Spring 5-1-2019

Traduttore Traditore: All Translators are Traitors. Except, maybe, for Chaucer.

Karen Miranda

Abstract

The aim of this project is to analyse plot elements and word choices in Geoffrey Chaucer's "Reeve's Tale" from his greater work, *The Canterbury Tales*, and compare them to those used in a similar story from Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Day 9, Story 6 in order to determine if there are enough similar elements between the two stories to infer that Chaucer could have been familiar with Boccaccio's version of the tale when writing "The Reeve's Tale". The paper also addresses the question of whether or not Chaucer "merely translated" his source text into English and, if so, what the act of translating really means. Nida's concept of translation styles (specifically whether one uses to domesticize or forenize a work through their translation) defines translation for this paper and serves as the basis for how Chaucer can be interpreted as having been a translator, of sorts, when writing his own works.

Executive Summary

The sources for the individual stories in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* have always been up for debate. In some cases, such as in that of "the Knight's Tale", Chaucer's source material can reliably be attributed to one source: Boccaccio's epic poem The *Teseida*. However, not all of Chaucer's stories have a clear singular source. There are three different tales, for example, similar enough to "the Reeve's Tale" to be considered analogues: A French version by Jean Bodel (*De Gombert et des deux clers* [*Gombert and the Two Clerks*]), a Flemish version by an unknown author (*Een bispel van .ij. clerken* [*A Moral Tale about two Clerics]*) and an Italian version by Boccaccio (Day 9, Story 6 in the *Decameron)*. The French version by Jean Bodel has been identified as the most likely analogue Chaucer would have been familiar with because it is the oldest of the three and is known to have served as the inspiration for both the Italian and later Flemish versions of the story. However, that does not mean that Chaucer could not also have been familiar with and inspired by the other analogues when he was writing his version of "the cradle story".

In this essay, I focus on "the Reeve's Tale" and how it contains elements that suggest Chaucer could have been familiar with Boccaccio's comparable story from the *Decameron*. It is plausible to consider *Dec.* IX.6 as being, at least in part, a source material for Chaucer's "Reeve's Tale" because it contains plot elements and words that are not present in either the French or the Flemish analogues. These elements are important to focus on because, as Thompson pointed out in his book "*Chaucer, Boccaccio, and the Debate of Love: A Comparative Study of the Decameron and the Canterbury Tales*," Chaucer has a very distinct way of using his sources:

> If Chaucer was inspired by the *Teseida*, he does not reproduce it in English: we have the *Knight's Tale* (and *Anelida*) instead; if he was inspired by *Filostrato*, and even translates a good part of it directly, he still makes his own work ultimately a very different one. In short, he was his own man and the way he used his sources was one which might best be described as well absorbed. He can take a whole narrative, a scene or even a single line, and transform it by a different context. Where he adopts a concept, this too surfaces in a surprising way. (Thompson)

In other words, Chaucer was translator, not so much in the sense of taking a story and rewriting it in another language, but a translator in the sense that he could take a story and reshape it so that it would make sense to an audience it was not originally intended for and that they could connect with on a deeply human level.

In order to see which anaolgues Chaucer may have used as a source text for "The Reeve's Tale", the paper compares and contrasts plot elements and word choices in four different analogues. The Project is significant because, although there are a few different essays that discuss the similarities between a variety of different tales between *The Canterbury Tales* and *The Decameron*, there are few that specifically compare "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec. IX.6* and even fewer (none that I could find) that compare all four anologues to each other. It is important to do so because "the Reeve's Tale" contains elements from all three analogues and (in general) most closely resembles Boccaccio's consider *Dec.* IX.6. Therefore, it would be in incomplete comparison to look at just a few instead of all of the stories in relation to one another.

Table of Contents

Advice to Future Honors Students (Optional)

I love quotes, I have multiple notebooks in my room filled to brim with the words and thoughts of people much wiser than I. So, when I saw this section on advice to future honors students, my problem wasn't whether or not I would include it in my final submission, but rather figuring out which of the many pieces of advice I have found so helpful in my own life that I would choose to share. Fortunately, I did not have to search long (or much at all) because the words I needed to share found me.

Recently I was reading a book on Creative Copywriting and came across this quote by Luke Sullivan that I felt perfectly describes how I feel at the beginning of every project:

> "The way I procrastinate is to do research…. I use it as a hidey hole. *I can't possibly begin to write this! Don't you see how MUCH there is I don't know?*"

However, it is important not to get bogged down by these thoughts. The simplest way to do this is by following Anne Lamott's advice:

> "Start from where you are"

Wishing all future honors students all the luck in the world in finding and completing a project they are passionate about,

Karen Miranda
Class of 2019

Epigraph

"If Chaucer was inspired by the *Teseida*, he does not reproduce it in English: we have the *Knight's Tale* (and *Anelida*) instead; if he was inspired by *Filostrato*, and even translates a good part of it directly, he still makes his own work ultimately a very different one. In short, he was his own man and the way he used his sources was one which might best be described as well absorbed. He can take a whole narrative, a scene or even a single line, and transform it by a different context. Where he adopts a concept, this too surfaces in a surprising way".

- N.S. Thompson

Chaucer, Boccaccio, and the Debate of Love: A Comparative Study of the Decameron and the Canterbury Tales.

Chapter 1

Introduction: A Note on Translation

The sources for the individual stories in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* have always been up for debate.[i] In some cases, such as in that of "the Knight's Tale", the source material can reliably be attributed to one source: Boccaccio's epic poem The *Teseida*. However, not all of Chaucer's stories have a clear singular source. There are three different tales, for example, similar enough to "the Reeve's Tale" to be considered analogues: A French version by Jean Bodel (*De Gombert et des deux clers* [*Gombert and the Two Clerks*]), a Flemish version by an unknown author (*Een bispel van .ij. clerken* [*A Moral Tale about two Clerics]*) and an Italian version by Boccaccio (Day 9, Story 6 in the *Decameron).* The French version by Jean Bodel has been identified as the most likely version Chaucer would have been familiar with because it is the oldest of the three and is known to have served as the inspiration for both the Italian and later Flemish versions of the story.[ii] However, that does not mean that Chaucer could not also have been familiar with and inspired by the other analogues when he was writing his version of "the cradle story". In this essay, I will focus on "the Reeve's Tale" and how it contains elements that suggest Chaucer could have been familiar with Boccaccio's comparable story from the *Decameron*, which I will refer to as *Dec.* IX.6 going forward. It is plausible to consider *Dec.* IX.6 as being, at least in part, a source material for Chaucer's story because it contains plot elements and words that are not present in either the French or the Flemish analogues.[iii] These

elements are important to focus on because, as Thompson pointed out in his book "*Chaucer, Boccaccio, and the Debate of Love: A Comparative Study of the Decameron and the Canterbury Tales,*" Chaucer has a very distinct way of using his sources:

> If Chaucer was inspired by the *Teseida,* he does not reproduce it in English: we have the *Knight's Tale* (and *Anelida*) instead; if he was inspired by *Filostrato,* and even translates a good part of it directly, he still makes his own work ultimately a very different one. In short, he was his own man and the way he used his sources was one which might best be described as well absorbed. He can take a whole narrative, a scene or even a single line, and transform it by a different context. Where he adopts a concept, this too surfaces in a surprising way. (Thompson)

In other words, Chaucer was translator, not so much in the sense of taking a story and rewriting it in another language, but a translator in the sense that he could take a story and reshape it so that it would make sense to an audience it was not originally intended for and that they could connect with on a deeply human level.

In Italian there is an expression which lends itself to the title of this essay: Traduttore Traditore which, directly translated into English, would be: Translator Traitor. What it means in Italian is that no translator can help but also be a traitor because of the very nature of translating.[iv] In his essay, "Principles of Translation as Exemplified by Bible Translating", Eugene Nida offers a definition of the goals of translation in the following way: "Translating consists in producing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language, first in meaning and secondly in style" (Nida 155). However, it is difficult to fully translate something into a new language and fully retain both meaning and style because

both things have very different ways in which they present themselves. For example, style appears in a tangible way that can be accessed through its printed form and encompasses things such as grammar, word choice and literary style. On the other hand, meaning appears in an intangible way that needs to be accessed through interpretation, which is heavily influenced by a reader's own personal life experiences and, perhaps more importantly, by the cultural context in which it resides.[v] If, then, according to the Italian expression, a translator does not successfully carry over both these things in his work, he has betrayed the source text by stripping it of one of the essential parts of its identity by favoring style over meaning, or vice versa. Therefore, it becomes the goal of the translator to reproduce both elements of the work in the new language as closely as possible. Yet, according to Nida, this is only possible through a transformation of the text in its new receptor language.[vi]

In his essay, Nida uses two graphs to map out in a visual way how a work functions in its own cultural context and how that structure must be transformed in order to work in another. Figure 1 from Nida's essay shows how a message lives within its own culture by showing how people (R) perceive a work in their own culture. When the message (M) is born out of the same culture in which it exists, it is interpreted as "domestic". This means that the people (R) understand the message because it is familiar and reflects elements of daily-life they interact with on some level every day. There is a linear mode of communication that an author (S) uses to send his or her message (M) to the reader (R): the author creates the message which the reader is exposed to and free to interpret within the contexts of his own culture.

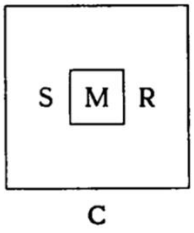

Figure 1

In the diagram of Figure 1 *S* stands for source (the speaker as source and encoder). *M* is the message as expressed in accordance with the particular structure (the inner square in this instance) of the language. The message may include anything from a single word to an entire utterance. *R* is the receptor (including decoder and receiver), and the outer square (designated by *C*) represents the cultural context as a whole, of which the message (as a part of the language) is itself a part and a model (compare similarity of shapes).

(Nida, *Principles of Translation as Exemplified by Bible Translating* p. 150)

However, as presented in Figure 2, in order to truly translate something into another language, it is essential then to recreate the message (or transform it) so that it can act in the same way within the new host culture. In order to do this, the translator must assume the role of the reader in the source culture before he can assume the position of the author in the new culture. Only after the translator has read and interpreted the meaning of the message in the source culture can he try to convey the original message in a way that people in the new culture can understand as if it were born out of their own cultural context.

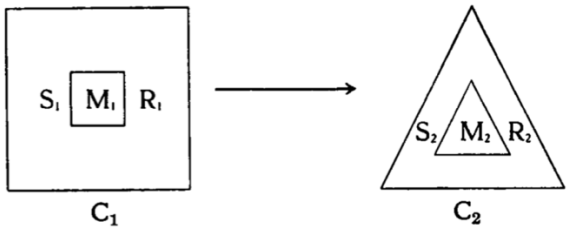

Figure 2

(Nida, *Principles of Translation as Exemplified by Bible Translating* p. 151)

There is another way of translating that Nida also touches upon that aims to foreignize the source text as a way of preserving the messages original meaning. In this way, M1 would not "transform" into a new shape, but rather keep its shape and move into the new culture so that people will easily recognize it as foreign. The translator can accomplish both methods of translation through the style in which he chooses to present the message. For example, if the translator wants to domesticate a message, he must make changes in certain parts of the text in order to explain something in a way that is relatable to the new audience. Nida uses the example of a source text using fresh snow in order to describe something white. If snow is not known in the culture of the receptor language because the climate is too hot for snow, the translator must find another metaphor to use that conveys the whiteness of the object as well as snow does in the source text. If, however, the translator chooses to foreignize the message to the reader, then he can retain the original image of snow.

Ultimately, then, a translator is tasked with preserving a source text's meaning and style and provided with two means of doing so: domesticating or foreignizing the text in the new receptor language. Though this may seem like a complex undertaking, when the translator is someone like Geoffrey Chaucer who is knowledgeable about what he wants to do and how he wants to do it, it becomes very easy. Geoffrey Chaucer was familiar with the concept that translation could not be an exclusively linear experience, but had to be something more complex in order to successfully retain meaning for the reader and be able stand alone as a meaningful work on its own.[vii] That is, an exploration of which texts could have inspired Chaucer would be incomplete if one were to look exclusively at a line-by-line translation or at a general list of plot elements. It is essential to look at both in order to see how Chaucer could have possibly pulled apart his source texts and

then rearranged them in a way that would simultaneously preserve the overall meaning of the text, make sense to his readers, and align with the new work he was trying to create.

Chapter 2

Method

Many articles and essays compare stories from the *Canterbury Tales* to their "Boccaccian counterparts" by comparing the original and translated versions of those stories. For example, there are many essays that focus on "the Clerk's Tale" & Griselda's Tale from *Dec.* X.10 and "the Knight's Tale" & the *Teseida*.[viii] However, I have never encountered a dedicated essay in which a similar in-depth textual comparison has been done with "the Reeve's Tale" and multiple of its alleged sources, including *Dec.* IX.6. The closest I have come across is an essay by Peter Beidler, in which he compares "the Reeve's Tale" with two other French tales and the Flemish one I am also using. For the most part, "the Reeve's Tale" is talked about, either as another tale that was possibly written with Boccaccian influence or, more commonly, as an example and point of reference for how Chaucer's characters interact with each other, (i.e. the Miller and the Reeve).[ix] For my own comparison between the tales, I will use two main strategies. First, a comparison of plot elements in the overall stories that may indicate Chaucer's familiarity with one version of the tale over the other. Secondly, a line by line comparison of focused sections inspired by Piero Boitani's work in his book *Chaucer and Boccaccio* in order to determine which words were used and how they affect the story.[x] This paper will focus on the first method of comparison in order to establish the similarities between the four tales in a broader sense while the line-by-line comparisons is work that falls to a different essay.

I wish to focus on the line-by-line comparison in a separate essay because it will take a lot of time and space to break apart, translate and compare three different versions of the tale to "the Reeve's Tale". However, it is important to explain why I have chosen this method and how I think it can be useful in determining which tale Chaucer may (or may not) have been familiar with when writing "The Reeve's Tale". For example, in his book *Chaucer and Boccaccio*, Piero Boitani used the line-by line comparison method in order to find similarities between Chaucer's "Knight's Tale" and Boccaccio's *Teseida.* Although some of the conclusions he draws from his comparison are flawed, his work exemplified how examining two different texts on a line-by-line level can be very useful in understanding Chaucer's relationship with his sources. Boitani briefly goes over the methods he uses in the following way: "[By] reading *Teseida* and "the Knight's Tale" side by side, line by line, one follows Chaucer's very process of thinking and creating, thus achieving a completeness that no other study has attained. When, on the other hand, one discusses characterization or structure in the two poems, one applies an external criterion to a process that was originally different and from which general conclusions can be drawn" (75). In his book Boitani goes on to claim that one can observe how Boccaccio influenced Chaucer throughout his career as a writer. The parallels, as Boitani determined, can first be observed with the *Anelida*, which was predominantly influenced by the *Teseida* stylistically. The next sphere of Boccaccian influence according to Boitani can be found in the *Parlement of Foules* (the sixteen stanzas that Boitani declares are undeniably *Teseida*-inspired) which constitute Chaucer's closest imitation of Boccaccio (Boitani 72). Thus, "the Knight's Tale" marks the stage for Boitani in Chaucer's literary career where he perfected his interpretation and use of the *Teseida* in his own work as 'evidenced' by his ability to re-tell a version of the story he found so interesting, only now with his own personal and unique literary voice. Therefore, by analyzing the text on this

micro scale, one can look, not only at the overall ideas that might be present in Chaucer and Boccaccio's versions of the tale, but also at language and how it changes from "the original" text to the "translated" text.

Though it is weak and, on its own, incapable of successfully proving Chaucer's familiarity with anything because it can be argued as being a method to explain away inconveniences, there is one last concept Boitani brings up in *Chaucer and Boccaccio* that can be useful if it is supported by additional information. According to Boitani, Chaucer toyed with the details of his source materials so that they would either make more sense in the context of his own story, or fit within the framework of his overall narrative better: "Chaucer … eliminates the references presented by Boccaccio in his commentary and uses only those that served his purpose. Since he has to reduce the size of his tale to adapt it to the needs of his pilgrimage, Chaucer removes the superfluities from the text he is using" (Boitani 116). Though interesting and in-line with Nida's concept of translating in a way that domesticates a text, this last concept is not able to evidence Chaucer's familiarity with a Boccaccian text. However, if Boitani had supplemented his reasoning with arguments similar to the one's Leah Schwebel or Jessica Harkins did in their essays, it could have been much more convincing and less susceptible to criticism. Leah Schwebel's essay, "Redressing Griselda: Restoration through Translation in the Clerk's Tale" and Jessica Harkins essay "Chaucer's Clerks Tale and Boccaccio's *Decameron* X.10" both use methods of comparisons that would have made Boitani's work more complete had he used them in his own process of comparison. The point Schwebel makes in her essay is that Chaucer restored the *Decameron* by undoing all "the stylistic and moral 'improvements' that Petrarch first made to *Dec.* X.10, [therefore] restoring the tale to its original function" (13). This idea argues that a translation cannot always be trusted to be faithful to the original, even if the

translator is the celebrated poet Petrarch. Schwebel argues that Petrarch could not have been Chaucer's only source because Chaucer's version contains aspects of Boccaccio's original story that Petrarch purposefully left out in order to improve the story according to his own moral ideas. Jessica Harkins uses a similar method on a smaller scale when she focuses on four specific terms from "the Clerk's Tale" and traces how their presence, or lack thereof, in the various analogues of Griselda's Tale act as key indicators of the *Decameron* being a direct source material for Chaucer's version of the story.

By using Harkins' and Schwebel's methods of comparison to supplement Boitani's use of line by line comparison, it will be easier to determine if it is plausible for Chaucer to have been familiar with Boccaccio's *Dec.* IX.6. Before I get into my own work, however, I will provide a summary of "the Reeve's Tale", and then explain how the other four tales differ from each other, using "the Reeves Tale" as a point of reference.

Chapter 3

Analogues in Relation to "the Reeves Tale"

The Reeve's Tale

The *Canterbury Tales* is a story about a group of people from varying social classes who embark on a pilgrimage to Canterbury to visit the tomb of the English martyr, Saint Thomas Becket. It is set in April at the Tabard Inn where the proprietor, Harry Bailey, finds the group so entertaining that he decides to join them on their journey. He suggests the group participate in a story-telling competition in which he would serve as the judge and declare a victor who would win a prize: a lavish dinner paid for by the other pilgrims. The members of the group agree to the conditions set by the Host to each tell four tales - two on the way to Canterbury and another two on the way back.[xi] Chaucer inserts himself into the story as one of the pilgrims and, before beginning with the tales, introduces each character in the General Prologue with a description of both their physical appearances and social status. When Chaucer finishes describing his companions, the story-telling competition begins, starting with "the Knight's Tale". From then on, most of the tales that follow are preceded by a storyteller's prologue in which the narrative of the overall story progresses, character plots and relationships are established. For example, in "the Miller's Prologue" Chaucer alludes to the fact that the Miller and the Reeve knew each other before the trip: "it is patent that these two rascals have known each other long before their meeting at the Tabard Inn. Robin, the Miller, addresses Oswald, the Reeve, by name, and he is

aware that Oswald has a wife; the Reeve vulgarly calls upon the drunken Robin to hold his tongue, as if he knew exactly what story Robin [was] going to tell" (Bowden 249). The familiar relationship between the Miller and the Reeve becomes even more interesting when it becomes apparent that the pair do not get along. The Miller seems to be making fun of the Reeve in some way with his tale, as we can infer from the Reeve's insulted reaction to "the Miller's Tale" in his own prologue:

> This dronke Millere hath tooled us heer
> How that bigyled was a carpenteer,
> Peraventure in scorn, for I am oon.
> And, by youre leve, I shal hym quite anoon;
> Right in his cherles termes wol I speke.
> I pray to God his nekke mote to-breke; (Chaucer 78, lines 3913-18).

Thus, "the Miller's Tale" enrages the Reeve so much that he decides to use his first turn as a narrator as a vehicle through which to get back at the Miller.

In short, "the Reeve's Tale" is a story about two students who trick a dishonest miller in revenge because he stole corn and flour from them. Chaucer begins the story describing the ugly, quarrelsome and bully of a Miller, Symkyn, his proud wife and their plump and unmarried twenty-year-old daughter, Malyne. Next, he describes the two students from Cambridge with thick northern accents, John and Aleyn, who volunteer to run an errand for their sick schoolmaster. They assure their schoolmaster that they will be extra vigilant at the mill since he is known to be a trickster and stole half of the school's grain the last time the schoolmaster was there. The students came up with a plan to keep an eye on their grain by pretending to be very interested in the process of milling. However, Symkyn realized what their true intentions were and had his wife untie their horses in order to distract them. The students then spent the rest of

the day chasing down their horses while the Miller, again, stole half their grain, which he had his wife hide by using it to bake a cake.

By the time the students had captured their horses again, the day was almost over. Because they would not be able to make it back to their school in Cambridge before dark, they asked the Miller if they could spend the night at his house. The Miller agreed but warned the students that because the house was small, they would have to sleep with him, his wife, his daughter and his infant son in one bedroom, though in different beds. After dinner, everyone was in the bedroom sleeping when Aleyn, kept awake by the family's drunken snoring, decided that because the Miller succeeded in stealing the corn and flour from them, he would have sex with his daughter as retribution. Aleyn then got out of his bed and made his way to Malyne's bed to complete his plan. John stayed behind, jealous and angry at himself for not having had the courage to do the same. At that moment, the Miller's wife got out of bed and John, taking advantage of the situation, moved the cradle from her bedside over to his own. When the wife got back from relieving herself outside, she walked over to her bed but, because she did not find the cradle there, thought she had somehow walked over to the wrong one. She stumbled around in the dark until she found the cradle and got into the bed with John who, upon feeling her lay down next to him, started having sex with her. After a few hours, Aleyn left the daughter's bed thinking he got away with his plan. When he got to his own, however, he noticed the cradle and, thinking he had made a mistake, found his way to the Miller's bed. Then, thinking the Miller was his friend, he bragged about how he had sex with the Miller's daughter three times during the night. In anger, the Miller punched Aleyn in the face and the two started fighting. The fight awoke the Miller's wife who, still thinking John was her husband, asked him to break up the fight between the two students. John "agreed" to help break up the fight, but really left to help

Aleyn beat up the Miller. While John was looking for a stick to use in the fight, the wife, who knew the room better than he did, found a staff for herself. She picked it up and, confusing her husband's white and shiny bald head with one of the students' white sleeping caps, hit him over the head with it instead of one of the students. John and Aleyn then made their escape and left, taking the cake the miller's daughter told Aleyn about with them, and leaving the Miller behind injured, cuckolded, and without the gains of his theft or the payment he rightfully deserved for milling the student's grain and lodging them overnight.

Dec, IX.6

The Decameron can be simply summarized in the way Boccaccio himself describes in the preface to the novel: "Here begins the book called Decameron, also known as Prince Galeotto, which contains one hundred stories told in ten days by seven ladies and three young men" [xii]. However, though this is enough to satisfy Boccaccio, it will not do for the purposes of this essay because, similar to *the Canterbury Tales*, *the Decameron* is a story in which the framework within which the stories are told and the ways in which the authors inserts himself into the narrative are as important to notice as the tales themselves. The stories in both *the Canterbury* Tales and *the Decameron* are framed within a frame. That is to say that there is one overarching narrative in both Chaucer and Boccaccio's story – the pilgrimage to Canterbury and the flight from Florence respectively- and a second series of narratives told by the characters from the main storyline– the tales recounted by the pilgrims and the brigata. Reading "the Reeve's Tale*"* with *Dec.* IX.6 in mind adds to our appreciation of Chaucer because it allows us to think of the tale, not as a free-standing fabliau[xiii] (like the French and Flemish tales), but as a single living

piece of a greater and more complex narrative framework. Like Chaucer who inserts himself into the story as one of the characters on the pilgrimage, Boccaccio becomes part of the narrative on four occasions: in the preface, in the introductions to days 1 and 4, and in the Authors Conclusion at the end of the story. Both these things tie *the Canterbury Tales* and *the Decameron* to one another and can be considered another indication of Chaucer's familiarity with Boccaccio's when modeling his own work. However there are other works from the East that predate *the Decameron* with a similar structure, such as *Arabi Nisollasaya* or *One Thousand and One Nights*, that Chaucer could also have focused on when writing his own story. Still as Rebhorn wrote in the preface of the book, there is growing support among critics that Chaucer was familiar with *the Decameron* when the wrote *the Canterbury Tales:*

> This first volume begins with a fresh examination of the sources of the frame of the work. Hellen Cooper's assertion that Boccaccio's *Decameron* is the one "text that can stake a primary claim to being Chaucer's model for the Tales" represents a major shift of the opinion among a number of scholars who are now willing to credit the influence of this work on *The Canterbury Tales*. (Boccaccio vii).

Boccaccio starts off the narrative with a Preface in which he addresses his readers (whom he presumes to be women) and describes that he is writing this book to comfort women who are in love because he knows what it means to be in love, and though it is a noble thing, how painful it can be.[xiv] He continues his direct address to the "Most gracious ladies" in the introduction for Day 1 and starts off the introductions by giving the ladies a brief reminder of what life was like in Florence during the plague. *The Decameron* takes place in Florence during the year 1348 and Boccaccio sets the stage with the brutally vivid descriptions of Florence at the time so that the reader can feel as the ten characters – seven women and three men- must have felt when they met

in the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella and decided to leave the city for a total of two weeks in order to escape the plague. Similar to the Characters in *the Canterbury Tales,* the characters in *the Decameron* seem to know each other: some because they are somehow related, others because they are in love with one of the characters.[xv] Over the course of the two weeks, the group, or *brigata* (brigade), decide to occupy themselves by telling stories to each other during ten out of the fourteen days. They use the remaining four days for washing and religious observance. During the first day the group decided that it would be best to choose a different person each day to reign as the King or Queen who would plan the meals and entertainment for the rest of the *brigata* as well as choose the topic the narrators should adhere to. A parallel to this arrangement can be found in the *Canterbury Tales* with the Host who dictates which pilgrims will tell their stories (even if he does not have as much control over the speakers as the Kings and Queens have over the rest of the members of the *brigata*) and promises the winner of the competition a plentiful meal. The days in the *Decameron* are differentiated from one another by their respective introductions and conclusions that serve to move the plot of the overarching narrative along. The days themselves are then further divided into ten sections, one for every storyteller, that include a short summary of the tale at the top of the page and, much like the prologues that precede the storytellers' tales in the *Canterbury Tales,* an introduction by the narrator before the story actually begins. Each day (and some stories) are also ended with a song.

On Day 9, Emilia is the queen and she decides that there should be no theme for that day. Still, many of the stories told that day are humorous and Panfilo, the narrator for *Dec,* IX.6, decides to continue this unofficial theme with his tale. In his contemporary English edition of the *Decameron,* Wayne Rebhorn translated the summary of *Dec,* IX.6 as follows:

> Two young men find lodging overnight, and while one of them goes to bed with their host's daughter, the host's wife inadvertently sleeps with the other. Then, the youth who was with the daughter gets into bed with her father, and thinking he is talking to his companion, tells him everything. A great commotion ensues, at which point the wife, realizing her mistake, gets into bed with her daughter and by means of a few choice words restores the peace (Boccaccio 724).

Though the general plot of the story is very similar to "the Reeve's Tale," *Dec,* IX.6 differs from it in a few key ways. In "the Reeve's Tale," the two young men are students from Cambridge who only know and interact with the Miller and his family when they need to for business transactions (the milling of the university's grains). In contrast, in *Dec,* IX.6, the young men, Pinuccio and Adriano, are not students, but noblemen – a point we will discuss further at the end of section III. Additionally, "the Miller" is transformed from a mean and sneaky man into a simple and kind peasant living in the countryside outside of Florence. The two young men end up at his house because one of them, Pinuccio, is in love with the peasant's daughter, Niccolosa. The two lovers came up with the plan together for Pinuccio to pretend to be a traveler on his way back to Florence seeking a place to stay overnight. By doing this, they would have an opportunity to spend the night together without exposing either one of themselves to gossip. Unlike any of the other stories where the second clerk was jealous of his friend, in the *Decameron,* Adriano, Pinuccio's friend, sleeps with the peasant's wife merely by chance when she accidentally gets into his bed. The night scene is essentially the same in *Dec,* IX.6 as it is in "the Reeve's Tale," except for the way in which the crib gets switched around. However, the ending is significantly different since no fight takes place at all thanks to the quick thinking of the peasant's wife.

Gombert and the Two Clerks (French Tale)

In the French version of the tale, the two young men are students, like in "the Reeve's Tale," but many of the details that lead up to the main part of the story are different. In this version, the "Miller" is also a peasant who, this time, has a name: Gombert. One main difference, however, between this story and "the Reeve's Tale" is that in this story, Gombert's wife, Dame Guile, is so beautiful that the student who sleeps with and falls in love with her 'at first sight'. As in the other stories, the student who sleeps with Gombert's daughter (in this story unnamed) is the first to get out of the bed while the other is left behind, jealous of his friend and thinking about Dame Guile. A major difference, however, in this version of the tale as compared to the previous two is that in this version, the daughter is tricked into having sex with the clerk when he gives her an iron ring he stole from one of her mother's hanging pans by telling her it is a ring made out of pure gold. Furthermore, it is Gombert, not his wife, who gets out of bed to relieve himself and is tricked by the misplaced cradle. The student then gets into bed with Dame Guile and has sex with her three times during the night. At one point, Dame Guile makes a comment about Gombert being impotent that is not present in Chaucer or in Boccaccio's versions of the tale. The rest of the story proceeds as it does in "the Reeve's Tale", except that the wife never gets up or tries to help her husband. The story ends with a warning to men with pretty wives to never allow a clerk to sleep in their homes lest the same thing happen to them as did to Gombert.

A Moral Tale about two Clerics (Flemish Tale)

The Flemish tale is almost exactly the same as the French tale, save for a few minor differences. In fact, the stories are so similar that the peasant's name in this version of the tale, Gobert, is only slightly changed from the original French 'Gombert'. The differences are that in the Flemish tale: the fight between Gobert and the student is bloody; Gobert falls into the hearth after the student hits him; the wife makes an extra comment while she asks the student she thinks is her husband to break up the fight and the warning at the tales conclusion is longer and changes from addressing men with beautiful wives to addressing men with bold wives. The differences are noteworthy because they all, save for the warning for men at the end, make an appearance in some way in "the Reeve's Tale" as well.

Now that we have compared and contrasted the stories themselves, I will go into detail about some plot elements that reflect the possibility that *Dec*. IX.6 influenced "the Reeve's Tale".

Chapter 4

Similarities in Plot between "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec.* IX.6:

One of the most important aspects that is present in both "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec.* IX.6 that differs in the French and Flemish versions of the tale is the role of the host's wife. While in the French and Flemish versions she is a very passive character, she is an active one in both Chaucer and Boccaccio's versions. By active, I mean that she has a voice, speaks more than just a few lines, and tries, in some way, to stop things from happening to her husband rather than remaining a bystander in the story. For example, in the French and Flemish versions, it is the husband that gets up to pee, leaving his wife in bed alone. The second clerk then takes advantage of the situation, moves the crib that serves to indicate which bed belongs to the peasant, and sneaks into bed with the wife, pretending to be her husband. Thus, in these version of the story, the wife does not really physically move much. By contrast, in "the Reeve's Tale", the wife is actually the character performing the action of getting up to go relieve herself. In *the Decameron*, the situation is almost identical, except for the fact that the wife gets up to find out if a cat had broken anything after she heard a crash coming from the other side of the house. In the Italian version of the story, it is the second clerk, Adriano, that gets up in the middle of the night to go outside. He is still the one who moves the crib from the wife's bed to his own only this time, he does it innocently rather than intentionally after stubbing his toe on it on his way out of the room.

The most important reason for which the wife in both Chaucer and Boccaccio's stories is an active character, however, is how she responds to the fighting between her husband and the two clerks. In both the Flemish and French versions of the tale, the wife simply sends the second clerk (whom she believes is her husband) to break up the fight. Though they did not know any better and were acting in good faith, the wives in both the French and Flemish versions simply let their husbands, older men, get badly beat up by the two young clerks. By contrast, in the *Dec.* IX.6 version of the story, the wife is described as a wise woman and figures out a way to stop the fight from happening in the first place. Boccaccio Writes: "Incontanente conobbe là dove stata era e con cui; per che, come savia, senza alcuna parola dire, subitamente si levò, e presa la culla del suo figlioletto … D'altra parte Adriano, veggendo che la donna saviamente la sua vergogna e quella della figliuola ricopriva" (*Il Deca.* 753). [But as soon as she heard Adriano's words, she immediately realized where she was and with whom. Wise woman that she was, however, she got up at once without saying another word and grabbed her baby son's cradle. … For [Adriano's] part, seeing how adroitly the woman was covering up both her own shame and her daughter's.] Chaucer creates a wife who is comically caught in between being as wise as Boccaccio's wife and as inactive as those in the French and Flemish versions. In "the Reeve's Tale" the wife decides to stop the fight by attacking one of the clerks, but, unfortunately, she makes a mistake and hits her own husband over the head with her staff, adding to his injuries, and rendering him unable to fight back. As in the French and Flemish tales, the clerks continue to beat the husband up until they decide to leave. Chaucer Writes:

> And with the staf she drow ay neer and neer,
> And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle
> And smoot the millere on the pyled skulle,
> That doun he goth, and cride, "Harrow! I dye!"
> Thise clerkes beete hym weel and lete hym lye, (Chaucer 84, lines 4304 –08)

Though the wife in Chaucer's tale ultimately caused more harm that she did good, it is still noteworthy for her to be a character that plays a part in the tale that is more than just a means for one of the clerks to get revenge on the Miller.

Another very important plot element is the relationship between the first clerk and the host's daughter. In both the French and Flemish versions, the main victim of the clerk's trick is the daughter, whereas in the English and Italian version of the story, it is her father. In both the French and Flemish tales, the first clerk ends up at the peasant's house by chance and becomes infatuated with the daughter when he first sees her. Consequently, he steals a ring from the house to trick the daughter with during the night. The peasant's daughter is further identified as the tricked person in the French and Flemish analogues because her relationship with the clerk is purely transactional: were it not for the golden ring she thought she was receiving, she would not have done what the clerk wanted. In the French tale Bodel writes:

> Et cil li a bouté l'anel
> Ou doit, si qu'il passa la jointe.
> Et cele s'est près de lui jointe,
> Et jure que jà nel prendroit.
> Toutes eures, mi tort, mi droit,
> L'uns vers l'autre tant s'amolie
> Que li clers li fist la folie (Benson 92, lines 70 – 76).

> And he pushed the ring
> On her finger, so that it passed the joint,
> And she pressed herself close to him
> And swore that she would never leave him.
> Immediately, half by trickery, half openly,
> the one became so tender to the other
> that the clerk accomplished his foolish desire (Benson 92, lines 70 – 76).

In the Flemish tale the author writes:

> Doe*n* stac hijt haer ande*n* vingher,
> Dat ouer hare cnokel voer.
> Daer seide hi ende swore:

Hets uwe, proeuet wat d*at* weight.
Mettien hi hare bat nare leeght
En*de* spelde met hare een spel,
Seidict v, soe wistijt wel (Beidler 60, lines 88-94)

then he put it on her finger
and it slipped over her knuckle.
Then he said and solemnly swore,
"It is yours. Feel the weight of it."
With that he settled himself closer to her
and played a game with her.
If I told you which one, you would know it well

This scene depicts a very different objective than the purposeful reasons Boccaccio and Chaucer's characters have for sleeping with the daughter in their stories. For example, in *Dec.* IX.6, Pinuccio and the host's daughter were already lovers who had come up with the plan together for Pinuccio to pretend to need to stay the night at her house in order to finally consummate their love. In "the Reeve's Tale", Alan's reason for sleeping with the Miller's daughter is much more sinister. He sleeps with and essentially rapes Malyne as a way to exact revenge on the Miller for having stolen his corn: "If that I may, yon wenche wil I swyve. / Som esement has lawe yshapen us, / For, John, ther is a lawe that says thus: / That gif a man in a point be agreved, / That in another he sal be releved" (Chaucer 82, lines 4178-82).

Still, in both Boccaccio and Chaucer's versions of the tale there is more depth to the relationship between the first clerk and the daughter. In *Dec.* IX.6, it is established in the beginning that Pinuccio and Niccolosa were lovers before he stayed the night in her father's house. Therefore, Pinuccio's intentions from the very beginning are to trick Niccolosa's father as a way to continue his relationship with her. The tale ends with an assurance that later on, Pinuccio and Niccolosa found safer and more discrete ways to sleep with each other in secret. "E poi appresso, trovati altri modi, Pinuccio con la Niccolosa si ritrovò" (*Il Deca.* 754). [From then on, Pinuccio found other ways to spend time with Niccolosa]. In "the Reeve's Tale", it is

assumed that Aleyn is familiar with the Miller and his family before the events of the story take place because when he arrives at the mill, he asks Symkyn after his wife and daughter. “And at the mille the sak adoun he layth. Aleyn spak first: “All hayl, Symond, y-fayth! Hou fares thy faire doghter and thy wyf?” (Chaucer 80, lines 4021-23). Though it seems by the text that Aleyn only knew the Miller’s daughter superficially and did not have a romantic attachment to her, towards the end of the story, one can observe a relationship, or at the very least a fondness, develop between the two. When Aleyn reaches Malyne, she was more a victim of rape than a victim of a trick. Chaucer emphasized that she had been sleeping when Aleyn got out of his bed and that by the time he got to her, it was already too late for her to cry out for help. “And up he rist, and by the wenche he crepte. / This wenche lay upright and faste slepte, / Til he so nye was, er she myghte espie, / That it had been to late for to crie, / And shortly for to seyn, they were aton” (Chaucer 82, lines 4193-97). Though she did not originally want to have a relationship with Aleyn (if she did there would not have been a reason for her to cry out for help), by the time the night is over, it is obvious that both Malyne and Aleyn have developed feelings for each other. Whereas in the Flemish and French analogues, neither the clerk nor the daughter say anything to each other when the clerk returns to his bed, in Chaucer’s version of the story, Aleyn declares himself to be Malyne’s clerk and she reveals to him what happened to his corn and how he can get it back from her father:

> Aleyn wax wery in the dawenynge,
> For he had swonken al the longe nyght,
> And seyde, “Fare weel, Malyne, sweete wight!
> The day is come; I may no lenger byde; But evermo, wher so I go or ryde,
> I is thyn awen clerk, swa have I seel!”
> “Now deere lemman,” quod she, “go, far weel!
> But er thow go, o thing I wol thee telle:
> Whan that thou wendest homeward by the melle,
> Right at the entrée of the dore buhynde
> Thou shalt a cake of half a busshel fynde

That was ymaked of thyne owene mele,
Which that I heelp my sire for to stele.
And, good lemman, God thee save and kepe!
And with that word almost she gan to wepe ". (Chaucer 83, lines 4234-48)

By the time Aleyn leaves Malyne's side, she has become so attached to him that she is sad to see him go. In both tales, the daughter and the clerk that slept with her seems to have feelings towards one another and thus each reflect an element of love: Boccaccio more traditionally through his tale of two people who genuinely love each other and wish to express that love physically, and Chaucer in a way that mocks it by having his whose spiritual love of each other is born, perhaps also genuinely, out of their physical actions. This detail, along with the fact that it is her father who is tricked and not her, can support the theory that Chaucer could have been familiar with Boccaccio's *Dec.* IX.6.

One major plot point against my argument that I have only briefly mentioned before is that in Boccaccio's *Dec.* IX.6, the young men are nobles and not clerks (students) like they are in the other three version of the tale. Though this is a discrepancy, I would argue that Chaucer preferred to hold on to other aspects of the young men he found in *Dec.* IX.6, such as their intelligence (a point I will touch on in the next section), in place of their social status. In his book *Chaucer's Decameron and the Origin of the Canterbury Tales*, Frederick Biggs suggests that Chaucer learned from Boccaccio to write "in the illusion that his tales, as part of a vast collection of amusing stories, simply reflect[ed] the views of his [story]tellers" (15). This could have been the case for Chaucer when he decided to keep the young men as clerks: a choice that served the purpose of the tale's narrator, the Reeve.

The Reeve choses to tell this story as a way to insult the Miller in the same way the Miller had done to him, or worse. In order to do this, the Reeve, who was known to have a distaste for

scholars, probably felt that having the Miller cuckolded and cheated out of his ill-gotten gains by clerks would add insult to injury:

> For reasons concerning his own station in life, the Reeve likewise identifies with the miller against the clerks – just as long as the miller is more cunning than they. He shares with the miller a revenge formula ("Blere hir ye") and a common dislike of the clerks' bumptious self-confidence and educational privilege. He makes them, in terms of class and origin, conspicuously no better than himself, or perhaps a little worse. Their dialect is more "north country" than his, their wit less quick, and their favored "auctoritee" little more than folk proverb, wisdom of a kind no one ever had to go to university to learn. Indeed, the Reeve's discourse in his prologue is far more learned than anything we ever hear from their lips. The Reeve likes these scholars little – until the miller overextends himself and relaxes his guard. At that point the Reeve's sympathies abruptly shift, and he makes common cause with the students in their revenge (Kolve 253).

Had the Reeve followed Boccaccio's example and made the young men nobles, the insult to the Miller would not have been as great because it would not be surprising for someone with the virtues that went along with having noble blood to, ultimately, win the upper hand.

Chapter 5

Similarities in Language between "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec.* IX.6:

The second way in which "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec.* IX.6 are similar is the way the stories describe the young men's intelligence: in all four versions of the story, the word "wisdom" is used when describing the students. However, it is only in Chaucer and Boccaccio's versions that the word is used specifically to describe the young men in ways that, at first, seems insulting, but are later revealed to be positive. Chaucer, for example, has the Miller Symkyn say: "The gretteste clerks been noght the wisest men" (80, line 4054). This line is, perhaps, the most revealing in that it conveys what the rest of the tale goes on to prove: book-learning is not as useful as cleverness. Aleyn and John arrived at the Mill with a plan to outmaneuver the Miller that ultimately backfired on them. It was not until they used their savvy that they were actually successful in besting the Miller and obtaining their original goal (and then some). A similar progression can be found in *Dec.* IX.6. Boccaccio writes of Pinuccio: Pinuccio, che non era il più savio giovane del mondo, avveggendosi del suo errore, non ricorse ad emendare come meglio avesse potuto …" (*Il Deca.* 752). [Pinuccio, who was not the wisest youth in the world, realized his mistake, but could not figure out the best remedy for the situation…]. He was smart enough to figure out a clever way to spend the night with Niccolosa, but when it came time to use his wit on the spot without any time to plan things out beforehand, he could not and was going to suffer for it. In the story, it is the peasant's wife, whom we can assume was not as well educated as

Pinuccio, that saves everyone by using her own wit in pretending to have spent the night with her daughter. What the Italian and English versions of the tale want to demonstrate is that plans, even those made by learned men (maybe even, in Chaucer's version, especially those made by learned men), are not as useful as 'street smarts'. The character of "the second clerk", John and Adriano, in "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec.* IX.6 respectively, is one that further proves wit is better than book-learning on its own. In "the Reeve's Tale", he is the one to come up with and execute his devious plan to trick the wife into sleeping with him and in *Dec.* IX.6, he quickly realized what the peasant's wife is doing and reinforces her coverup by walking over to Pinuccio and pretending that he had a history of sleep-walking. "D'altra parte Andriano, veggendo che la donna saviamete la sua vergogna e quella della figliuola ricopriva, disse…" (*Il Deca.* 753). [From the other side of the room, Adriano, seeing that the woman wisely hid both her secret and her daughter's said…"]. Thus, the second clerk stands in contrast to Aleyn and Pinuccio as the cleverer of the two for his use of and/or recognition of wit which results in him not, in either story, getting into trouble in the same way his friend does.

While the French and Flemish versions of the tale share some similarities with the points I have just made, they do so in different ways and under different contexts. Neither the French nor the Flemish versions describe the students' wisdom directly or contrast intelligence from books and quick wit. In fact, the Flemish and French tales both identify clerks as being inherently tricky in their warnings to the reader at the conclusion of the tales. The French version of the tale seems to accept, in traditional fabliaux fashion, that the clerks are clever and capable of tricking you easily: "Cis fabliaus moustre par example / Que nus hom qui bele fam ait, / Por nule proière ne lait / Clerc gesir dedenz son ostel, / Qui il li feroit autretel; / Qui plus met en aus, plus I pert" (Benson 98, lines 184-189). ["This tale shows us by example / That a man who has a pretty wife

/ Should never allow, despite his prayers, / A clerk to sleep in his house, / For he will do the same thing. / The more one trusts them, the more one loses" (Benson 99, lines 184-189). The Flemish version does the same thing as the French, but is more specific about what the clerks usually do : "Sijn die clerke wel gherust / Die al meest mans wiuen begheren, / Ende somwile haer goet verteren. / Selden hebbic oec verstaen / Dat si gheuadered bidden gaen" (Beidler 67, lines 230-235). ["the clerics, who mostly / desire other men's wives, / and waste their goods as well, are ready and waiting. / And I have seldom heard / that they take responsibility for their offspring" (Beidler 67, lines 230-235). So, whereas the Italian and French versions of the story seem to comment on wit and how it can be, at times, more valuable than education, the French and Flemish tales seem only to comment on the deceiving nature of clerks. There was no initial plan that failed and thus proved wit and savvy to be *better* than book-learning, and the first clerk demonstrated himself to be just as savvy as the second clerk with his quick thinking to steal the ring from the pan to trick the daughter with. Furthermore, rather than measure how unwise the clerks are based, ironically, on their education, the French and Flemish tales are more faithful to a traditional fabliau and insinuate that the students are unwise (or irresponsible) because they do not know how to manage their money.[xvi] In his version of the story, Bodel writes: En cest autre fablel parole / De II clers qui vienent d'escole; / Despendu orent leur avoir / En folie plus qu'en savoir" (Benson 88, lines 1-4). "[This next fabliau tells / About two clerks who were returning from school; / They had spent all their money. / More on foolishness than on wisdom]" (Benson 89, lines 1-4). The Flemish version says:

Van twe Clercken, die waren gekeept
Van Parijs en*de* die geleert
Hadden spel ende wijsheid mede,
Ghelijc dat gare noch es die Sede.
Oec doe liet men mi verstaan
Dat si haer goed hadden verdaen. (Beidler 57, lines 5-10)

Of two clerics who were scholars
From Paris, having learned
How to play games and wisdom,
As is still the custom there.
I was also told that
They spent all their money. (Beidler 56, lines 5-10)

Spending money in a frivolous way is never mentioned in either Boccaccio or Chaucer's version of the tale. Chaucer does state that the students were poor, but he does not say this is a result of them using their money unwisely. In fact, the students in "the Reeve's Tale" try to save the school money by attempting to stop the Miller from stealing corn from them again. Money is not mentioned in *Dec.* IX.6 as much as it is implied. The young men are described as nobles and, therefore, one can assume that they are wealthy. This is especially true when one considers that in the previous paragraphs, Boccaccio described the peasant's financial status. If the nobles had spent their own money unwisely, Boccaccio would have pointed it out as he did for the peasant in this story or for frivolous nobles in others. Additionally, while the student's in the French and Flemish versions are characterized by their wealth, in Chaucer and Boccaccio's versions of the tales, the young men's' wealth is not as important to understanding who they are as understanding the motivations behind their actions are.

Still, neither the students in "the Reeve's Tale" nor the young men in *Dec.* IX.6 lose their playful and fun-loving qualities because of their responsible ones. In "the Reeve's Tale", Chaucer describes the students as having asked the schoolmaster for permission to go to the mill as a way to act upon their lighthearted, yet determined, desires:

Testif they were and lusty for to pleye,
And, oonly for hire myrthe and revelrye,
Upon the wardeyn bisily they crye
To yeve hem leve, but litel stounde,
To goon to mille and seen hir corn ygrounde,

And hardily they dorste leye hir nekke
The millere sholde not stele hem half a pekke
Of corn by sleighte, ne by force hem reve;
And at the laste the wardeyn yah hem leve. (4004-12)

While in the French and Flemish tales the student's "enjoyment" seems to cause them harm and leave them poor, the students in "the Reeve's Tale" seem to want to put their energy to good use for the university. They swear not to let the Miller steal a single grain from them and, although they fail at carrying out their plan initially, their playfulness ultimately redeems them of their mistakes. Similarly, in the *Decameron*, Boccaccio describes Pinuccio as a youth who was passionate, yet energetic and approachable. "Alla giovane aveva posto gli occhi un giovanetto leggiadro e piacevole e gentile uomo della nostra città, il quale molto usava per la contrada, e focosamente l'amava" (*Il Deca.* 749). ["The young lady caught the eye of a young man from our city, a graceful and lively youth who spent a lot of time in the district and loved her passionately"]. Because Chaucer seems to invert the descriptions of the student's "wisdom" and omits any mention of their spending habits in a similar way to what Boccaccio did, it can be assumed that, at least in this respect, he may have preferred Boccaccio's version of the tale to the original French version. If Chaucer only had the French version to work off of, he might have ended up with a story more similar to the Flemish version's mention of the students' intelligence (or wisdom), playfulness, and lack of money management.

Another thing that is pointedly different in the Italian and English version and the French and Flemish ones is that in the latter two, the Miller is made fun of for his age and his alleged impotence. In the Flemish version the author writes:

Die soe die vrouw: her Gobert,
Al sidi out ende tay,
Ghi selt noch wesen herde fray;
Al heft v anschijn menege runtse,
Ghebetert es wel sere v fluntse;

Pleghet dus de*n* oude*n* lieden,
Of waendi d*at* ment sal verbieden?
Die clerc sweech emmer stille
Ende liet haer segghen haren wille. (Beidler 63, lines144-152)

Then the woman said, “Master Gobert,
although you are old and dried up,
you will still do very nicely.
Though your face is full of wrinkles,
your prick is greatly improved.
Is this usual with old men,
or are you afraid you won’t get any sex in the future?”
The cleric did not say a word,
and let her say what she wanted” (Beidler 62, lines144-152)

In the French version, the peasants wife makes a similar comment. Bodel writes:

Or a Gombers bone mesnie;
Moult le mainent de male pile.
“Sire Gombers,” dist dame Guile,
“Si viez hom com estes et frailes,
Moult avez anuit esté quailes;
Ne sai or de qoi vous souvint;
Pieça mès qu’il ne vous avint;
Ne cuidiez -vous que il m’anuit?
Vous avez ausi fet anuit
Que s’il n’en fust nus recouvriers;
Moult avez esté bons ouvriers;
N’avez guères esté oiseus.”
Li clers, qui ne fu pas noiseus,
En fist toutes voies ses buens,
Et li lesse dire les suens (Benson 94, lines 116-130).

Now Gombert had a good household
But he ran it with a weak stick.
“Sir Gombert,” said Dame Guile,
“For so old and weak a man as you are,
You have been very hot tonight;
I don’t know what you are thinking of;
It has been a long time indeed since you have been like this;
Aren’t you afraid you will tire me?
You have done as much tonight
As if our salvation depended on it;
You have been a very good worker,
You have not been lazy”
The clerk, who did not make a sound,

Continually did his pleasure
And let her say what she pleased. (Benson 95, lines 116-130).

In both versions of the tale, the wife makes a comment that seems inappropriate for her to make, to her husband, since with it she is telling him that he is an old and feeble man. At the end of both the French and Flemish tales, the narrator of the story finished the tale by reminding the reader that if they have a pretty or bold wife, they should not allow a clerk to stay in their home overnight. Doing so would cause the same thing to happen to them as did to Gombert. Though this warning does say that clerks are sneaky people who desire other men's wives and do not care for the children they produce, the tales themselves would have one believe that the fault lays also with the wife for being too beautiful or too bold. Though these comments from the wife are very comical in and of themselves, neither Chaucer, who might have been, nor Boccaccio, who definitely was familiar with Bodel's version of the tale, felt the need to include it in his own. This feels like a purposeful choice on behalf of Chaucer because the Reeve's point of telling this tale to the other pilgrims on the journey was to humiliate the Miller. Thus, calling the Miller in his own story impotent and old, on top of everything else, could only have been desirable to the Reeve's purpose. Because he chose to omit it, however, one can assume that Chaucer liked the ending in Boccaccio's story better which allowed the wife to cause a direct and physical undermining of her husband's attempt at revenge rather than a rhetorical insult. Perhaps Chaucer felt that an ending like the ones in the French and Flemish stories would be somewhat redundant in his own where the husband is already figuratively losing his manhood by being cuckolded.

Additionally, a parallel that can be found between "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec.*IX.6 in the mention of the daughters' age and civil status. Whereas in the French and Flemish versions, no more information is given about the daughters, other than that they exist, in Boccaccio, Niccolosa is introduced to the reader in the following way: "e l'uno era una giovanetta bella e

leggiadra, d'età di quindici o di sedici anni, che ancora marito non avea" (*Il Deca.* 749). [one was a beautiful young and slender girl about fifteen or sixteen years old that still had no husband]. "The Reeve's Tale" describes Malyne in a similar, yet more detailed, way:

A doghter hadde they bitwixe hem two
Of twenty yeer, withouten any mo,
...
This person of the toun, for she was feir,
In purpose was to maken hire his heir,
Bothe of his catel and his mesuage,
And straunge he made it of hir marriage.
His purpos was for to bistowe hire hye
Into som worthy blood of auncetrye;
For hooly chirches good moot been despended
On hooly chirches blood, that is descended.
Therfore he wolde his hooly blood honoure, (Chaucer 79, lines 3969-70 & 3977-85)

In "the Reeve's Tale", the story benefits from knowing how old the daughter is and that she is unmarried because it offers the Reeve an opportunity to further emphasize the Miller's blind pride: He and his wife are so pretentious that they have not married off their daughter yet because they are waiting for a suitor with noble lineage to 'match their own'. The Miller and his wife think highly of themselves because he is of "free birth" and she of "noble kin", yet they appear to completely overlook the fact that she is the bastard child of the town Parson. Thus, what began as an innocent detail in *Dec.* IX.6 became an opportunity for Chaucer, or rather the Reeve, to elaborate on in a way that insulted the Miller even more because, just as he turned the honest peasants in *Dec.* IX.6 into a scheming couple, he makes the daughter in his tale a complete juxtaposition of the beautiful, young and slender one found in the Italian version.

Knowledge of the dark is also something that appears in Boccaccio and Chaucer's version of the tale, but not the French of Flemish. All four stories include passages where either the wife (In Chaucer and Bocaccio's versions) or the peasant (in the French and Flemish versions) has to fumble around in the room while returning from relieving themselves outside.

However, it is only in the Italian and English versions, that the narrators specifically point out to the reader that the room was very dark. In *Dec.* IX.6 Boccaccio writes: E presa la culla del suo figliuoletto, come che punto lume nella comera non si vedesse, per aviso la potò allato al letto dove dormiva la figliuola, e con lei si coricò," (*Il Deca.* 753). [She got up at once without saying another word and grabbed her baby son's cradle. Since there was absolutely no light in the room, she felt her way along, carrying the cradle to the side of the bed in which her daughter was sleeping"]. Chaucer emphasizes the darkness in the room as well in the following passage: "By cause that the cradle by it stood / And nyste where she was, for it was derk; / But faire and wel she creep in to the clerk, / And lith full stille, and wolde han caught a / sleep" (82, lines 4224-27).

Meanwhile, in the French and Flemish versions, we find different descriptions that are similar to that in "the Reeve's Tale", but because of the lack of mentioning how dark the room is, not as similar to "the Reeve's Tale", as *Dec.* IX.6 is in its description. The French Tale states:

Or est fant Gombert decéu;
Quar adès à costume avoit
La nuit, quant de pisser venoit,
Qu'il tastoit au berçuel premier.
Si some il estoit coustumier,
Lors vint tastant sire Gombers
Au lit, mès n'I ert pas li bers; (Benson 92, lines 88-94)

Now Dan Gombert is tricked,
For he always had the habit
At night when he came back from pissing
That he would first grope for the cradle.
Thus, as was his custom,
Sir Gombert soon came groping
To his bed, but there was no cradle there;

While the Flemish says:

Nu es weder her Gobert

Te sinen bedde weert ghekeert./
Hine hoedde hem niet van bedrieghe,
Maer ginc tasten na die wieghe,
Van costumen hi dit leered
Wanneer dat hi van pissen keerde.
Te sinen bedde quam hi te hant.
Doen hi die weigh niet en vatn, (Beidler 61, lines 115 – 122).

Now Master Gobert
Came back to bed.
He did not suspect any trickery,
But felt for the cradle,
As he habitually did
When he came back after pissing.
He came straight to bed.
When he couldn't find the cradle.

Although the similarities in the text itself are very interesting, I think the way in which Chaucer works with his sources is equally interesting. As mentioned in the introduction, there is a lot of speculation about which analogues most likely served as the source for Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. The reason it is so hard to pin-point one, however, is because although Chaucer inevitably had to have known some version of the tales before writing his own, he was such a talented writer that his style and modification to the stories altered them beyond positive identification. In his book, *Chaucer's Italian Tradition*, Warren Ginsberg wrote of Chaucer's translation style in the following way:

> I therefore will conceive of Chaucer's Italian Tradition not as the accumulation of localized borrowings from Dante, Boccaccio, or Petrarch, important as these are, but as a translation that emerges out of the two horizons that traverse and demarcate Chaucer's experience of Italy. We will find evidence of this translation less in this or that instance of Dante-like allegory and irony in *The Canterbury Tales*, we will see it not so much in the specific changes Chaucer made to Italian texts as in the development of what we might call his urban style. … . It will be observed more in the array of social discourse that comprise the Clerk

> than in those that comprise his tale. Chaucer's Italian Tradition, in other words, is a translation of his translations (8).

In this quote, Ginsberg is essentially saying that Chaucer translated his sources twice: first from the source language into English, and second from the social context of the source material into one that would fit within the social context his readers would be able to recognize and, therefore, understand. In the next and final section, I will go over Chaucer's translation styles and how these methods worked to create an English version of the cradle story for an English audience: "the Reeve's Tale".

Chapter 6

Conclusion

There are two different ways one can view translating a work: The first is one in which the meaning of a source material is foreignized in translation, giving readers in the language of translation the sense that they are dealing with material that does not originate from their own culture. The second is one in which the source material is domesticated so that readers in the language of translation can understand the work as easily as if it had originated in their own culture – both methods which I believe Chaucer mastered in his own writing. Eugene Nida believes the latter option to be the best and defines translation in the following way:

> Translating consists in producing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language, first in meaning and secondly in style. This type of definition recognizes the lack of any absolute correspondence, but it does point up the importance of finding the closest equivalence. By "natural" we mean that the equivalent forms should not be "foreign" either in form (except of course for such inevitable matters as proper names) or meaning. That is to say, a good translation should not reveal its nonnative source (Nida 155).

Working off of this definition, Chaucer's "Reeve's Tale" does exactly that for Boccaccio's *Dec.* IX.6. Chaucer uses elements of Boccaccio's style (both works were written in the vernacular[xvii]); structure[xviii]; and language[xix] (as exemplified by close reading of certain tales as well as evidence

in the various prologues). Chaucer was also incredibly faithful in ensuring his "translation" of the stories from the *Decameron* changed to fit into their newly adopted cultural context. Though the *Canterbury Tales* is not an exact replica of the *Decameron* and uses stories from many different countries and locations around England, it is, nevertheless, a "Frame Narrative" that very closely resembles Boccaccio's comparable work.[xx] Though Chaucer might have liked the way the *Decameron* was structured because it allowed the characters to speak for themselves, there was something about a group of story-telling, high-class nobles fleeing from the plague that he might not have felt the English people could easily relate to. This is where Biggs claims Chaucer focused on the character of Licisca from the conclusion of day VI. Out of her, Biggs argues, a pattern emerges that is complex enough to point to "Licisca's outburst" as the main source for Chaucer's thinking as he developed his initial ideas for the *Canterbury Tales*:

> Recognizing that Licisca's story of her friend's wedding night is similar to the *novella* told by upper class members of the *brigata* and different because of its narrator, Chaucer started (Perhaps even before he settles on the idea of a pilgrimage to Canterbury) by pairing tellers whose social status would place their views in conflict. … . Chaucer's move beyond Boccaccio is to keep the Licisca's talking (Biggs 115, 107).

By focusing on so many people from diverse backgrounds, the *Canterbury Tales* shares something else with the *Decameron*: being a work that discusses earthly matters: "If Dante's emphasis is on the life to come, as he makes his way from Hell to Purgatory to Paradise, Boccaccio's emphasis falls on our life in this world. When the transcendent is imagined, as it is in just a few tales, that sphere is always made to serve the interests of our mundane existence. Dante's concern for the afterlife led readers to call his work *La Divina Commedia*. It is thus no

wonder that Italian critics have long insisted on labeling Boccaccio's *La Commedia Umana*, "The Human Comedy" (Boccaccio lviii). Additionally, Chaucer introduces cultural elements into the narrative through his narrators. Both "the Reeve's Tale" and *Dec.* IX.6 allow the reader to get a clearer picture of the narrators' personalities: The Reeve is a vengeful man telling his tale in order to insult the Miller. Boccaccio's narrator, Panfilo, on the other hand, could not be more opposite. He is a lover and his name literally means "he who is made entirely of love", or "he who loves all" Panfilo, true to his name, chooses the topic of two lovers and recounts a tale whose purpose is not to insult anyone, but to celebrate love, and women. Boccaccio's version of the tale also allows the reader to view deeper into Panfilo's head (and heart) just as Chaucer's Reeve reveals his vengeful nature with the tale he first chooses to tell. This is especially important since the theme for the day in the *Decameron* was whatever topic the narrators wanted to talk about the most. This freedom of choice enabled the narrators to reveal parts of themselves through their storytelling, a tactic Chaucer himself employed, and quite possibly learned from Day IX in the *Decameron*. In her book, *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative,* V.A. Klove writes:

> Chaucer clearly understood that one possible entry into a man's most hidden self is to ask him to tell you a story. The story that he chooses to tell, along with the way he chooses to tell it – his language, tone emphasis, and choice of detail – can sometimes constitute a communication that goes beyond the story itself, and is not inferior in terms of interest. Chaucer's practice in this matter, as in the individuating detail within the formal portraits, varies from the perfunctory to the profound. … At this most innovative level of his art, Chaucer explores not only personality through tale-telling, but the many and divergent "truths" likely to coexist in any human company (218).

While the telling of "the Reeve's Tale" is clearly an opportunity the Reeve has taken to exact revenge on the Miller for his story belittling carpentry, Chaucer simultaneously uses this character as a mouthpiece to comment on the social structures and beliefs of English people at that time: "Reading Chaucer against Boccaccio thus has much to tell us about what Chaucer does as a fundamentally revisionist poet, how he shapes his borrowed stories, and where he seeks to locate them in English and European literary traditions." (Edwards 11). The plot in *Dec.* IX.6 itself would not have seemed relatable to Chaucer and his contemporaries in England, so Chaucer decided to change the story in order to have it make more sense and be more realistic for the people of England.[xxi] For example, in setting up the Miller and the Reeve as enemies, Chaucer was using a convention that many English people would already have been familiar with.[xxii]

Thus, is Chaucer a traitor to the original sources for his tales? No, he is their interpreter. By translating the story in a way that people in England at this time could (and did) easily understand, appreciate and enjoy in the same way Boccaccio's readers did in Italy in their time, is a testament to that. None of the analogues are translated in a way that one might normally think of a translation (A to B transcription). However, going back to Nida's opinion on the inevitable consequences of translating, we might agree that Chaucer did a good job in rendering his own translation: "The basic principles of translation mean that no translation in a receptor language can be the exact equivalent of the model in the source language. That is to say, all types of translation involve (1) loss of information, (2) addition of information, and/or (3) skewing of information" (Nida 150). Though I think there is a case to be made for accepting *Dec.*XI.6 as a possible source "the Reeve's Tale", there are certain passages in the other analogues I have been comparing that also make good points as to why they, too, may be Chaucer's "true source" and

believe that further research should be done on those examples. I do not, with my study, intend to disprove or discredit any of those ideas, but simply wish to propose that there are elements of influence from the *Decameron* to be found in it as well. Chaucer could have been both familiar with more than one version of the story and, in his own way, a faithful adaptor and translator to them all.

NOTES

[i] Though none of the analogues – at least not in the forms that survive – can be said to represent "the source" of Chaucer's tale, the story itself was apparently so widely known that it is almost certain that Chaucer had read at least one, and quite possibly more than one, of the versions presented here. In addition to the cradle trick story in the *Reeve's Tale*, there are three surviving versions of it in French, one in Flemish, one in Italian and two in German, all of them almost surely predating Chaucer. (*Sources and Analogues of The Canterbury Tales* by Robert M. Correale and Mary Hamel). Page 23.

[ii] "Another important analogue is Jean Bodel's late twelfth-century *De Gombert et des deux clers*, which Glending Olson has argued should be considered as a possible source for Chaucer's tale. Olson does not dispute the importance of the two versions of *Le meunier*, but identifies five narrative features that are not present in either text of *Le meunier*, but are found in both Bodel's and Chaucer's poems: (1) the host is solicitous of this guests, (2) his daughter sleeps in a bed instead of in a bin or cupboard, (3) one of the parents leaves the bedroom to urinate, (4) the baby in the cradle does not cry out, and (5) the host does not realize that his wife has cuckolded him" (Cooper 25).

[iii] "Two points emerge from such a survey of generic analogues to the *Canterbury Tales* first, that Chaucer's own story-collection participates in a widespread current fashion for such works; and second, that it is strikingly different from most in the dynamics offered by its frame story, in the articulation of its tales, and in its refusal to offer any consistent moralization. Very few works offer any detailed resemblance; and of those that do, the *Decameron* is by far the closest, to the point where deliberate imitation, not coincidence, becomes the only plausible explanation" (Cooper 7).

[iv] "Since, therefore, no two languages segment experience in the same way, this means that there can never be a word-for-word type of correspondence which is fully meaningful or accurate" (Nida 149).

[v] It is quite impossible to deal with any language as a linguistic signal without recognizing immediately its essential relationship to the cultural context as a whole. (Nida 150)

[vi] According to Nida, then, translations cannot be complete and must result in a transformation of some sort of the original text: "The basic principles of translation mean that no translation in a receptor language can be the exact equivalent of the model in the source language. That is to say, all types of translation involve (1) loss of information, (2) addition of information, and/or (3) skewing of information" (Nida 150).

[vii] "By establishing that Chaucer relied heavily on three *novella* from the Eighth Day of the *Decameron* in writing the *Shipman's Tale*, the previous chapter allows us to consider when and why he did so. The thesis of this chapter and, indeed, of this book is that his use of 8.1, 8.2, and 8.10 points to both the conceptual and temporal origin of the *Canterbury Tales*. From them Chaucer learned a new way to write, not to retell the stories of others, but rather to create new narratives from disparate places that would allow him to develop complex arguments. (Biggs 106).

[viii] Biggs; Harkins; Scwebel; Sowell "Chaucer and the Three Crowns of Florence (Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio): Recent Comparative Scholarship";

[ix] *The Decameron and the Canterbury Tales* (Koff and Schildgen); *Chaucer, Boccaccio, and the Debate of Love* (Thompson); "Chaucer's Merchant's Tale and the Decameron" (Beidler)

[x] All translations are done by myself unless otherwise cited. I have worked with fluent speakers of Flemish and French as well as medieval Dutch and French dictionaries in order to verify my translations of the original are as accurate as possible. After choosing selected passages to translate, I looked over those passages with the people helping me or in the dictionaries to ensure the translation was accurate. If it was, I left the translation as I found it in my translated source and cited it as such. If, however, I found a word I felt was more accurate, I changed it and

did not cite the translated source. I have used my own knowledge of the Italian Language to translate the texts from the *Decameron*.

[xi] It is worth mentioning that the *Canterbury Tales* were never finished, and it is not clear where most of the fragments should be officially situated. "The *Canterbury Tales* is made up of fragments, that is, of groups of tales which are so joined by references in the text that they can- not be separated ('inseparably linked,' to use Tyrwhitt's phrase), while the groups them- selves are not directly connected. There are nine of these fragments, but the group headed by the *Knight's Tale* comes first, and there is no doubt that the *Parson's Tale* comes last, so only seven groups left for us to arrange" The fragments appear most commonly in the following order: "1. Prologue, Knight, Miller, Reeve, Cook. 2. Man of Law. 3. Wife of Bath, Friar, Summoner. 4. Clerk, Merchant. 5. Squire, Franklin. 6. Doctor, Pardoner. 7. Shipman, Prioress, Sir Thomas, Melibeus , Monk, Nun's Priest. 8. Second Nun, Canon's Yeoman. 9. Manciple, (slightly linked to) Parson" (Shipley 133, 131).

[xii] The original Italian version reads: "Comincia il libro chiamato Decameron (cognominato Prencipe Gakeotto) nel quale si contegono ceto novella in diece dì dette dasette donne e da tre giovani uomini"

[xiii] "A fabliau is a brief comic tale in verse, usually scurrilous and often scatological or obscene. The style is simple, vigorous, and straight-forward; the time is the present, and the settings real, familiar places; the characters are ordinary sorts– tradesmen, peasants, priests, students, restless wives; the plots are realistically motivated tricks and ruses. The fabliaux thus present a lively image of everyday life among the middle and lower classes" (Chaucer 7).

[xiv] "It is a matter of humanity to show compassion for those who suffer, and although it is fitting for everyone to do so, it is especially desirable in those who, having had need of comfort, have received it from others – and if anyone ever needed it or appreciated it or derived any pleasure from it, I am one of them. For, from my earliest youth up to the present, I have been enflamed beyond measure by most exalted, noble love, which were I to describe it, might seem greater than what is suitable for one in my low condition. (Boccaccio 1)

[xv] When Boccaccio introduces the three male characters in the story he writes: "In the midst of all this turbulence, they were seeking the solace, sweet beyond measure, of catching a glimpse of the ladies they loved, all three of whom just so happened to be among the seven previously mentioned, while several of the others were closer relatives of one or another of the men" (Rebhorn 72).

[xvi] "The heroes and heroines, invariably witty and usually young, are those whom society ordinarily scorns – dispossessed intellectuals (Lecherous priests, wayward monks, penniless students), clever peasants, and enthusiastically unchaste wives" (Chaucer 8).

[xvii] "Chaucer's masterful use of dialect – the first extensive literary representation of a dialect in English – is likewise without precedent" (Benson 8).

[xviii] "It has regularly been pointed out that, in addition to several shared stories, the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Decameron* have various features in common. These include the chance assembly of a group united by a common purpose, the use of the individuals comprising this group as story-tellers, and the description in liking passages of interaction between them" (Andrew 4).

[xix] "Still, there is an impressive enough number of parallels between the two masterly fourteenth-century tale collection to suggests that the *Decameron* is at least as much an influence on Chaucer as other works by Boccaccio that are acknowledged sources (i.e., the *Teseida*, the *Filococlo*, the *Ameto*). It is well known that both Chaucer and Boccaccio apologize for their more churlish tales by making disingenuous appeals to the need for realism" (Heffernan 314).

[xx] "There are, however, more parallels of both framing and idea and phrasing in the two works that have generally been recognized, and those occur in precisely those areas that are unique to these two collections: in their handling of a frame for their storytelling that includes both multiple and tellers and a fictional audience and their implied readers, and between fictional tellers and their self-presentation as authors; in their comments on nature and function of fiction; and in their articulation of a story-collection that forgoes the more obvious kinds of thematic unity." (Andrew, One B 464).

[xxi] "The Reeve's tale reminds us that the Miller's tale is as idealized and the Knight's. Country girls more often resemble Malyne than Alison, and illicit sex is seldom a matter of uncomplicated fun: it can be, as it is here, a tool to maintain the upper hand in a world populated not by complaisant dupes with beautiful wives but by thieving millers with ugly daughters. In this tale, action matters more than talk; one clerk simply moves the crib, mechanically rearranging the physical space, and the other leaps upon the sleeping daughter, without bothering with Nicholas's elaborate schemes or Absolon's bungling courtship. The Reeve's view of the world is much less joyful that the Miller's, though it may be closer to reality. [yet,] Chaucer manages to infuse the tale with a sense of the Reeve's embittered view of life without sacrificing its comedy" (Chaucer 8).

[xxii] A related case is propounded by Tupper, who argues that, in representing the Miller and the Reeve as enemies, Chaucer builds on a tradition of enmity between millers and reeves which would have arisen from their professional… . Additionally, "millers and reeves were associated because of the common opportunity, provided by their work, to rob both peasant and lord" (Andrew, One B 464, 465).

Works Cited

Andrew, Malcom. *The Canterbury Tales*. Oklahoma UP, 1993. Part One A: The General Prologue.

---. *The Canterbury Tales*. Oklahoma UP, 1993. Part One B: The General Prologue.

Beidler, Peter G. "Chaucer's Merchant's Tale and the Decameron." *Italica*, vol. 50, no. 2, Summer 1973, pp. 266-84. *JSTOR*.

---. "The Reeve's Tale." *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, edited by Robert M. Correale and Mary Hamel, vol. I, D.S. Brewer, 2002, pp. 57-66.

Benson, Larry D., and Theodore M. Andersson. *The Literary Context of Chaucer's Fabliaux*. Bobbs-Merril Company, 1971.

Biggs, Frederick M. *Chaucer's Decameron and the Origin of the Canterbury Tales*. D.S. Brewer, 2017.

Boccaccio, Giovanni. *The Decameron*. Translated by Wayne A. Rebhorne, Norton W.W & Company, 2014.

---. *Il Decamerone*. Edited by Vittore Branca, Enaudi, 1956. *Biblioteca di Letteratura Italiana*, Enaudi, tp://www.letteraturaitaliana.net/pdf/Volume_2/t318.pdf.

Boitani, Pietro. *Chaucer and Boccaccio*. Oxford & Cambridge Schools, 1977.

Bowden, Muriel. *A Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*. New York, Macmillan Company, 1962.

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Riverside Chaucer*. Edited by Larry D. Benson, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987.

Cooper, Helen. "The Frame." *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, by Robert M. Correale and Mary Hamel, vol. I, D.S. Brewer, 2002, pp. 1-22.

Corrale, Robert M., and Mary Hamel, editors. *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*. Vol. II, D.S. Brewer, 2005.

Edwards, Robert R. *Chaucer and Boccaccio*. Palgrave, 2002.

Ginsberg, Warren. *Chaucer's Italian Tradition*. U of Michigan P, 2002.

Harkins, Jessica. "Chaucer's Clerk's Tale and Boccaccio's Decameron X.10." *The Chaucer Review*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2013, pp. 247-73. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/chaucerrev.47.3.0247. Accessed 12 10 2017.

Heffernan, Carol Falvo. "Chaucer's 'Miller's Tale' and 'Reeve's Tale,' Boccaccio's 'Decameron,' and the French Fabliaux." *Italica*, vol. 81, no. 3, Fall 2004, pp. 311-24. *JSTOR*. Accessed 16 Mar. 2018.

Koff, Leonard Michael, and Brenda Deen Schildgen, editors. *The Decameron and the Canterbury Tales: New Essays on Old Questions*. Associated UP, 2000.

Kolve, V. A. *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative: The First Five Canterbury Tales*. Stanford, Stanford UP, 1984.

Nida, Eugene A. "Principles of Translations as Exemplified by Bible Translating." *On Translation*, edited by Reuben A, Brower, Harvard UP, 1959, pp. 148-64.

Schwebel, Leah. "Redressing Griselda: Restoration through Translation in the Clerk's Tale." *The Chaucer Review*, Penn State UP. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/chaucerrev.47.3.0274. Accessed 12 Oct. 2017. Originally published in *The Chaucer Review*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2013, pp. 274-99.

Shipley, George. "Arrangement of the Canterbury Tales." *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 10, no. 5, May 1895, pp. 130-40. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2918681?seq=4#page_scan_tab_contents. Accessed 28 Apr. 2018.

Thompson, N. S. *Chaucer, Boccaccio, and the Debate of Love: A Comparative Study of the Decameron and the Canterbury Tales*. Oxford UP, 1996.