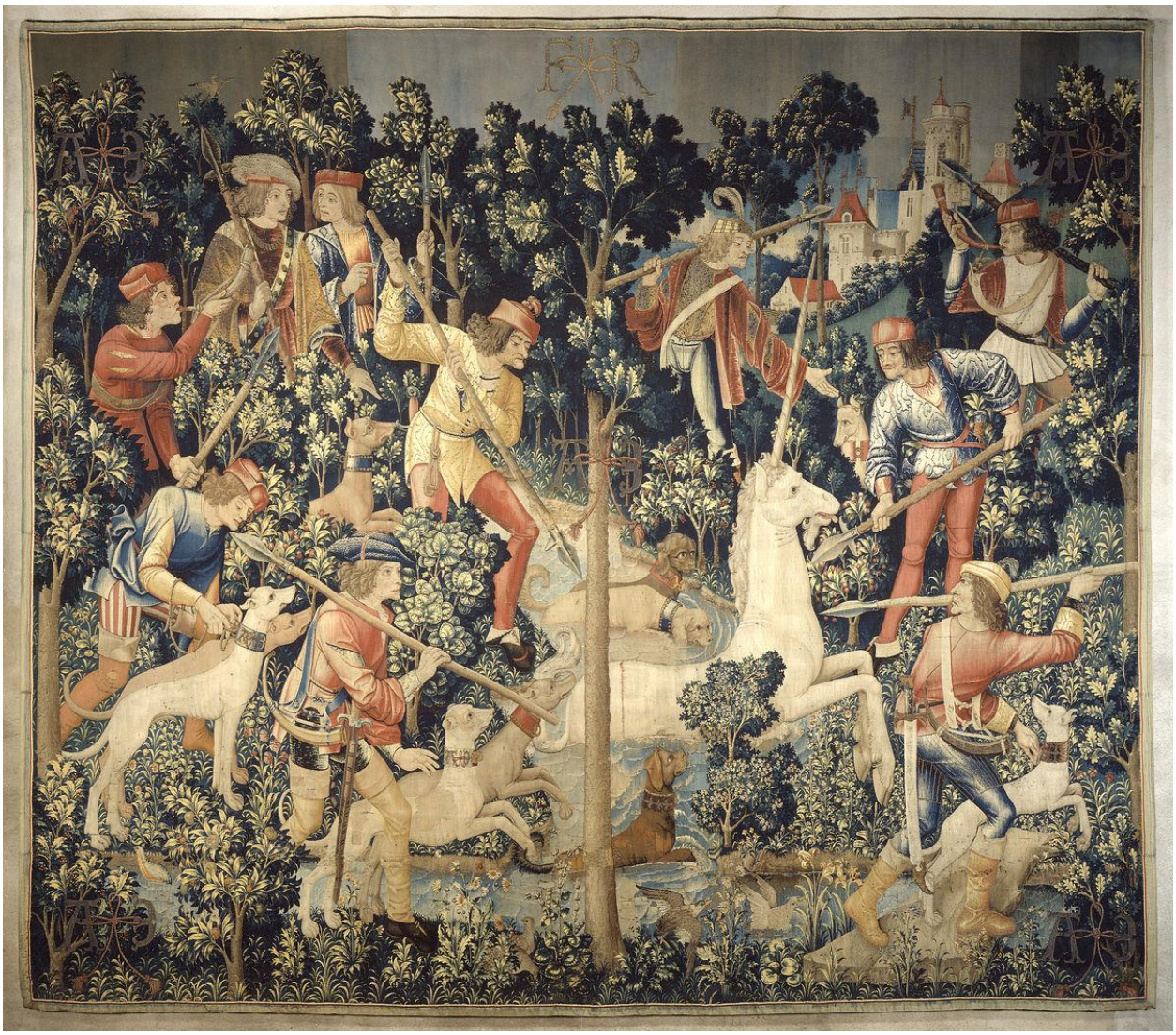
2.1 *The King with a Dominican.* Miniature painting in the *Book of Hours of Alfonso V of Aragon*, Spain (?), circa 1450. British Library, London (Add. MS 28962, folio 14 verso).

2.2 *January*. Miniature painting by the Limbourg brothers, in the *Tres Riches Heures* of the duke of Berry, circa 1410. Musée Conde, Chantilly (MS 65, folio 1 verso).

2.3 *Richard II Surrenders his Crown to Henry of Bowlingbroke, Earl of Derby.* Miniature painting in a copy of Froissart's *Chronicles,* France, circa 1470. British Library, London (MS Harl. 4380, folio 184)

2.4 *Charles VI with Author and Three Nobles.* Miniature painting by the Boucicaut Master, in Pierre Salmon's *Responses de Pierre Salmon*, after 1411. Bibliotheque Publique et Universitaire, Geneva (MS fr. 165, folio 4 recto)

2.5 *Hortus Conclusus*, Kreuzkapelle in Lachen, Canton of Schwyz, 1480, Swiss National Museum.

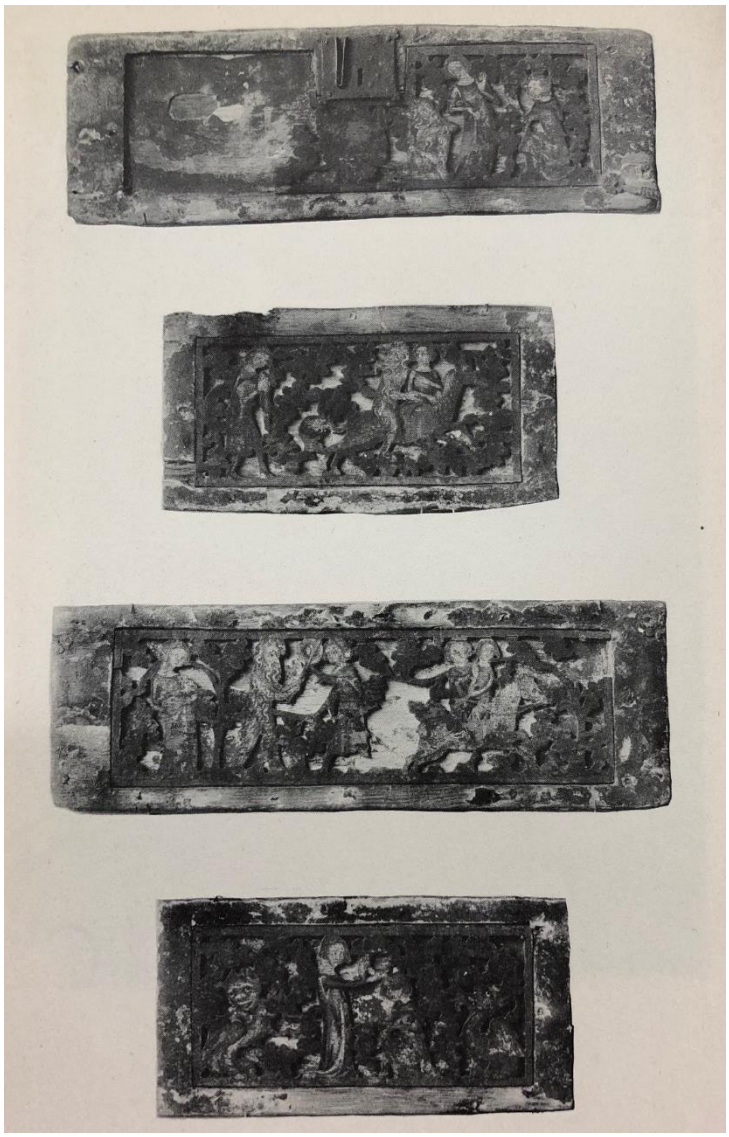


2.6 *The Unicorn is Attacked* (from the Unicorn Tapestries), 1495-1505. Gift of John D. Rockefeller Jr., 1937. Image courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Chapter III

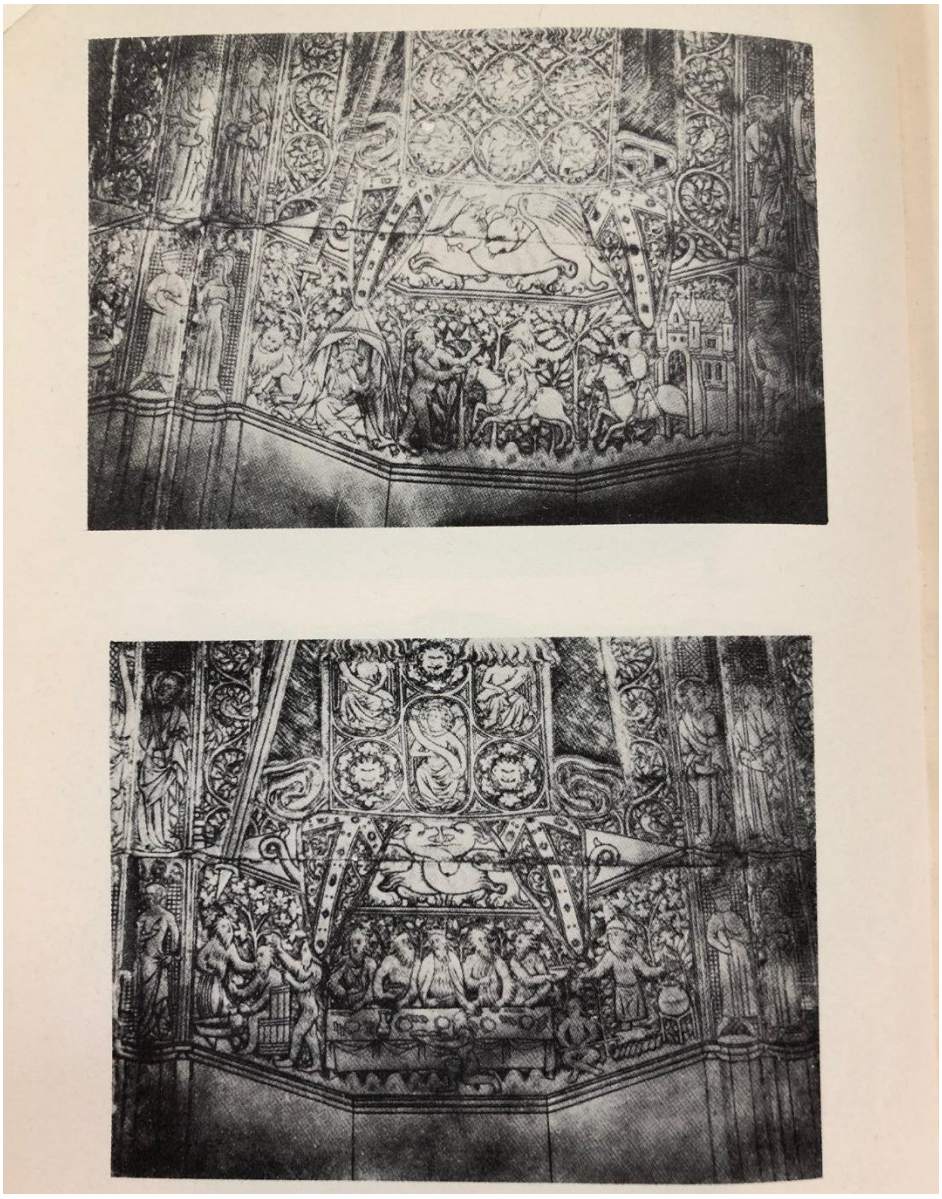
3.1 Detail, *The Fight Between Carnival and Lent,* Pieter Brueghel the Elder, 1559, Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna

3.2 Taymouth Hours, England (London?), 2nd quarter of the 14th century, Yates Thompson 13, f. 62.



3.3 Casket with victory of a knight over a Wildman, Rhinish, 14th century. Museum fur Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg.

3.4 Casket with victory of a Wildman over a knight, Rhinish, 14th century. Kunstgewerbe Museum, Cologne.

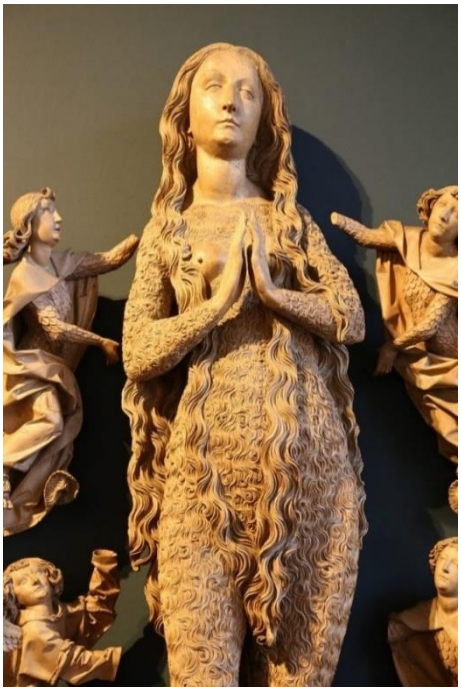


3.5 Tomb plate with lady kidnapped by Wildman, Flemish (?), 14th century, Schwerin.

3.6 *Wildman in the bonds of love*, tapestry, 15th century, Swiss, National Museum, Copenhagen.

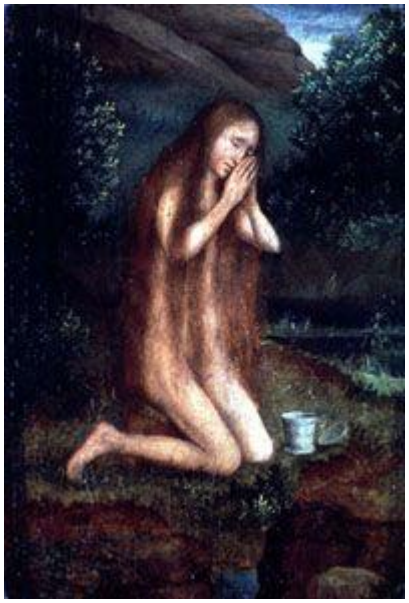
3.7 Scene from "Der Busant" (The Buzzard), 1480–90, Upper Rhenish. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC

3.8 *Unidentified Scene (Virtue and Vices?),* Southern Netherlandish, c. 1500-1510. H 9'7" x W 6'11"



3.9 Tilman Riemenschneider, Mary Magdalen taken up into the air, 1490-92, from the Altarpiece of the Magdalen, from Münnerstadt, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich.

3.10 Miniature accompanying prayers relating to Mary Magdalen, from the Sforza Hours, Add MS 34294, f. 211v



3.11 Saint Mary Magdalene, Quentin Massys, Netherlandish (active Antwerp), 1466 – 1530. Philidelphia Museum of Art.

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4.1 *The Tragic Burning of Charles VI*, Master of Anthony of Burgundy, Jean Froissart, *Chroniques*, book IV, Bruges, circa 1470-1475.

4.2 Wild men support coats of arms in the side panels of a portrait by Albrecht Dürer, 1499, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

4.3 The seal of Christian I of Denmark, 1450.

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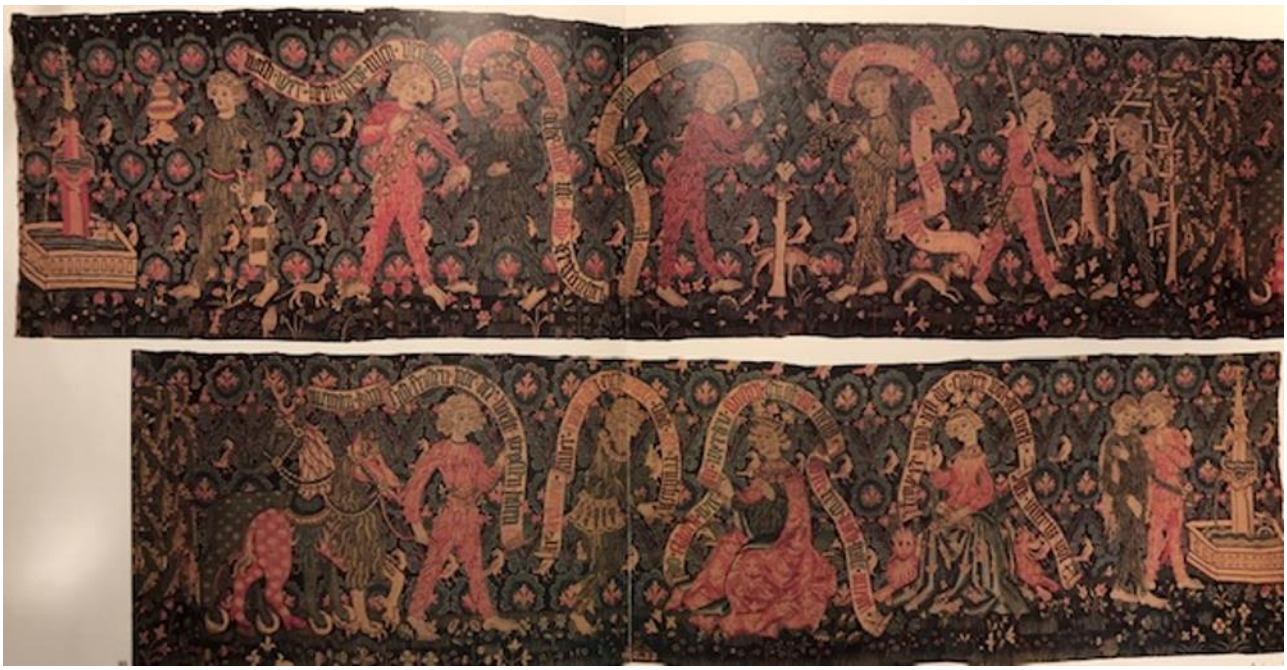
4.5 Wildman his Beasts, 1430-40, Osterreichisches Museum, Vienna.

4.6 Edelleute und Wildleute auf der Falkenjagd (Nobleman and Wildfolk on the Hawk Hunt) 1488, Historiches Museum, Basel.

4.7 *Höfische und Wilde Leute bei Jagd, Essen und Spiel* (Courtiers and Wildfolk Hunting, Eating and Playing) 1420, Musée d'oeuvre Notre-Dame, Strasbourg.



4.8 *Sinnbilder fur Hoffnungsvolle und Enttauschte* (Symbols for the Hopeful and Disappointed) 1470, Thyssen-Bornemisza, Barcelona.

4.9 *Wilde Manner Esturmen eine Burg* (Wildmen Siege on a Castle) tapestry from the Germanisches Nationalmuseum

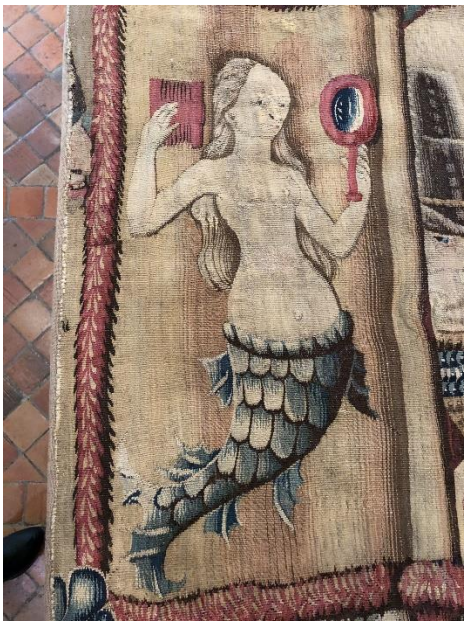
4.10 *Episode Aus Einem Ritterroman* (Episode from a *Roman*), Tournai manufacture. About 1550. Nuremberg. Germanisches Nationalmuseum. Phot. Christof Muller, Publisher, Nuremberg.

Chapter V

5.1 Proposed matching of the left and right fragments of *Le Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers*.

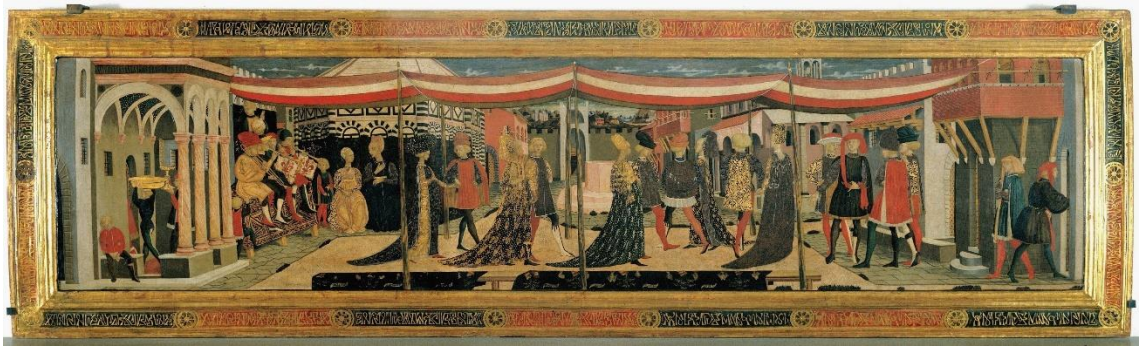
5.2 Certain details in the battle scene appear to convey text, from *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers.*

5.3 A Wildman struck while astride his horse, from *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers.*



5.4 Mermaid banner from *Combat des Hommes Sauvages et Chevaliers.*

5.5 *Bal des Sauvages.*



5.6 Adimari Panel, Dance Scene Cassone Adimari, Florence, 1450, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence

5.7 Marriage of Clarisse Montabon to Renaud, Ms-5073 folio 117, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, France.

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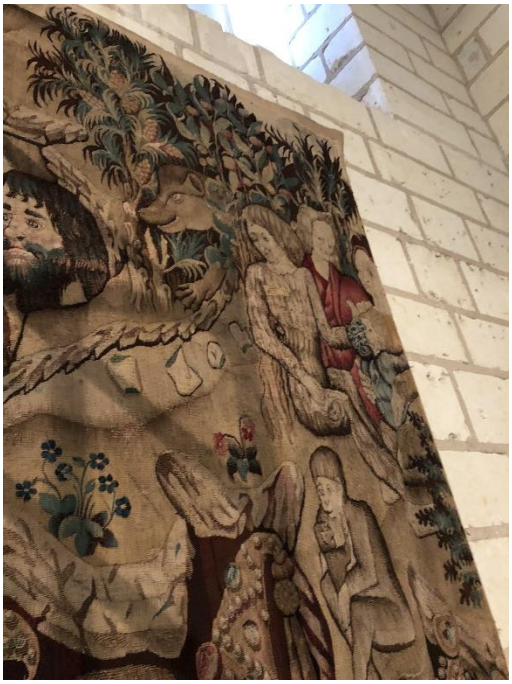
5.12 Wild couple and courtly couple sharing a bowl of wine, from *Bal des Sauvages.*

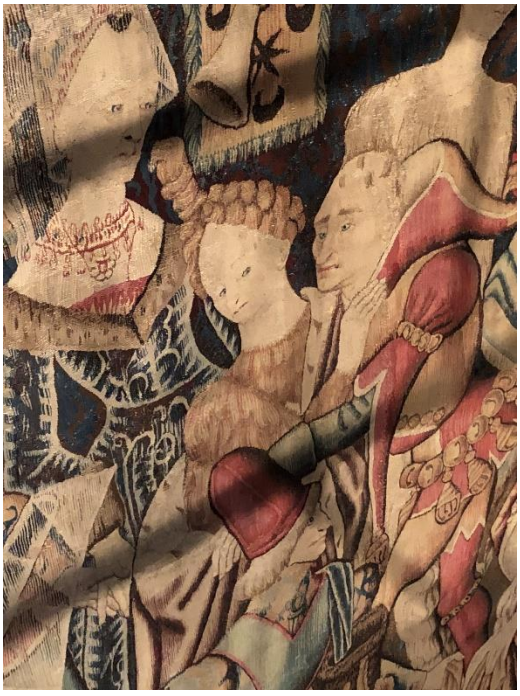


5.13 Monkey and child, Wildwoman and child detail, from *Bal des Sauvages.*

5.14 Formation of the marital alliance, from *Bal des Sauvages.*

5.15 Wildmen exchanging Wildwomen with courtier, from *Bal des Sauvages.*

5.16 Nuptial couple, from *Bal des Sauvages.*



5.17 Fool and Wildwoman, from *Bal des Sauvages.*

Figure 5.18 *Fête champêtre à la cour de Philippe le Bon*, (copy of a 16th century painting inspired by a 15th century painting), Musee des Beaux Arts, Dijon.

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