STORYTELLING AS PREACHING IN MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE'S *HEPTAMERON*

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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January 2015

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Cornell University 2015

My first chapter, "Four Frames for a Portrait of a Patient Wife," looks at Marguerite de Navarre as part of the broad historical community of European framed short fiction writers, comparing her work to that of Giovanni Boccaccio, Francesco Petrarca, and Geoffrey Chaucer. While no *Heptaméron* character goes by the name of "Griselda," this famous heroine – or her closest analogs – turn out to leave peculiar traces in the frame-structure of the *Decameron* and the *Canterbury Tales* as well as the *Heptaméron*. Extreme examples of female submission to male authority like Griselda's serve to expose fissures in patriarchal ideology, although different framed-novella writers are more or less prepared to face the implications of those aporia.

While previous studies have analyzed the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* as an example of iconographic and hyperbolic male homosocial domination, my second chapter shows that the *Heptaméron*'s recycling of the earlier book's "Katherine/Conrard" as "Rolandine" illustrates a process by which the invisible male storytellers of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* become the male chauvinist *devisants* of the *Heptaméron*, while iconographic transformations in *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 find their textual descendants in *Heptaméron* 21's intergeneric transformations.

My third chapter addresses the *Heptaméron*'s attempts to answer the arguments of the all-male preaching communities that the historical Marguerite de Navarre could favor or counter at court but never directly debate. In taking up some of the themes of preachers like Aimé Meigret (an early reformer imprisoned for heresy whose sole surviving sermon was probably printed at Marguerite's behest) and François Le Picart (a steadfast opponent of the Reformation who was imprisoned for branding Marguerite and her husband Henri de Navarre), the

Heptaméron's frame-characters chart an alternative predicant path. Their preaching activities, in which men and women take equal part, are an example of fiction literature leading the history of ideas. Marguerite employed dozens of preachers during her lifetime, but only in the imaginary storytelling world she created could women like herself fully assert their views on theological issues, pointing towards a more open and honest Christian community freed from the male monopoly on preaching.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The author of this dissertation is António Joaquim Eduardo de Ridder-Vignone (legal name "ANTONIO JOAQUIM DE RIDDER"). He was born in 1983 in Lisbon, Portugal, and studied in the public schools of South Carolina until leaving for graduate school in Indiana in 2005. After getting an MA in French Literature From IU-Bloomington, the author transferred to Cornell University to pursue a PhD. He is married to Kathryn Vignone and has two children, Joséphine and Oskar. As of this dissertation's submission, the author lives in Harrisonburg, Virginia and is an employee of James Madison University.

For my wife, Kathryn, and our children, Joséphine & Oskar

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like first and foremost to thank Cornell University for financing my graduate studies, through fellowships, teaching assistantships, instructorships, and conference and research travel funding. I would like to thank all Cornell University faculty for creating an environment where I could learn, especially my committee members William J. Kennedy, Kathleen Long, and Marie-Claire Vallois, and other faculty members in Romance Studies. Bill made sure I wasn't crazy enough to think my writing was good enough at the first or even third pass, Kathleen made sure I knew I wasn't crazy to think that my ideas were good, and Marie-Claire taught me feminist literary theory and close reading, two of the most important tools that I employ in my criticism.

I am also proud to thank helpful colleagues in Science and Technology Studies (most particularly my excellent wife, Kathryn Vignone), and of course my own undergraduate students - shout out to you, Lorraine Fitzmaurice! - and fellow graduate students in Romance Studies and Comparative Literature. Among the latter, I give special thanks to Ashley Brandenburg, Zach Gooch, Yoon Oh, Maria Fernanda Negrete Martinez, Henry Berlin, and Zac Zimmer. I'd like to look a bit farther back too, to my Indiana days, and thank my teachers Kelly Sax, Kevin Rottet, Margaret Gray, Emmanuel Mickel, Eileen Julien, and Oana Panaïté. Of my fellow students there, I must give special mention to Paco Montaño. I thank my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, my cousins, and my children.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my external committee member, Dr. R. Gary Ferguson of the University of Delaware, as well as Claire Faucher, Alexandre Delefosse, and Pierre-Henri Collin of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Biographical Sketch. iii

Dedication iv

Acknowledgements v

Table Of Contents vi

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter 2. BOCCACCIO'S *DECAMERON*, PETRARCH'S *RERUM SENILIUM LIBRI*, CHAUCER'S *CANTERBURY TALES*, AND MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE'S *HEPTAMÉRON*: FOUR FRAMES FOR A PORTRAIT OF A PATIENT WIFE 18

Chapter 3. INTERTEXTUAL ICONOGRAPHIC NARRATIVE: HOW "KATHERINE/CONRARD" OF THE *CENT NOUVELLES NOUVELLES* BECOMES "ROLANDINE" OF THE *HEPTAMÉRON* 106

Chapter 4. "THE MOTHER OF THE RENAISSANCE," "THE SOUL OF PARIS," AND AIMÉ MEIGRET: MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE'S ENGAGEMENT WITH CONTEMPORARY PREACHERS 150

Chapter 5. CONCLUSIONS 250

BIBLIOGRAPHY 253

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I. An overview of this dissertation

Sometime in the waning decades of Francis I's reign in France (r. 1515 – 1547) and just after his death, his sister Marguerite de Navarre wrote a collection of *nouvelles* (a term meaning short prose fictions and equivalent to "novellas" in English or "novelle" in Italian, although an early modern novella is not much like a modern Anglophone one). The Queen of Navarre's *nouvelles* were intended to reach 100 stories, copying the structure made famous by Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* two centuries earlier, but Marguerite's death halted further progress at seventy-two. For these seventy-two, the author created a framing conversation among ten storytelling characters whom scholars nowadays call *devisants*. These are ten French aristocrats with obviously fake names, who – according to the frame story – get stuck at an abbey on the Franco-Spanish border due to torrential rains. While waiting for a bridge to be built at their own expense, these lords and ladies, including five men and five women whose age and marital status vary, decide to spend ten days telling ten stories apiece, so that they can write down the stories told and present them as a book to the French royal court.

The conservative, monarchist, and nationalist attitude of the *devisants* is unmistakable, and in some respects their conversation reveals precisely the biases one would expect in a text by a powerful member of the Valois dynasty. What is surprising about the frame-narrators of the *Heptaméron*, as the Queen's novellas have come to be called, is that they express openly Evangelical attitudes that had, by the time of the book's probable composition and certainly by the time of Marguerite's death, long been considered heretical by royal and ecclesiastical authorities in France. Even more surprising than the *devisants*' radical religious attitudes, which

presuppose mass biblical literacy while attempting to thoroughly apply Christian precepts to everyday life, is the assertiveness with which the *devisantes*, the female frame-characters, teach each other and their male companions about Scripture and moral behavior, as well as the males' tolerance of (not to say receptiveness to) such instruction.

Marguerite's transformative imitation of the *Decameron* allows (some of) her *devisants*, despite their class and national prejudices, to be far ahead of their time in their attitudes towards gender roles, literacy, and religious authority. Today's readers and writers also seek, by putting our thoughts into writing and sharing them with others, to see through the dominant bigotries of our day and lead lives of activity and contemplation that later generations will recognize as having been "ahead of their time." In her ability to blend the comic with the tragic and to reframe contemporary historical and cultural tidbits in order to create satirical social critique, Marguerite reminds me of Jon Stewart, whose *Daily Show* mimics the frame structure of "real" news programs while mixing obvious fiction with reporting on actual recent events, the net effect being a product that fans feel is an accurate picture of American life despite – or perhaps because of – its overt theatricality and fictitiousness. Most American progressives today, I think I may say without much trepidation, and certainly most academics, wish that we could be more like Jon Stewart or Marguerite de Navarre. That is, we want to be keen observers of contemporary culture and politics and to be able to share our observations with friends and the public in a convincing, amusing, engaging way. As literary and cultural critics, we want to reframe both fictional and historical narratives so as to give ourselves and our readers or listeners a greater understanding of the power dynamics underlying these stories, to stimulate everyone to question the assumptions of superiority and inferiority that underpin unjust social relations. In helping students and fellow scholars understand how Marguerite accomplishes this goal, this dissertation

could provide us with a partial blueprint for the critical re-appropriation of segments of various dominant discourses into an aesthetically pleasing and thought-provoking form.

I soon found that a story-by-story explanation of how Marguerite (may have) constructed her *nouvelles* would be a gargantuan project on the scale of Correale's and Hamel's *Sources and Analogues of the* Canterbury Tales, not the sort of thing that a doctoral student might achieve in a single dissertation. Nevertheless, I am using this thesis to shed light on a few small parts of the genesis of the *Heptaméron*. All three of my chapters explore the sources of and influences on the *Heptaméron*, in each case demonstrating how Marguerite's novellas allow her to respond to male-dominated textual traditions. Furthermore, each chapter examines the ways that the *Heptaméron* answers pressing political questions about women's rights, religious authority, marriage, and literacy.

Chapter 2 analyzes Marguerite's reuse of a particular narrative module ("Griselda" or Aarne-Thompson Tale Type 887) common in late medieval and early modern European fiction, which lets her reply both to the Boccaccian novella tradition and to the contemporary questions of women's proper role in matrimony and the celibacy requirement imposed by the Catholic Church upon its priests from the High Middle Ages till the present day. Chapter 3 looks at Marguerite's reuse of material from recent history, martyrologies, pardon requests, and a curious predecessor *nouvelle* in her creation of a new and highly complex narrative, the story of *Heptaméron* 21's "Rolandine." While providing an account of the several genres that Marguerite appears to have blended in order to create her twenty-first novella and respond to the contemporary question of the legality of clandestine marriages, this chapter also explains the dialogues surrounding the novella in terms of the frame-characters' preaching patterns and roles in the cornice narrative's interlocking love stories.

Although Marguerite was certainly historically implicated in the questions of women's authority and status as subjects and (especially) objects of marriage traffic that my first two chapters explore, it is in Chapter 4 that I focus most closely on Marguerite as a political agent. This last chapter asks how the *Heptaméron*'s unusual predicant storytelling conversation responds to or comments upon the conflicts among French preachers during the early Reformation that drew the historical Marguerite into such controversy. To answer this question, I compare the citations of Scripture as practiced by Marguerite's *devisants* and novella characters to those found in sermons by the hard-line conservative Catholic François Le Picart and the early radical reformer Aimé Meigret, both of whom have historical connections to the *Heptaméron*'s author. I find that while Marguerite and Meigret share a sincere interest in the spread of biblical literacy and quasi-Lutheran ideas that places them at odds with Le Picart, the *devisants*' dissolution of the usual gender hierarchies regulating the distribution, discussion, and teaching of Scripture appears to have been promoted by few sixteenth-century Christian sects apart from the heretic Waldensians. One observes, in the *Heptaméron*, an opening of Scriptural study and in particular teaching to women as well as men, and this relative egalitarianism regarding gender and interpretive authority is the trait that most sets Marguerite's collection apart from and, indeed, ahead of, the times and places where she wrote it.

Some students will be interested in the discussion of patriarchal values and gender relations to which the *Heptaméron* points, and some will want to use their study of the Queen of Navarre's *nouvelles* to better understand the denominational and gender divisions that continue to characterize Christian religious life. Others will most readily grasp the parallels between the sixteenth-century debate over biblical translations in which Marguerite's Evangelical characters occupy a radical position and the economies of literacy that enable, direct, and shape our

participation in globalized cultural interactions (interactions that, for Europeans, largely came into being during Francis I's and Marguerite's reigns). I hope that Chapter 4 will stimulate readers to compare the historical fates of texts such as the *Heptaméron* and the *Sermon d'Aimé Meigret* on the one hand, which approach the literacy gap between writer and audience fairly honestly in order to express reformist ecclesiological opinions, to texts such as the *Sermons & Instructions...* of François Le Picart on the other, which use the literacy gap between theologians like Le Picart and their ignorant audiences – dishonestly – in order to preserve the Catholic French status quo.

The popularity of both Le Picart and his sermons, contrasted with the relative obscurity of Meigret's *Sermon* and the *Heptaméron* (particularly during the sixteenth century), should invite students to reflect on the apparent weirdness of the frequently internationalist and pacifist views expressed in a dominant national vernacular (meaning, in the U.S., American English) by people fluent in multiple languages. The apparently normal views expressed by the monolingual majority, which gets its information from government and media sources heavily invested in manipulating opinions about other peoples in various ways, lose some of their veneer of cultural authority when compared to the now-obvious, then-masterful manipulations of François Le Picart. This easily misled majority is seldom reminded by its government or mainstream media that written and oral texts accessed in a given people's own first language are the most interesting barometers of that population's political, economic, or religious attitudes.

Instead of gaining – or being encouraged to gain – the communicative competence to speak directly to one or more non-Anglophone groups, the monolingual majority is like Le Picart's audience, waiting for their tutor to reach across the linguistic and educational chasm separating priest from parishioner and spoon-feed them Church-approved biblical interpretations.

In our days of secular government and global empire, the public usually does not consider the Bible to be the government's business but does demand up-to-date information about Americans' civilian and military operations in the U.S. and around the world. In this respect, it is unfortunate that monolingual Americans rely on scrupulously filtered English-language summaries which use the unilingual masses' inability to access non-Anglophone texts to market highly biased accounts of world events as impartial information or "news" (*nouvelles*). Studying the success of a preacher like Le Picart should help students understand how the crafty manipulation of widespread ignorance insures the victory of illogical ideologies. Along the way, they might even learn how to recognize flaws in the self-serving, self-fulfilling prophecies that dominant people create in order to explain and ultimately to extol their reign over their subalterns.

In comparing and contrasting the uses of Scripture, Latin, and French that one finds in Le Picart, Meigret, and Marguerite, I am keeping in mind what must have seemed the widespread failure of reform ideas to win over the hearts and minds of French Catholics in the sixteenth century. Catholics who, like François Le Picart, promoted articles of faith lacking any solid biblical basis were largely successful in doing so because of the Catholic masses' enforced ignorance of the Bible's actual texts. Le Picart's view prevailed in his own time, yet today his Church looks back with some embarrassment on the centuries it spent stifling laypeople's interest in reading holy writ. This sea change in ecclesiological politics, the opening of biblical literacy to laypeople as well as clergy, eventually shifted the intolerant views of an ignorant majority to such an extent that today biblical literacy is assumed of any person claiming to be Christian and undergraduate students can understand what is wrong with the argumentation of a preacher like Le Picart more easily than many learned theologians of his own time could. I hope

my students will better understand the importance of multiple literacies in shaping social power structures, feel driven to pursue the improvement of linguistic ability in themselves and others as an inherent social good, and appreciate their engagement with the written and oral languages that can help them communicate directly with non-Anglophones. Their own enthusiasm, apathy, or antagonism towards multilingualism in American society will in no small part determine whether they are able to look back on their lives with pride at having been "ahead of their time" or with embarrassment at having taken so long to adopt a worldview inclusive enough to cope with global cultural exchanges.

II. Details of the specific texts consulted and argumentative conclusions

In Chapter 2, "The *Decameron*, the *Rerum senilium libri*, the *Canterbury Tales*, and the *Heptaméron*: Four Frames for a Portrait of a Patient Wife," I follow Boccaccio's Italian story of "Griselda," which he uses as the final novella in the *Decameron*, as it is altered and re-framed by readers writing their own versions in Latin, English, and French. Chapter 2 is an attempt to enlighten readers about the *Heptaméron*'s relationship to the framed-novella tradition, of which the three most prominent authors are Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Marguerite herself. Even though Petrarch's *Historia Griseldis*, unlike *Decameron* X.10, the *Clerk's Tale*, and *Heptaméron* 37 and 38, is not a framed-novella, it is still a dialogically framed work of fiction, in this case forming part of an epistolary conversation between Petrarch and Boccaccio. The association of *Heptaméron* 37 and 38 with the story of "Griselda" is not original, so Chapter 3 does not focus on finding the source for Marguerite's thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth novellas so much as demonstrating that this particular story consistently drives early modern authors to the heights of formal creativity, impelling Boccaccio, Petrarch, Chaucer, and Marguerite alike to create intricate, ambiguous, and unique textual frames. Chapter 2 also traces the parallel innovations

upon Boccaccio's frame structure that Marguerite and Chaucer enact; these innovations serve in both the *Heptaméron* and the *Canterbury Tales* to turn the framed-novella structure into an arena for predicant and exegetical debate as well as a meta-narrative exposing contemporary Church corruption.

Since the framing (written) conversations that surround these four analogs all register a distinct uneasiness at attempting to interpret this particular narrative, I surmise that Griselda's story encapsulates a cognitive dissonance central to patriarchal Christendom. The faulty logic of wives' total submission to imperfect husbands, modeled on Job's submission to the will of a perfect God, and of the exclusion of otherwise capable women from positions of economic and political power based solely on their sex, creates a tension driving readers to spin off their own versions of "Griselda," whether their purpose is to strengthen the tale's patriarchal message, as Petrarch does, or to question it, as Boccaccio and Chaucer and – to a much greater degree – Marguerite do. In each author's case, the reader or listener responses left *un*said, whether specifically mentioned by the extant text or merely implied by it, give us a clearer idea of the limits of these four writers' ability to question the prevailing patriarchies of their times.

Chapter 3, "Intertextual Iconographic Narrative: How the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*' Katherine/Conrard Becomes the *Heptaméron*'s Rolandine," examines the *Heptaméron*'s place in literary history from a different angle. While still interested in the genealogy of Marguerite's prose narratives, this chapter chooses as its principal object of analysis a novella that Marguerite did not draw from any obvious source or analog, *Heptaméron* 21. Although "Rolandine" is a popular *nouvelle*, readers tend to have trouble explaining why its characters behave as they do and what the connections are between the novella and its frame. Chapter 3 therefore explains some of the more jarring aspects of this story's plot with simpler analyses focused solely on the

novella itself, describes the information about French dynastic history and narrative elements found in the twenty-sixth story of the fifteenth-century Burgundian *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* that are recombined to create *Heptaméron* 21's plot, and interprets several shifts in the heroine's behavior as coincident with shifts in the type of genre being used as the text's model, from *nouvelle* or romance of the *mal mariée* variety to pardon request to martyr's tale. Whereas Chapter 2 might be thought of as an explanation of how several great artists decide to re-frame one classic image, Chapter 3 takes us inside Marguerite's textual chop-shop, helping readers appreciate the kinds of experiments in genre hybridity that enable both avant-garde literature and radical social critique.

Chapter 4, "'The Mother of the Renaissance,' 'The Soul of Paris,' and Aimé Meigret: Marguerite de Navarre's Engagement with Contemporary Preachers," asks how Marguerite reuses elements found in both orthodox and unorthodox contemporary preaching in her framed-novellas. This chapter marks a shift in tactics, because where Chapters One and Two ask how Marguerite wrote particular novellas or pairs of novellas, Chapter 4 inquires into the possible sources for her frame-characters' exegetical and predicant habits, which are structural elements continuing throughout the book rather than specific narrative modules. Rather than follow tale types, motifs, or *dramatis personae* as they reappear in the *Heptaméron*, the *Sermon d'Aimé Meigret*, and Le Picart's *Sermons & Instructions...*, Chapter 4 compares the widely varying uses that these texts make of the same Bible chapters (sometimes the exact same verses), providing three case studies not only of the Reformation's splintering of Catholic exegeses into conflicting interpretations, but also of three different ways that sixteenth-century religious writers could relate to literacy.

I argue that Le Picart's strategic obfuscation of the sources of his non-biblical Latin quotations and his interpolation of non-Scriptural elements into biblical stories sets him apart from Meigret's and Marguerite's comparatively more transparent and vernacular-centered use of holy writ. Although we may today disagree with his preaching style, Le Picart was beloved by the people of Paris as a rock-solid pillar of the Church's moral authority and an unflagging opponent of heresy. Meanwhile, Meigret was condemned as a heretic by a committee of Gallican inquisitors that began as an *ad hoc* entity in charge of his particular trial and pursued other heterodox thinkers for decades.[1] Meigret likely lived out his last years in exile and in any case fell into obscurity, the result of his having publicly preached exegeses favoring (for the most part) logic and textual accuracy over the Church's official line.

Marguerite was protected from persecution by her privileged position as the sole sibling of King Francis I, but her *Heptaméron*, like Le Picart's *Sermons & Instructions...*, was published only posthumously (she died in 1549). Both the misattributed, truncated 1558 edition of Marguerite's *nouvelles* by Boaistuau and Gruget's "restored" 1559 edition expurgated the parts of the frame-narrative most likely to anger state and religious authorities. As this dissertation will show, these patterns of manuscript proliferation, publication involving expurgations and subsequent restorations, mirror the handling of Scripture, ever a dangerous weapon, by its early modern preachers.

III. Review of relevant criticism on the genealogy of the Heptaméron

The critical literature on the *Heptaméron* regarding Marguerite's purposes in writing the book may be summarized as follows. Marguerite's motivations appear to be feminist, nationalistic, evangelical, aesthetic, psychological, and philosophical, although those six sets of

[1] Taylor 208.

motivations conflict with one another and with those of contemporary patriarchy throughout her framed-novella collection. Many articles or book chapters elucidate aspects of the *Heptaméron* that pertain to more than one of these motivations – psychoanalytical readings of Marguerite's *nouvelles* sometimes focus on the author's or her female characters' "feminist" desire for power, for example, while nationalistic and aesthetic goals coincide in the Queen's decision to renovate the *Decameron*. All of these critical readings focus on basic questions about the writing of the *Heptaméron*; these questions are themselves a response to some surprising aspects of the text mentioned above.[2]

The *Heptaméron* is a literary work that becomes more astonishing, not less, as one gains a wider knowledge of early modern French literature. There seem to be few, if any, precedents for a book of this type, with its fluctuating formal structures and assertive female characters. Readers, therefore, particularly readers who have read Montaigne, Rabelais, and other major writers of the sixteenth century and failed to find obvious close cousins of Marguerite's own prose fiction, are faced with enormous questions: How could Marguerite have written this book? Why did she write it? Different critics have registered different responses to these puzzles, some of which help to enable the analysis undertaken in the present dissertation.

For critics like Sainte-Beuve, writing in the nineteenth century, an obvious answer to the first question suggests itself, rendering the second question irrelevant. Marguerite de Navarre or, indeed, any woman of her time, simply could not have written the *Heptaméron*. As Sainte-Beuve puts it, "Et puis, quand une femme écrit, on est tenté toujours de demander, en souriant, qui est là derrière" ["After all, when a woman writes, one is always tempted to ask, smiling,

[2] See pages 1 and 2.

who's standing behind her"].[3] This sort of explanation finds a more nuanced descendant in Mireille Huchon's *Louise Labé: Une creature de papier* (Huchon's main point is not that a woman could not have written Labé's poems, but that the historical evidence of Labé's existence is insufficient to warrant the assumption that she was a real poet).

Recent scholars, however, have reached a consensus that Marguerite *did* write the *Heptaméron*. Given that consensus, I put aside questions of the book's authorship and focus on an inquiry into the method and stakes of its production. This focus, in turn, determines the relationship of the present study to previous criticism. The *Heptaméron* is not a uniform text, however. Different segments of the *Heptaméron* contain different kinds of stories and (to a lesser degree) different types of discussions. Thus, each chapter of this dissertation will interest slightly different groups of scholars.

One of the greatest concentrated funds of scholarly information and inferences as to the time frame and methods of Marguerite's composition of her *nouvelles* lies in the introduction and endnote references of Renja Salminen's 1999 Droz *Heptaméron*. Salminen is concerned with distinguishing the various oldest and most thoroughly authenticated manuscripts of the *Heptaméron*, and her version of Marguerite's novellas combines a sort of democratic quantitative approach (in which a given reading of the primary text will be accepted if it is carried by a plurality or majority of the manuscripts) with a hierarchical, qualitative judgment that assigns certain manuscripts more authority than others based on completeness, coherence, and documentation of provenance. This kind of analysis provides information as to the physical circumstances of the *Heptaméron*'s production - the places and times where its various portions

[3] Polachek 155.

were written, Marguerite's use of dictation, copies made by various scribes, and so on. Salminen also provides notes for each *nouvelle* that mention sources for each story whenever possible.

Although Chapter 3 does make a detailed argument regarding possible or probable sources of various parts of *Heptaméron* 21, my dissertation's primary concern is not to ferret out the ancestor or contemporary analogous intertexts of every single one of Marguerite's *nouvelles*. Such a project, as I have noted,[4] is far beyond the scope of the present study. What unifies my three main chapters, what they are intended to accomplish as a group and in this particular arrangement, is an investigation of Marguerite-as-*nouvelliste*'s generative method and the ecclesiological, political, and authorial stakes of that method. This dissertation seeks to describe how Marguerite recombines found textual elements to create a new type of framed-novella collection, where the dialogic frame simultaneously functions as courtly debate about the *nouvelles* recounted, coded messages between pairs of potential or actual sexual partners, and Scriptural interpretation of contemporary *exempla*. Although the question of why Marguerite wrote the *Heptaméron* is impossible to answer – nothing in her correspondence or elsewhere assigns the project a specific motivation – we can at least partially answer the more important question of *why someone like Marguerite might write a collection like the* Heptaméron by looking at the types of work accomplished by the text.

A statement folding a description of how Marguerite creates the *Heptaméron* into a consideration of her motives can be found in the words of André Tournon:

> la prolifération des "nouvelles" trouve sa raison d'être dans les énigmes d'une réalité composite, variable selon l'enchevêtrement des "causes secondes" qui la déterminent. Cela se traduit, dans le

[4] See page 4.

recueil, en une *combinatoire* narrative dont les ressources dépassent peut-être celles du roman tel qu'il se constitue plus tard, avec ses soucis de cohérence, de vraisemblance ou de réalisme qui imposent, sauf exceptions, le respect des principes d'identité et de continuité. En composant son recueil selon un système propre à favoriser les agencements multiples, les superpositions et concurrences de versions, de configurations stylistiques, de significations, Marguerite de Navarre trouve le moyen d'articuler entre elles la vérité et la fiction, les messages religieux ou moraux et les jeux, le sens spirituel et le sens ludique.

[the proliferation of the "nouvelles" finds its *raison d'être* in the enigmas of a composite reality, variable according to the entanglement of the "second causes" that determine it. This is translated, in the collection, into a narrative *combiner* whose resources perhaps surpass those of the novel such as it is constituted later, with its worries about coherence, verisimilitude, or realism, which impose, exceptions aside, respect for the principles of identity and continuity. In composing her collection according to a system able to favor multiple agencies, the superpositions and competition of versions, of stylistic configurations, of meanings, Marguerite de Navarre finds the way

of articulating among them truth and fiction, moral or religious messages and games, the spiritual sense and the ludic sense.][5]

What interests me most is the "system," as Tournon calls it, via which Marguerite creates her collection. I would argue that "systems," plural, is more appropriate, precisely because of the textual features that Tournon mentions. The *Heptaméron*, unconcerned with "coherence" and "realism" as one might find those qualities in a modern novel, uses various methods of transforming the raw narrative materials of older novella collections, history, lived experience (Marguerite's or her friends'), and oral traditions into a book that is and is not a French *Decameron*. Each chapter of the present study will interest different groups of critics depending on the type of system of composition on which that chapter focuses.

In exposing the types of transformations involved in the *Heptaméron*'s reframing of contemporary narratives, I argue in Chapter 2 that Marguerite appropriates the Boccaccian framed-novella form in order to respond and contribute to European prose fictional literature about marriage. Such an emphasis on gender issues and the *Heptaméron*'s relationship to the framed-novella tradition builds mainly on the work of scholars such as Patricia Cholakian,[6] Paula Sommers,[7] Hope Glidden,[8] Josephine Donovan,[9] Mihiko Suzuki,[10] Cathleen Bauschatz,[11] and

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[5] Tournon 18, my translation.

[6] See Cholakian's *Rape and Writing in the* Heptaméron of Marguerite de Navarre, especially "Signs of the Feminine" on pages 1 – 19; also her article "Heroic Infidelity: Novella 15."

[7] See Sommers' "Marguerite de Navarre and Erasmus: Wives' Tales Retold" or her earlier piece "Feminine Authority in the *Heptaméron*: A Reading of Oysille."

[8] See Glidden's "Gender, Essence, and the Feminine (*Heptameron* 43)."

[9] See Donovan's "Women and the Framed-Novelle: A Tradition of Their Own."

Daniel Russell.[12] Chapter 3 maintains that Marguerite creates new hybrid *nouvelle* forms mixing various types of fictional and nonfictional sources in order to depict strong, secular female characters engaged in realistic processes of psychological and spiritual change. Reading *Heptaméron* 21 as an experiment in genre hybridity more directly engages critics such as Tom Conley,[13] Mary McKinley,[14] Philippe de Lajarte,[15] Daniel Russell,[16] and Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani,[17] who have delved into Marguerite's artistic or aesthetic, principally form-oriented, goals.

In Chapter 4, I show that Marguerite creates a sexually charged predicant frame-narrative structure (featuring *devisants* who either complain about or seek to engage in devious preaching and misuse of Scripture) in order to depict the dangers posed by seemingly pious men, in terms of both the direct physical threat of seduction or rape and their poisoning of the minds of unwary Christians with unsound doctrine. In tackling the *Heptaméron*'s relationship to contemporary preachers' ecclesiological and exegetical conflicts, Chapter 4 primarily connects to the work of

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[10] See Suzuki's "Gender, Power, and the Female Reader: Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptameron*."

[11] See Bauschatz's "'Voylà, mes dames…': Inscribed Women Listeners and Readers in the *Heptameron*."

[12] See Russell's "Some Ways of Structuring Character in the *Heptameron*."

[13] See Conley's "The Graphics of Dissimulation: Between *Heptameron* 10 and *l'histoire tragique*."

[14] See McKinley's "L'*Heptaméron*: oeuvre composite."

[15] See Lajarte's "l'*Heptaméron* et la naissance du récit moderne: essai de lecture épistémologique d'un discours narratif," "Des *Nouvelles* de Marguerite de Navarre à *La Princesse de Clèves*: notes sur quelques transformations de l'écriture narrative de la Renaissance à l'Âge classique."

[16] See Russell's "Some Ways of Structuring Character in the *Heptameron*."

[17] See Mathieu-Castellani's "Pour une poétique de la nouvelle."

scholars such as Carol Thysell,[18] Gérard Defaux,[19] Catherine Randall,[20] François Rigolot,[21] Christine Martineau-Génieys,[22] Nicole Cazauran,[23] G.-A. Pérouse,[24] and Edwin Duval,[25] who have focused on the *Heptaméron*'s engagement with and promotion of Evangelicalism.

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[18] See Thysell's "Gendered Virtue, Vernacular Theology, and the Nature of Authority in the *Heptameron*" and especially her book, *The Pleasure of Discernment: Marguerite de Navarre as Theologian*.

[19] See Defaux's "Marguerite de Navarre et la guerre des sexes: *Heptameron*, première Journée" and "De la Bonne Nouvelle aux nouvelles: remarques sur la structure de L'*Heptaméron*."

[20] See Randall's *Earthly Treasures: Material Culture and Metaphysics in the* Heptameron *and Evangelical Narrative*.

[21] See Rigolot's "The *Heptameron* and the 'Magdalen Controversy': Dialogue and Humanist Hermeneutics" and "Magdalen's Skull: Allegory and Iconography in *Heptameron* 32."

[22] See her article, published under the name "Christine Martineau," "La *Lectio Divina* dans l'*Heptaméron*."

[23] See Cauzaran(1976) 257-92, "L'inspiration religieuse."

[24] See Pérouse's "L'amour, la mort et le salut selon Marguerite de Navarre, des comédies sacrées à l'*Heptaméron*."

[25] See Duval's "'Et puis, quelles nouvelles?': The Project of Marguerite's Unfinished *Decameron*."

CHAPTER 2

BOCCACCIO'S *DECAMERON*, PETRARCH'S *RERUM SENILIUM LIBRI*, CHAUCER'S *CANTERBURY TALES*, AND MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE'S *HEPTAMÉRON*: FOUR FRAMES FOR A PORTRAIT OF A PATIENT WIFE

I. Medieval and early modern social history, "Griselda" as an exemplary intertext, and the evolution of framed novellas

In works of literature that represent their storytellers and listeners as fictional (or fictionalized historical) persons reacting to internally nested examples, readers are often taken aback when the reactions of the frame-level audience to a framed text are drastically different from their own. Likewise, points of common interest or ethical concern shared by today's readers and the distant cultures of late medieval and early modern Italy, England, or France occur when we hear textually framed members of those cultures expressing attitudes towards various examples that seem to resonate with their own. For instance, much of what literary critics and historians can learn from Montaigne's *Essays* lies in the writer's treatment of Latin authors he loves to quote, stories about New World peoples, accounts of contemporary oddities like Marie Germain/Germain Marie, and so forth. Of course we can also profit from considering Montaigne's views on topics from his own personal memories. But since in these cases we no longer have access to the original objects or events that he is discussing, we will not learn as much from his opinions on them as we will from his opinions on texts that remain extant.

The *Decameron*,[26] the *Canterbury Tales*,[27] and the *Heptaméron*[28] derive much of their current interest from the reactions of their frame-level storytellers to short narratives, reactions that were apparently believable to Giovanni Boccaccio's, Geoffrey Chaucer's, and Marguerite de Navarre's contemporaries. We pay close attention to how Boccaccio's *lieta brigata*, Chaucer's pilgrims, or Marguerite's *devisants*[29] react to the stories that they tell one another, because the attitudes towards religion, politics, sex, family, labor, property, and power expressed in their conversational reactions to framed novellas inform us about the social structures of medieval and early modern Europe. To recognize elements of early modern culture that survive in our own time and to better discern the differences between ourselves and Renaissance Europeans, we can read Boccaccio's *novelle*, Chaucer's tales, or Marguerite's *nouvelles* and compare the frame-characters' reactions to our own. Yet these frame-characters' reactions are not always clear and unambiguous, nor are they expressed in the same ways in different framed-novella collections. Where frame-characters' dialogic exegeses become (apparently) tangential or obscure, readers may appreciate some informed commentary from literary scholars.

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[26] References to the *Decameron* will be to the 1976 Vittore Branca edition and the 1995 English edition by G. H. McWilliam unless otherwise noted. Citations will be in the format "x; y", where "x" represents the page number in Branca's Italian original and "y" represents the page number in McWilliam's English translation.

[27] Unless otherwise noted, references to the *Canterbury Tales* will be to the 1980 N. F. Blake edition (Hengwrt manuscript), and citations will list page number, then line number, in the format "x, y."

[28] References to the *Heptaméron* will be to the 1999 R. Salminen edition and the 1984 English edition by P. A. Chilton unless otherwise noted. Citations will be in the format "x, y; z", where "x" and "y" represent the page and line number in Salminen's French original and "z" represents the page number in Chilton's English translation.

[29] Modern criticism tends to refer to Boccaccio's frame-narrators as the *lieta brigata* and to Marguerite's as the *devisants*. Chaucer's storytellers go by various designations, but I prefer "pilgrims" as it is short and obvious.

In Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron*, one of the most complex, puzzling, and informative interweavings of *nouvelles* and framing dialogue occurs in the fifth through eighth stories of Day Four. There, two pairs of short novellas, the first two about bad wives, the last two about good ones, provoke a barrage of commentary from the *devisants* which highlights the gulf between younger frame-characters (distracted by marital strife and amorous intrigue) and older ones (whose detachment from the world leaves them chiefly interested in spiritual matters). At the same time, the exegeses following *Heptaméron* 35 through 38, each of them halted by a frame-character who is uncomfortable about continuing the conversation, give readers an indication of the limits of courtly discussion in Marguerite's France. In looking more closely at the reasons why four *devisants* tell these four stories, and why four others refuse to continue discussing them, we will gain a better idea of how early modern French writers and readers could make polemic use of ambient *nouvelles* (either "novellas" or "news"). We will also arrive at a clearer notion of the social limits threatened by narrative exchange, the ways in which French lords and their ladies disciplined their own speech even when ostensibly "au jeu"[30] ("at play").

This chapter will argue that in each of the three framed-novella collections being studied here (and some other medieval and early modern texts such as Petrarch's letters as well), the most elaborate exegetical and narrative framing techniques are deployed around analogs[31] of the

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[30]12, line 389; 70.

[31] As Farrell explains, a text may be a *source* for a later text, meaning that the later author possessed and was using the source text while writing his own; or the two texts may be *hard analogs*, meaning that the two texts share common themes or motifs, but no similarities striking enough to establish that the later author (who did know the earlier text) used the first text as a *source*; or, finally, the two texts may be *soft analogs*, meaning that they share many features but that the later author cannot be assumed to have known the earlier text. In the context of the

Decameron's 100th and final novella, the story of Griselda. I will demonstrate that Boccaccio, Petrarch,[32] and Chaucer created unique, layered framing devices that rationalize and justify but also problematize their own links in the chain of patriarchal and literary traditions that Griselda represents. In doing so, I will pay close attention to closures of discussion as structural elements indicating ideological stresses and the policing of expression associated with a counter-intuitive devotion to power structures whose inadequacies the novellas themselves expose. It is true that *Decameron* X.10[33] has no precise analog in the Queen of Navarre's writings, but the two *nouvelles* most similar to this exemplary narrative of wifely patience – *Heptaméron* 37 and 38 – are once again found at a striking site of argumentative and contested textual framing. These two stories of chaste, obedient, and self-immolatingly pleasant wives whose sweetness and patience win back their wayward husbands are a response to *Heptaméron* 35 and 36, in which clever husbands deceive and violently punish their wayward wives in order to safeguard their families' honor.

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present study, Boccaccio's *Decameron* X.10 is a source for Petrarch's *Seniles* XVII.4, a source or hard analog for Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale," and a soft analog of *Heptaméron* 38. See Farrell (2003) 346-51.

[32] Petrarch's *Historia Griseldis* forms part of a letter to Boccaccio which, along with two previous letters and one subsequent one, forms book XVII of the *Rerum senilium libri* (also called the *Epistolae seniles*). The letter that contains *Griseldis* is *Seniles* XVII.3. All references to XVII.1, XVII.2, and XVII.4 are to Bernardo et al's English edition (1992), while references to XVII.3 are to Farrell's English translation presented side-by-side with the Latin original in *Sources and Analogs of the* Canterbury Tales (2002). References to XVII.3 will list the page number for the English text and the page and line numbers of the Latin text; references to XVII.1, XVII.2, and XVII.4 will give the page number only.

[33] Stories from the *Decameron* are generally referred to by a roman numeral indicating the day on which they are told and a number indicating the order of stories for that particular day.

Marguerite's treatment of such paradigmatic stories about good and bad wives indicates the *Heptaméron*'s relationship to the late medieval and early modern novella's traditional promotion of patriarchal values. Her collection's reuse of analogous source texts – *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 47[34] as *Heptaméron* 36,[35] for example, or *Le Menagier de Paris*'s story of "Jehanne la Quentine"[36] as *Heptaméron* 38[37] – provides a dramatic interpretive frame allowing for comparison with other texts' treatment of the theme of women's submission in matrimony. Petrarch, Chaucer, and Marguerite, as readers of *Decameron* X.10,[38] register quite different reactions to Boccaccio's novellas, but all three authors seem to feel compelled to respond to precisely that exegetical uncertainty which surrounds Griselda's story, the division between men and women when it comes to interpreting stories about wives' submission or failure to submit to their husbands. My principal conclusion is that the closures of discussion following *Heptaméron* 37 and 38 build on a sexually divided cognitive dissonance central to Christian patriarchy – the idea that wives must obey their imperfect husbands as Christians obey a perfect God – not only challenging misogynistic prejudices generally, but more specifically gesturing towards a radical

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[34] References to the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* are to the anonymous 15th-century Burgundian text from the ducal court of Philippe le Bon, according to F. P. Sweetser's 1966 Droz edition.

[35] Salminen 747.

[36] References to the *Menagier de Paris* are to the online open text English translation by Rose & Greco, accessed at http://encompass.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/checkIP.cgi?access=gateway_standard%26url=http://site.ebrary.com/lib/cornell/Doc?id=10468072 on 17 February 2012.

[37] Brereton 207. See Sommers 115n.5 for a catalog of articles discussing sources for *Heptaméron* 38.

[38] *Decameron* X.10, as mentioned, has no direct analog in the *Heptaméron*, yet obviously Marguerite read the *Decameron* closely – she knew the Italian text and in 1545 paid Antoine le Maçon to provide a French translation superior to Laurent de Premierfait's fifteenth-century version. (Salminen xlii)

reform of the Christian Church that would eliminate the celibacy of the priesthood, allow laypeople to access Scripture directly, and grant women the freedom to preach. I hope also to prove the usefulness of comparing three readers' responses to the *Decameron*, with Chaucer and Boccaccio occupying a middle ground between a patriarchal Petrarch and a matriarchal Marguerite.

II. Review of Relevant Recent Criticism

In recent decades, there have been two specialist articles written on wifely exemplars in the *Heptaméron* and two book-length studies of early Renaissance Florentine literature that are particularly relevant to this chapter. I employ the two book-length studies by analogy, as methodological tools. For a maximal appreciation of the interaction between the framed-novella cornice and the modular short fictions within, I draw my inspiration from Marilyn Migiel's 2003 *Rhetoric of the* Decameron. "When I read the *Decameron*," Migiel writes, "I see as cardinal the strategies used to control discourses about women, their agency, and their sexuality – and I am, to tell the truth, deeply disturbed to see how deep-rooted those strategies remain to this very day…I read the *Decameron* not as a work that dictates which sort of narratives will be best for women, but rather as a work that invites us to reflect on how narratives can be used for good or ill."[39] I am similarly interested in the patriarchal power structures embedded in the *Heptaméron*, what Parlamente and company's "conversation conteuse"[40] can teach us about the control of discourse and the struggle to define correct gendered behavior that the *devisants*' diegeses and exegeses represent. As Migiel watches closely the *lieta brigata*'s motivations for telling their stories and the messages encoded in their *novelle*, I will spy on the *devisants* to find out what

[39] Migiel 4.

[40] This term is drawn from the title of Mathieu-Castellani's *La Conversation conteuse*.

kinds of games I can catch them playing behind the partial concealment of the storytelling pastime described in Marguerite's "Prologue."

In a less direct way, I am also inspired by Stephanie Jed's 1989 *Chaste Thinking: The Rape of Lucretia and the Birth of Humanism*. Jed's book is primarily interested in the ways in which humanists in fifteenth-century Florence and afterwards reproduced Livy's myth of the fall of the Tarquins, reinforcing the association of Lucretia's rape and death with Roman liberty.[41] As Lucretia's example helps to perpetuate the idea of women as the property of their male-controlled families, valuable primarily in terms of their chastity and devoid of honor in the event of extramarital sexual activity whether consensual or forced, Griselda's example lends powerful literary support to the idealization of feminine chastity, obedience, and uncomplaining courtesy in deference to patriarchal power. Like *Chaste Thinking*, this chapter will attempt to follow the diachronic influence of a mythically honorable and obedient daughter-figure who willingly suffers for men's benefit.

In terms of criticism comparing individual *nouvelles* in the *Heptaméron* to *Decameron* X.10, two articles deserve special attention here. First, in her 1993 chapter, "Heroic Infidelity: Novella 15,"[42] Patricia Cholakian argues for a reading of "*Heptaméron* 15 against *Decameron*

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[41] As Livy and his textual descendants explain, the Roman Republic is founded in a wave of vengeance against the tyrant rapist, Sextus Tarquinius, and this revolution is enabled when Brutus convinces his fellow Romans to convert their grief at the suicide of Lucretia, the victim, into the anger that motivates a courageously administered and salutary punishment of Tarquin as the violator of Lucretia's family's honor. (For summary, see Jed 9-10; for a facsimile, transcription, and translation of Salutati's *Declamatio Lucretiae*, which reproduces the speeches of Lucretia and her kinsmen in the form of a legal argument, see Jed 132-52.)

[42] This chapter is part of the edited volume *Heroic Virtue, Comic Infidelity*.

100"[43] (this in the same volume where Carla Freccero finds *Heptaméron* 42 "unwriting Lucretia"[44]). Cholakian describes how Marguerite seeks to undo an age-old and international masculinist literary tradition representing women as "deceitful, lascivious, and unfaithful."[45] As she goes on to relate, the example of Griselda was promoted as a natural response to these purported facts about women, showing the proper submission to male authority figures that could keep women obedient and – most of all – chaste. The other option besides chastity that *Decameron* X.10's narrator, Dioneo, offers to women in his speculative post-novella epilogue is literally prostitution, "trading [their] caresses for more elegant attire."[46]

In *Heptaméron* 15, a scorned wife decides to act on her own desires and take charge of her own fate in defiance of her unfaithful husband, but her attempts at extramarital romantic fulfillment are doomed to failure. Cholakian reminds us of the political stakes of chastity: "The…woman who acted on her desire represented a dynastic threat, for she could bring down the whole structure by endangering the legitimacy of the line. This actually happened in the first half of the fifteenth century when suspicions about the [French] queen caused many to suspect that the Dauphin was a bastard; nothing less than divine intervention via Jeanne d'Arc was required to establish him as the true heir."[47] Cholakian argues that Longarine and the other *devisants* "reimpose the Griselda model" and "the heroine's behavior [in *Heptaméron* 15] is finally repudiated," but that nevertheless "this story inscribes not only the heroine's desire for love but the author's desire to be done with the everlasting patience and long suffering of

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[43] Cholakian 64.

[44] Freccero 77-87.

[45] Cholakian 64.

[46] Ibid. 65.

[47] Ibid. 67.

Griselda."[48] Like Cholakian's study, the present chapter reads the *Heptaméron* for its response to *Decameron* X.10 and to exempla about wives in general, analyzing *nouvelles* 35 through 38 as examples of good and bad wifely comportment, and asking what is at stake for women "as *subjects*"[49] in Marguerite's creative recycling of established models of feminine behavior.

The other recent specialist article that I wish to engage is Paula Sommers' 1998 comparative study of *Heptaméron* 38 and Erasmus's *Conjugium*. In "Marguerite de Navarre and Erasmus: Wives' Tales Retold," Sommers argues that the thirty-eighth *nouvelle* responds not only to the preceding story, *Heptaméron* 37, but also to a tradition of exempla of wifely patience, including analogs of *Heptaméron* 38 found in Erasmus, Pierre de Lesnauderie's *Louanges de Mariage*, and the anonymous *Mesnagier de Paris*.[50] Sommers focuses on the *devisants*' reactions to novellas 37 and 38, noting that the less patient and more assertive wife in 37 (the Dame de Loué) is more psychologically believable. While I build on Sommers' analysis, I would like to extend it by including several angles that her article does not consider. Specifically, I will interpret *Heptaméron* 37 and 38 not only as a pair but also as a response to the bad wives in 35 and 36, consider how the frame-character Geburon parallels Oysille, and take into account tales of Griselda as significant intertexts allowing us to compare the *Heptaméron*'s structural strategies to those of Marguerite's predecessors.

In contrast to all the aforementioned scholars, I will also pay careful attention to the predicant (preaching) discourse that frequently appears in the *Heptaméron* and the *Canterbury Tales*, where terms related to preaching and sermons are used metaphorically as well as literally

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[48] Cholakian 75.

[49] Ibid. 63, quoting Nancy K. Miller, "Emphasis Added: Plots and Plausibilities in Women's Fiction." *PMLA* 96.1 (January 1981), p. 41, emphasis in original.

[50] Sommers 115.

to describe men's and women's attempts to deceive. In addition, although Marguerite may not have known Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* at all,[51] she and Chaucer both, as readers of Boccaccio, apparently decided that one way to spice up the frame-narrative structure inherited from the *Decameron* would be to place the frame-characters' dialogue into a frame story more frictional and less idealized than the pastoral scene of Boccaccio's short prose fictions. The *Clerk's Tale* places itself in problematic relation to patriarchal power structures via its repackaging of both Boccaccio and Petrarch, whose versions of Griselda Marguerite surely knew, and a half-disguised masculinism similar to Boccaccio's comes through in Chaucer's text despite the Englishman's undercutting of Petrarch's exemplum.

Although Sommers does not address the Griselda archetype in her article, two of the scholars she cites, John D. Bernard[52] and Emile Telle,[53] suggest the similarity of *Heptaméron* 38 to *Decameron* X.10. The *Mesnagier de Paris*, probably the most direct source for the thirty-

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[51] Her grandfather owned a copy, but Marguerite's work shows no definite signs of Chaucer's influence. For information about the *Canterbury Tales* manuscript owned by Jean d'Angoulême, see Crow 5.

[52] Bernard 309: "This story, well known from its variants by Petrarch and Chaucer, was exceedingly popular in the Renaissance as well and may be expected to have put in an appearance in the *Heptameron*; but it does not. There is a group of tales, however, exemplifying Griselda-like patience in women; see, for example, nouvelles 37 and 38."

[53] Telle 313, cited and translated in Sommers 115-6, writing about Erasmus's Eulalia teaching wifely patience to Xanthippe in the *Conjugium*: "par le truchement d'une femme…qui a bien compris la leçon des paraphrases sur Saint Paul et Saint Pierre, le réformateur fait un cours sur la vie de marriage qui ne pouvait qu'intéresser toutes les Grisélidis de son temps, et toutes les mal mariées à venir…" ["through the agency of a woman…who has understood his paraphrases of Saints Paul and Peter, the reformer gives lessons on married life that could not fail to interest all the Griseldas of his time and all the unhappily married women to come…"]

eighth *nouvelle*,[54] contains Philippe de Mézières' French translation of Petrarch's *Historia Griseldis* as its centerpiece.[55] As Marguerite knew the *Mesnagier*, and as the story of Jehanne la Quentine in that compendium of advice to wives is part of a series of feminine exempla all laboring in Griselda's shadow, I submit that this relationship, if less directly to Griselda's precise example than to the virtues of chastity, obedience, and silence that she personifies, pervades the *Heptaméron*'s Fourth Day. The conflicted conversational structures that frame Marguerite's tales find some interesting predecessors in the unique paratexts that Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Chaucer attach to their versions of Griselda's narrative.

Even when the imagined community of listeners and storytellers is homogeneous (like Boccaccio's well-born young Florentine *brigata* or Petrarch and his Latin-speaking male friends), there are discordant interpretations of novellas. When the imagined community is more diverse, as in the case of Marguerite's *devisants* (all aristocrats but including people both young and old, male and female, single and married) or Chaucer's famously variegated pilgrims, the opportunities for oppositional dialogue increase, and modern readers get a broader perspective on the culture that produced the text at hand. Marguerite and Chaucer, in particular, create distinctions among their frame-characters based on those frame-characters' familiarity with and use of Scripture and on their dramatically varying temperaments. The former distinction is absent from Boccaccio's *Decameron*, but we will turn now to the Italian text for a glimpse at Griselda's story and the provocative frame in which it is set, a narrative module that Petrarch,

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[54] Brereton mentions this connection as early as 1954. Sommers also acknowledges the likely relationship between *Heptaméron* 38 and the very similar story of Jehanne la Quentine in *Le Mesnagier de Paris*.

[55] Christine Rose and Gina Greco make a strong case for the Griselda *exemplum*'s centrality to the compiler's message in their "Introduction" to the 2009 English translation of *Le Mesnagier de Paris*.

Chaucer, and Marguerite answered in kind and a structural device that the latter two authors re-fashioned to fit their own priorities.

III. Boccaccio's Decameron

For readers unfamiliar with the *Decameron*'s final novella, it may be helpful to recall its plot:

Gualtieri, the Marquis of Saluzzo, chooses Griselda, a poor shepherdess, as his bride; he has never given any thought to marriage in the time before the story's beginning and would prefer to remain a bachelor, but he is willing to marry in response to his people's pleas for him to produce an heir. After marrying her, Gualtieri develops an obsession with testing the invincibility of Griselda's love for him, and he puts her through various torments in order to be absolutely sure of her devotion. He takes first one child, then another, away from her, making her believe that they have been put to death. Gualtieri sends Griselda back to her father's hut so that he can marry a younger, nobler woman, and then, as his final insult, recalls Griselda so that she may teach his new wife how to please him. When Griselda continues, in spite of everything, to serve Gualtieri cheerfully, he reveals that his new bride is actually their long-lost daughter, and the whole family is joyfully reunited.

The cognitive dissonance involved in interpreting Griselda's irrational loyalty to her cruel and paranoid husband does not go unnoticed by Dioneo, her narrator, who sets off *Decameron* X.10 from its fellow *novelle* in several respects aside from its prominent position as the final novella in the collection.[56] Dioneo does not have to speak on the topic that each day's King or

[56] Petrarch cites this finality factor as the aspect of Boccaccio's text indicating that Griselda's is the most important of the one hundred novellas. "After all, [the story of Griselda] had consistently pleased me for many years after I first heard it and you liked it, I felt, well enough to give it *the final position in your Italian book, where the art of rhetoric teaches us to place whatever is more important.*" (110, emphasis added)

Queen assigns to the storytellers, having claimed this distinction for himself from the First Day onward.[57] So any story he tells will already question, to some degree, whether the characters in it behave munificently (deeds of munificence are supposed to be the Tenth Day's theme). "Ridendo" ("laughing"), as members of the *brigata* so often do, Dioneo confirms that he will exercise his exclusionary clause in his final turn at narrating. "Vo' ragionar d'un marchese, non cosa magnifica ma una matta bestialita, come che ben ne gli seguisse alla fine; la quale io non consiglio alcun che segue, per ciò che gran peccato fu che a costui ben n'avenisse." ["I want to tell you about a marquis, whose actions, even though things turned out well for him in the end, were remarkable not so much for their munificence as for their senseless brutality. Nor do I advise anyone to follow his example, for it was a great pity that the fellow should have drawn any profit from his conduct."] (703; 784)

Dioneo repeats his condemnation of Gualtieri at the end of his story, adding this final paragraph of summary commentary:

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[57] Boccaccio, Giovanni (ed. V. Branca). *Decameron*. Torino, 1980: Einaudi. 125, 12-13; 68. "Madonna, come tutti questi altri hanno detto, così dico io sommamente esser piacevole e commendabile l'ordine dato da voi. Ma di spezial grazia vi cheggio un dono, il quale voglio che mi sia confermato per infino a tanto che la nostra compagnia durerà, il quale è questo: che io a questa legge non sia costretto di dover dire novella secondo la proposta data, se io non vorrò, ma qual più di dire mi piacerà. E acciò che alcun non creda che io questia grazia voglia sì come uomo che delle novelle non abbia alle mani, infino da ora son contento d'esser sempre l'ultimo che ragioni." ["My lady, like all the others, I too say that the rule you have given us is highly attractive and laudable. But I would ask you to grant me a special privilege, which I wish to have conferred upon me for as long as our company shall last, namely, that whenever I feel so inclined, I may be exempted from this law obliging us to conform to the subject agreed, and tell whatever story I please. But so that none shall think I desire this favor because I have but a poor supply of stories, I will say at once that I am willing always to be the last person to speak."]

> Che si potrà dir qui? se non che anche nelle povere case piovono dal cielo de' divini spiriti, come nelle reali di quegli che sarien più degni di guardar porci che d'avere sopra uomini signoria. Chi avrebbe, altri che Griselda, potuto col viso non solamente asciutto ma lieto sofferir le rigide e mai più non udite pruove da Gualtier fatte ? Al quale non sarebbe forse stato male investito d'essersi abbattuto a una che quando, fuor di casa, l'avesse fuori in camiscia cacciata, s'avesse sì a un altro fatto scuotere il pilliccione che riuscito ne fosse una bella roba.
>
> [What more needs to be said, except that celestial spirits may sometimes descend even into the houses of the poor, whilst there are those in royal palaces who would be better employed as swineherds than as rulers of men? Who else but Griselda could have endured so cheerfully the cruel and unheard of trials that Gualtieri imposed upon her without shedding a tear? For perhaps it would have served him right if he had chanced upon a wife, who, being driven from the house in her shift, had found some other man to shake her skin-coat for her, earning herself a fine new dress in the process.] (712; 794-5)

Dioneo underscores Griselda's exemplary patience, but he also suggests that she is wrong to put up with such mistreatment. After all, if Gualtieri is indeed more worthy of keeping pigs than of having lordship over men, then perhaps Griselda *would* be better off finding another man "to shake her skin-coat for her."

Notice, too, that G. H. McWilliam's translation of the opening sentence of Dioneo's epilogue is rather imprecise: "Che si potrà dir qui?" Dioneo asks, most exactly, "What will be able to be said here?" or more gracefully, "What can be said here?" and his rhetorical question frames the crucial exegetical paragraph that follows. What we find in Dioneo's closing statement is not all that "needs to be said" but all that "*can* be said." If Dioneo's story and its interpretation are pushing the limits of polite discourse in fourteenth-century Italy, this may explain why the tension between altruism and egoism, between Griselda and Dioneo's imagined anti-Griselda, will be left unresolved. As noted above, Patricia Cholakian points out that Dioneo's problematization of *Decameron* X.10's exemplary value appears somewhat insincere in light of the fact that his anti-Griselda is imagined as a sex worker. In setting off his final comments by labeling them as all that can be said, Dioneo betrays the narrowness of women's options – saintly and self-abnegating chastity on the one hand or whoredom on the other.

Immediately following Dioneo's epilogue, the conclusion to the tenth day also emphasizes the *Decameron*'s uncertainty about the meaning of its final novella:

> La novella di Dioneo era finita, e assai le donne, chi d'una parte e chi d'altra tirando, chi biasimando una cosa, un'altra intorno ad essa lodandone, n'avevan favellato, quando il re, levato il viso verso il cielo e vedendo che il sole era già basso all'ora di vespro, senza da seder levarsi così cominciò a parlare...
>
> [Dioneo's story had ended, and the ladies, some taking one side and some another, some finding fault with one of its details and some commending another, had talked about it at length, when the king, having raised his eyes to observe that the sun had already

> sunk low in the evening sky, began, without getting up, to address them…] (713; 795)

The ladies' reading of this story is an oscillation that the King-for-the-day intervenes to stop. The unsolvable dilemma of women's enforced (but also self-enforced) dependence upon men, which Griselda's sacrifice seeks to encapsulate, spills over into Dioneo's coda and then into the Conclusion of Day Ten.

How serious a symptom is this elaborately conflicted framing? Here we find a prologue indicting X.10's protagonist, who leads a happy life despite his cruelty, an epilogue imagining that the story had turned out differently yet offering only one other opposite possibility to wives encountering difficulties similar to the heroine's, and a post-novella discussion that wavers among various unreported opinions before being adjourned by the King. How often does this sort of thing happen in the *Decameron*?

Looking through the volume as a whole, one discovers that Boccaccio's transitions between *novelle* tend on the contrary to be relatively simple. Each story starts with a paragraph or two of description of the narrative to come, summarizing the points that the teller wants his or her audience to retain. Sometimes a frame-character will explain that the previous story helped him or her remember the tale that will now be told, and frequently the prologue to a story will draw out one or more themes that link it to neighboring tales. At the end of the novella proper, the narrator gives a wrap-up that may or may not simply reinforce the points made at the story's outset. In the vast majority of cases, the *brigata* registers one single reaction to the story it has just heard, reacting with unanimous disgust or horror to a villain, unanimous sadness and sympathy to an ill-fated virtuous lover, unanimous amusement to a tale of tricks skillfully pulled

off, and so on. There is frequently no dialogue per se between two stories and sometimes only a summary statement by the King or Queen.

Occasionally, however, Boccaccio's *brigata* has a more varied, more conflicted, or more dialogic response to a story, such as the one we have observed surrounding X.10. While I may take the universal approval that the storytellers express after most of the *novelle* to be a sign of Boccaccio's need for his readers' approval (among other things), I take the framing device and its associated techniques to be productive of novellas and thus more significant for a genealogical analysis.[58] That is, the frame story is the technology for organizing modular narrative material. Once a framed-novella author/compiler/translator has determined the ways in which she wishes to link her stories together, then she has a general idea of the ways in which the stories and anecdotes that she gathers from disparate sources must be altered so as to fit into a unifying narrative. Focusing on framing techniques as central to the generic novelistic productive apparatus, I am drawn to those segments of the frame where Boccaccio expands the cornice narrative's possibilities. Dioneo's I.4 provokes the first post-novella reaction which is more than just a summary statement of the audience's satisfaction:

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[58] I use "genealogical" merely to mean tracking the production of fictional narratives within framed collections as well as the genesis of the framed-novella genre throughout the medieval and Early Modern periods. A useful exploration of the further possibilities of genealogical analysis, however, tying the term "genealogy" to the work of Michel Foucault, can be found in the introduction to *Genealogy and Literature*. As Lee Quinby explains, "genealogical investigation makes visible the ordering of discourses into the prose and poetry forms that constitute the field of literature. Genealogy seeks to demystify the pieties that continue to haunt literature by searching out the way 'the literary' is delineated, how these texts are produced and distributed...Genealogical literary analysis teaches a great deal about how given cultures engage with and deny their own local dispositions and practices towards such preeminent concerns of literature as death, sexuality, war, love, hatred, and madness." (xi - xiv)

> La novella da Dioneo raccontata prima con un poco di vergogna punse i cuori delle donne ascoltanti e con onesto rossore nel loro viso apparito ne diede segno; e poi quella, l'una l'altra guardando, appena del rider potendosi abstenere, soghignando ascoltarono. Ma venuta di questa la fine, poi che lui con alquante dolci parolette ebber morso, volendo mostrare che simili novelle non fossero tra donne da raccontare.
>
> [As they listened to Dioneo's story, the ladies at first felt some embarrassment, which showed itself in the modest blushes that appeared on all their faces. Then, glancing at one another and barely managing to restrain their laughter, they giggled as they listened. When it came to an end, however, they gently rebuked him with some well-chosen words, in order to show that stories of that kind should not be told when ladies were present.] (49, 48)

The *Decameron*'s prologue having attempted to link the volume to a female readership, the ladies' increasingly relaxed enjoyment of Dioneo's tale about a hypocritical abbot and a monk having sex with the same girl and eventually sharing her between them establishes that Boccaccio's female storytellers display a combination of superficial prudishness and inner mischief. Here, it is relatively easy to follow the author's fantasy of women being seduced by his stories (even their rebuke comes in the form of sweet little words – *dolci parolette* – not "well-chosen words," as McWilliam would have it). Their blushes and reproof say no, but their giggles say yes. The rather dishonorable fate of the young girl, who becomes two men's sex-object while the importance of the males' relationship as cleric and superior outweighs that of

either of them when paired with her, does not *really* bother the ladies, although it appears to at first. This blushes-and-laughter motif will be reused following III.1, the story of the gardener Masetto and his nunnery full of lovers, and again after VI.7, in which Madonna Filippa argues her way out of being burned at the stake as an unchaste wife.

For the remainder of Day One after I.4, every novella is followed by a barebones statement of group reaction – "Emilia's story…provoked the laughter of the whole company…and everybody applauded the crusader's novel interpretation of the gospel"[59] – or an even more rudimentary linkage – "Once Elissa was silent, only the tale of the queen remained to be told, and she began with womanly grace to address them as follows."[60] The next time that the *Decameron* will depart from these simplistic procedures is following II.7, in which Alatiel, the daughter of the Sultan of Babylon, is forced to enter into nine different unwanted (yet subsequently sexually satisfying) marriages during a series of misadventures preventing her from marrying her intended husband, the King of Algarve. Like the text following I.4 and VI.7, this passage indicates that women take a concealed pleasure in being sexually active with many men: "Sospirato fu molto dalle donne per li varii casi della bella donna: ma chi sa che cagione moveva que' sospiri? Forse v'eran di quelle che non meno per vaghezza di così spesse nozze che per pieta di colei sospiravano." ["The ladies heaved many a sigh over the fair lady's several adventures: but who knows what their motives may have been? Perhaps some of them were sighing, not so much because they felt sorry for Alatiel, but because they longed to be married no less often than she was."] (141; 148)

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[59] 54; original text 55, "Mosse la piacevolezza d'Emilia e la sua novella la reina e ciascuno d'altro a ridere e a commendare il nuovo avviso del crociato."

[60] 63; original text 65, "Restava, tacendo già Elissa, l'ultima fatica del novellare alla reina; la quale donnescamente cominciando a parlar disse…"

On Day Four, the *Decameron*'s framing dialogues become more dramatic, showcasing the brooding of the unhappy lover, Filostrato. His choice of topic, stories of lovers that end tragically, provokes some complaints from his fellow narrators, and he in turn becomes the first of the *brigata* to openly criticize another's tale: following Pampinea's IV.2, he comments that "un poco di buono e che mi piacque fu nella fine della vostra novella; ma troppo più vi fu innanzi a quella da ridere, il che avrei voluto che stato non vi fosse." ["The ending of [Pampinea's] story was not without a modicum of merit…But there was far too much matter of a humorous kind in the part that preceded it, and this I would have preferred to do without."] (284; 313) The next novella, about Ninetta, Maddalena, and Bertella and their lovers Restagnone, Folco, and Ughetto, involves several characters acting in questionable ways: Restagnone betrays Ninetta, she then poisons him to avenge herself, Maddalena later prostitutes herself to the Duke in order to get Ninetta off the hook for Restagnone's murder, and Folco murders Maddalena to avenge the dishonor of her prostitution. One could put into practice a variety of lessons by aiming to avoid the actions of any of these people, especially – it seems to me – Ninetta or Folco, the two murderers. Both these characters kill for the same reason, to take revenge on their unfaithful lovers. Folco is, if anything, the worse of the two, because Maddalena's acquiescence to the Duke's desire is a desperate move to save her sister from being executed, whereas Restagnone's infidelity is simply the result of boredom and thus worthy of Ninetta's wrath.

Lauretta, however, in opening the novella, spends three paragraphs explaining that women, in particular, must combat their anger. I have excerpted the most relevant portions here:

> E come che questo sovente negli uomini avvenga…nondimeno già
> con maggior danni s'è nelle donne veduto, per ciò che più
> leggiermente in quelle s'accende e ardevi con fiamma più chiara e

> con meno rattenimento sospigne…e noi pur siamo (non l'abbiano gli uomini a male) più dilicate che essi non sono e molto più mobile. Laonde, veggendoci naturalmente a ciò inichevoli, e appresso raguardato come la nostra mansuetudine e benignità sia di gran riposo e di piacere agli uomini co' quali a costumare abbiamo, e così l'ira e il furore essere di gran noia e di pericolo, acciò che da quella con più forte petto ci guardiamo…la mia novella mostrarvi. [Although men are not immune from this particular vice… nevertheless it has been observed to produce its most catastrophic effects among the ladies, for they catch fire more easily, their anger burns more fiercely, and they are carried away by it without offering more than a token resistance…if the gentlemen will forgive me for saying so, we are invariably more delicate than they are, as well as being much more capricious… Bearing in mind, then, that we have a natural propensity to fly into a temper, that our cheerfulness and mildness of manner have a pleasing and very soothing effect upon our menfolk, and that anger and fury can bring about so much peril and anguish, I intend to strengthen our will to resist this vice by telling this story of mine.] (284-5; 313-4)

If readers find that they cannot square this narrow and misogynistic gloss with the novella that follows it, they are not alone: following IV.3, for the first time in the *Decameron*, the *brigata* reaches no consensus on the story just told. Instead, "e chi l'ira della Ninetta biasimava, e chi una cosa e chi altra diceva; quando il re…alzò il viso e a Elissa fé segno che appresso dicesse."

["Some of them blamed it all on Ninetta's anger, but opinion was divided on this point, and they were still debating the pros and cons among themselves when the king…looked up and gave Elissa a signal to proceed."] (290; 320) This closure of discussion, with an ongoing debate dismissed and silenced by the voice of a King, bears obvious parallels to the scene following X.10; note that the only audience opinion explicitly reported is the one that agrees with Lauretta and keeps the focus on women's anger. Exegeses diverging from the storyteller's announced lesson will remain vague – "and one said one thing, and another said another"[61] ("e chi una cosa e chi altra diceva").

As it turns out, there are three post-novella passages in the *Decameron*, besides the one following IV.3, where the frame-characters' remarks are varied, but the conversation's details remain out of reach. These occur after VII.8, VIII.8, and, of course, X.10.[62] VII.8, in which Monna Sismonda cuckolds and outwits her husband Arriguccio, is "tanto…piaciuta…che né di ridere né di ragionar di quella si potevano le donne tenere, quantunque il re più volte silenzio loro avesse imposto, avendo comandato a Panfilo che la sua dicesse." ["so much to their liking that the ladies could not be restrained from laughing and talking about it, even though the king,

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[61] My translation.

[62] I have not found previous criticism of the *Decameron* linking these stories together or paying systematic attention to the general form of the discussions following each novella. Critics have, of course, commented upon the discussion following *Decameron* X.10; one prominent example occurs in Chapter Four of *The World at Play in Boccaccio's* Decameron. There, Giuseppe Mazzotta argues that Dioneo's imagining of an opposite, pleasure-seeking pattern of behavior in which Griselda might have engaged (following the story proper) "points to the proximity between violence and libertine pleasures" and "suggests that nothing is definitive and final in this narrative universe: the very end, conventionally seen as the privileged perspective from which the moral coherence and order of the text are constituted, is disclosed as a contigent and purely formal closure." (129-30)

who had ordered Panfilo to narrate his own tale, called upon them several times to be silent."] VIII.8 veers even further from heteronormative standards, telling the founding history of a four-party marriage. It ends with a gaze toward the quartet's future, enabled by Spinelloccio's recognition that he has been justly cuckolded by his friend Zeppa, with whose wife Spinelloccio had committed the initial adultery:

> "Zeppa, noi siam pari pari, e per ciò è buono, come tu dicevi dianzi alla mia donna, che noi siamo amici come solavamo e, non essendo tra noi dua niuna altra cosa che le mogli divisa, che noi quelle ancora comunichiamo." Il Zeppa fu contento, e nella miglior pace del mondo tutti e quattro desinarono insieme; e da indi innanzi ciascuna di quelle donne ebbe due mariti e ciascun di loro ebbe due mogli, senza alcuna quistione o zuffa mai per quello insieme averne.
>
> ["Now we are quits, Zeppa. So let us remain friends, as you were saying just now to my wife. And since we have always shared everything in common except our wives, let us share them as well." Zeppa having consented to this proposal, all four breakfasted together in perfect amity. And from that day forth, each of the ladies had two husbands, and each of the men had two wives, nor did this arrangement ever give rise to any argument or dispute between them.] (558; 615)

The obvious suggestion, that marriage could be profitably and peaceably opened up to include multiple sexual partners in a stable arrangement, is one of the more radical to be found in the

Decameron. Readers will notice, however, that this story still involves a woman selling her sexual services to a man – Zeppa pays Spinelloccio's wife with a valuable jewel[63] – and that the novella ends with a male homosocial contract, an agreement by the men to share their wives, not an agreement by the women to share their husbands.

We are told almost nothing about the female storytellers' reaction to this subversive narrative. Lauretta, as queen and the narrator of the next story, ties VIII.8 in with the topos of the deceiver deceived (a popular subject on a day devoted to tales of deception). In fact, although Lauretta, unlike Filostrato, Dioneo, and Panfilo – as the Kings ruling over stories IV.3, VII.8, and X.10 – waits for the ladies to finish their conversation before asserting herself, the *Decameron* does use the Queen of Day Eight's exegesis to associate VIII.8 with other classic comic tales, focusing on Zeppa's revenge sex with Spinelloccio's wife and forgetting about the astonishing *ménage à quatre* that constitutes VIII.8's happily-ever-after. What's more, Lauretta's comments divert the reader's interest away from the subject of the ladies' conversation, which appears to have been precisely the unorthodox family arrangement:

> Poi che le donne alquanto ebber *cianciato dello accomunar le mogli fatto da' due sanesi*, la reina, alla qual sola restava a dire…incominciò: – Assai bene, amorose Donne, si guadagnò Spinelloccio la beffa che fatta gli fu dal Zeppa; per la qual cosa non mi pare che agramente sia da riprendere…chi fa beffa alcuna a colui che…la si guadagna.
>
> [When the ladies had quite finished *commenting upon the two*

[63] 558; 614.

> *Sienese and their wife-swapping*, the queen, who…was the only one left to address them, began as follows: "When you consider, fond ladies, how richly Spinelloccio deserved the trick played upon him by Zeppa, you will I think agree…that one should not judge a person too harshly for playing a trick on another, if the victim is being hoisted with his own petard."] (559; 615-6; my emphasis)

To summarize, there are four *novelle* in the *Decameron* – IV.3, VII.8, VIII.8, and X.10 – which are followed by some sort of conversation that the momentary monarch forcibly terminates or diverts. Four others, meanwhile – I.4, II.7, III.1, and VI.7 – are followed by a graduated authorial description of the ladies' physical actions (blushing, giggling, mild reproaches) or outright authorial speculation about the ladies' thoughts. In the former cases, dissent or debate (or an amused but apparently threatening or obnoxious feminine *caquet*) arises from the presentation of problematic narratives about women's chastity and meekness. In the latter cases, the text clearly suggests that the *brigata*'s ladies, despite their halfhearted scolding of the men who tell such dirty stories, are amused by illicit sexuality, unmoved by the objectification of female novella characters, and unperturbed by rape.

The men of the *brigata*, in actively shutting down the women's discussions of IV.3, VII.8, and X.10, act in concert with the male Author's voice which imputes to women such hypocritical and intense heterosexual desire. What do the ladies (and sometimes the men) debate and comment upon in their scantily reported conversations? Honor killings? Women's anger management? A husband's right to share his wife with a friend? A neglected wife's right to extramarital affairs? An unjustly punished wife's right to rebel? The assumption that women's minds are easily overwhelmed by anger or sexual desire, and that they therefore need men's

guidance and correction, is the concept underlying the double standard by which violence and uninhibited sex are judged. This same idea underlies Boccaccio's speculation that the *brigata*'s ladies actually envy the serial rape victim Alatiel and are secretly pleased by tales of illicit sexual relations. Add to this the idea that women's honor equals their chastity, and that dishonorable women can be killed by the men they offend, but not vice versa,[64] and we have a fair picture of the misogynistic aspects of the patriarchal power structure that the discussions following IV.3, VII.8, VIII.8, and X.10 could threaten.

Although we know that the *brigata* has found these stories more vexing or puzzling than most, if no less stimulating, readers must guess for themselves about the specific comments that Boccaccio's frame-characters make about these *novelle*. With the discussion rendered in only the barest indirect discourse, we learn little here about men's or women's opinions, exegeses, and style of debate. At the same time, Boccaccio repeatedly depicts stories that call marital and patriarchal norms into question as being greeted with a divided reaction, textually marked by uncommon framing devices pointing towards discussions which the *Decameron* will not explicitly articulate.

IV. Petrarch's Rerum senilium libri

I will focus on narrative elements rather than verbal intricacies in analyzing Petrarch's Latin translation of *Decameron* X.10, since I am working primarily with the English translation of Petrarch's text myself. Readers should keep Petrarch's version in mind throughout this chapter, because the *Historia Griseldis* was a very well-known text in early modern Europe.[65]

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[64] This is the suggestion of *Decameron* IV.3 along with its framing (see pages 32-4 above).

[65] See Duché-Gavet's 2007 article and the introduction to Rossi's 1991 Italian-Latin edition pairing *Decameron* X.10 with the *Historia Griseldis* for details of the massive diffusion of this story during the late medieval and early modern periods.

One of Petrarch's goals in writing his Latin story of "Griseldis" and "Walterus" – to render the story accessible to a non-italophone public – was certainly accomplished. Philippe de Mézières translated Petrarch's *Historia Griseldis* into French even before Chaucer wrote the *Clerk's Tale*, which is believed to have used both the Latin and an anonymous French version, *Le Livre Griseldis*.[66] Marguerite de Navarre, in turn, probably knew Mézières' translation from the *Mesnagier de Paris*[67] and could easily have seen Petrarch's Latin text as well. Thanks in large part to Petrarch, *Decameron* X.10 circulated throughout Europe in advance of the rest of the *Decameron*,[68] which would be translated from Latin into French by Laurent de Premierfait in 1414 and directly from Italian into French by Antoine le Maçon, working for Marguerite, only in 1545.[69]

In my analysis of Boccaccio's storytelling techniques, I can rely on the justification that Marguerite is one of the *Decameron*'s most prominent readers; the *Heptaméron* cites Boccaccio's book as the source for the *devisants*' concept of a novella collection.[70] Why should I include texts like the *Historia Griseldis* or the *Clerk's Tale*, since we cannot be sure that Marguerite knew them? Even assuming that Marguerite did *not* know either of these versions of Griselda's story, we are still left with Petrarch, Chaucer, and Marguerite as three of the most successful and influential readers of Boccaccio, whose techniques can be analyzed as a group. In addition, with some slight alterations to the argument Farrell makes specifically with respect to

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[66] Farrell and Goodwin 101.

[67] See above, pages 23-4.

[68] Duché-Gavet 193.

[69] Chilton 11.

[70] 11, 332-3; 68.

the *Clerk's Tale* and *Decameron* X.10, I maintain that "sources[71] and hard analogues[72]…give us some insight into the way that [a given author] used background materials, and so give us some anagram of authorial intent," but "we can learn from a soft analogue[73] something about the horizons of discourse in the later Middle Ages [or the Renaissance], that is, about the parameters of meaning that the Griselda story could have suggested to another writer."[74]

These three multilingual authors – including one woman who, unlike the men, did not have a parallel writing career in Latin alongside her vernacular texts – looked at Boccaccio's *novelle* and saw something that they could exploit for their own projects. In following the contours of their three framings of tales of wifely patience, we will identify some patterns that help us systematize our own gendered reading of late medieval and early modern literature. As I will demonstrate, in Petrarch's case the translation of *Decameron* X.10 is linked to a devaluation of vernacular and popular points of view, of the common people, and – I believe – of women

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[71] This refers to an earlier text that an author both knew and actively used (drew upon, imitated) in the writing of later text. Although I do not have the space here to engage in a debate over these terms, readers will no doubt notice that "active use" could be defined in a number of ways. For my purposes, this may be simply imagined as an author having the earlier text physically on hand during the later composition process.

[72] These are earlier texts similar to the later text and known to the later author, but lacking enough verbal and narrative similarities to the later text to indicate active use by the later author.

[73] This refers to a second text with evident linguistic and/or narrative similarities to the text being examined, but which is unlikely to have been known to the first text's author (usually because of geographic or temporal distance). This definition seems to allow for a descendent text to be referred to as a "soft analogue" of its source, so I would add an additional distinction to state that "soft analogues" are *non-descendent,* narratively/verbally similar texts whose respective authors did not read one another's work.

[74] Farrell (2003) 360. Farrell draws the terms "source," "hard analogue," and "soft analogue" from Beider (2000) 41-42.

generally. This devaluation is not surprising, given the shift in audience attendant upon Petrarch's translation of "Griselda" from Italian into Latin, but Petrarch's alterations of Boccaccio's narrative provide an instructive example of the masculinization of a text seen as insufficiently integrated into serious Christian culture.

Petrarch wrote his translation near the end of his life, in 1373, and he dedicated it to Boccaccio in a letter dated that same year.[75] Following the *Historia Griseldis*, Petrarch wrote a second letter to Boccaccio discussing two anonymous readers' reactions to the tale; this letter and the one containing the translation proper form parts XVII.3 and XVII.4 of Petrarch's *Rerum senilium libri*. Petrarch explains in letter XVII.3 that he has, at some prior moment, seen the *Decameron*, but that he skimmed through it, paying more attention to the beginning and the end of the book than to anything in the middle. He pronounces himself "delectatus" ["delighted"][76] with his skimming, and excuses the immorality of many of the stories' subject matter on the grounds of Boccaccio's relatively young age when he wrote his *novelle* and of his audience: "Et siquid lascivie liberioris occurreret, excusabat etas tunc tua dum id scriberes, stilus, ydioma, ipsa quoque rerum levitas et eorum qui lecture talia videbantur. Refert enim largiter quibus scribas, morumque varietate stili varietas excusatur." ["As for the rather frankly uninhibited events that cropped up, your age when you wrote it is enough excuse, as are the style and the idiom, for levity is suitable in the stories and in those who would read them. Your audience makes all the difference: the range of their conduct pardons the stylistic diversity."][77]

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[75] Farrell (2002) 104.

[76] 109, line 13; 108.

[77] Ibid., lines 13-16; ibidem.

Petrarch thus implies not only that men like Boccaccio and himself, now aged and mature, have no business reading the kinds of stories that occupy most of the *Decameron*, but also that the *Decameron*'s readers behave as badly as its novella characters. If X.10 catches his eye, it is because of its apparent difference from its fellow tales, because, like a few others of Boccaccio's *novelle*, it is "pia et gravia" ["pious and serious"].[78] Petrarch is careful to put most of the *Decameron* in (what he sees as) its place, among silly texts for idle young people, while reserving the right to retell this one novella he deems worthy of his attention *and* to deflect questions of its truth value – "an historiam scripserim an fabulam" ["whether I have written a history or a fable"] – back onto Boccaccio. "Respondebo illud Crispi: Fides penes auctorem meum scilicet Johanem sit." ["I will respond with Sallust's words: 'Credibility must be sought with the author,' that is, my friend Giovanni."][79]

Given that we now possess no other text translated by Petrarch from a vernacular language into Latin and that the *Historia Griseldis* was one of his very last writings, his tale already occupies unique positions in the frames constituted by his own career and by the constellation of Latin and vernacular languages in which early modern European intellectual life was recorded. Furthermore, Petrarch's letters establish himself and Boccaccio as part of an almost exclusively masculine Latinate readership well served by moral exempla like Griselda's story but too wise to remain interested by ordinary *novelle*.[80] According to Glyn Norton,

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[78] Ibid., line 17; ibidem.

[79] 111, lines 47-48; 110.

[80] According to Glending Olson's 1976 article, "Petrarch's View of the *Decameron*," Petrarch saw Boccaccio's *novelle* as mainly directed at entertainment and justified by what Olson calls the "recreative argument" (as a way to ward off boredom, more or less the same justification given by the frame-characters themselves in the *Decameron* and *Heptaméron*).

Petrarch was not alone in this dismissive attitude towards the Boccaccian vernacular prose texts. Laurent de Premierfait and, Norton argues, fifteenth-century French people in general, saw Latin treatises by the older Boccaccio like *De Casibus virorum illustrium* as more significant than the *Decameron*, and tended to let Boccaccio's later moralizing texts color their readings of his novellas.[81] Giuseppe Mazzotta confirms that Italian humanists reacted to the *Decameron* in much the same "patronizing" way, since "the rigor of their scholarly standards did not make allowance for stories they saw simply as 'domestic trifles,'" and "they never hid either their preference for Boccaccio the humanist or their astonishment at his encyclopedic erudition that would find its way into works such as *Genealogy of the Gentile Gods*."[82]

In what ways does Petrarch, the accomplished humanist, think that he may alter *Decameron* X.10 so as to "ornaverim" ["adorn"] rather than "deformaverim" ["disfigure"]?[83] He himself has set these two terms as the parameters of his success or failure, to be assigned according to Boccaccio's judgment. But as Rossi points out, Petrarch also intends his *Historia Griseldis* as a lesson for Boccaccio, the younger writer who so admires the old master.[84] We can therefore assume without too much hesitation that Petrarch does in fact regard his translation as a success, seeing his Latin version as a story that conforms still more closely than *Decameron*

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[81] Norton 376.

[82] Mazzotta 3.

[83] Ibid., lines 44-45; ibidem.

[84] Rossi 17. For a dissenting view, see Goodwin 45: "Petrarch's dedication of the tale suggests that he vaunts his version as a rival. Yet it is very difficult to detect whether Petrarch thinks that he has one-upped Boccaccio or, if he does, the kind of one-upmanship that has occurred."

X.10 to the model of a superior text which his letters to Boccaccio imply – pious, serious, internationally circulated, and suited to mature, upright people.[85]

Within this picture of Petrarch attempting to improve upon Griselda's story while translating it into Latin, there are various possible interpretations of his accomplishment. Among the several changes to *Decameron* X.10 (quite apart from the change in language) that Petrarch performs, the following interest me most: he eliminates Dioneo's framing comments and the rest of the *Decameron*'s context, places Griseldis's story into the framework of *Seniles* XVII, depicts Walterus as the founder of the still-prosperous "Salucia," makes Walterus a more emotionally sympathetic character than Gualtieri, depicts Griseldis ruling skillfully as marchioness, masculinizes Griseldis, denigrates the marquisate's common people, and adds a Christian moral at the end reading *Griseldis* as a lesson for all believers.

Let us examine these alterations in order. I have already addressed the differences between the audiences that *Decameron* X.10 and *Seniles* XVII imply, and obviously the removal of Dioneo's condemnatory statements prefacing and wrapping up his story will mean that Petrarch's readers are less likely to detest Walterus than Boccaccio's are to despise Gualtieri. Furthermore, Gualtieri is merely "tra' marchesi di Sanluzzo il maggior della casa" ["among the marquises of Sanluzzo the eldest of the house"],[86] while Walterus is "primusque omnium et

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[85] See Mazzotta 3-4: "One reasonably suspects...condescension even in Petrarch's decision to translate...Griselda into Latin. The gesture was primarily meant, no doubt, as a friendly recognition of Boccaccio's treatment of a grave matter, but the compliment was bound to appear double-edged...suggesting the desirability of transplanting the tale into...Latin, presumably because Petrarch felt Latin to be adequate to the solemn cadence of the narrative, possibly because he thought it promised a more durable fame and certainly that it would fend off the noise and crowd of the marketplace."

[86] 703; my translation (McWilliam's is on page 784).

maximus" ["the first and greatest"][87] of his line. Since the land Walterus ruled is still "apta…et iocunda" ["pleasant and happy"][88] at the storytelling moment, we can assume his descendants to have continued in his successful footsteps after him; Boccaccio supplies no similar information about the Sanluzzo of his day.

In addition to this recasting of Gualtieri, one of many marquises, as Walterus, the "first and greatest" of the rulers of a land still peaceful and prosperous, Petrarch has Walterus react emotionally to his wife's predicaments in ways that Gualtieri does not. Here is Gualtieri, in the first phase of his tests:

> Primieramente la punse con parole…dicendo che i suoi uomini pessimamente si contentavano di lei per la sua bassa condizione… e della figliuola che nata era tristissimi altro che mormorar non faceano…la donna, senza mutar viso o buon proponimento in alcuno atto, disse: "Signor mio, fa di me quello che tu credi che più tuo onore e consolazion sia"…Questa risposta fu molto cara a Gualtieri, conoscendo costei non essere in alcuna superbia levata… [At first he lashed her with his tongue…claiming that his subjects were thoroughly disgruntled with her on account of her lowly condition…he said they were greatly distressed about this infant daughter of theirs, about whom they did nothing but grumble…The lady betrayed no sign of bitterness…she said to him: 'My lord, deal with me as you think best for your own good'…This reply

[87] 113, line 63; 112.

[88] 111, line 59; 110.

> was much to Gualtieri's liking, for it showed him that she had not been puffed with pride…] (788; 1239[89])

This is all we are told about Gualtieri's reaction. When his child-snatching servant then reports Griselda's impassive acceptance of her husband's will, Gualtieri is surprised at her abilities: "maravigliandosi egli della sua costanzia" ["marveling at her constancy"].[90] As for Walterus, at these same two moments "letus ille responso, sed dissimulans visu mestus abscessit" ["he was happy with her response, but departed masked in melancholy"];[91] then, rather than mere astonishment, "vehementer paterna animum pietas movit; susceptum tamen rigorem propositi non inflexit" ["a father's devotion moved Walter's feelings deeply, but he did not bend from the rigorous course of his intention"].[92] Surprise has become fatherly feeling and *pietas*.

In the second phase of testing, when he tells Griselda that he must dispose of their son as he did their daughter, Gualtieri has no reaction to Griselda's initial assent and again simply marvels at her singular constancy after the child is taken – "Gualtieri si maravigliava forte e seco stesso affermava niuna altra femina questo poter fare" ["much to the astonishment of Gualtieri, who told himself that no other woman could have remained so impassive"].[93] After the second child is removed, Walterus's reaction is nearly identical to Gualtieri's; but at the moment of Griseldis's second assent to being separated from her offspring, Petrarch's marquis again

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[89] This reference is to a 1980 edition of the *Decameron* that I have had to use because I am finishing this dissertation using books from the library of Arizona State University rather than from Cornell University. Any use of this other edition, rather than the 1976 one that I have mainly used, will be indicated in my notes.

[90] 707; 788.

[91] 119, lines 208-9; 118.

[92] 121, lines 226-7; 120.

[93] 707; 789.

"turbato vultu abiit" ["left with a disturbed countenance"],[94] whereas Boccaccio's is passed over without facial description.

When the third phase begins, and the patient marchioness is rejected in favor of the purported new bride, Gualtieri contains his emotions as he dismisses Griselda in her undergarments: "Gualtieri, che maggior voglia di piagnere aveva che d'altro, stando pur col viso duro, disse: 'E tu una camiscia ne porta.'" ["Gualtieri wanted above all else to burst into tears, but maintaining a stern expression he said: 'Very well, you may take a shift.'"][95] Walterus, however, is gradually overwhelmed with admiration for his wife's virtue: "Habundabant viro lacrime, ut contineri amplius non posset. Itaque faciem avertens, Et camisiam tibi unicam habeto, verbis trementibus vix expressit, et sic abiit illacrimans." ["Tears welled up in the man; he could no longer be contained. Turning his face, Walter said in a trembling voice, 'I grant you a single shift,' and left weeping."][96]

Turning Gualtieri, the stone-faced petty tyrant, into Walterus, the weeping patriarch and founder of his state, Petrarch makes a double move to prevent his reader from focusing on Walterus's needless mistreatment of Griseldis. On the other hand, Griseldis is capable of running the government in her husband's absence, which Griselda does not do: "sed ubi res posceret, publica etiam subibat officia, viro absente…tam gravibus responsis tantaque maturitate et iudicii equitate, ut omnes ad salute publicam demissam cello feminam predicarent." ["When affairs required it, she took up public duties in the marquis' absence…with such authoritative opinions and with such maturity and equity of judgment that everyone said the woman had been

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[94] 123, line 257; 122.

[95] 709; 791.

[96] 125, lines 325-7; 124.

sent from heaven for the common welfare."][97] This addition calls the entire exemplum into question because Walterus, although wise in his dealings, is never depicted ruling skillfully and in some detail as Griseldis does here. Coupled with the fact, also present in *Decameron* X.10, that the marquis is initially obsessed with hunting[98] and unconcerned with the affairs of his marquisate, Griseldis's conduct as regent poses a problem for any reading of her story as a straightforward patriarchalization of Boccaccio's novella.

Nevertheless, Griseldis's status as a good ruler is only attained after Walterus has the wisdom to select her as his wife, and Petrarch presents the initial sterling qualities that distinguish Griseldis in a way that both embellishes Walter's faculties of judgment and masculinizes his bride. "Omnis inscia voluptatis, nil molle nil tenerum cogitare didicerat, sed *virilis* senilisque animus virgineo latebat in pectore." ["Ignorant of all comfort, she had learned not to dream about soft and tender things: a mature, *manly* spirit lay hidden in her virginal breast."][99] This same disavowal of Griseldis's femininity is reflected in the marquis's discerning gaze: "In hanc virgunculam Walterus, sepe illuc transiens, quandoque oculos non iuvenili lascivia sed senili gravitate defixerat, et virtutem eximiam *supra sexum supraque etatem*" ["Walter, periodically riding past, fixed his eyes, not youthfully lascivious but maturely

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[97] 119, lines 185-8; 118.

[98] For a reading of the marquis's hunting through a psychoanalytical lens, see Cramer 509: "He has exchanged the narcissism of self-centered pleasures for the narcissism of self-centered power." For a reading of his hunting in the context of Petrarch's other writings, see Goodwin 60: "in his *Remedies* Petrarch…derided hunting as an anti-intellectual, trivial, and slothful pursuit." Cramer's article is about the *Clerk's Tale*, whereas Goodwin focuses on *Seniles* XVII.3 and *Decameron* X.10, but their comments are significant for all three versions since the hunting motif is present in each.

[99] 115, lines 117-8; 114; emphasis added.

considerate, on the virtue of this maid, *excellent beyond her age and gender*."][100] Boccaccio lets Griselda's good behavior and beauty weigh equally in Gualtieri's mind. "Erano a Gualtieri buona pezza piaciuti i costumi d'una povera giovinetta che d'una villa vicina a casa sua era, e parendogli bella assai estimò che con costei dovesse potere aver vita assai consolata." ["Gualtieri had been casting an appreciative eye on the manners of a poor girl from a neighboring village, and thinking her very beautiful, he considered that a life with her would have much to commend it."][101] What Walterus sees in Griseldis is the perfect servant – she herself will eventually point out that she fills this role more than that of a wife[102] – raised in poverty, used to hard work, mature, and (for how could Petrarch doubt that a male servant was in general more valuable than a female one?) *manly*.

Griseldis's virtues may outshine even those of Griselda, but Walterus also shines forth as a shrewd and sober judge of manpower, a ruler more judicious and less lascivious than Gualtieri. It is hard not to read Petrarch's androgynization of his exemplary female protagonist and embellishment of the patriarchal anti-hero as pandering to his audience: after all, translating *Decameron* X.10 into Latin places the story before a clerkly readership, more international but also much more predominantly male than the *Decameron*'s public. This move away from the

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[100] 115, lines 122-4; 114; emphasis added.

[101] 704; 785.

[102] "Ego, inquit, mi domine, semper scivi inter magnitudinem tuam et humilitatem meam nullam esse proporcionem. Meque nunquam tuo, non dicam coniugio, sed servicio dignam duxi. Inque hac domo, in qua tu me dominam fecisti, deum testor, animo semper ancilla permansi." ["My lord, I always knew there was no parallel between your greatness and my lowness. I never held myself worthy to be your – I do not say wife – but servant, and in this house, where you made me the lady, I swear before God that I was always a servant in spirit."] (125, lines 305-9; 124)

vernacular and into the language of Scripture and the schools, which Petrarch's Latin letters to Boccaccio already announce, is mirrored within the *Historia Griseldis* by the narrator's scorn for Salucia's commoners.

When Gualtieri fools his people into believing that he has a papal dispensation to annul his marriage, the reader finds only a neutral description of his actions: "fece venire sue lettere contrafatte da Roma e fece veduto a' suoi subditi il Papa per quelle aver seco dispensato di poter torre altra moglie e lasciar Griselda." ["Gualtieri arranged for some counterfeit letters of his to arrive from Rome, and led his subjects to believe that in these, the Pope had granted him permission to abandon Griselda and remarry"].[103] Walterus's subjects, however, take on a distinctly backwoods air: "simulatas litteras apostolicas inde referent, quibus in populo vulgaretur datam sibi licenciam a Romano Pontifice…primo matrimonio reiecto, aliam ducere posset uxorem; *nec operosum sane fuit aggrestibus rudibusque animis quod libet persuadere*" ["counterfeit papal letters…it was commonly believed, gave him permission from the Pope to put aside his first wife…and to marry another; *it was by no means difficult to persuade the ignorant peasants of any story*"].[104] Why can Walterus and his henchmen make any outrageous claim they please about the contents of the Pope's letters and expect to convince the peasants so easily, if not because of the peasants' illiteracy and their ignorance of Latin?

Now that the general patterns of Petrarch's changes to Griselda's tale have been established, his tropological moral appended to the conclusion merits full quotation:

> Hanc historiam stilo nunc alio retexere visum fuit, non tam ideo, ut matronas nostri temporis ad imitandam huius uxoris pacienciam,

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[103] 708; 790.

[104] 123, lines 286-9; 122, my emphasis.

que michi vix mutabilis videtur, quam ut legentes ad imitandam saltem femine constanciam excitarem, ut quod hec viro suo prestitit, hoc prestare deo nostro audeant, qui licet ut Iacobus ait Apostolus intemptator malorum sit, et ipse neminem temptet: probat tamen. Et sepe nos multis ac gravibus flagellis exerceri sinit, non ut animum nostrum sciat, quem scivit ante quam crearemur. Sed ut nobis nostra fragilitas notis ac domesticis indiciis innotescat. Habunde ego constantibus viris asscripserim, quisquis is fuerit, qui pro deo suo sine murmure paciatur quod pro suo mortali coniuge rusticana hec muliercula passa est.

[I thought it fitting to re-tell this story in a different style, not so much to urge the matrons of our time to imitate the patience of this wife (which seems to me almost unchanging) as to arouse readers to imitate her womanly constancy, so that they might dare to undertake for God what she undertook for her husband. God is the appropriate tester of evils, as the Apostle James said; but he tempts no one himself. Nevertheless he tests us. Often he allows us to be belabored with heavy stings, not so that he might know our spirit - he knew us before we were created - but so that our fragility might be shown to us by clear and familiar signs. I would have rated among the most steadfast of men one of whatever station who

endured without complaint and for God what this little country

wife endured for her mortal husband.][105]

By adding this exegesis to *Seniles* XVII.3 after the *Historia Griseldis* proper, Petrarch implies that his Latin tale is to be read allegorically rather than literally. Following Petrarch's advice, we can read Griseldis's suffering at Walterus's hands as an allegorical lesson about Christian submission to God's will. Indeed, Petrarch's comments to Boccaccio in *Seniles* XVII.2, the longer letter preceding the one containing the *Historia Griseldis*, suggest that his primary concern is to convince Boccaccio that the latter's intellectual gifts are more than consolation enough for material poverty.[106] Petrarch thus uses his friend's own text, reframed, to counter Boccaccio's lamentations over his penury. Petrarch may think that what he is doing with Boccaccio's *Decameron* X.10 is merely a re-positioning of the story within a moral frame optimal for consoling unhappy Christians like his friend Giovanni. At the same time, however, this seems to automatically mean a masculinization of the protagonist, perhaps in an effort to encourage Boccaccio to take his life's vicissitudes like a man. Alternatively, one could say that Petrarch really does mean to tell a story in praise of a woman, but to his mind, the highest compliment he can pay her is to say that she is man-like. This, in and of itself, speaks volumes about how seriously medieval readers take the notion that women's subjugation to male superiors is natural, lawful, and necessary.

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[105] 129, lines 396-405; 128.

[106] 644-45: "When we see a man outstanding in virtues and culture, but lacking in other things…we complain that it has happened unfairly…That would be true if he had those things with which he has been adorned from himself or from someone else, not from Him who [gives], 'distributing…to each as He wills.' Therefore, let it suffice to have received what is more precious, although what is cheaper has been denied to you."

For Cottino-Jones, Goodwin, and Carruthers, Griselda and her analogous textual descendants are fully dissociated from real-life women. Cottino-Jones focuses on Boccaccio's Griselda, offering a reading of *Decameron* X.10 perhaps more positive than even Petrarch would authorize. "The *Decameron*," she writes, "concludes with the apotheosis of a perfect woman, a feminine *figura Christi*, who stands diametrically opposite to the *figura diaboli* which had opened the book, Ser Ciappelletto…The…movement of the narrative has developed from the negative mood of the [first] novella…to the all-positive vision of the novella of Griselda, where moral integrity prevails, and Gualtieri's 'ingegno' is conducive to social harmony…the highest level of human happiness and ethical values, an earthly paradise of matrimonial and social bliss."[107] Goodwin, for her part, reads Boccaccio's framing of *Decameron* X.10 as placing Griselda's story within the purview of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and judges that Petrarch, "by replacing Aristotle with St. James," "substitutes Scripture as the measure of the characters' actions."[108] To her, "Petrarch's criticism [of Walter] is not muted but implies that the impulsive Walter is a dangerous kind of ruler," and "artistic and thematic motives rather than strictly ideological ones explain the [mild and indirect] forms that Petrarch uses to criticize Walter."[109] Carruthers, finally, focusing on Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale*, maintains that Chaucer "disavows, as Petrarch had before him, any connection between Griselda and real women."[110] Carruthers goes on to point out the "allusions…in the second part of the *Clerk's Tale* which suggest Rachel, the Virgin Mary, the Bride of Christ, the Good Shepherd, and Christ, not to mention other Old and

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[107] Cottino-Jones 50.

[108] Goodwin 63.

[109] Ibid. 61.

[110] Carruthers 223.

New Testament figures of virtue"[111] as models with whom Griselda is associated. In this view, Chaucer's contribution would be a dilation upon the allegorical Christian reading of Griseldis (and Griselda) that Petrarch recommends in *Seniles* XVII.3.

If one reads further than the end of the *Historia Griseldis* in Petrarch's letters, however, one finds that in *Seniles* XVII.4 he complains about a Veronese friend of his who refuses to believe that a woman as constant as Griselda could ever have existed.[112] Petrarch supplies a list of examples from antiquity to demonstrate that such unbending virtue is indeed possible, and it is obvious throughout *Seniles* XVII that he takes comparisons between the ancients and late medieval people seriously. In fact, the deployment of exempla culled from Classical texts is his main argumentative tactic. Petrarch's dismissal of cynical readers like his Veronese friend, "who consider whatever is difficult for them impossible for everyone,"[113] clearly implies that ancient examples like Griselda's count as proof of the range of contemporary human potential.

I favor an open interpretation of the style Finlayson describes, drawing no clear distinction between Boccaccio and realism, on the one hand, and Petrarch and allegory, on the other.[114] Goodwin's concept of a "Griselda game," where the reader's perceptions of the

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[111] Ibid. 225.

[112] 669-70.

[113] 670.

[114] I do not, however, agree with Finlayson that Petrarch presents the readings of his Paduan and Veronese friends as alternatives to be considered as valuable as his own and combined with it. (Finlayson (2000) 274) Although Petrarch is appreciative of the Paduan's tears, he vituperates the Veronese reader's incredulity. Even the emotional response of the Paduan is unlikely to figure as an approved reading for Petrarch, who frequently "drew on stoic virtues, which he combined unproblematically with Christian ones." (Goodwin 56) The Paduan reader's weeping flies in the face of the entire lesson in manly patience that Petrarch is trying to teach Boccaccio in *Seniles* XVII.

relationship between the *Historia Griseldis* and *Decameron* X.10 are the crucial element in determining Petrarch's story's meanings, is an apt figure for such open-ended exegesis. I nevertheless disagree with Goodwin's analysis of the roles that Scripture, patriarchy, and Aristotle play in the interaction of Boccaccio's and Petrarch's tales. Goodwin is right to point out that Dioneo's comments before and after his last novella are a reference to the moral scale set up in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, distinguishing among virtuous, incontinent, and vicious men. She poses momentarily, only to dismiss, the possibility that Griselda might be read as an illustration of what Dioneo calls "bestialità": "I think that Dioneo's final comments persuade against this analogy by distinguishing Griselda from another kind of wife who might be guided by her appetites once driven out of the palace by her husband."[115] I have already explained above[116] why I do not read Dioneo's final remarks as empowering women to seek any real alternative to chaste submission to men's authority. More importantly, in reading animality as synonymous with moral degradation, Goodwin overlooks the comparisons between good wives and good domesticated animals that were common in medieval literature on marriage.[117]

As Petrarch sees it, a man would have to be "overflowing with constancy" to "suffer…for his God what [Griseldis]…suffered for her mortal husband." But as the *Mesnagier de Paris* states just before its chapter on wifely obedience including an unabridged French translation of the *Historia Griseldis*, "beasts have the sagacity to love completely and be friendly with their owners and benefactors, keeping their distance from others. So much more should women, with

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[115] Goodwin 49.

[116] See page 27.

[117] See Greco and Rose, "Introduction," 12-13, for the *Mesnagier de Paris*'s comparisons of good wives to dogs and horses.

God-given sense and reason, have perfect and solemn love for their husbands."[118] Griseldis thus appears, much more obviously in this French translation than in Petrarch's text, as a wife whose perfection consists of her assumption of a non-subject position, a woman whose dog-like obedience is a model for wives in everyday life.

Indeed, as one of three responses to the *Decameron* featured in the present study, the *Historia Griseldis* represents a maximal effacement of the woman as subject. Translation of Griselda's story from Italian into Latin, denial of anything particularly feminine about Griseldis (via Petrarch's Christian moral and his characterization of his heroine's "manly" virtues), and the valorization of Walterus as a foundational patriarch conspire to remove women from the scene of *Seniles* XVII.3 as readers, listeners, writers, speakers – in short, as individuals entitled to self-determination or self-expression. Petrarch removes the novella from its Boccaccian dialogic frame, in which men are outnumbered, and inserts it into a pen pal conversation among men only. We will see that many of these moves are reversed by Geoffrey Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale*, which, in my reading, falls with the *Decameron* somewhere in the gray area between Petrarch and Marguerite.

V. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales

In the previous section, I felt it important to present a portrait of Petrarch's appropriation of Boccaccio's "Griselda" in order to set the historical context of the archetype's late medieval and early modern international diffusion (Petrarch's text becoming, as he perhaps hoped, the preferred version because of its Latin idiom and serious moral conclusion). The *Historia Griseldis*, although no doubt known to Marguerite in some form(s), sits within an epistolary

[118] Greco and Rose 103.

frame[119] quite unlike the cornice fictions developed in the *Decameron*, the *Canterbury Tales*, and the *Heptaméron*. This means that although the *Historia Griseldis* was known to Marguerite at least in French if not also in Latin, the *Clerk's Tale* may prove a more interesting object of a comparative study with *Heptaméron* 38 because the *Canterbury Tales* are a soft analog of the *Heptaméron*. Chaucer and Marguerite, writing in Boccaccio's wake, both decide to write framed-novella collections of their own, taking a much greater interest in Christian themes than their Italian predecessor does; their projects are analogous in several other important ways as well.

Both the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Heptaméron* introduce members of the clergy and their associates[120] into the frame-narrative, although the *Canterbury Tales* use these characters much more extensively. The Friar, Summoner, Nun, Clerk, Pardoner, Prioress, Monk, and Nun's Priest tell stories that reveal something of their personalities good or bad, while the *Parson's Tale* is not a tale at all but a sermon, traditionally found at the end of the *Tales*, just before Chaucer's "Retraction." The Friar, Summoner, and Pardoner, in particular, constitute a grotesque triptych of ecclesiastical corruption. Marguerite, on the other hand, includes the abbot

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[119] Mazzotta, as referenced above in Note 85, discussed Petrarch's attempt to provide a more "durable fame" (one is tempted to insert a parenthetical "r" in between the latter word's "f" and "a") for Griselda's story. For an excellent recent article on Petrarch's framing of his letters and summary of criticism in that regard, see Eisner. Albert Ascoli's work on such framing spans several books and many articles, of which Eisner makes extensive use. One example that is instructive as to how Ascoli analyzes Petrarch's letters in terms of the conversations and discursive communities of which they are a part is "Blinding the Cyclops: Petrarch after Dante," the third chapter of Cachey's and Baransky's 2007 edited volume, *Petrarch and Dante*.

[120] The Summoner is not a "clergyman," but he works for the ecclesiastical court and he is defined primarily by his antagonistic relationship to the Friar. The Clerk does not seem to be in holy orders, but he is a theology/philosophy student and actually possesses the knowledge of holy writ that the clerics *ought* to have.

and monks of Nostre-Dame-de-Sarrance as frame-characters whom the authorial presence and the *devisants* will not allow to participate in discursive or narrative activity. (The abbot speaks, but the author reports his words only indirectly; the monks are actually ordered to keep behind the hedges while the storytellers converse.) The *Heptaméron*'s Prologue's description of the abbot of Sarrance – a "mauvais homme" characterized by hypocrisy and avarice, who only helps the *devisants* out of fear of the Seigneur de Béarn[121] – grows darker still in the Prologue to the fifth Day, when readers learn that the Abbot is eager to be rid of all these "gens de bien" so that he may dare to send for his "pellerines acoustumées" ["usual female pilgrims"].[122]

Compared to Boccaccio, both Chaucer and Marguerite also make much greater use of overt rivalry and disputation as motivating factors behind their frame-characters' storytelling. This argumentative structuring is so ubiquitous in the *Heptaméron* that it does not merit lengthy discussion here, but a brief overview of the discursive combat in the *Canterbury Tales* may prove helpful.[123] In Chaucer's collection, the Miller and Reeve, the Friar and Summoner, and the Wife of Bath and Clerk all entertain antagonistic relationships that shape their choices of subject matter. After the initial *Knight's Tale*, the *Miller's Tale* and *Reeve's Tale* set up a relationship wherein two tellers use their tales to ridicule one another's profession. The *Reeve's Tale* is about a cuckolded miller, and it is told to counteract the *Miller's Tale* about a cuckolded carpenter – readers know from the general Prologue that the Reeve was once a carpenter himself,

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[121] 7, lines 200-203, 219-222; 65.

[122] 343, 13-16; 376.

[123] The most comprehensive study of the *Canterbury* pilgrims' conflicts with one another is still to be found in Lumiansky, *Of Sondry Folk: The Dramatic Principle in the* Canterbury Tales. Although many articles, chapters, and even book-length studies interpret conflicts between certain pairs or groups of the pilgrims, Lumiansky's study appears to be the only one attempting to evaluate all of Chaucer's storytellers as characters.

and he easily recognizes the *Miller's Tale* as directed at him before the story proper even begins. The *Cook's Tale*, although it remains only a fragment, is preceded by a prologue that clearly suggests that the Cook will at some point direct a tale against Harry Bailly, the Host and the Cook's employer, who impugns the Cook's professionalism. The Host (or innkeeper) declares that the Cook has a penchant for repeatedly draining the gravy out of unsold pies so as to later refill, reheat, and sell them, and also that "in [the Cook's] shoppe is many a flye loos."[124] When the Cook announces that he will tell a tale about "an hostiler,"[125] the reader feels certain that Hogg of Ware will eventually[126] do to his boss what we have just witnessed the Miller and Reeve doing to one another.

The *Wife of Bath's Prologue* and *Tale* begin a new fragment and thus do not respond to any particular previous story, although the Wife is clearly responding to and part of a long patriarchal and misogynist textual tradition in both profane and sacred works. When she finishes, although her tale draws some remarks from the Friar, he and the Summoner tell the next two tales as another pair of antagonistic narratives in which each teller ridicules the other's professional caste. The next five tales in Blake's edition of the Hengwrt manuscript involve little or no connection to the framing dialogues, and Blake states that their attribution to this or that pilgrim was likely performed by posthumous editors of Chaucer's text.[127] In fact, although some

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[124] 173-4, lines 4338-4344.

[125] 174, line 4352.

[126] The Cook specifies that he will not tell his "hostiler" story immediately, but at some later time; apparently the Cook plans to serve his revenge as he does his pies. Each storyteller in the *Canterbury Tales*, according to the frame-narrative, is to tell four stories during the pilgrimage, but Chaucer never got around to writing more than one *Tale* for any individual teller.

[127] See Blake's footnotes on pages 250, 289, 310, 344, and 370.

dialogue will be used to incorporate many of the remaining *Canterbury Tales* into the overall frame-narrative, in the rest of Hengwrt only the *Clerk's Tale* will clearly enter into dispute with another storyteller, responding to statements previously made by the Wife of Bath.

More of Chaucer's tales lack argumentative links to their fellow tales than possess them, but the fragmentary nature of the *Tales* makes it impossible to know how many of the stories might eventually have been connected in this way in the finished project. These exchanges between antagonistic pilgrims, using their turns at narration to ridicule or refute one another, bear an obvious resemblance to the conversation among the *devisants* in the *Heptaméron*, who also – and much more consistently than the *Canterbury* pilgrims – recount their stories in order to contradict, cancel out, or otherwise problematize previous statements by their fellow frame-characters. Without alleging any closer connection than a soft analogy between the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Heptaméron*, we can still appreciate that both collections make the polemic use of modular narratives more explicit than what one finds in the *Decameron*. And regardless of Marguerite's actual exposure to or ignorance of the *Clerk's Tale*, there is an important parallel between the relationship of the Wife of Bath to the Clerk and the interactions of Marguerite's male and female frame-characters. The antagonism between the Wife and the Clerk, unlike that existing between the Reeve and Miller, Friar and Summoner, or Cook and Host, but precisely like the discursive competition between the *Heptaméron*'s men and women, is based on gender rather than profession.

In addition to the new level of realism that the collection's anticlerical aspects take on through the frame-narrative's representation of ecclesiastical characters, the *Heptaméron* has one further feature in common with the *Canterbury Tales* that I will explore: the use of predicant activity as a topic of discussion, a narrative activity, and a metaphor used to denigrate others'

speech. The *Clerk's Tale* and *Heptaméron* 38 both sit within segments of their respective frames where the competitive intertwining of storytelling and preaching develops in extraordinary ways in response to exemplary narratives about wifely obedience. Preaching was and is a crucial form of oral and written literature connecting humankind to God. Because predication in mixed company was generally forbidden to women in medieval and early modern Europe, preaching functioned as one of many social practices placing men between women and God. I will demonstrate that in both the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Heptaméron*, women's attempts to establish themselves as subjects equal to their male interlocutors turn on frame-characters' use of figurative language related to preaching and sermons.

In the *Canterbury Tales*, preaching as a figure of speech first appears in the transition between the *Miller's Tale* and the *Reeve's Tale*. The Miller has characterized his tale as "a legende and a lyf," thus comparing his scurrilous tale of the cuckolded carpenter to a saint's life. We may read this statement as a thinly veiled confession of the story's apocryphal nature, since saints' lives are filled with figural rather than historical detail and typically report literary rather than literal truth. Yet for Chaucer's audience, saints' lives were used much as the Gospels themselves, as texts backed by all the authority of the Church, providing examples of how clergy and laity alike could live justly and win the Lord's favor. Some would argue that these saints' lives are unconcerned with "history" in the modern, quasi-scientific sense, so that the concept of "historical inaccuracy" does not apply to them.[128] Therefore, the Miller's characterization of his tale as a "legende and a lyf" may be read as a complex argumentative move aspiring to greater credence among more credulous listeners, or greater amusement among the more cynical.

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[128] On the medieval saint's life and its place in the *Decameron* and the *Canterbury Tales*, see Lupton. On gender issues in medieval devotional practices, see Bynum.

When the Reeve gets a chance to avenge himself on the Miller, he at first also delves only indirectly and benignly into preaching. Speaking of old folk like himself, he states that "in oure wil ther stiketh evere a nayl," a possible allusion to 2 Corinthians 12:7, "Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me."[129] Ignoring the merits of the Reeve's self-critique, however, the Host criticizes Oswald for being out of character. Note that the authorial voice conspires with the Host to negatively characterize the Reeve's speech as *preachy*: "Whan that oure hoost hadde herd this sermonyng, / … / He seyde: 'What amounteth al this wit? / What, shal we speke al day of holy writ? / The devel made a reve for to preche / Or of souter[130] a shipman or a leche.[131]"[132]

The Reeve partially obeys the Host's command, cutting his "Prologue" short (twelve lines after the Host's interruption, as opposed to forty-four lines beforehand) and dropping his meditation on old age. Rather than steer clear of "holy writ," however, the Reeve moves from vague allusion to direct biblical citation even as his theme changes from the ravages of time upon mortal man to a straightforward attack on his rival, the Miller. Praying to God and quoting the Gospel of Matthew directly, he declares: "Right in his cherles termes wol I speke. / I pray to God his nekke mote tobreke. / He kan wel in myn eye seen a stalke, / But in his owene he kan nought seen a balke."[133] The Reeve's escalation of the storytellers' predicant competition continues at his story's conclusion, when he becomes the first pilgrim to offer an exegesis of his own tale, a

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[129] New International Version, by Biblica, Inc., 2011. Accessed online at http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20corinthians%2012:7&version=NIV, on 19 May 2012.

[130] = "cobbler" (Blake 158).

[131] = "doctor, physician" (Blake 700).

[132] 158, lines 3895-6.

[133] 159, lines 3909-12. The last two lines are from Matthew 7:3.

reworking of a French fabliau about two clerks who have sex with a miller's wife. Whereas the Knight and Miller both use their final lines simply to summarize their narratives and pray for their companions' salvation,[134] the Reeve contemplates the deeper meaning of his story, tying it back in with the passage from Matthew: "And therfore this prouerbe is seyd ful sooth: / Hym thar nat wene wel that yuele dooth; / A gilour shal hymself bigiled be. / And god, that sitteth heighe in magestee, / Saue al this compaignie grete and smale. / Thus have I quyt the millere in my tale."[135]

After the incomplete *Cook's Prologue* and *Tale* (during which the Cook adds onto the biblical interpretation of the *Reeve's Tale* by connecting its demonstration of the danger of housing strangers to Solomon's statements in Ecclesiasticus), a new fragment begins with the prologue and tale of the Wife of Bath. Since the Reeve's and Cook's forays into preachy storytelling draw the Host's criticism, we might expect Harry Bailly to attack Alisoun as well – but he does not. Although the Wife refers to at least twenty-one different Bible passages during the first 161 lines of her *Prologue* (eleven of which are from 1 Corinthians),[136] she draws sarcastic encouragement from the Pardoner and rebuke from the Friar, while the Host only instructs her to tell on. The Summoner, who might ordinarily upbraid Alisoun for her frank and enthusiastic attitude towards sex, is too distracted by his quarrel with the Friar to play his usual role as an enforcer of public morality. As I will demonstrate, the issue of predicant activity and its abuse is at the forefront of both the *Wife of Bath's Prologue* and her *Tale*.

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[134] See 133, lines 3103-4, "Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye, / And god save al this faire compaignye. Amen," and 156, lines 3842-6, "Thus swyued was the carpenters wyf / For al his kepyng and his ialousye. / And Absolon hath kist her nether iye / And Nicholas is scalded in the toute. / This tale is doon, and god saue al the route."

[135] 172, lines 4311-16.

[136] See Blake's footnotes on pages 177-82.

The *Wife of Bath's Prologue* prior to the Pardoner's interruption consists of a long series of scripturally-based arguments favoring marriage over celibacy. In this beginning segment, Alisoun draws extensively on St. Jerome's *Epistola adversus Jovinianum*, taking to pieces Jerome's distortions and non sequiturs in order to show that St. Paul's letters do not actually endorse virginity as better than matrimony, especially not when read in the context of the rest of Scripture. The Pardoner's interjection – "Ye been a noble *prechour* in this cas"[137] – clearly recognizes that the Wife has veered into predicant territory. I am inclined to read this praise as sarcastic, since the Pardoner goes on to say that he was about to wed but now will not, meaning that he intends to follow a path directly opposite that which is being promoted in Alisoun's sermon.

When the interruption is over, the Wife continues her *Prologue*, with a move toward autobiography. The move to autobiography and away from Scripture, however, does not signal the end of the Wife's concern with preaching. When she begins to provide her audience with an account of her outraged response to one of her husbands who was an obnoxious "olde kaynard," she quickly zeroes in on his misogynist predication as his chief offense: "Thow comest home as dronken as a mous / And *prechest* on thy bench with yvel preef.[138] / Thow seyst to me it is a greet mescheef / To wedde a poure womman […] / And that if she be ryche of heigh parage / […] it is a tormentrye / […] if that she be fair […] / […] every holour[139] will hir have: / She may no while in chastitee abyde / That is assayled upon ech a syde."[140] Alisoun thus demonstrates

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[137] 183, line 165, emphasis added.

[138] Blake 185: "with yvel preef" = "with bad luck to you."

[139] = "lecher," ibid.

[140] 185, lines 246-56, emphasis added. It is difficult to know whether the Wife is talking about only one of her first three husbands or mixing anecdotes from all three marriages in lines 235-450.

that chastity, backed up by men's preaching, is a masculinist con game – husbands insist that their wives remain chaste, yet because of men's sexual aggression, there is little chance that wives will succeed.

A few lines later, the Wife returns to the theme of antifeminist preaching: "Thow seydest eek that ther ben thynges three / The whiche thynges troublen al this erthe / […] Yet *prechestow* and seist an hateful wyf / Yrekened is for oon of thise myschaunces. / Been ther noone othere resemblaunces / That ye may likne youre *parables* to / But if a sely wyf be oon of tho."[141] The next time she uses this sort of language, her discourse bears upon the theme of Job's patience. As she tells her husband, "Ye sholden be al pacient and meke. / […] Sith ye so *preche* of Iobes pacience. / Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan *preche*, / […] And sith a man is moore reasonable / Than womman is, ye mosten been suffrable."[142] This argument, that husbands rather than wives should practice the patience of Job in matrimony, foreshadows the response she will eventually receive from the Clerk in the form of his tale of "Grisilde."

After telling of her fourth husband, who cheated on her,[143] Alisoun wraps up her life story with a segment about her fifth husband, "a clerk of Oxenford,"[144] whom she married for love. The fifth husband's profession and place of origin tighten the Wife's eventual connection to the Clerk, who is likewise identified in both the general *Prologue* and the *Clerk's Prologue* as

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[141] 189, lines 362-70, emphasis added.

[142] 191, 434-42, emphasis added.

[143] 192, lines 481-8: "I seye I hadde in herte gret despit / That he of any oother had delit. / But he was quyt, by god and by seint Ioce. / I made hym of the same wode a croce, / Nat of my body in no foul manere: / But certeynly I made folk swich chiere / That in his owene grece I made hym frye / For angre and for verray ialousye."

[144] Ibidem, line 527.

being "of Oxenford."[145] The fifth husband, Iankyn, sought to establish mastery over the Wife, who stubbornly refused to do his bidding: "He nolde suffre nothyng of my list. / […] I nolde noght forbere hym in no case."[146] The Wife's policy towards this clerk-husband is the mirror opposite of Griselda's behavior; and in a pattern that is by now predictable, the angry husband responds by sermonizing about (what he sees as) his spouse's misdeeds and those of women generally. "And walke I wolde as I hadde doon biforn / From hous to hous, althogh he hadde it sworn. / For which he often tymes wolde *preche*…"[147] Iankyn's preaching was based on a large compendium of stories of "wikked wyues,"[148] most of which are found in Jerome's *Epistola adversus Jovinianum*.[149]

Alisoun points out the injustice of clerks' misogyny, supported by mountains of texts against which she can muster little bookish evidence. As she puts it, "For trusteth wel it is an inpossible / That any clerk wol speke good of wyues / But if it be of holy seintes lyues, / […] By god, if women hadden writen stories / As clerkes han withinne hir oratories, / They wolde han writen of men moore wikkednesse / Than al the mark of Adam may redresse. / […] no womman of no clerk is preysed."[150] Although their argument eventually degenerated into violence, the Wife got the upper hand in the end. Having been struck such a blow that she would remain deaf in one ear, she convinced her contrite husband to burn his book and yield to her authority: "And whan that I hadde geten unto me / By maistrye al the soueraynetee / And that he seyde 'Myn

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[145] 42, line 287, and 389, line 1.

[146] 196-7, lines 611 and 643.

[147] 196, lines 617-19, emphasis added.

[148] 198, line 663.

[149] Blake 199.

[150] 198, lines 666-84.

owene trewe wyf, / Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf, / Keep thyn honour and keep eek myn estaat,' / After that day we hadden neuere debaat."[151]

After 800 lines of introduction, the Wife of Bath is at last ready to begin her *Tale*. Having been interrupted just before her autobiographical segment by the Pardoner, she is now interrupted by the Friar, who laughs at her absurdly long "preamble."[152] His criticism is cut short, however, by his archenemy the Summoner, who characterizes friars as busybodies and tells Brother Huberd to either be silent or go away.[153] Finally, each of these immoral men threatens to tell embarrassing tales about the other's professional caste, the Host commands them to halt their quarrel, and Alisoun is able to tell her (non-autobiographical) story.

Within the *Wife's Tale*, one of King Arthur's knights rapes a maiden and is then condemned to death. After the queen intercedes on his behalf, the knight is given one year to find out what women want most; if he cannot answer the question, he will be executed. Having failed to divine the answer himself, he agrees to grant an old hag anything she wishes in exchange for her provision of the correct response. Following her instructions, he answers the queen's inquiry: "'My lige lady, generally,' quod he, / 'Wommen desire to haue souereyntee / As wel ouer hir housbonde as hir loue / And for to been in maistrie hym aboue.'"[154] "Maistrie" and "souereyntee" are exactly what the Wife of Bath eventually gained over Iankyn, and she has described that personal experience in exactly the same terms.

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[151] 202, lines 791-6.

[152] Ibidem, line 805.

[153] Ibidem, lines 808-812: "A frere wol entremette hym eueremo. / […] What spekestow of preambulacioun? / What amble or trotte or pees or go sit doun."

[154] 208-9, lines 1011-14.

The knight's answer does win him a royal pardon, but the drama is not over. The old hag now demands that he marry her in return for her help, and the prospect is so horrifying that the knight at first believes he would be better off dead. The hag, in turn, spends lines 1080 through 1201 of the *Wife's Tale* convincing him otherwise. If her long speech is not exactly a sermon, it nonetheless consists of the use of mostly ancient examples – including biblical ones – to refute the knight's objections to her commonness, poverty, and ugliness. Along the way, the hag dips into Dante, Valerius Maximus, Seneca, Boethius, and Juvenal,[155] with her most sermon-like argument addressing the question of poverty. As she states, "The hye god on whom that we bileue / In willful pouerte chees to lyue his lyf. / And certes euery man, mayden or wyf / May vnderstonde that Iesus heuene-kyng / Ne wolde nat chese a vicious lyuyng."[156] Lastly, she offers the knight a choice between taking her as an old and ugly wife who he knows will be faithful or having her young and beautiful, with the corresponding anxiety that she will be pursued by other men and thus much more likely to be unchaste. When the overwhelmed knight asks her to make the choice for them both, she makes sure that he means to give her total "maistrye," then magically transforms into a woman both fair *and* faithful.

In the Hengwrt *Canterbury Tales*, as I have already noted, many tales intervene between the *Wife of Bath's Tale* and the *Clerk's Tale*. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Clerk is responding to the Wife in his own segment. Of the tales that come between their two, only the *Friar's Tale* and the *Summoner's Tale* have any significant connections to their tellers. I will not go into the details of the Friar's and Summoner's narratives, except to say that they continue the *Canterbury Tales*' focus on preaching and the abuses of Church authority.

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[155] See Blake's footnotes on pages 211-13.

[156] 213, lines 1152-6.

The Host calls upon the Clerk to tell a tale in a new fragment of the collection, but Harry Bailly maintains his concern with discouraging his storytellers from preaching. As he instructs the Oxford scholar, "…precheth nat as freres doon in Lente / To maken vs for oure olde synnes wepe, / Ne that thy tale make vs nat to slepe."[157] The master of the storytelling game apparently suspects that the Clerk might otherwise sermonize after the manner of the Summoner's anti-hero (who attempts to frighten his sinful listeners into donating their money but sometimes bores them to flatulence instead). The Host's orders also discourage the Clerk from following the examples of the Reeve and Wife, who have preached although according to their stations in life they should not. The Clerk, whose tale is the most complexly framed of all the *Canterbury Tales*, reacts rather as the Reeve did previously, partially obeying the Host and partially ignoring him.

The Clerk announces that he will retell a tale he learned from another "worthy clerk," one "Fraunceys Petrak."[158] In this adaptation of the *Historia Griseldis*, the Clerk will make dual use of Petrarch in order to make his tale seem appropriate to his character. First, by identifying Petrarch as a clerk, the storyteller implies that the tale will befit a Clerk like himself. Second, when the Clerk eventually provides a Christian exegesis of his own narrative (as the Reeve and Friar have previously done), he ascribes this exegesis to Petrarch, thus sidestepping the Host's injunction against preaching:

> This storie is seyd…
>
> …for that euery wight in his degree
>
> Sholde be constant in aduersitee
>
> As was Grisilde. Therfore Petrak writeth

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[157] 389, lines 2-3.

[158] 390, lines 27 and 31.

This storie…

For sith a womman was so pacient

Vnto a mortal man, wel moore vs oghte

Receyuen al in gree that god vs sent…

But [God] ne tempteth no man that he boghte,

As seith seint Iame if ye his pistel rede:

He preueth folk al day it is no drede…

And for oure beste is al his gouernance:

Lat vs thanne lyue in vertuous suffrance. (424, lines 1142-62)

This interpretation, including the reference to James 1:13, is drawn directly from the *Historia Griseldis*. The Clerk does not follow Petrarch's text precisely, however, and adds various touches designed to further incriminate Walter. Whereas Boccaccio's *Decameron* X.10 tends merely to lack praise for Gualtieri, and where one finds Petrarch more aggressively promoting Walterus, the Clerk incriminates Walter in his tale. When the marquis first decides to test Grisilde, for example, the Clerk opines that such tests were "nedelees" and asks, "What neded it / Hir for to tempte and alwey moore and moore? / Thogh som men preyse it for a subtil wit, / But as for me I seye that yuele it sit / T'assaye a wyf whan that it is no nede."[159] And when Walter begins the final test, telling Grisilde that he must dismiss her in favor of a new wife, the Clerk describes this action as part of Walter's "wikke vsage,"[160] his vicious habits. In addition, the *Clerk's Tale* specifically praises Grisilde's patience as being superior to Job's, answering the Wife of Bath's charge that clerks never speak well of women: "Men speke of Iob and moost for

[159] 403, lines 455-61.

[160] 413, line 785.

his humblenesse, / As clerkes whan hem lest konne wel endite / Namely of men: but as in soothfastnesse / Thogh clerkes preyse wommen but a lite / Ther kan no man in humblesse hym acquite / As wommen kan, ne kan be half so trewe / As wommen been, but it be falle of newe."[161]

Once the tale is done, moreover, the Clerk sings a six-verse song, designated "*L'enuoy de Chaucer*,"[162] in honor of the Wife of Bath. In this song, he encourages women to ignore Grisilde's example and instead to speak and act however they please, spend their husbands' money freely, and gain control of their households by any means necessary. The divergences from Petrarch's *Historia Griseldis* during the story proper, combined with this final segment, have led some critics to believe that Chaucer's version of the tale is primarily intended to demonstrate the immorality of Walter's behavior or even to criticize Grisilde's unquestioning obedience. As responses to such readings, I would like to point out three features of the *Canterbury Tales* that contradict Chaucer's apparent sympathy for wives.

First, the Clerk's favorable comparison of women to Job is linked to an important caveat. The scholar states that men cannot hope to match women's patience and humility "but it be falle of newe;" in other words, women are superior with respect to these virtues unless things have changed in the days since Grisilde's time. The crucial verses echoing the Christian exegesis derived from Petrarch and ascribed to Chaucer's ostensibly anti-male *envoy* assert that precisely such a change has taken place. "It were ful hard to fynde now-a-dayes / In al a town Grisildis

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[161] 417, lines 932-8.

[162] 425, between lines 1176 and 1177, emphasis in original.

thre or two," the Clerk claims, and in his own time women's "gold" is so badly alloyed with brass "that thogh the coigne be fair at eye / It wolde rather breste atwo than plye."[163]

Second, *L'envoy de Chaucer*, whether we read it as emanating from the Clerk or from Chaucer himself, grows steadily more carnivalesque as it progresses. While we could perhaps take seriously the encouragement of "noble wyues ful of heigh prudence" to "lat noon humilitee youre tonge nayle,"[164] particularly if women's rule works in favor of "commune profit,"[165] the song goes on to state that wives should be "egre as is a tigre"[166] to fight with recalcitrant husbands. The envoy's concluding verse asserts that pretty wives should show off their looks in public, ugly wives should spend money in order to acquire friends, and in any case husbands should be the ones to "wepe and wrynge and wayle."[167] The envoy enjoins wives not simply to show more backbone than Grisilde did but to aspire to shrewish dominance, and the anti-Grisilde here imagined winds up resembling the anti-Griselda who appears in Dioneo's final statements, save perhaps that this time she is a different anti-Madonna - more "bitch" and less "whore" than her Italian predecessor.

Third, the *Parson's Tale* clearly states that women must be submissive to their husbands as well as reiterating the Church's traditional teachings on marriage versus celibacy. The Parson draws upon both Proverbs and Paul's epistles the first time he argues along these lines, declaring that a man is better off possessing "a morsel of breed with ioye" than "an hous ful of delices with [a wife's] chidynge […] / Seint Paul seith: O ye wommen, be ye subgetes to youre housbondes,

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[163] 424-5, lines 1164-9.

[164] 425, lines 1183-4.

[165] Ibidem, line 1194.

[166] 426, line 1199.

[167] Ibidem, line 1212.

and ye men loueth youre wyues."[168] Later on, the Parson reminds his audience that marriage is good because it produces descendants and "chaungeth deedly synne into venial synne bitwixe hem that been ywedded."[169] It is obviously better to commit no sin at all than to commit venial sin, which is one reason why the Catholic Church has historically maintained that celibacy is superior to marriage.

In the next few lines of his sermon, the Parson quickly meanders from preaching mutual fidelity and forbearance in marriage to demanding only that women engage in submissive monogamy, apparently without even noticing that he has done so. He states that in the lost paradise of Eden,

> it was ordeyned that o man sholde have but o womman and o womman but o man, as seith seint Augustyn by manye resouns. / First for marriage is figured bitwixe Crist and holy chirche. And that oother is for a man is heued of a womman, algate by ordinaunce it sholde be so. / For if a womman hadde mo men than oon, thanne sholde she haue moo heuedes than oon and that were an horrible thing biforn god. And eek a womman ne myghte nat plese to many folk at oones. And also ther ne sholde neuere be pees ne reste amonges hem, for euerich wolde axen his owene thyng. / And fortherouer no man ne sholde knowe his owene engendrure… (649-50, lines 921-4)

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[168] 630, lines 633-4.

[169] 649, line 920.

He goes on in this vein for quite a while, but his audience never hears of any benefits (aside from a reduction in sinfulness) that marriage brings to women. Although women are required to be obedient and discreet, men are only instructed in the most perfunctory terms to be faithful to their wives. In addition, widows should "been a clene wydewe and eschue the embracynges of man and desiren the embracynge of Iesu Crist,"[170] but widowers are given no such directive.

To understand fully the implications of these statements for the narrative exchange between the Wife of Bath and the Clerk, readers must keep in mind that the Parson is the final storyteller to speak, enthusiastically taking on his responsibility to "knytte vp al this feste and make an ende."[171] The general *Prologue* also presents the Parson in highly idealized terms. This preacher is "riche…of holy thoght and werk," "lerned," "deuout," "benygne," "diligent," and "pacient."[172] He is materially poor, and he stays at home to teach his parishioners rather than traveling about in search of benefices or other money. As the *Prologue* informs us, "Cristes lore and hise apostles twelue / He taught, but first he folwed it hymselue."[173] To distrust the words of such a preacher is to willfully misinterpret Chaucer's message; the Parson is everything that the Friar and Pardoner ought to be but are not. His sermons are a clear reflection of the Gospels' truth, and therefore a refutation of the Wife of Bath as well as the other devious preachers featured in the *Canterbury Tales*.

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[170] 651, line 944.

[171] On the finality of the Parson's contribution, see Finlayson (1971) 96. Although Finlayson's point is that the Parson's pedantic verbosity is intended to make him a realistic character of his particular professional type, the critic confirms that the *Parson's Tale* is "the last tale, of whose position in the scheme there is no doubt."

[172] 51, lines 481-5.

[173] 53, 529-30.

To conclude this section, I would argue that the *Clerk's Tale* and the *Parson's Tale* more than outweigh the feminist stance that the Wife of Bath assumes. The *Canterbury Tales* possess many textual features that the *Heptaméron* also displays, especially in their portrayal of competitive storytelling as a battle over whose sermons to believe and whose to discount. The Wife of Bath's comments indicate that she is a keen observer of patriarchy, able to discursively undo the specious exegeses that uphold her society's misogynist prejudices. But the framed-novella collection in which she appears, when viewed in its entirety, clearly discourages readers from believing her unorthodox claims, mitigating comparisons between Chaucer and Marguerite as (proto-)feminist innovators upon Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

The prospect of married laywomen's moral authority rears its head here, but the implications of allowing oneself to understand how illogical Jerome's and the other Church fathers' arguments in favor of celibacy and patriarchy are, prove too radical. Instead of allowing the Wife's arguments to stand, the *Canterbury Tales* marshal an array of framing devices – from the tongue-in-cheek *envoy* that echoes Dioneo's epilogue so closely to the Parson's powerful preaching – in order to silence her critiques. In a sign of just how difficult it is to integrate the *Clerk's Tale* into the overall structure of the collection in which we find it, the Hengwrt manuscript even adds one last epilogue after the *envoy*, a spontaneous outburst by Harry Bailly. The Host declares that he would have gladly given up a barrel of ale (no mean prize for an hotelier), if only his "wyf at hom had herd this legende ones." He resigns himself, however, to the impossibility of expecting his spouse to follow Grisilde's example, bringing the discussion to a pronounced closure. "But thyng that wol nat be, lat it be stille!" he declares, hinting as Boccaccio had before him that tales inviting their readers or listeners to question marital conventions tend to exhaust the tolerance of the societies in which they exist. The ugly truth that

women's complete submission to their husbands is simply unwise, impractical, and unjust, can be laid bare, but it remains indigestible.

VI. Heptaméron *35 & 36*

My intent, throughout this chapter, has been to prove that late medieval and early modern framed short fictions about ideal wifely comportment provoke ripples of interpretive uncertainty that their authors feel obliged to dispel. Boccaccio, as we have seen, softens the impact of the spectacle of Griselda's suffering by placing her in a binary opposition to an imaginary unruly wife, one who would select a pleasure-driven life of trading sex for material goods as an alternative to submission in marriage. Petrarch, avoiding such comic devices, instead allegorizes Griseldis as a model for the humble Christian of either sex, even as he consistently devalues feminine points of view. Chaucer's tale of Grisilde, with its greater focus on the needless cruelty of Walter-as-husband, could be even more threatening to patriarchal norms than *Decameron* X.10. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, the *Canterbury Tales* go to far greater lengths in neutralizing any such threat, allowing the anti-Grisilde not only to appear in the section immediately following the *Clerk's Tale* but also to materialize into the Wife of Bath. Chaucer is certainly interested in reforming the abuses of scoundrels like the Friar, Pardoner, and Summoner. Nevertheless, his framed-novella collection rejects the notion that laywomen, by preaching against the warped biblical exegeses that underpin the Church's misogyny and its insistence on the celibacy of the priesthood, could play a role in this reform.

Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* essentially combines the basic frame structure of the *Decameron* with a heavy dose of politely contentious dialogue, including a focus on predicant activity that in many respects resembles what we have observed in the *Canterbury Tales*. This argumentative storytelling as preaching saturates almost every page of her book, so

that there are many different novella sequences that one might select from the *Heptaméron* whose framing techniques compare with those of its predecessors. I would like to conclude the present chapter by focusing on her thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh, and thirty-eighth novellas, because the last of these is the closest analog of *Decameron* X.10 to be found in the *Heptaméron*. Moreover, tales of humble, long-suffering wives in Marguerite's collection provoke unusually intense and conflicted dialogic responses and strain the limits of her storytellers' conversation, triggering particularly creative fluctuations in the frame structure, as they also do in the *Decameron*, *Seniles*, and *Canterbury Tales*.

The *Heptaméron* contains seventy-two different framed-novellas, and each of them – assuming that one reads the entire collection – in some way influences one's reading of the others. Since detailed discussion of all these stories is unfeasible outside of a multi-volume critique, I will only mention a few other novellas besides the four on which I am focusing. Following *Heptaméron* 33, about a village priest whose apparently blameless life with his miraculously pregnant virgin sister hides the dark secret of an incestuous relationship, a structural device appears that will be crucial for my analysis.

Parlamente, considering this atrocious hypocrisy, opines that "ce seroit belle chose…que nostre cueur fust sy remply par foy de Celluy qui est toute vertu et toute joye que nous le puissions librement monstrer à chacun" ["it would be a fine thing…for our hearts to be so filled, through faith, with Him who is all virtue and all joy that we could freely show it to everyone"]. (304-305, 115-118; 340) When her husband, Hircain, suggests that this is only possible for those who no longer have any flesh on their bones, the elderly Oysille insists that Parlamente's desired perfect truthfulness is in fact possible with God's help, even for those who are young and healthy. Saffredent, the aging rake, then points out that the gift of such righteousness is rare,

provoking a somewhat cryptic response from the old lady. "Il est commung" ["It is common"], she says, "à ceulx qui ont la foy, mais, pour ce que ceste matiere ne se lairroit entendre de ceulx qui sont charnelz, sachons à qui Symontault donne sa voix" ["to those who have faith, but, since this matter would not be understood by those who are carnal, let's find out to whom Symontault gives his voice"]. (305, 123-126; my translation) Who are the people too "carnal" to understand this discussion, which must therefore be halted? Might they be Oysille's fellow *devisants*, the monks listening from behind the hedges, or the Queen of Navarre's potential readers (or censors)?

A similar phenomenon occurs after the next novella, about a pair of Franciscans who mistakenly believe that their host intends to butcher them after they overhear him referring to his hogs as "*cordeliers*." Despite the light-hearted nature of the story, the lengthy discussion following *Heptaméron* 34 raises as many issues about religious practices as the one that followed 33. As Oysille reminds her companions, "ceulx qui ont cuydé estre plus saiges que les autres homes…ont esté faictz…plus ignorans et desraisonnables…que les bestes bruttes" ["those who think themselves wiser than other people…have become…more ignorant and unreasonable even than the beasts"]. (309, 114-121; 344) The folly of human pride, and in particular of wise men's arrogant attributions of their accomplishments to themselves rather than to God, has already been the theme of Oysille's morning Bible lesson; here, she recalls its substance, drawn from St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, for her students and fellow storytellers.

Hircain attempts to infer from these and other comments that men must be better than women, since the former are openly sinful while the latter constantly emphasize their pious ways and thus are unlikely to recognize their own pride. Longarine, however, refutes him, concluding that "bien heureux sont ceulx qui la foy a tant humiliez qu'ilz n'ont poinct besoing

d'experimenter leur nature pecheresse par les effetz du dehors" ["blessed are they whom faith has so humbled that they have no need of external effects to have their sinful nature demonstrated to them"]. (310, 141-3; 344) This time, it is Symontault who adjourns the conversation, again indicating that the discussion has become overly theological. He enforces a return to the storytelling game as follows: "en parlant d'une tresgrande folye, nous sommes tumbez en la philosophye et theologie. Laissons ces disputes à ceulx qui savent myeulx resver que nous, et saichons de Nomerfide à qui elle donne sa voix" ["We started with folly and we end up with philosophy and theology! Let's leave such disputes to those better able to muse on such matters than we, and ask Nomerfide who she will choose as the next storyteller"]. (310, 144-8; 344-5) As Oysille has cited the incomprehension of "those who are carnal" as her reason for truncating her comments following *Heptaméron* 33, Symontault exhorts his comrades to leave "philosophy and theology" to "those better able to muse on such matters than we" – a nod to the men Marot famously labeled "les Sorboniqueurs"?

This closure of discussion employs a combination of two forms of response that will reappear over the course of the next four inter-novella segments. Namely, Symontault silences any further debate on the grounds that the *devisants* have strayed too far into the theologians' territory, while simultaneously timing the return to narrative exchange so as to coincide with a moment in the conversation when it appears that his side's argument is doomed to failure. Although it is Hircain and not Symontault who is being refuted by the women, Hircain's position here could easily have been Symontault's. The latter character, like the former, maintains throughout the *Heptaméron* that women's chastity is merely a hypocritical façade interfering with what could be their greater enjoyment of sexual relations.

When Nomerfide gives the floor to Hircain for *Heptaméron* 35, he seizes the opportunity to tell a story of a (would-be) unfaithful wife, and the predicant discourse kicks into high gear. Much as Chaucer's Parson indicates that he will teach his listeners, male and female, how to conduct themselves properly in marriage, and then forgets to aim any of his stern directives at husbands, Hircain at first characterizes his novella as an example of all people's sinful nature but subsequently focuses only on sinful women. His story, set in Pamplona, features a skillful preacher with a reputation as a "sainct homme pour sa tresgrande austerité et bonté de vye" ["holy man because his austere and saintly life made him look so pale and thin"], and – contrary to the general trend in the *Heptaméron* – this man actually is as good as he seems. (311, 11-12; 346) The lady-protagonist of the story, however, is so taken with the "sermons" of this "prescheur" (Hircain ceases to refer to the man as a "*cordelier*" after the initial mention of his preaching prowess), that she soon falls in love with him.

She reveals her feelings in letters that she gives to a page to be delivered to the preacher, but her husband intercepts the message. He subsequently convinces the preacher to lend him his religious habit, going to great lengths to disguise himself so that his wife will not recognize him during what she thinks is her first private meeting with her beloved. Continuing the comic reversals, the incognito spouse at first runs from the woman, making the sign of the cross and "faisant semblant de la fuyr, en disant tousjours, sans autre propoz: 'Temptacion! temptacion!'" ["pretend[ing] to back away, saying over and over again the words: 'Temptation! Temptation! Temptation!'"] (313-314, 107-9; 348) Ordinarily, women in the *Heptaméron* are hotly pursued by male characters, who more often than not are willing to resort to force.[174] When the wife

[174] Stories involving romantic or sexual interest on a female's part that is not reciprocated by the desired male – and where the desired, indifferent male is not the desiring female's husband – include only four novellas, 24, 30, 35, and

continues the chase, the husband takes a thick stick that he has hidden beneath his Franciscan robes and "la battit sy bien qu'il luy fist passer sa temptacion" ["beat her so soundly that he soon got rid of her temptation for her"]! (314, 118; 349) Compounding her humiliation, the husband then invites the preacher to their home, convincing the "sainct homme predicateur" ["saintly preacher"] that his wife, who still believes that her beating was administered by the preacher, is suffering from demonic possession – why else would she react so violently to the holy man's very presence? (314, 128-9; 349) Finally, satisfied that his wife has been "bien chastiée de sa folle fantaisie" ["duly punished for her wild infatuation"], the husband sends the preacher home but never reveals to his mate what has actually taken place. (316, 184-5; 350) Hircain assures everyone that the husband's strategy succeeded "en telle sorte qu'elle hayoit mortellement ce qu'elle avoit aymé et detestoit sa follie" ["such that she mortally hated what she had loved and detested her folly"] and thereafter the wife "se adonna du tout au mary et au mesnaige" ["devoted herself to her husband and home more earnestly than before"]. (187-191; 351)

What of Hircain's initial claim that his story would demonstrate that "la nature des femmes et des hommes est de soy incline à tout vice" ["both women and men are by nature inclined to vices of all kinds"]? (310, 152-153; 345) After finishing his novella, he sings quite a different tune. Addressing the *devisantes* only, he offers this exegesis: "'Par cecy,

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70. By contrast, stories involving romantic or sexual interest on a male's part that is not reciprocated by the desired female – and where the desired, indifferent female is not the desiring male's wife – include nineteen novellas, 2, 4, 5, 8, 12, 13, 14, 22, 23, 27, 31, 41, 42, 46, 48, 57, 59, 69, and 71. I do not mean to suggest that women in the *Heptaméron* rarely actively pursue sexual satisfaction – Marguerite's collection is rife with unfaithful wives as well as wives trying to win back the love of their wayward husbands – but to show that in the world of the Queen's *nouvelles*, men are far more likely than women to pursue indifferent desired sexual partners and to orient themselves as hunter-subjects pursuing hunted objects.

Mesdames…pouvez vous congnoistre le bon sens d'un mary et la fragilité d'une estimée femme de bien. Et je pense, quant vous aurez bien regardé en ce myrouer…vous apprandrez à vous retourner à Celluy en la main duquel gist vostre honneur'" ["'In this story, Ladies, you can see the good sense of a husband and the fragility of a reputedly good woman. It is, as it were, a mirror, and once you've looked into it, I think you will learn to turn to Him in whose hands your honor lies'"]. (316, 192-197; 351) Taken together with Ennasuytte's earlier reference to human beings' "nature pecheresse," Hircain's suggestion that the ladies should gaze into his story as a "myrouer" weaves his comments into a predicant discourse mischievously modeled on Marguerite's own *Miroir de l'âme pécheresse*. Hircain's wife Parlamente, whom many readers see as a stand-in for the Queen of Navarre herself, immediately steps in to counter her husband's predication. "'Je suys bien ayse'" ["I'm glad to see"], she says sarcastically, "'de quoy vous estes devenu prescheur des dames, et le seroys encores plus, sy vous vouliez continuer [c]es beaulx sermons à toutes celles à qui vous parlez'" ["'that you have started to preach for the ladies. I'd be even happier if you would kindly continue to preach these fine sermons to *all* the ladies you address!'"] (316-317, 197-200; 351, emphasis in original) As the conversation meanders, Parlamente winds up declaring that in her own time there are no men who care about women's honor or conscience, leaving women with no good options in terms of love affairs (from which they should thus abstain). When Ennasuytte, who is also married but younger than Parlamente and traveling without her husband, points out that Parlamente's logic is too severe to allow any woman to love a man, the argument begins in earnest:

> "A ce que vous dictes, dist Ennasuite, jamais femme ne vouldroict aymer homme. Mais vostre loy est si aspre qu'elle ne durera pas."
> Je le sçay bien, dist Parlamente, mais je ne lairray pour cella de

> desirer que chacune se contantast de son mary, comme je faiz du mien. Ennasuyte, qui par ce mot se sentist touchée, en changeant couleur, luy dist : "Vous devez juger que chacune a le cueur comme vous, ou vous pensez estre plus parfaicte que toutes les autres." – Or, ce dist Parlamente, de peur d'entrer en disputes, saichons à qui Hircain donnera sa voix.
>
> ["From what you say," said Ennasuite, "no woman would ever want to be in love with a man. But your law is so harsh that it cannot endure. "I know," said Parlamente, "but in spite of that, I still think it desirable that every woman should be content with her own husband, as I am with mine!" Ennasuite felt that these words were aimed at her and colored: "I don't think you should assume the rest of us are any different at heart from yourself," she said, "unless you regard yourself as more perfect than we are." "Well," said Parlamente, "so as not to get into an argument, let's see who Hircan will pick to speak next."] (317-318, 234-243; 352)

As Ennasuite has pointed out, Parlamente is overestimating either her own representativeness or her own moral perfection – finding herself out-maneuvered, Parlamente retreats.

Parlamente's insistance that Hircain immediately designate the next storyteller so as to avoid "disputes" recognizes that the courtly conversation has its limits. The storytelling structure is essential as a leveling field and an outlet for interpersonal tension, but it is also anxiously called upon by frame-characters seeking to cut short a conversation not to their liking. Hircain, keeping it impossible for a reader or listener to say for certain whether he is trying to reconcile

the two ladies or spoiling for a catfight, passes the floor to Ennasuite, as he claims, "pour la rapaiser contre ma femme"[175] ["to restore peace between her and my wife"] (318, 244; my translation). Ennasuite's announcement of *Heptaméron* 36 is a calculated assault on her antagonist, Parlamente, in several respects, yet her use of second-person verbal forms common to the address of both singular and plural subjects maintains a slight veil over her criticism. As she declares: "'Or, puis que je suis en mon rang…je n'espargneray homme ne femme, affin de faire tout esgal, et voy bien que vous ne pouvez vaincre vostre cueur à confesser la vertu et bonté des hommes: qui me faict reprandre le propoz dernier par une semblable histoire.' ["'Well, since it's my turn…I shall spare neither men nor women, in order to make everything equal. And seeing that you can't bring yourselves to admit that men can be good and virtuous, I'll take up the thread of the last story, and tell you one that is very similar.'"] (318, 245-249; 352)

Ennasuite's promise to "spare neither men nor women" places her, as narrator of *Heptaméron* 36, in a superficially neutral position vis-à-vis her story's two star sinners, the vengeful and murderous President of Grenoble and his unfaithful wife, but of course presenting the *nouvelle* in this way only ensures that it may be fought over the more bitterly once told. If the thirty-sixth novella is truer to its announced unbiased purpose than the thirty-fifth (the narrator assures her audience immediately after she finishes that she has not told this story in order to "louer la conscience du presidant" ["praise the President's conscience"] (321, 89-90;

[175] The 1967 Michel François edition of the *Heptaméron* uses the verb "recompenser" instead of "rapaiser" – for the actual variant, see page 261 of François's version; for more about this variant and its implications for the triangular relationship connecting Parlamente, Hircain, and Ennasuitte, see B. Davis 101. Readers will not find there, unfortunately, a very deep or detailed discussion of the differences between the post-thirty-fifth novella discussions in the François and Le Hir *Heptamérons*, let alone between those two editions and the Salminen *Heptaméron*, which did not exist at the time of B. Davis's writing.

355), Ennasuite nonetheless reinforces a strongly masculinist vision of marriage by establishing that neither she nor her listeners unequivocally condemn such a revenge killing. The power of the *paterfamilias* to judge his wife's conduct, render a verdict, and mete out whatever punishment he chooses will come into even sharper focus as a result of the stark contrast between *Heptaméron* 35 and 36, whose bad wives are violently punished, and *Heptaméron* 37 and 38, whose good wives are expected to rely on docility, politeness, and loyal service in order to bring their profligate husbands to heel.

Ennasuite's story opens with a curious description of its protagonist-killer. She informs the *devisants* that her tale involves a President of the Parlement of Grenoble "dont je ne diray le nom, mais il n'estoit pas françois" ["whose name I can't reveal, although I can tell you he wasn't a Frenchman"].[176] (318, 1-2; 353) This President's wife is only described as "bien belle" ["very beautiful"], and her entrance into an extramarital affair occurs on the novella's fourth line, accompanied by only the barest and most banal description of her motives – "voiant que son mary estoit vieil, print en amour ung jeune clerc, nommé Nicolas" ["the President was getting on in years, and the wife began an affair with a young clerk who was called Nicholas"]. (318, 2-5; 353)

An old, faithful servant warns the protagonist that while he has been "au matin au palais, Nicolas entroit en la chambre et tenoit sa place" ["off to the Palais de Justice, Nicolas would go to [the President's wife's] bedroom and take his place"]. (318, 5-6; 353) After that, the rest of Ennasuite's novella focuses on a series of skillful deceptions whereby the President manages to

[176] Salminen's notes identify the only logical historical protagonist of the novella as a certain "Geoffroy (Jeffroy) Carles (Caroli), d'origine piémontaise, premier Président au Parlement de Grenoble et Président du Sénat de Turin, mort en 1516." (747)

dispose of his dishonored wife while making her death look like an accident. The President returns home to find his wife in bed with Nicolas just as his servant has predicted, but he forces the two of them to hide while he browbeats his loyal employee about the latter's purported attempt to cause discord between him and his wife by falsely accusing the lady of the house. The President grants his servant a handsome severance and even expresses the hope that he may assist the servant further in the future, but he also banishes his "varlet" ("valet") from the city, ordering him to quit Grenoble within twenty-four hours.

Nicolas, the clerk-lover, proves rather easy to trick. Two weeks of the President's wife dressing herself "plus gorgiacement qu'elle n'avoit de coustume" ["more elegantly than usual" and participating "en toutes compagnyes, dances, et festins" ["in all the social gatherings, dances, and festivities"] combined with the President's command that Nicolas then lead the wife in a dance at a banquet, suffice to convince the clerk that the President "eust oublyé les faultes passées" ["had forgotten past faults"]. (320, 62-3 & 73-4; 354-55) Nicolas "la mena dancer joyeusement" ["danced with her quite gaily"] (320, 74; 355), but at the dance's end the President orders him to begone from Grenoble within three hours. At this point, Nicolas may well guess what awaits his unfortunate erstwhile lover, but the shrewd magistrate has judged his craven adversary's character correctly. "Bien marry de laisser sa dame, mais non moings joyeulx d'avoir sa vye saulvée" ["sorry indeed to leave his lady, but none the less glad to escape with his life"] (320, 77-8; 355), he flees to safety, eliminating the last potentially dangerous witness and setting the stage for the President to avenge himself. This he does by picking some poisonous herbs from his garden and slipping them to his wife in a salad she eats, after which "elle ne vesquit que vingt quatre heures" ["[she] did not live more than twenty-four hours"]. (320, 83-4; 355) Having deceived his valet, his wife's lover, and his wife, the offended patriarch completes

his triumph with a final, thoroughly convincing dramatic performance : "il fist sy grant dueil par semblant que nul ne povoit soupsonner qu'il feust occasion de ceste mort, et, par ce moyen, se vengea de son ennemy et saulva l'honneur de sa maison" ["the grief that the President showed was so great that nobody suspected that he was the agent of her death. And so he avenged himself on his enemy and saved the honor of his house"]. (320-21, 84-7; 355)

The discussion following *Heptaméron* 36 and leading into *Heptaméron* 37 is longer than *Heptaméron* 36 itself (ninety-three lines versus eighty-seven) and made up of several movements. Initially (lines 88 to 106), Ennasuite's exegetical opening is appropriated by Parlamente in an attempt to turn this narrative's death threat against its narrator, prompting Hircain to accuse his wife of being excessively judgmental. Parlamente responds to his criticism by insisting that many other women deserve the same punishment the President's wife got, although in lauding the President's "'merveilleuse prudence et pascience'" ["'remarkable prudence and good sense'"] (321, 106; 356) she is of course quoting Ennasuite word-for-word. In the second interpretive movement (lines 106 to 145), Longarine's questioning of the President's merits – given that his prudence and patience are offset by his malice and cruelty – stirs the *devisants* to debate whether men in the President's situation may be pardoned for murdering their unfaithful wives. When Hircain asks Longarine what she would rather the President have done "pour se venger de la plus grant injure que la femme peult faire à l'homme" ["to avenge himself for the worst outrage a woman can perpetrate against a man"] (321, 110-11; 356), she replies that she "eusse voulu…qu'il l'eust tuée en sa collere, car les docteurs disent que le peché est remissible, pour ce que les premiers mouvements ne sont pas en la puissance de l'homme" ["would rather…that he had killed her out of anger, for the learned doctors say that such a sin is remissible, because the first movements of the soul are not within man's powers"].

(321, 111-15; 356) Had the President committed a simple crime of passion, Longarine reasons, rather than a premeditated homicide, he might have obtained “grace.”

Geburon points out that such a sudden crime would have stained the family's honor, which leads Longarine to the conclusion that the President should not have killed his wife at all. Saffredent, however, drawing on the same sort of evidence that Longarine uses when citing the "docteurs" ("learned doctors"), argues that some men's anger continues unabated until they exact vengeance, "et me faictes grant plaisir de dire que les theologiens estiment ces pechez là facilles à pardonner, car je suis de leur oppinion" ["and I'm glad to say the theologians regard this kind of sin as readily pardonable. I share their view on this"]. (322, 125-7; 356)

Parlamente tries to point out that Saffredent's slippery-slope view of emotional movements is exaggerated and that the theologians' dispensation is only to be applied in cases "quant la passion est si forte que soubdainement elle occuppe tant les sens que la raison n'y peult avoir lieu" ["where the passion is so great that it suddenly overwhelms the senses, and does so to such an extent that reason cannot operate"]. (322, 130-1; 356) Not to be dissuaded so easily, he now turns Parlamente's words to his nefarious purposes as well. Since love, he explains, is such a "furieuse follie" ["wild passion"], "ung homme bien fort amoureux" ["a man who is deeply in love"] can do no worse than commit a "peché veniel" ["venial sin"], "pardonnée facillement, mais encores je croy que Dieu ne se courrouce point de tel peché, veu que c'est ung degré pour monster à l'amour parfaicte de luy, où jamais nul ne monsta qu'il n'ayt passé par l'eschelle de l'amour de ce monde. Car sainct Jehan dict: 'Comment aymerez vous Dieu, que vous ne voyez poinct, si vous ne aymez celluy que vous voyez?'" ["readily pardonable. What is more, I believe that God is not even angered by sin of this kind, since it is one step in the ascent to perfect love of Him, to which one cannot ascend without passing up the ladder of worldly love. For St John

says: 'How shall you love God, whom you see not, unless you love him whom you see?'"] (322, 133-45; 356-7)

In the final movement of this discussion prior to the passing of the narrative voice and Dagoucin's preamble to *Heptaméron* 37 (lines 146 to 164), Oysille re-enters the debate to combat Saffredent's specious use of 1 John 4:20. "Gardez vous de faire comme l'iraigne" ["take care lest, like the spider"], she warns the white-templed ladies' man, "qui convertist toute bonne viande en venyn, et si vous advise qu'il est dangereux d'alleguer l'Escripture sans propoz ne neccessité" ["you turn wholesome meat into poison. Be you assured that it is indeed dangerous to draw on Scripture out of place and without necessity"]. (322-3, 147-50; 357) Having been called out on his misuse of the Bible, Saffredent makes one last attempt to twist religious logic towards his lecherous ends. It is the ladies who are guilty of sin, he claims, "car voz incredulitez nous contraignent à chercher tous les sermens dont nous pouvons adviser, et encores ne pouvons nous allumer le feu de charité en voz cueurs de glace" ["because it's *your* unbelief that obliges us to look for all the oaths we can possibly think of. And even then we can't kindle the fire of charity in your icy hearts"]. (323, 155-8; 357)

As Oysille has compared him to a spider, Longarine now goes one step further, declaring that "tous vous mentez" ["you're all liars"] and that "il y a danger que les filles de Eve croient trop tost ce serpent" ["the danger is that the daughters of Eve are too ready to believe this serpent"]. (323, 159-61; 357) Sensing that he is outmatched, Saffredent testily throws in the towel: "'J'entendz bien, Parlamente,' dist Saffredent, 'que les femmes sont incivilles aux hommes; parquoy je me tairay, affin d'escouter à qui Ennasuytte donnera sa voix'" ["'I understand well, Parlamente,' said Saffredent, 'that women are uncivil to men; therefore I will be

silent, in order to hear to whom Ennasuytte will give her voice'"]. (323, 161-164; my translation)[177]

VII.* Heptaméron *37 & 38

Ennasuite feels she can most trust Dagoucin to tell a story to the ladies' credit, so he gets to tell the next one. This is how we come to receive the first wifely patience story, Novella 37. In this *nouvelle*, "une dame en la maison de Loué" ["a lady of the house of Loué"] (324, 1; 358) is at first admired and liked by all her neighbors as well as her husband, whom she bears "plusieurs beaux enfans" ["several fine children"]. (324, 8; 358) Her husband, however, "trouvant l'honneste repoz insupportable, l'habandonna pour chercher son travail" ["became dissatisfied with their quiet, respectable life and abandoned her to seek excitement elsewhere"]. (324, 10-11; 358) Falling into a deep depression as a result of her concealed jealousy, the wife ceases her active management of their household (which had previously been so skillful that theirs was "une des plus riches maisons et mieulx meublées qui feust au pays d'Anjou ne de Touraine" ["one of the richest and best appointed in the lands of Anjou and Touraine"]. (324, 5-7; 358)

When one of her relatives reminds her that she must put a stop to her husband's profligacy for her children's sake if not for her husband's, she begins a ritual of meeting him when he returns to their bed in the wee hours of the morning and insisting that he wash his hands. He claims to have only been to the "retraict" ["privy"] (325, 39; 359), but she insists that he should wash up after going somewhere "ord et salle" ["foul and dirty"]. (325, 42; 359) He fails to take the hint, and after a year of repeating this quiet scolding, she finally discovers him "en une arriere garderobbe...couché et endormy avecques la plus layde, orde et salle chambriere

[177] Chilton's translation, following Michel François's French edition, has "invincible" instead of "uncivil."

qui feust leans" ["in an obscure closet asleep in bed with the ugliest, dirtiest and foulest chambermaid in the house"]. (325, 49-51; 359) Incensed at her husband's having dared to "laisser une honneste femme pour une si salle et villaine" ["leave an honest woman for this foul and dirty creature"] (325, 52-3; 359), she "print de la paille et la mist soubz le lict toute ardante" ["set fire to some straw in the middle of the room"]. (325, 53-4; 359) Seeing that her husband is likely to die in the fire, she wakes him up, but in a thinly veiled threat, warns him that if her latest action does not convince him to change, "je ne sçay sy à une seconde foiz je vous retireray du danger" ["I do not know if I shall have it in my power a second time to save you from danger"]. (326, 65-6; 359) This time, the lady's husband decides to quit while he is ahead, allowing his wife to "chass[er] ce qui luy desplaisoyt" ["cast out that which offended her"] (326, 73; 359) and thereafter living with his spouse in "grande et bonne amityé" ["great affection"]. (326, 74; 359)

After Dagoucin has finished, Parlamente, following in the footsteps of Dioneo's imagined anti-Griselda, Chaucer's *envoy*, and Harry Bailly's wife, declares that she would not have the patience to follow Dagoucin's *exemplum*. Ennasuite, who is speaking in Hircain's presence and thus might be offering him some ideas about what to do with his own impatient wife, again indicates the flaw in Parlamente's thinking: "'Mais il y a danger,' dist Ennasuyte, 'que la femme impasciente treuve ung mary furieux qui luy donnera doulleur en lieu de pascience'" ["'But,' said Ennasuite, 'there's a danger that the impatient wife will have a violent husband, who would give rise to suffering rather than patience'"]. (327, 95-97; 360) As Ennasuite goes on to point out, the husband could have decided to beat his wife and make her sleep on the servant's cot while the other woman occupied the marriage bed.

The misogynist aspects of patriarchy evident in Ennasuite's comments are anticipated, in fact, by the depiction of the chambermaid in the story by the ostensibly feminist narrator,

Dagoucin. In a cascade of increasing objectification, Dagoucin first calls the husband's mistress "orde et salle" ("foul and dirty"), using exactly the same words that the wife has used in speaking of the "lieu" ("place") where her husband goes every night. His female protagonist then thinks of the maid as "salle et villaine" (really "dirty and base," not "foul and dirty" as Chilton renders it). The storyteller next refers to the husband's shame at having been found with "une telle ordure" ("such filth"), dropping any pretense of thinking of the chambermaid as an actual person. And when the servant is finally driven from their home, she has become merely "ce qui...desplaisoyt" ("that which offended"), an unspecified thing identified only by its undesirability.

Longarine echoes Parlamente's skepticism toward the example of this latter-day Griselda, and at the dicussion's end Parlamente and Oysille summarize two political positions on marriage:

> "C'est raison," dist Parlamente, "que l'homme nous gouverne comme nostre chef, mais non pas qu'il nous habandonne ou traicte mal." "Dieu a mis si bon ordre, dist Oysille, "tant à l'homme que à la femme, que, sy l'on n'en abuse, je tiens mariage le plus beau et le plus seur estat qui soyt en ce monde; et suis seure que tous ceulx qui sont icy, quelque myne qu'ilz en facent, en pensent autant. Et d'autant que l'homme se dict plus saige que la femme, il sera plus repris, sy la faulte vient de son costé. Mais, ayant assez mené ce propoz, sachons à qui Dagoucin donnera sa voix."
>
> ["It's reasonable that the man should govern us as our head," said Parlamente, "but not that he should abandon us or treat us badly." "God has so wisely ordained," said Oisille, "both for men and for

> women, that, provided one does not abuse it, marriage is, I believe, the finest and surest state in this world; and I am sure that all of us here, whatever impression they may wish to give, are of the same opinion. And as the man claims to be wiser than the woman, so he will be the more severely punished if the fault is on his side. But enough has been said. Let us see who Dagoucin will choose to speak next."] (328, 128-137; 361)

While Parlamente merely insists that (dominant, patriarchal) husbands treat their wives decently, Oysille seems to be aligning herself with a particularly feminist, Reformist view of marriage. For one thing, in stating that "d'autant que l'homme se dict plus saige que la femme, il sera plus repris, sy la faulte vient de son costé" ["as the man claims to be wiser than the woman, so he will be the more severely punished if the fault is on his side"], Oysille makes essentially the same argument as the Wife of Bath. Chaucer's famous female frame-character, the reader should recall, maintains that "sith a man is moore reasonable / Than womman is, ye mosten been suffrable."[178] Furthermore, when Oysille states that marriage is "le plus beau et le plus seur estat qui soyt en ce monde" ["the finest and surest state in this world"] she draws a surreptitious contrast between marriage and the other "estat" ["state"] of celibacy, which must therefore be inferior or at least less "seur" ["safe"] for one's soul. Oysille herself, however, cannot or will not state this argument explicitly, and she swiftly moves to censor herself by calling for a return to the storytelling game. Whereas Symontault, Parlamente, and Saffredent have retreated from earlier discussions when they saw themselves on the losing side of the debate, Oysille is speaking here with an authority unchallenged within the fictional conversation. The forces

[178] See above, page 59.

which prompt this unorthodox widow to silence herself lie beyond the *Heptaméron*, in the complex politics of marriage and religion echoed in the evangelical movement supported by Marguerite de Navarre.

Dagoucin decides to pass the storytelling torch to Longarine, which makes sense as she has vigorously argued against other *devisants*' praise of the President of Grenoble and Saffredent's perversion of Scripture and theology. As happens elsewhere in Marguerite's collection, Longarine announces that she will tell a story that is similar to the previous one but even better. Not only is her novella "digne de suyvre le vostre" ["worthy to follow yours"], she will actually recount the story of a woman "plus louable de celle de qui a esté presentement parlé, et de tant plus est elle à estimer qu'elle estoit femme de ville, qui de leur coustume ne sont nourries si vertueusement que les autres" ["more laudable...than the one we've just discussed, a case that is all the more admirable as it concerns a townswoman, for townswomen are not usually so virtuously brought up as other women"]. (328, 139-44; 361) (I would speculate that this somewhat curious remark comparing the virtue of "femme[s] de ville" unfavorably with that of "les autres" could be connected to the fact that during Marguerite's lifetime both Paris and the Loire valley were attempting to become the center of the rising French nation-state. The Paris parliament and theologians frequently annoyed Francis I and especially Marguerite herself, and conflicts between the more rural aristocracy and monarchy and the increasing power of Paris would continue throughout the Valois and Bourbon periods until the eruption of armed hostilities in the French Revolution.)

There is no story about a character named “Griselda” in the *Heptaméron*, but the thirty-eighth novella depicts practically the same archetype – the feminine virtue of patience in marriage, personified. The key motif linking *Heptaméron* 38 to other analogs of "Griselda" is

the wife's concern for her husband's well-being and refusal to express either anger towards him or jealousy towards the other woman. These elements are present in Boccaccio's, Petrarch's, and Chaucer's "Griselda" stories as well as Marie de France's "Le Fresne" and the most direct source for Longarine's story, the *Mesnagier de Paris*'s narrative about Jehanne la Quentine. To summarize Novella 38's plot briefly:

A married woman is “non seullement aymée, mais craincte et estimée de son mary” ["loved by her husband, but also admired and respected by him"] (328, 2-3; 362) at the outset of the story, but the conjugal bliss quickly unravels. Within a few lines, we find *Heptaméron* 38’s husband spending as much time as possible at his country property, fooling around with his “mestaire” ["a woman who farmed his land"]. (329, 7; 362) When the wife notices that her husband always returns from his dalliances in poor health, she travels to the country to properly outfit the house there, upbraiding the *mestaire* for failing to care for the master of the house. After his paramour tearfully informs him of her mistress’s devotion to his health, the husband realizes the error of his ways and confesses everything to his wife. "Et depuis, vesquirent en bonne paix, laissant entierement la vye passée." ["And leaving the past behind them they lived from that time on in harmony together."] (330, 45-6; 363)

The discussion following this novella is simpler than that which follows *Heptaméron* 37, but the closures of debate after each story are structured in essentially the same way. Parlamente again scoffs at the wifely protagonist, characterizing the latter's constancy as cowardice: "'Vela une femme sans cueur, sans fiel ne sans foye" ["'That woman had no heart and no backbone!'"] (330, 51; 363) Longarine points out that the wife simply fulfilled her Christian duty to repay poor treatment with kindness, while the misogynist *devisants* offer various obtuse responses. (Hircain opines that the wife must have had a Franciscan boyfriend whom she was glad to

frequent while neglected by her husband; Simontault wonders why the husband wanted to go back to his wife once the country property was properly appointed; and Saffredent tells a little story about a rich Parisian who preferred sleeping with a servant in the basement to lying in his own bed with his wife.)

Among the male storytellers, only Geburon (who is referred to by his companions as the oldest and most reasonable of the men) might be read as Oysille's masculine counterpart. Not coincidentally, it is Geburon who winds up closing the debate as Oysille adjourned the discussion following *Heptaméron* 37. Referring to the man from Saffredent's mini-tale, Geburon says:

> "N'avez vous pas ouy dire...que Dieu ayde tousjours aux folz, aux amoureux et aux ivroignes? Peult estre que cestuy là estoit luy seul tous les trois ensemble." "Par cella, vouldrez vous conclure," dist Parlamente, "que Dieu nuyroit aux saiges, aux chastes et aux sobres?" "Ceulx qui par eulx mesmes," dist Geburon, "se peuvent ayder n'ont poinct besoing d'ayde. Car Celluy qui a dict qu'il est venu pour les malades, et non poinct pour les sains, est tenu par la loy de sa misericorde à secourir à noz infirmitez, rompant les arrestz de la rigueur de sa justice; et qui se cuyde saige est fol devant Luy. Mais, pour finer nostre sermon, à qui donnera sa voix Longarine?"
>
> ["Haven't you heard, said Geburon, "that God always helps fools, lovers and drunkards? Maybe this man was all three at once!" "Do you mean by that," said Parlamente, "that God would harm

> the wise, the chaste, and the sober?" "Those who can help themselves," said Geburon, "need no help. For He who said that He came for the sick, and not for the healthy, is bound by the law of His mercy to succor our infirmities, repealing the harsh decrees of the rigor of His justice; and he who thinks himself wise is a fool before Him. But, to end our sermon, to whom will Longarine give her voice?"] (321, 72-83; my translation)[179]

Although this exchange begins as more of a logic game – does God's aid to one group of people imply his disfavor towards those people's opposites? – I am not sure that Geburon is still talking about fools, lovers, and drunkards as he responds to Parlamente's comment. The *devisants*' discussions on Day Four remind the *Heptaméron*'s readers that the frame-characters are familiar with vernacular Scripture. Would those capable of reading the Bible on their own not be "ceulx qui par eulx mesmes...se peuvent ayder" ["those who can help themselves"]? I am similarly tempted to identify contemporary Catholic clerics who wished to reserve the right to read the Bible for themselves as those who think themselves "saige[s]" ["wise"] but are in fact "fol[s] devant [Dieu]" ["fool[s] before [God]"].

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[179] Chilton's version renders "qui se cuyde sage" as "he who would be wise," and the conditional tense does not suffice to communicate the meaning of *cuyder*, a key term for Marguerite and other Evangelical writers meaning prideful and mistaken belief. In addition, "rompant les arrestz de la rigeur de sa justice" is given in Chilton's text as "repealing the harsh decrees of His justice," but "les rigeurs de la justice" and closely related formulas repeatedly show up in the pardon letters of *Fiction in the Archives*, where petitioners cite fear of said "rigeurs" as the reason for their flight from the jurisdiction of the court to which they are appealing, so I also wanted this term to come through in the English translation.

This broadening of religious authority to embrace laypeople of both genders would reflect not only the sort of religious educational atmosphere that characterizes the *devisants*' activities at Nostre Dame de Sarrance but also a key difference between the story of Jehanne la Quentine and *Heptaméron* 38. In the former story, the husband confesses his sins to a priest and never has to speak directly to his wife about his misdeeds, but here the husband confesses to his spouse. Her apparent usurpation of the role of confessor usually occupied by a clergyman reminds the reader of nothing so much as Oysille's usurpation of the role (which would likewise ordinarily be played by a man of the cloth) of preacher and teacher during the *devisants*' morning Bible study sessions. Geburon acknowledges that he has gotten carried away and begun to occupy the preaching position usually filled in the mornings by Oysille; he suggests that everyone return to fictional narratives "pour finer nostre sermon" ["to end our sermon"].

VIII. Conclusions

Geburon is doing more than poking fun at his own overwrought religiosity. Whereas Boccaccio's, Petrarch's, and Chaucer's frames exhibit a certain uneasiness about the applicability of Griselda's example, Marguerite's frame-characters demonstrate through their own behavior that the time of all-powerful husbands like Gualtieri is definitely over. Instead, as courtly society and Reformation theology develop in the first half of the 1500s, the *devisants* will nervously escape back into storytelling just as their gender-based rivalries or their unorthodox religious opinions threaten to explode. Parlamente *almost* accuses Ennasuite of infidelity, the ladies *almost* accuse Saffredent of being so immoral as to be unworthy of their company, Oysille *almost* declares that the celibacy of the Catholic priesthood is a mistake, and Geburon *almost* openly champions laypeople's right to read the Scriptures themselves. Most radical of all, the

entire *Heptaméron* suggests, but does *not* explicitly state, that women are at least as capable as men of responsibly exercising religious authority over individuals of both genders.

We could see the frame-characters' willingness to censor themselves as a natural facet of courtly society, where aristocrats are trying to engage in increasingly codified and non-violent interactions as their role changes from that of landed magnates free to field private armies to that of the King's and the French state's subordinate employees. The constitution of early modern courtly society, à la Castiglione, is enabled by just such conversational restraint. In order to determine exactly why the *devisants* stop short where they do, the best next step would be comparative study with the *Book of the Courtier* and other similar Renaissance texts, which would allow one to compare the different types of constraints that govern discussants' conversation in various contexts. The *Book of the Courtier*, for example, leaves little doubt that its author senses the superiority of democracy to monarchy, given the weakness (and scholasticism) of the monarchist frame-characters' arguments and the logical strength of the democrats' arguments, but the arguments among differently-minded courtiers are always ostensibly won by the monarchists. Residing at the court of an aristocrat, the Duke of Urbino, Castiglione's characters can hardly allow their discussions to openly favor rule by the people.

The *Heptaméron* also acknowledges the impracticality of such inflammatory statements, no matter how true they may be, when the *devisants* scurry back to their "veritable[s] histoires" so as not to provoke "disputes." From the courtly insider's point of view that is Marguerite's, frank admission of the truth of men's and women's relationships, or of the falsehoods in the Church's teachings, might theoretically be wonderful, but in practice it would cause conflicts that French aristocratic society could not withstand. Patriarchal and orthodox Catholic assumptions may be tested, up-ended, even subverted over the course of the storytelling

conversation, but in the end these debates must be silently disposed of. Or as Harry Bailly, the host whose own chief function is to goad others into telling their tales, would have it: “But thyng that wol nat be, lat it be stille!”

CHAPTER 3

INTERTEXTUAL ICONOGRAPHIC NARRATIVE: HOW "KATHERINE/CONRARD" OF THE *CENT NOUVELLES NOUVELLES* BECOMES "ROLANDINE" OF THE *HEPTAMÉRON*

I. Introduction: An "incoherent" nouvelle *at the intersection of early modern French storytelling and preaching*

Why would Marguerite de Navarre write one of her longest prose fictions about an enduring and virtuous friendship between two harassed members of a bygone royal court, only to veer in an entirely different direction near the story's end? Why would Parlamente, the narrator of *Heptaméron* 21, expend so much narrative energy to craft a convincing love story and then close by revealing the male lead as a self-interested gold-digger, bringing in God's providence to put the villainous characters to death, and reincorporating her female protagonist into the aristocratic society that has persistently rejected her? In her notes on the twenty-first *nouvelle*, Renja Salminen, editor of the magisterial 1999 Droz edition of the *Heptaméron*,[180] cites the editor of Flammarion's modernized and frequently reprinted 1982 version,[181] Simone de Reyff, to confirm that the story is not coherent. "From a literary standpoint, this unexpected 'happy ending' appears a bit artificial. Reyff emphasizes the *incoherencies* of the story: the bastard's betrayal, which nothing in his prior behavior prepares or justifies, and Rolandine's sudden change in behavior. After manifesting an obstinacy 'that could pass for a form of

[180] Navarre, Marguerite de (ed. Renja Salminen). *Heptaméron*. Geneva: Droz, 1999. References to the *Heptaméron*'s English translation will be in-line as well, and come from the English text rendered by P. A. Chilton in *The Heptameron*. London: Penguin, 1984. I will use my own translations in some cases where Chilton's version, by translating one French word in different ways in different places in the book, obscures the strategic reuse of identical vocabulary that a reader of the original French-language text would no doubt notice.

[181] Navarre, Marguerite de (ed. Simone de Reyff). *Heptaméron*. Paris: Flammarion, 1982.

schizophrenia,'she benignly accepts a marriage of convenience as soon as she learns of the bastard's death."[182]

Such a dismissal of any possibility of comprehending this narrative begs to be improved upon, and ameliorating our understanding of the apparent "incoherencies" of texts that nonetheless fascinate and entertain us is, in any case, one important purpose of literary criticism. This chapter will endeavor to shed some light upon the apparent inconsistencies of Rolandine's and her friend's trajectories. In the past thirty years, various critics have offered alternative explanations of *Heptaméron* 21; although I will draw upon their work, I will also offer some new interpretive strategies for understanding this complex novella. Taking some inspiration from a number of previous analyses, I will demonstrate that *Heptaméron* 21's twists and turns may be best understood in light of the many connections between storytelling and preaching that underpin Marguerite's collection. In doing so, I will argue that the individual preaching styles (understood in terms of both narration and exegesis) embodied by the frame-characters Parlamente, Oysille, Symontault, and Hircain can help readers make sense of "Rolandine" within the context of the *Heptaméron*. In addition, I will clarify the intertextual connections between "Rolandine" and two non-fictional early modern genres, the pardon request and the martyr's tale.

Lastly, I will explore the relationship of *Heptaméron* 21 to an unrecognized source text, the twenty-sixth story in the anonymous fifteenth-century Burgundian novella collection, the

[182] Salminen 718 and Reyff, Simone de, "Rolandine, ou il n'y a pas d'amour heureux: Quelques remarques à propos de la 21e Nouvelle de l'*Heptaméron*." *Réforme, Humanisme, Renaissance: Bulletin de l'Assocation d'Étude sur l'Humanisme, la Réforme et la Renaissance (France du Centre et du Sud-Est)*, 1990, p. 27, my translation and emphasis.

Cent nouvelles nouvelles.[183] I argue that the greater length of novellas like *Heptaméron* 21 and *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 enables them to focus on iconographic[184] transformations, whereby generalized characters (icons), identified by simple clusters of modifiers or small image motifs, change their identities as icons rather than merely performing one iconographic function in one brief narrative. In most readings of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*, "*nouvelles*" are thought of as short, frequently comic tales with casual attitudes towards sex, violence, and morality, in which men consistently triumph over women. In *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26, which for the sake of variety I will also refer to as "Katherine/Conrard," I will be analyzing a story that is comic but also long and didactic, where the chaste and virtuous female character is morally and intellectually superior to and triumphs over the male. To do this, however, Katherine has to transform herself outwardly, visually, into a man, Conrard, whose identification as male is underscored by the consistent use of "il" rather than "elle," "Conrard" rather than "Katherine," to refer to this character whenever she is cross-dressing.

I find that *Heptaméron* 21 recycles elements taken from *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 so as to shift the focus from literal, visual transformations (from "dressed in women's clothing and therefore feminine" to "dressed in men's clothing and therefore masculine") to textual, intergeneric ones. Rolandine's appearance never changes, but the outward projection of personality to be found in her speech changes from the discourse of a typical aging and unmarried court lady to the voice beseeching pardon in a letter requesting royal grace to the triumphant and world-defying proclamations of a saintly religious martyr. I will close with some

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[183] Anonymous (ed. F. P. Sweetser). *Les Cent nouvelles nouvelles*. Geneva: Droz, 1966. In-line references to *Les Cent nouvelles nouvelles* will be to this edition; all English translations of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* are my own.

[184] See LaGuardia 38-50.

suggestions as to how we might further pursue the discussion of the *Heptaméron*'s storytelling circle as a space for co-educational predicant experimentation and intertextual iconographic narration.

II. Summary of **Heptaméron** *21 and a review of relevant recent criticism*

For readers unfamiliar with *Heptaméron* 21, it will be helpful to recount its plot in brief: Rolandine is a lady in the household of an unnamed Queen of France[185] who torments the heroine because of "quelque inimité qu[e la Reine] portoit à son pere" ["some grudge against Rolandine's father"] (196, 4-5; 236). Because of the queen's dislike and her father's avarice, Rolandine reaches thirty years of age without being married. She forms a close friendship with a "bastard d'une grande et bonne maison" ["bastard son of a good and noble family]" (196, 24; 236), whose situation resembles her own: he is poor and thus unable to secure a wife befitting his lineage. With the court scandalized by their relationship, the Queen's agents drive their amorous conversations further and further underground, eventually under the threat of death if they continue to meet. Despite the Queen's prohibition, Rolandine and the bastard conduct a clandestine marriage, which she makes him promise not to consummate until her father either dies or consents to their union.

The secret marriage is eventually discovered, whereupon the bastard flees to Germany and Rolandine is sent back to her father's house to live as a prisoner. The bastard begins to pursue a rich German lady, but Rolandine refuses to renounce her marriage. What finally saves her is her "husband's" early death, followed by her father's decision to arrange an honorable marriage for her after all. Her brother then withholds her share of the family fortune after their

[185] Scholars have identified her as Anne de Bretagne, the wife of Louis XII; Rolandine is thought to be a fictional recreation of Anne de Rohan (Salminen 715).

father's death, but the brother, like the bastard, dies soon afterwards, leaving Rolandine and her new husband with all of her house's wealth.

Many critics have argued that "Rolandine" is best read alongside *Heptaméron* 40, the story of Rolandine's aunt's clandestine marriage, although their reasons for maintaining this position vary. Some have noted that *Heptaméron* 21 forms one end of an internal frame connecting novellas 21 through 40 to a common theme drawn from Saint Paul's epistles, the universal sinful nature of human beings.[186] At least one scholar, focusing on Marguerite's positive messages about marriage rather than her negative ones about human nature, finds that *Heptaméron* 40 "repairs the defective exemplarity of narration"[187] triggered by the discussion following "Rolandine," which remains silent on the question of clandestine marriage despite the novella's obvious interest in that regard. Several have argued that *Heptaméron* 21 and 40 demonstrate Marguerite's rejection of clandestine marriages, which were controversial during her lifetime, although critics differ as to whether they believe the Queen of Navarre's preferred

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[186] See especially Defaux's "De la Bonne Nouvelle aux nouvelles: remarques sur la structure de l'*Heptaméron*."

[187] Leushuis 263, my translation. With the addition of the fortieth *nouvelle* to the twenty-first, Leushuis writes, the reader can appreciate Marguerite's rejection of clandestine marriage in favor of a union that would combine *philia*, *agapè*, and *éros* to please spouses as well as their families. The exploration of *philia* (love based on personal mutual affinity), *agapè* (love based on a sense of community), and *éros* (love based on sexual desire) is the unifying theme of Leushuis's book. For another view of *Heptaméron* 21 as a rejection of clandestine marriage, see Bauschatz's "Rabelais and Marguerite de Navarre on Sixteenth-Century Views of Clandestine Marriage." For a reading of *Heptaméron* 21 as a rejection of Catholic marriage in favor of a Calvinist-style companionate marriage, see Randall's *Earthly Treasures: Material Culture and Metaphysics in the* Heptaméron *and Evangelical Narrative*.

vision of matrimony, as expressed through her framed novellas, is Calvinist, Lutheran, Catholic, or something else altogether.[188]

In analyzing *Heptaméron* 21 and 40 together, however, one may also note that the doubtlessly well-known story of her aunt's thwarted clandestine marriage appears not to have taught Rolandine or her father anything.[189] Since Rolandine reacts to her father's failure to marry her off in nearly the same manner as her aunt did (and the same lord of Jossebelin is responsible for both women's predicaments), *Heptaméron* 40 seems an ineffective *exemplum*. One may see the aunt's story's failure to instruct her niece as a symptom of a wider early modern European crisis of exemplarity brought about by individuals' increased awareness of their ability to interpret any given *exemplum* in multiple ways. Likewise, *Heptaméron* 21 may also signal Marguerite de Navarre's rejection of rhetorical and narrative closure in contrast to her collection's model, Boccaccio's *Decameron*.[190]

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[188] For a recent discussion of Marguerite's continued adherence to Catholicism, see Le Gall, "Marguerite de Navarre: The Reasons for Remaining Catholic." For Marguerite interpreted as a quasi-Calvinist - albeit one who was in open conflict with Calvin himself, see Thysell, *The Pleasure of Discernment: Marguerite de Navarre as Theologian*. On Marguerite's thought as "Erasmian," see especially Febvre, *Amour sacré, amour profane: autour de l'Heptaméron*, 68-89. On the question of Marguerite's possible adherence to Lutheranism, see Febvre, 132-71. Various trends in theological thinking that would later be consistently characterized as "Lutheran" were nonetheless present among reputable members of the Gallican Church through the 1540s; on this, see Ferguson 140. Reid, among others, has argued convincingly that the only label appropriate to Marguerite's religious thought and actions is "Evangelical."

[189] See Lyons, John. "The *Heptaméron* and the Foundation of Critical Narrative." This article is reproduced in a modified form in the second chapter of *Exemplum: The Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy*.

[190] See Bernard, "Realism and Closure in the *Heptaméron*: Marguerite de Navarre and Boccaccio." For Bernard, the key to understanding Marguerite's twenty-first *nouvelle* lies in comparing it to *Decameron* 4.1, Boccaccio's tale of Ghismunda. Despite the similarities between Ghismunda's angry speech to her cruel father and Rolandine's

For my own analysis, although I disagree with the essentialist conclusions that some religious readings attempt to impose upon Marguerite's project, I agree with their assertion that the *Heptaméron* is a text that devotes serious attention to religious controversy. At the same time, I aim to retain other scholars' emphasis on the basic openness of Marguerite's *nouvelles* to multifarious, even mutually exclusive, interpretations. Why else would Marguerite have bothered creating ten frame-characters, or *devisants*, whose exegetical styles are so much more diverse and distinctive than those of their Boccaccian forebears?[191] Where I contest these latter scholars is in their assertion that Marguerite and her frame-characters employ two totally different logics or attitudes in reading the two bodies of evidence found in the Bible on the one hand and everyday life on the other. As John Bernard puts it, "the 'world' of Marguerite's stories remains incoherent precisely because it retains the openness to the manifold possibilities of signification that a good story, or at least a good medieval *exemplum*, normally denies."[192]

One must not push the distinction between a *Heptaméron* story and "a good medieval *exemplum*" too far. The internecine turmoil of the early Reformation demonstrated that the Bible itself, like Marguerite's *nouvelles*, is "open…to the manifold possibilities of signification." In

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speeches to her tormentor, the Queen, Bernard argues that for Marguerite, the varied and uncontrollable experiences of humans in the world cannot achieve the consummated closure of Boccaccio's "*letterarietà*" (314) or of Holy Scripture. Note, however, that not all critics agree with Bernard's perception of the *Decameron* as a literary work that accepts narrative closure. Marilyn Migiel's analysis in *A Rhetoric of the* Decameron is based on precisely the opposite premise.

[191] I do not mean to suggest that Boccaccio's narrators do not differ from one another in significant ways or that their storytelling does not constitute a conversation worthy of analysis – such a suggestion is thoroughly refuted by Migiel, among others. But even *Decameron* specialists do not dispute that the *Heptaméron* uses a much larger percentage of its text to develop its frame-characters than the *Decameron* does.

[192] Bernard 316.

other words, the fact that the *Heptaméron*'s stories do not function in the same manner as medieval *exempla* should not blind us to the *devisants*' attempts to use their narratives in much the same way that the Reformation's competing preachers used Holy Scripture. Like those preachers, the *devisants* tell stories that their society has agreed to accept as factually true, but they proceed from that shared fund of narrative knowledge to a variety of frequently incompatible interpretations.

III. Rolandine, her bastard boyfriend, and the element of surprise

Before exploring the ways in which the *Heptaméron* stages and frames "Rolandine," I will address this novella's supposed incoherencies with some small-bore intratextual close reading. Although this section will restrict its analysis to *Heptaméron* 21 in isolation, the points made here will help us later in explaining this narrative's engagement with preaching, non-fiction, and other *nouvelles*. My own initial impression of this story was predominantly one of shock at the bastard's sudden betrayal of Rolandine after the years of hardship that they have endured together. Their love affair is one of the most detailed and convincing anywhere in the *Heptaméron*, and it seems psychologically improbable that he could so easily slip into a relationship with a new woman as soon as he leaves France. This turn of events is particularly difficult to understand given that his move to Germany resembles his earlier travels around Europe. He and Rolandine have often been geographically separated without generating any infidelity or suspicion. So why does his crossing the Rhine trigger his desertion?

The *devisants* themselves, however, do not seem to find the story incredible. No fewer than six of the ten storytellers weigh in during the discussion following *Heptaméron* 21, and none of them expresses surprise at the events that Parlamente has recounted. One might think that this lack of surprise is evidence that the discussion essentially disregards the *nouvelle*

(perhaps suggesting a careless or yet-to-be-refined addition of cornice to story), but I contend that the tale is actually quite well-integrated into the frame-narrative's storytelling dialogue. Upon reviewing this novella more closely, I find that the *devisants*, unfazed by the bastard's perfidy, might have been paying closer attention to Parlamente's language than I had. In fact, when the two lovers first separate, acting on the advice of Rolandine's governess, they "commance[nt] à sentir ung tourment qui jamais *du cousté d'elle* n'a...esté experimenté" (198, 69-70) ["began to feel a torment that *she* had never experienced," my translation and emphasis].[193]

The collective experience of suffering suggested by the third-person plural "commancerent" is contradicted by the rest of the sentence, which indicates that the bastard – but *not* Rolandine – has been involved in similar love affairs before. We then learn that instead of simply despairing at the loss of his lover, the bastard thinks up resourceful ways to get around her governess's anxiety and the court's disapproval. The omen of his later betrayal lies in his motivation for overcoming these obstacles and attempting to marry his beloved: "regardant avecques l'amour *l'honneur que ce luy seroit, s'il la povoit avoir,* pensa qu'il failloit chercher moyen..." ["He considered too *the honor that would redound to him if he could but win her*, and concluded that he must find a way."] (198, 77-9; 238, my emphasis)

In the unromantic prize appended to the tell-tale "avecques" lies the difference between the bastard's love and Rolandine's. His love is entangled with social and financial concerns,

[193] I do not use Chilton's translation here because it ascribes these feelings to both characters equally, but the reader should note that, in contradiction of Salminen's text, the torment of separation from one's partner is also described as new to both Rolandine *and* the bastard in Michel François's and Yves Le Hir's editions of the *Heptaméron*. See Navarre (ed. M. François). *L'Heptaméron*. Paris: Garnier Frères, 1964, pg. 160, and Navarre (ed. Y. Le Hir). *Nouvelles*. Paris: PUF, 1967, pg. 141, line 20.

with the pride of possessing Rolandine; hers is purely based on his virtues and pleasant company. When he reveals his desire to marry her, he is careful to argue that a richer husband would actually be excessively interested in her wealth while neglecting her "personne." He thereby cleverly allays what would ordinarily be the automatic suspicion of a woman near the peak of the aristocratic hierarchy listening to the proposal of an impoverished and illegitimate suitor:

> Je sçay bien que je suys pouvre…Mais…sy…vous me voulsissiez elsire pour mary, je vous serois mary, amy et serviteur…sy vous en prenez ung esgal à vous…il vouldra estre maistre et regardera plus à voz biens que à vostre personne...en joyssant de l'usuffruict de vostre bien, traictera vostre corps autrement qu'il ne le merite. (200, 129-41)
>
> [I know only too well that I am poor…But...if I were to be chosen by you for your husband, then I would be your husband, your lover and your servant…If you take a man who is your equal…he will want to be your master and will pay more attention to your wealth than to yourself…He will have full right to enjoy your wealth, yet will treat your body other than it deserves.] (239)

It makes sense for Rolandine's friend to present her with a careful argument, but the use of the legal term "usuffruict"[194] should alert us to the fact that he has money on the brain.

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[194] Greimas and Keane's *Dictionnaire du moyen français: la Renaissance* does not mention this word. I have been able to retrieve an etymological French dictionary entry at the following address - http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/dmf/usufruit?idf=dmfXeXrmXudh;str=0 – which explains "usufruit" as derived from the Latin *usufructus* and established in French texts since at least the 1330s, meaning "the legal right to enjoy property held by another individual." Separately, as indicated at the following address -

Therefore, when Rolandine's misgivings (based on the bastard's "escriptures tant changées et reffroidies du langaige acoustumé" ["wr[iting which] i]s so cool, so different in style from the way he ha[s] written in the past"] (213, 578-9; 251)) are confirmed, and she learns that her clandestine husband is now "fort amoureux d'une dame d'Allemaigne, et...pourchass[e] de l'espouser, car elle est...fort riche" ["deeply enamoured of a German lady, and…inten[ds] to marry her, for she [i]s a very wealthy woman"] (214, 587-9; 251), readers should not be totally shocked. Given his previous experiences in love and his crafty pursuit of Rolandine, this (at least for Salminen's manuscripts of choice) third *amour* confirms a consistent pattern.

What about Rolandine's behavior? Her patient suffering ends when God has pity on her pain and calls away to the hereafter first her unfaithful lover and then her ungenerous brother.[195] If the bastard's betrayal appears sudden, the brother's tardy and villainous appearance – he lives for only a few sentences near the story's end – is baffling. Like the bastard's infidelity, the brother's disputation of the estate sends perplexed readers back to the beginning of *Heptaméron* 21, wondering whether we have (at least partially) misunderstood the whole story.

In fact, property conflicts constitute a theme running through the entire *nouvelle*. Although Parlamente specifies neither the queen's true identity nor the nature of her dispute with Rolandine's father, Salminen provides the following information in her notes: "Anne of Brittany held a grudge against the Rohans because they had disputed her inheritance of the lands of the last Dukes of Brittany. The viscount of Rohan defended the interests of the French crown to the

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http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/usufruct - the English equivalent "usufruct" is identified in some dictionaries as deriving from Latin and appearing in the early 1600s, but at least one dictionary (*Online Etymology Dictionary*, Douglas Harper, 2010) attests to the appearance in 1478 of a "delatinized form," *usufruit*.

[195] Ibid. 214-215, lines 605-8 and 631-4; Parlamente attributes the bastard's death to "la bonté divine" and the brother's demise to "Dieu." See also Navarre (transl. P. A. Chilton) 252.

detriment of those that Anne had as Duchess of Britanny."[196] For Parlamente's purposes, this is an exemplary tale of feminine chastity and loyalty contrasted with masculine infidelity. With Salminen's help, however, we can see that in the mouth of a different teller, Rolandine's story could have focused exclusively on the inheritance fights that form its historical basis.

Even in the Prologue to Day Three, Parlamente announces that she will change the names of her protagonists "pour ce que celle dont je vous veulx parler estoit de bonne maison" ["because the lady I want to tell you about is from a good family"]. (195-6, 27-8; 235) Rolandine belongs to a coterie of "filles de grandes et bonnes maisons" ["daughters of important noble families"] in the company of the queen. (196, 2; 235) Her eventual lover is first introduced as a "bastard d'une grande et bonne maison" ["bastard son of a good and noble family"] (196, 23-4; 236) and only afterward as "autant gentil compagnon et homme de bien qu'il en feust poinct de son temps" ["as gallant and worthy as any man of his day"]. (196-7, 24-6; 236) Similarly, when Parlamente explains why the bastard cannot marry, she mentions his lack of beauty only *after* specifying that "la richesse l'avoit du tout délaissé" ["he…[was] bereft of means"]. (197, 26; 236) From this point on, he will consistently be referred to as either "le bastard de bonne maison" ["the high-born bastard"] or simply "le bastard" ["the bastard"].

Likewise, both Parlamente-as-narrator and Rolandine identify Rolandine's chief suffering at the hands of her father and the queen as the shame resulting from their failure to secure a husband worthy of her nobility. Rolandine is "celle qui se faschea à la longue, non tant pour envye qu'elle eust d'estre mariée que pour *la honte qu'elle avoit de ne l'estre poinct*" ["she who grew vexed in the end, not so much out of any desire she had to be married as out of *shame that*

[196] Salminen 716, my translation.

she was not"] (196, 15-18).[197] When her governess advises her to stay away from the bastard for a time in order to appease the court, Rolandine complains, "'Helas, ma mere! vous voyez que je ne puis avoir ung mary *selon la maison dont je suys*'" ["'Alas, Mother, you know that I cannot find a husband *to match my family and lineage*'"] (197, 46-7; 237, my emphasis). When the queen criticizes her relationship with the bastard, her foremost counter-accusation is that the queen has not arranged a timely and appropriate marriage for her: "[Rolandine] savoit bien qu[e la reine] n'avoyt jamais eu envye de la marier au temps et aux lieux où elle eust esté honnorablement et à son ayse" ["[Rolandine] knew well enough that [the queen] had never wished her to marry at a time when she might have been honorably and comfortably provided for"] (202, 192-4; 246).[198]

When subterfuge fails and Queen publicly confronts Rolandine, this same complaint is found in the most prominent position of the latter's speech:

> quant il vous eust pleu me favoriser, comme celles qui ne vous sont sy proches que moy, je feusse maintenant mariée autant à vostre honneur qu'au myen...les bons partiz que j'eusse sceu avoir

[197] My emphasis. The English text here is mine, as Chilton's on page 236 is incomplete. Compare: "As time went by this state of affairs came to distress her greatly, not because she actually wished to marry, but more because she was ashamed." Marguerite's text is more explicit in stating that Rolandine's remaining unmarried is the source of her shame, and I have tried to retain that sense in my translation.

[198] Parlamente is quoting Rolandine's speech here indirectly. On the mutual obligations defining "fosterage" at the courts of ladies like Anne de Bretagne, Marguerite de Navarre, and Anne de Beaujeu, see Adams, "Fostering Girls in Early Modern France." For some suggestions about how to add early modern conduct literature (Erasmus, Juan Luis Vives, Anne de France, Christine de Pisan, etc.) into one's consideration of the *Heptaméron*'s exploration of proper and improper female behavior, see Llewellyn, "'Afin Que Vous Connaissiez, Mesdames': The *Heptameron* and Conduct Literature for Women."

> me sont passez devant les yeulx, par la negligence de…mon pere et…le peu d'estime que vous avez faict de moy...En ce desespoir, m'est venu trouver celluy qui seroit d'aussy bonne maison que moy, sy l'amour de deux personnes estoit autant estimée que l'anneau, car…son pere passeroit devant le myen. (207-8, 383-97)
>
> [If you had favored me in the same way as you favored the other girls, who were not even as closely related as I am, I would by now have been married in a manner that would have brought honour to yourself as well as to me...[the] good match[es] that I might have made slipped away before my very eyes, thanks to my father's negligence and to your lack of regard for me...in this state of despair I was sought out by a man whose birth would have been the equal of mine, if only love between two persons carried as much esteem as a ring on the finger, for…his father was more elevated than mine.] (246)

Despite the fact that this speech probably acts, more than any other segment of the novella, to cement Rolandine's reputation in the reader's mind as one of the most memorable female characters in the *Heptaméron*, here the heroine also exposes the flaws in her own logic.

She claims that she is justified in marrying the bastard in part because his father is more powerful or wealthier or better-connected (we cannot be certain of what she means by "son pere passeroit devant le myen") than her own. We might justifiably question Rolandine's attempt to suggest that her no-longer-secret husband should not be stigmatized as a bastard child while

simultaneously continuing her denunciation of the treatment she has received at court and basing her protest primarily on the nobility of her own lineage, so respected, no doubt, because she, like all her known direct ancestors, is a legitimate child. But it should be obvious, by this point in the present study, that Rolandine's eventual peaceful acceptance of a husband chosen by her family does not constitute a "sudden change in behavior." A marriage of convenience, dictated by social status and arranged by her noble superiors (the queen and her father), is exactly what Rolandine has wanted all along. Her deviant clandestine marriage is the result of a breakdown of the normal system of aristocratic bridal exchange, not a deliberate protest against those conventions. Even Parlamente does not view her relationship with the bastard as socially acceptable, which is underscored by the storyteller's comparison of the couple to "larron[s]" ["thie[ves]"] stealing the time that they spend together. (199, 112; 239)

IV. Non-fictional intertexts: letters of remission and martyrs' tales

Having retraced the development of the motivations and events that produce the bastard's betrayal, there remains one "incoherence" to address with regard to *Heptaméron* 21: Rolandine's persistent loyalty to her disloyal partner, which De Reyff compares to a "form of schizophrenia." In fact, Rolandine's feeling of being persecuted by the Queen and her high opinion of herself are the aspects of the heroine's behavior that could most indicate schizophrenia – paranoia and delusions of grandeur – but the narrator's descriptions of the action indicate that Rolandine's perceptions are accurate. Without claiming that Rolandine's perseverance is productive or therapeutic for her, I would argue that her refusal to end her own suffering for the sake of a worthless husband may be better understood in light of some interference from different textual genres within this story. I have mentioned already that Rolandine's lengthy speeches are largely responsible for drawing readers' attention to her. Examining three places in *Heptaméron* 21

where she confidently asserts herself, we find that her declarations begin as a harangue that resembles the pardon requests so frequently addressed to Francis I but end as something much closer to a martyr's reaffirmation of her own righteousness.[199]

In Rolandine's first extended speech running from line 377 to line 444, she details the unearned scorn she has endured under the Queen, her father's lack of concern for her marital status, and her decision to take charge of her own fate in view of her advancing age. She makes her determination clear, but she also requests the queen's pardon: "Et suis deliberée de tenir ce propoz sy ferme que tous les tourmens que je saurois endurer, feusse la mort, ne me feroit deppartir de ceste forte oppinion. Parquoy, Madame, il vous plaira excuser en moy ce qui est tresexcusable, comme vous mesmes l'entendez tresbien, et me laisser vivre en la paix que j'espere trouver avecques luy." ["I am determined to hold firm to this resolve, so firm indeed that no torment that I might endure, not even death itself, would make me swerve from what is in my mind. So, Madame, you will be pleased to excuse me for an eminently excusable offence, and permit me to enjoy the peace I hope to find with him"] (209, 439-44; 247).

Up to this point, Rolandine's discourse has many features in common with real-life pardon requests as presented by Natalie Zemon Davis's *Fiction in the Archives*.[200] The heroine

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[199] The "martyr's tale" as an early modern genre is derived here primarily from Kolb's *For All the Saints: Changing Perceptions of Martyrdom and Sainthood in the Lutheran Reformation* and Gregory's *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe*. Although the constraints of this project preclude detailed comparative analysis of *nouvelles* with early modern martyrs' tales, both Kolb and Gregory make clear that the first collections to study would be those of Ludwig Rabus, Jean Crespin, John Foxe, and Adrian van Haempstede.

[200] My notion of the "pardon tale," or the request for royal remission or grace, as a non-fictional early modern French genre is derived primarily from Natalie Zemon Davis's *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*.

details her antagonists' abusive behavior, asserts her own spotless conduct ("du tout j'estois retirée à mener une vye plus religieuse que autre" ["I was fully resolved to lead a life more religious than otherwise"] (208, 402-3; 246)),[201] and cites her age as a legal excuse for her defiance of marital custom. Rolandine also states that she had "tumbée en…desespoir" ["f[allen] into...despair"] (208, 391; 246) as a result of her prolonged mistreatment. The advocate for one of Davis's pardon requesters, the husband-murdering Marguerite Vallée, describes the perpetrator's distraught emotional state resulting from her late spouse's beatings in precisely the same language: "ladite Marguerite en seroit *tumba* [*sic*]…*en desespoir*" ["the said Marguerite allegedly *fell…into despair* about it"] and again to describe Vallée's agony after the murder is committed, "par *desespoir*...se seroit voullu noyer comme femme *desesperée*" ["out of *despair*…she would have wished to drown, as a *desperate* woman"].[202]

There are, however, significant differences between Rolandine's speech and the story told by a typical request for royal grace.[203] Rolandine tells of extenuating circumstances that justify her otherwise inadmissible actions and obliquely request that her deeds be "excused," but supplicants seeking the prince's mercy would never address him in terms this defiant or close their statements by asserting their imminent success. And although Rolandine provides an

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[201] All of N. Davis's pardon tales employ this technique, stating categorically that the supplicants have never been the subject of scandal, criminal trial, or rebuke aside from the events that led to the offense for which they now request pardon. Likewise, almost every supplication includes a litany of transgressions by the victim(s) of the crime for which pardon is being sought.

[202] N. Davis 131, 133, my emphasis and translation.

[203] For seven examples of supplicants' narratives in pardon requests addressed to François I, see N. Davis, Appendix A, pp. 117-137. One obvious difference between Rolandine's statement and the letters N. Davis reproduces is that N. Davis's letters are all requesting pardon for homicides, whereas Rolandine's offense is non-violent.

emotional explanation for her apparent wrongdoing, claiming that she began her relationship with the bastard while in a state of "desespoir,"[204] it is the queen's face that is "troublé et courroucé" ["violent and vehement"] (207, 376; 246), the queen who acts out of "collere" ["rag[e]"] (209, 447; 247)[205] in reproaching and insulting Rolandine.

Parlamente may intend the queen's "collere," which resembles the reported emotional state of wretched transgressors who beg for the crown's grace more than it does the majesty that befits a monarch, to sharpen the irony of Rolandine's request for justice, addressed as it is to an unjust authority figure.[206] After some beratement by the queen, Rolandine continues to elaborate on her rights and reasons from line 454 to line 501. This second part of her self-defense makes the connection between her monologues and pardon requests more obvious, as she explicitly cites the lack of an "advocat qui parle pour [elle]" ["advocate to speak in [her] defense"] as the circumstance that compels her to "declairer [la vérité] sans craincte" ["declare [the truth] fearlessly"] (210, 462-4; 248).

In this regard, however, we may note another difference between Rolandine's defense and that of a historical pardon request, which was generally put together by a lawyer on behalf of a supplicant. Because she must speak for herself, Rolandine's story is told entirely in the indicative mood, as fact, rather than oscillating between indicative and conditional moods as

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[204] See above, page 98.

[205] "Collere" or "chaude colle" (*hot anger*) were the emotions most often cited by supplicants requesting a royal pardon for an act of homicide. See N. Davis 16, 36-37.

[206] The Queen as an unworthy monarch thus functions in a manner basically opposite that of the King in N. Davis's interpretation of the pardon tales; as she explains in *Fiction in the Archives*, the supplicant enhances the majesty of the ruler receiving the pardon request through his or her humble address of and submission to the sovereign. See N. Davis 52-58.

typically happens in the letters of remission.[207] The indicative, which the supplicant's lawyer slips into as often as he dares from the more skeptical conditional, takes over the entire autobiographical, self-reflective crescendo of Rolandine's speech.

Her language becomes more religious than legalistic as she brings this second installment of her peroration to a close. As she informs the queen and the rest of the court, "J'ay ung pere au ciel, lequel...me donnera autant de pascience que je me veoy par vous de grans maulx preparer, et en Luy seul j'ay ma parfaicte confiance" ["I have a Father in Heaven, who, I know, will grant me patience enough to endure the evils which I see you preparing for me, and in Him alone do I place my trust"] (211, 498-50; 249). The second monologue's conclusion is the opposite of the first's: now Rolandine implies that the queen will *not* excuse her, and that the baseness of her biological father will be counteracted only by the support of her heavenly one. Here Rolandine steps fully into the classic martyr's role, publically and spectacularly confessing her faith and her willingness to suffer for it.

After an interlude dealing with the king's unsuccessful attempt to have the bastard arrested, Rolandine has one last chance to dissolve her troublesome matrimonial bonds (which, the "gens d'Eglise et de Conseil" ["men of the Church and…members of the King's Council"] assure her, can be done "facillement" ["easily"] (212, 533 & 535; 250)). Not only does she not do this, but in her indirectly reported one-sentence response of lines 537 to 548, she peels away one more layer of pardon request, revealing the martyr's speech underneath. No longer is the marriage to which she cleaves merely a "forte opinion" ["resolve"] as in her first speech: "elle

[207] The supplicants' tales' use of the French conditional tense to lessen the certitude of a statement, which N. Davis does not attempt to translate but which is still current, might be rendered as the Anglophone legalistic use of "alleged(ly)."

aym[e] myeulx mourir, en gardant sa *foy*, que vivre après l'avoir nyée" ["she would die to preserve her *faith*, rather than break it and live"] (212-213, 547-8; 250, my emphasis).

From a desperate lady engaged in a marriage of choice only for lack of an honorable marriage of convenience, Rolandine has grown by the force of her own speech into a woman willing to die rather than deny her faith, of which marriage forms an integral part. When she eventually secures her happy ending, it is not by *living* happily ever after – "après avoir eslevé deux filz que Dieu...donna [à elle et à son mari], rendit joyeusement son ame à Celluy où de long temps elle avoit sa parfaicte confiance" ["at last, after having raised the two sons it had pleased God to grant them, she gave up her soul to Him in whom she had always had perfect trust"] (215, 636-8; 253). She is a secular saint, a woman whose idealistic vision of "amour et bonne voulunté fondées sur la craincte de Dieu" ["love and honest intent founded on the fear of God"] as "le vray et seur lien de mariage" ["the true and sure bonds of marriage"] (212, 541-3; 250) turns out to be a premonition of the joyous marriage made possible by her reintegration into the bridal exchange that patriarchs regulate for the social advancement of their households.

V. Parlamente and Oysille, Diegesis and Exegesis: Rolandine's predicatory function

Parlamente (and Marguerite) wish, perhaps, for a world in which marriage as a sacrament is taken seriously, where their husbands would shrink before the prospect of divine punishment rather than betray them. But the heroine must show herself at her finest when under the yoke of incomprehensible punishment by her fathers literal, metaphorical, metaphysical and so on. They come to include the Seigneur de Jossebelin, the wise men of the Church and state who try to convince Rolandine to abandon her marriage, the husband who enjoys dominion over a woman as her father once did, and behind and above them, God. Oysille's praise immediately following her younger companion's storytelling zeroes in on the suffering that makes Rolandine's fidelity

and patience exemplary. "Ce qui donne autant de lustre à sa fermeté, c'est la desloyauté de son mary" ["[W]hat enhances her constancy is her husband's disloyalty]," Oysille explains, "qui la vouloit laisser pour une autre" ["and the fact that he deliberately left her for someone else]" (216, 651-3; 253).

In a less forgiving mood, we may read Renaissance appeals by French women to a masculinized God to intercede with their husbands as a deformed attempt to articulate their demands for respect as women, conditioned by the conservative, patriarchal Christendom to which they speak. The martyred saint's life depends on the protagonist's suffering for its narrative authority and emotive force, and we may see the *Heptaméron*'s female Christians as masochistic fools offering themselves up for undeserved punishment by a malicious and sexist God. This is the Rolandine, I suspect, that De Reyff finds "schizophren[ic]," and whose willingness to suffer for her faith puzzles today's readers just as other early modern martyrs might.[208]

Then again, if we suspend our disbelief at the competing claims underlying the *devisantes*' simultaneously feminist and patriarchal stance, we can understand why Parlamente and Oysille would interpret Rolandine as a model woman. We know that *Heptaméron* 21 is a saint's life as much as a *nouvelle* because the unexpected resolution of the main character's marital and financial troubles is unnecessary to the substance of her happy ending, the eventual rendering of Rolandine's spirit to "Him in whom she had perfect confidence." She correctly identifies her own most salient exemplary feature – the God-given patience to endure her torment

[208] See Gregory, 1-29 and 344-352, for a discussion of martyrs' privileging of soteriological concerns over physical self-preservation, and the implicitly atheist modern critic's viewpoint that (according to Gregory) leads most historical accounts of Reformation martyrs to anachronistically denounce early modern Europeans' relationship to violence.

with honor – just as her defiant moment of revindication folds into martyred resignation, at the end of her second speech.

No character in the *Heptaméron* goes by the name of "Griselda," Boccaccio's famous final heroine distinguished by her patient suffering at the hands of her husband, yet in Rolandine we find one of her many avatars. The female Job, like God's people, and (ideally) like the king's good subjects, finds freedom and happiness in cheerful submission to sometimes inexplicable authority. Reflecting her own position as a long-suffering but seldom silent wife, Parlamente's diegetical style revolves around the construction of a non-legendary women's martyrology, wherein contemporary pious female protagonists struggle valiantly against male infidelity, oppression, and violence. The tenth, thirteenth, twenty-first, fortieth, forty-second, and seventy-first novellas, six out of the eight that Parlamente tells, fall into this category. She tells these tales of exemplary women for several different reasons, of which I will discuss only two: 1. to explicitly exhort female listeners to virtuous conduct, and 2. to surreptitiously communicate with male listeners.[209]

Chiefly, Parlamente encourages her female listeners to follow her *exempla* in preserving their chastity, as Floride,[210] the old pilgrim's wife,[211] Rolandine, and Françoise[212] do. At the same time, Parlamente concentrates on examples of feminine patience, so even characters like

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[209] On the simultaneous and contradictory meanings of statements by the frame-characters and an analysis of how their novellas function as part of this half-concealed discussion, see Tournon, André (eds. J. Lyons & M. McKinley). "Rules of the Game." *Critical Tales: New Studies of the* Heptameron *and Early Modern Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1993, pp. 188-199; Tournon focuses on Parlamente and Dagoucin.

[210] The heroine of *Heptaméron* 10. See Navarre (ed. R. Salminen) 66-105, Navarre (transl. P. A. Chilton) 122-154.

[211] The heroine of *Heptaméron* 13. See Navarre (ed. R. Salminen) 120-134, Navarre (transl. P. A. Chilton) 167-180.

[212] The heroine of *Heptaméron* 42. See Navarre (ed. R. Salminen) 348-359, Navarre (transl. P. A. Chilton) 381-391.

Floride, Rolandine, and Françoise will try to avoid violent or unpleasant resistance in the face of their tormentors. None of these women successfully reports her problems to an authority that can protect her: Floride's mother and Rolandine's father both act to increase their children's suffering, and Françoise's mistress makes matters worse by forcing her to speak privately with the importunate prince. Each of these martyr-protagonists lives in conditions that heighten the temptation to despair of continuing a chaste and virtuous life. These include Floride's love for Amadour and the disagreeable marriage that traps her, the pilgrim's wife's marriage to a much older man, Rolandine's marriage vows to an unfaithful, banished husband, and Françoise's predicament, which may be the most dangerous of all: she, a poor servant girl, must resist the attentions of a persistent young François I,[213] who does not hesitate to use bribery and threats.

It might be objected that Parlamente's characters cannot be interpreted as martyrs *per se*, since they do not die for their beliefs, according to the modern acceptance of "martyr." One of the most thorough recent historical analyses of early modern martyrologies criticizes anachronistic, implicitly atheist historians of early modern religion[214] but announces its own use of "contemporary [late twentieth-century] criteria" for defining what "martyrs" are without any attempt to justify this anachronistic analytical category.[215] Larousse's *Dictionnaire du moyen français: la Renaissance* gives the following definitions for the related Middle French terms: "**martyr** ... 1. Supplice. -2. Celui ou celle qui souffre pour la bonne cause... **martyre** ... Souffrance d'amour."[216] Notice that a "martyr" in Middle French could thus be anyone who "suffers for the good cause," and that "martyrdom" could refer to "suffering in love," the

[213] The prince in the story goes unnamed, but scholars generally identify him as François I. See Salminen 755.

[214] Gregory 344-352.

[215] Ibid. 5-6.

[216] Greimas and Keane 403-404.

affliction among women that the *Decameron*, according to its prologue, offers to relieve. In fact, in Lutheran martyrologies such as that of Ludwig Rabus, more quotidian and less physically violent but equally real suffering by the believer could take the place of actual torture and death for the cause; thus Luther's first few generations of followers celebrated him as a martyr.[217] As Cryriakus Spangenberg's 1568 *Zehende Predigt* defines one, a martyr is a witness "who gives public confession of Jesus Christ with the mouth, that he alone is our righteousness and that there is no other forgiveness of sins to be found."[218]

Françoise, Floride, Rolandine's aunt, and Rolandine all testify to their willingness to suffer and even die rather than renounce their faith and their chastity. While Floride bears the most graphic witness to this martyr-like willingness to suffer, disfiguring her own face with a stone so as not to attract Amador's extramarital lust (95-6, 911-19; 146), in Rolandine we find the woman's testimony at its most clearly religious. Parlamente's other three Great Women are more articulate about their allegiance to a secular code of *honneur*, but Rolandine's speeches, morphing from the legal-historical into the soteriological, make clear her primary exemplary identity as a Christian martyr.

The "argument"[219] that provides the transition from Day Three's prologue to *Heptaméron* 21 itself advertises the story much as Parlamente announces "Floride and Amadour." As Floride

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[217] Kolb 107.

[218] Ibidem, citing and translating Spangenberg, Cyriakus. *Die Zehende Predigt, Von dem thewren Bekenner D. MARTINI LUTHER. Das er ein rechtschaffen heiliger MARTYRER und Bestendiger Zeuge Jhesu Christi gewesen*. Eisleben: Petri, 1568.

[219] Many editions of Marguerite's *nouvelles*, beginning as early as the manuscript prepared by Adrien de Thou, include pre-*nouvelle* "arguments" not enunciated by any of the frame-characters in addition to the actual dialogic explanation of what an *exemplum* is supposed to prove. See Le Hir ix.

proves the possibility of "une [dame], bien aymante, bien requise, pressée et importunée, et toutesfoiz femme de bien, victorieuse de son cueur, de son corps, d'amour et de son amy" ["a lady...truly in love, who had been desired, pursued and wooed, and yet had remained an honest woman, victorious over her heart...body... love...[and] would-be lover"] (65, 197-201; 120), Day Three's first story will "monstrer qu'il y a des dames qui en leurs amitiez n'ont cherché nulle fin que l'honnesteté" ["demonstrate...that there *are* women who in their love have had in view nothing other than honor and virtue"] (195, 24-6; 235, emphasis in original). Each story is told in order to prove the possibility of a particularly virtuous kind of woman who remains steadfast under extraordinary pressures; and the tellers demand, as Petrarch does, that their audience take such exemplary evidence seriously.

While Parlamente is demonstrating her storytelling skill by remixing older texts in novel ways and preaching chastity and constancy to the *devisantes* through examples of martyred women, she also uses her stories to talk in code to several male audiences. These include the monks, her husband, and her *serviteurs*, and in all three cases the communication is integrally tied to her radical pose as a woman preaching to men. Regarding the monks, one must remember that *Heptaméron* 21 is intricately linked not only to the subsequent stories of Day Three but also to Saffredent's *Heptaméron* 20, the last story of Day Two.[220]

At the second day's end, the *devisants* discover that a group of monks has been secretly listening to their stories from behind a thick hedge (193, 123-4; 234). Day Three's stories, therefore, are the first group which the *devisants* knowingly tell to the monks and not merely to

[220]For a mythologically-minded consideration of the links between *Heptaméron* 20 and *Heptaméron* 21 that, unlike my remarks here, takes account of the former novella's contents, see Wiesmann's "Rolandine's lict de reseul: An Arachnological Reading of a Tale by Marguerite de Navarre."

each other. Day Three's prologue's reference to the monks' infamous gluttony[221] and the suddenly much higher frequency of anticlerical stories (four out of ten, compared with only three among the first twenty novellas)[222] further demonstrate that both the authorial voice and the frame-characters are sensitive to their altered audience. By telling a tale of a woman whose understanding of marriage is morally superior to that of the churchmen, Parlamente gets her fellow storytellers started on a roast of their now-acknowledged monastic listeners.

In telling her stories of patient wives, Parlamente is also sending a message to her husband, Hircain: she is faithful, he is unfaithful, and she intends to embarrass him about this imbalance via both comments made during group discussion and veiled analogies to her own tribulations contained in her stories. We are given no stage directions for Parlamente, Oysille, and Longarine here – are they gazing calmly at one another or glaring at the men, as they react to *Heptaméron* 21? That these three *devisantes* are the most seriously interested in Scripture, we

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[221] By contrastive association with the virtuously restrained *devisants*, who had "le disner passé assez sobrement, pour n'empescher par les viandes leur memoire à s'acquiter, chacun en son rang, le mieulx qui luy seroit possible" ["had their meal, eating in moderation so that their memories would not be clouded and so that they would be able to perform to the best of their ability"] (195, 8-10; 235).

[222] During the first two Days, the only *nouvelles* depicting clerical wrongdoers are *Heptaméron* 1 and 5, with *Heptaméron* 11 playing on the Franciscans' exaggeratedly bad reputation without depicting *cordeliers* wreaking any actual havoc. On Day Three, by contrast, the reader finds "Rolandine" who righteously resists the insistence of the – by logical extension – corrupt or at least mistaken "men of the church" that she may easily break off a marriage to which only God and the spouses bear witness in 21, Marie Héroët persecuted by villainous Church superiors both male and female in 22, a young mother's murder-infanticide precipitated by a Franciscan who tricks her into sexual intercourse in 23, and a village priest who thinks up a way to escape punishment for having sex with a laborer's wife in 29. In addition, the final Day Three discussion wheels its argument around against the Franciscans, apropos of nothing specific to *Heptaméron* 30.

might infer from the greater frequency of their biblical citations.[223] These same three women act in concert to shape a fiercely feminist opening of the post-21 discussion.

First, Parlamente uses her ostensibly all-female audience to bounce a challenge to the *devisants*: "Mesdames, je vous prie que les hommes, qui nous veullent paindre tant inconstantes, viennent maintenant icy et me monstrent l'exemple d'un aussy bon mary que ceste cy fut bonne femme, et d'une telle foy et perseverance" ["Well, Ladies, let the men...produce an example of a husband who was as good, as faithful and as constant as the woman in this story"] (215, 639-42; 253). The slippery syntax, "Mesdames, je vous prie que les hommes...," which speaks to the *devisants* while maintaining the disingenuous periphrastic "Mesdames," is repeated in other forms elsewhere in the *Heptaméron*.[224] As Parlamente and Hircain form the only husband-and-wife pair among the *devisants*, and Parlamente consistently champions chaste behavior while Hircain brags about his sexual prowess and appetite and approves of scabrous stories where tricksters win the day,[225] this challenge is especially addressed to him. Oysille's approval of Rolandine has already been cited above, and Longarine also chimes in to support her sistren.

While Parlamente and Oysille praise Rolandine's steadfast loyalty to the unfaithful bastard, Longarine focuses on the psychic pain of being scorned by one's true love. As she says,

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[223] Of the Biblical citations or allusions that Salminen has identified in her endnotes to the *Heptaméron*, they are used by (from most to least frequent) Oysille (20), Parlamente (13), Longarine (10), Ennasuite (7), and Nomerfide (2), correlating precisely with age, from oldest to youngest.

[224] See Bauschatz's "'Voylà, mes dames...': Inscribed Women Listeners and Readers in the *Heptameron*." Bauschatz points out that the sort of phrase she reproduces in her article's title is a retort to Boccaccio, whose novellas are directly addressed to a female audience, and a departure from sixteenth-century writers' typical use of "maîtrise auctoriale." The latter term is drawn from Genette, Gérard. *Seuils*. Paris: Seuil, 1987, p. 7.

[225] See B. Davis 23-30, 85-90.

"il n'y a faix sy pesant que l'amour de deux personnes bien unyz ne puisse doulcement supporter; mais, quant l'un fault à son debvoir et laisse toute la charge sur l'autre, la pesenteur est importable" ["no burden is so heavy that it cannot be carried with a cheerful heart; but when one of them fails to meet the demands of duty and leaves the full burden to be borne by the other, the weight is beyond endurance"] (216, 654-8; 253). The length and complexity of this story, the proliferation of scenes of concealment and dramatic monologues which define Rolandine's and the bastard's ongoing relationship, is intended precisely to accentuate this impression of Longarine's: the weight of the text is the weight of love's burden, unbearable when the other is unfaithful. The pain of the husband's disloyalty is exacerbated, and Rolandine's martyrdom that much more brilliantly emphasized, as Parlamente's shifting and multiform tale is able to provide a convincing history of the two lovers' shared suffering, so that listeners can understand more exactly what makes the heroine think that the bastard's love will last forever.

Even as the *Heptaméron*'s novellas, including "Rolandine," fulfill a predicatory function, readers should remember that most of the *devisants* are involved in romantic intrigues as well. As the Prologue informs us, many frame-characters are either married to one another (Hircain and Parlamente), pursuing other frame-characters as desired love-objects (Saffredent, Dagoucin, and Symontault), or being pursued (Longarine and Parlamente). Ennasuitte and Nomerfide, although they are not explicitly identified as parts of any *dame*-and-*serviteur* couples, appear at various times during the framing discussions to be the objects of Saffredent's and Hircain's attentions. Thus, all the *devisants* except the elderly Oysille and Geburon are involved in amorous subplots. The roles that these frame-characters play as courtiers, however, do not exist separately from their roles as preachers.

This means that Parlamente's tales of faithful wives, like almost all the other *nouvelles*, can be interpreted in at least two different ways. Her *exemplum* may be a straightforward reflection of her own identity as an unfailingly chaste married woman, placing her in the same category with her heroines as an example for other ladies to follow. On the other hand, given that the authorial voice acknowledges Symontault as her long-time *serviteur* (6-7, 188-90; 64) and that she coughs after the first novella in order to prevent Hircain from noticing that Symontault has made her blush (12-13, 390-96; 70), the reader must wonder what her precise relationship to Symontault is. If Parlamente has been unfaithful to Hircain, clearly she would not reveal that fact to her companions. Her martyrs' tales may thus be an elaborate ruse to deflect attention away from her own failings, but the *Heptaméron* will never let its readers decide with certainty whether this is the case. The fact that the geriatric Oysille and Geburon are the only characters who are free of any suspicion of sexual transgressions plainly suggests that, in the world of Marguerite's frame-narrative, biological age is the only factor that can remove a person from the perils of amorous desire. As we will see, Symontault and Hircain operate within this self-interested preaching system as well.

Geburon plays word-games with Longarine's language – "Vous debvriez donq...avoir pitié de nous, qui portons l'amour entiere sans que vous y daignez mectre le bout du doigd pour la soulager" ["Well then...you ought to take pity on us, seeing that we bear the whole burden of love and you never lift a finger to ease the load!"] (216, 658-60; 253) – but the real argument is left to Parlamente and Hircain. Rather than let Longarine respond to Geburon herself, Parlamente jumps back in to claim that the situation the old man has described is caused and justified by men's and women's diametrically opposed definitions of love. Hircain, however, points out that Parlamente's black-and-white dichotomy of male and female love (founded on

"plaisir" ["pleasure"] and on "Dieu et...honneur," ["God and…honor"] (216, 663-7; 254) respectively) unjustly makes abandonment of men by their lady-loves laudable but the reverse situation deplorable:

> Vela une raison...forgée sur une fantaisie, de vouloir soustenir que les femmes honnestement peuvent laisser l'amour des hommes, et non les hommes celles des femmes, comme sy leurs cueurs estoient differendz; mais, combien que les visaiges et habitz le soient, sy croy je que les vouluntez sont toutes pareilles, sinon d'autant que la malice plus couverte est la pire. (216-17, 672-8)
> [If what you're maintaining...is that an honest woman can honourably abandon her love for a man, but that a man can't do the same, then it's just an argument made up to suit your own fancies. As if the hearts of men and women were any different! Although their clothes and their faces may be, their dispositions are the same – except in so far as the more concealed wickedness is worse!] (254)

Parlamente, growing angry with her husband, infers that the latter prefers "celles…de qui la malice est descouverte" ["women whose wickedness is *not* concealed"] (217, 680-81; 254, emphasis in original).

At this point, Symontault, Parlamente's *serviteur*, calls for an end to the discussion by declaring that "de l'homme et de la femme, le meilleur des deux n'en vault rien" ["the best of them is good for nothing, be they men or women"] (217, 682-3; 254). Geburon then makes Symontault's biblical allusion explicit by quoting the 115th and thirteenth Psalms before taking

the floor for *Heptaméron* 22.[226] We have reviewed the ways in which Parlamente uses "Rolandine" as a message to the monks and to Hircain; what is she communicating to Symontault? Symontault's exegesis largely coincides with Hircain's; both assert that men and women are similarly sinful, in spite of outward appearances. Yet the reader of the *Heptaméron*'s cornice will note that these two *devisants* are involved in a conflict of interests.

Hircain is married to Parlamente and considers that "infidelity is the greatest injury a woman can inflict on a man."[227] Symontault, as Parlamente's *serviteur*, wishes her to grant him sexual favors, which would make Hircain a cuckold. Although Symontault does not explicitly state this wish, he admits that he favors feminine chastity only in his own wife's case (118, 239-41; 164) and even excuses the clerical rapist-villain of *Heptaméron* 41 (347, 87-90; 379). As a predicant storyteller, Symontault tells the majority of his stories in order to criticize hypocrisy, to suggest that women are just as lustful as men, and to encourage the belief that deceivers should be deceived in turn. His hypocrites include Madame de Saint Aignan in *Heptaméron* 1, the Milanese lady in *Heptaméron* 14, and the incestuous priest-and-sister couple in *Heptaméron* 33. His deceivers deceived include all the aforementioned characters as well as the secretary in *Heptaméron* 28 and the lawyer in *Heptaméron* 52.

Symontault overtly ties his stories to biblical passages. His explanation of *Heptaméron* 33 states that Christians should not be expecting a second virgin pregnancy of the sort that the priest's sister claims to experience, since John 19:30 informs us that, with Christ's passion and death, "*Consummatum est.*"[228] After his story of Bernard du Ha and the wooden ham

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[226] Ibidem. See Salminen 719 for her notes on the Psalm quotations.

[227] B. Davis 27.

[228] On exegesis as a staged event performed by the Count of Angoulême within *Heptaméron* 33, see Langer, "Interpretation and the False Virgin: A Reading of *Heptaméron* 33."

(*Heptaméron* 28), Symontault connects Bernard's outfoxing the tricky secretary to a perverse interpretation of the Golden Rule, which appears in Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31. Rather than seize upon the morally upright, straightforward interpretation of these passages – "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" – Symontault suggests that it is right to deceive those who are in the habit of deceiving others – "Do unto others as they do unto you."

In light of his pursuit of Parlamente and the framing dialogues' numerous suggestions that Hircain is unfaithful to his wife, Symontault's preaching seems designed to provoke Parlamente into taking revenge on her rakish spouse and granting her *serviteur*'s wishes, thus turning Hircain into one more deceiver deceived. At the same time, Symontault competes against his apparent rival for Parlamente's affections, Dagoucin, by suggesting that outwardly saintly men are not what they seem. This trend is particularly evident in the very first *nouvelle*, which involves the Bishop of Séez as one of its villains (Nicolas Dangu, Bishop of Séez, is regarded as the probable closest historical analogue of Dagoucin),[229] and in *Heptaméron* 33, which ends with the burning of the incestuous priest and his sister.

Symontault opens up the floor for discussion of the latter novella by emphasizing that "la foy du bon conte ne fut vaincue par signes ne miracles exterieurs" ["the faith of the good count remained firm against outward signs and miracles"] (304, 86-87; 339), making "The False Virgin" into a story about a victorious character whose chief attribute is a faith solid enough to guard him against precisely the kind of specious evidence that Dagoucin has boldly offered in his opening of *Heptaméron* 9. As Dagoucin says just before his novella about the poor gentleman

[229] See B. Davis 36-37. Symontault's villain in *Heptaméron* 1 would have to be one of Dangu's predecessors, since the story takes place during the ducal reign of Marguerite's first husband Charles, who died in 1525, and Dangu became bishop in 1539; but Symontault's failure to name the clergyman reinforces his possible association with Dagoucin.

who dies of love, "'Affin…que les *signes et miracles*, suivant ma veritable parole, vous y puissant faire adjouster *foy*, je vous allegueray ce qui advent n'y pas encores troys ans'" ["'In order that *signs and miracles* may prove the truth of my words, and bring you to have *faith* in them…I shall recount to you what happened not three years ago'"] (59, 227-9; my translation, emphasis added).

In Symontault's *Heptaméron* 1, the novella itself obliquely suggests that Dagoucin's (Nicolas Dangu's?) saintly exterior is a mere façade like that of the priest in *Heptaméron* 33. The storyteller's comments after the thiry-third *nouvelle* imply that "signs and miracles" are unreliable evidence and that those who offer such evidence - like Dagoucin telling *Heptaméron* 9 - cannot be trusted. Furthermore, Symontault's predilection for tales of deceivers deceived suggests that unfaithful husbands like Hircain fully deserve to be cuckolded. Symontault's reduction of "Rolandine" to a sweeping condemnation of all people, male and female, can thus be understood as part of his overall strategy designed to inculpate Hircain and Dagoucin and convince Parlamente to give in to his desires.

Like Symontault, Hircain approves of men's deception or even rape (143, 229-33; 187) of women who resist them. In this respect, both he and Symontault find themselves in agreement with their older companion, Saffredent; all three of these characters are direct descendants of the narrators of the fifteenth-century Burgundian stories known as the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*. Marguerite rewrites the misogynist francophone novella tradition exemplified by the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*, exposing its hypocritical double standards by allowing male storytellers to speak for themselves. The cuckoldry-obsessed men at the court of Duke Philip the Good exert their intertextual influence through the misogynist, patriarchal, and frequently rapist attitudes of the *Heptaméron*'s three rogue storytellers.

VI. Fictional intertext: **Cent nouvelles nouvelles** *26*

Marguerite's use of the *Decameron*, the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*,[230] and the *fabliau* tradition as sources for her novellas has been widely documented, but critics have never associated *Heptaméron* 21 with any particular ancestor text. Nevertheless, the twenty-sixth story of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* (163-81) contains so many features in common with "Rolandine" that the older text, which I will also call "Katherine/Conrard," does seem to be a source for Parlamente's tale, albeit a non-analogous source. Unlike *Heptaméron* 8, for example, which largely retells *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 9 and alters its source material more in framing than in content, *Heptaméron* 21 thoroughly transforms the events and characters of *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26. For readers unfamiliar with the Burgundian novella, its plot is as follows:

Katherine and Girard live at the "ostel" (163) of a great baron in the Duchy of Brabant. They fall in love and enjoy a close friendship for two years, but Love so blinds them that their confidence in their own secrecy turns out to be mistaken – in fact the whole court talks of nothing but their relationship. At the urging of one of Katherine's companions, Girard takes leave of the lord and lady of the house and enters the service of a new lord in "Barrois" (169, 189). Meanwhile, Katherine's parents want her to marry another man, so she tells them that she has promised God not to "change[r] l'estat" ["change condition"] (170, 242-3) without first going on a pilgrimage to Saint Nicolas of Warengeville. To get there more cheaply and safely, she suggests that she travel with her bastard uncle, dressed as a man, rather than parade about with a full retinue of young ladies.

Once under way, Katherine reveals to her uncle the real purpose of the journey (to check up on Girard) and promises to reward him monetarily for his cooperation. Dressed as Germans,

[230] English translations of this text are my own.

they infiltrate the house where Girard now lives in Barrois, and Katherine – now called "Conrard" (172, 300 – 180, 556) by both narrator and characters alike – is lodged in the same room with her lover because they both come from Brabant. "Conrard" annoys "his" companion with long lamentations about the lady he has supposedly left behind in Brabant, prompting an exasperated Girard to advise his overwrought roommate to follow in his own footsteps. Conrard must realize, Girard counsels, that women are the same everywhere, and get himself a new one. Katherine, having discovered her lover's disloyalty, goes home after leaving Girard a note where she outs herself and tells him off. When Girard arrives at the feast of her wedding to the suitor her family favors, she refuses even to dance with him; the narrator intercedes at the story's end to exhort unfaithful male readers to "se...mirer a cest exemple" ["look into the mirror of this example"] (181, 588).

One obvious similarity between *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 and *Heptaméron* 21 is their length, as each is among the longest three stories of its collection.[231] Also, both stories feature properly named protagonists, whereas numerous *nouvelles* in both books – especially the shortest and most comic ones – use only anonymous characters. Aside from these formal considerations, Rolandine's and Katherine's stories converge in many other respects. Each text suggests (although only "Rolandine" actually demonstrates) that a lover's letters are more indicative than personal interaction of his level of sincerity. Both stories turn on similar questions of a female's threat to family honor: both couples exchange vows and precious objects with no other (human) witnesses present and despite the suitor's unacceptable poverty, although both narratives reassure

[231] *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 is 589 lines long in the Sweetser edition, making it one of only four *nouvelles* in the entire hundred that exceed 300 lines. At 635 lines, "Rolandine" is the third-longest story in the *Heptaméron*, after "Floride and Amadour" (10, 1138 lines) and the "Châtelaine de Vergy" (70, 705 lines). The line lengths mentioned here include only the *nouvelles*, not their framing dialogues.

readers that the protagonists' sexual contact goes no further than kissing. Both couples are found out by the courts where they live, forcing the man to flee to another territory, and in both cases he soon forgets his first lover and begins pursuing a new lady. Both women use their positions of power – access to money, servants, and supplies – to check up on their men, and the desire of an inheritance-challenged bastard for a share of the heroine's wealth acts as a plot motor in both stories. After the departure of both women's original lovers but before the heroines learn of their disloyalty, they are pressured to marry a different man. And at the story's end, each heroine marries the man of her family's choosing.

Just as critics have read *Heptaméron* 21 alongside *Heptaméron* 40,[232] we may read "Rolandine" alongside "Katherine/Conrard." Because *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 is an extended, complex, unpredictable narrative with a didactic thrust, it shares many features with the *Heptaméron*'s longest and most fully developed *nouvelles*. This fact should give pause to any critic claiming that the *Heptaméron*'s short fictions attain some essential complexity that is lacking in the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*.[233] I would advise against viewing the *Heptaméron* as a step between the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*, a medieval collection dominated by the *nouvelle-*

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[232] See review of relevant criticism above, pages 95-6.

[233] For a typical example of this view, see Carr 13-14: "The fifteenth-century *conteur* had little appreciation for the works he examined...[his characters] remained character types without individualization, playing a stylized role in a well-defined series of situations." In this regard, Carr also cites Kasprzyk, Krystyna. *Nicolas de Troyes et le genre narratif en France au XVIe siècle*. Paris: Klincksieck, 1963, pp. 278-294, and Coulet, Henri. *Le Roman jusqu'à la Révolution*. Paris: Colin, 1967, pp. 19-97. For a different view of the evolution of the "*histoire tragique*" (focused on the question of whether Marguerite de Navarre, Matteo Bandello, or Pierre Boaistuau is most properly regarded as the initiator of the *histoire tragique* genre), see Campangne's "Marguerite de Navarre and the Invention of the *Histoire Tragique*."

fabliau, and the *Histoires tragiques* of a Boaistuau or a Belleforest, an early modern collection dominated by longer, explicitly didactic tales with greater psychological depth. Instead, as a key to its complexity and specific modality this chapter will closely examine Marguerite's transformation of *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 by looking once again at the feature of the *Heptaméron* that most obviously sets it apart from prior novella collections: its frame.

The *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* does not have a frame-narrative in the sense of a larger fiction containing other tales told by internal narrators. Their lack of any formal cornice, however, should not fool readers into thinking that these Burgundian stories are totally unframed. The dedicatory letter at the collection's beginning establishes that these novellas have been gathered at the request of Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy, and recorded by one of his servants.[234] The Duke tells numerous stories about men trying to sleep with other men's wives, and he sets the tone for the other storytellers, who also repeatedly narrate tales obsessed with cuckoldry, adultery, and the establishment of relations between two men via the desired body of a woman. The fact that men generally function as the only subjects in these stories, with women playing the role of sex objects, leads David LaGuardia to characterize the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* as a series of variations on the theme of hyperbolic "male homosocial domination."[235] In addition, LaGuardia affirms that late-medieval and early modern French *nouvelles* narrate iconographically, meaning that characters are identified by small groups of key images that define them as belonging to particular types (miller, clerk, merchant, etc.) rather than possessing distinct individual personalities.[236]

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[234] See LaGuardia 51-56.

[235] Ibid. 51-82.

[236] Ibid. 38-50.

The vast majority of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* conform well to LaGuardia's model of "male homosocial domination," but "Katherine/Conrard" does not. Here, we find no cuckoldry, no adultery, and a foolish male character outwitted by a female character who, although she may not attain the distinctiveness of a heroine like Rolandine, is able to assume a number of different guises and styles of speech according to varying circumstances. The chain of iterations of the same transgressive story of one man pursuing another's wife is broken by *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26, and the narrator's final remarks drive the point home. Most of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* finish with the storyteller's assertion that he has heard no more about the characters – "et n'ay point sceu," "n'est encores venu a ma cognoissance" ["and I never found out," "it hasn't yet come to my attention"] (114, 158-9; 153, 94) – or that he is going to stop talking now – "ce suffise quant a la premiere histoire," "du surplus...ceste histoire se taist" ["that suffices for the first story," "about the rest…this story is silent"] (30, 241-242; 86, 46-8) – if indeed any conclusion is offered. "Katherine/Conrard," however, reveals an unusually didactic intent at its end: "Ainsi qu'avez oy perdit le desloyal sa femme. S'il en est encores de telz, *ils se doyvent mirer a cest exemple*, qui est notoire et vray et advenu depuis nagueres." ["Thus as you've heard, the disloyal man lost his woman. If there are still men like him, *they must look at this example like a mirror*; it's noteworthy and true and happened recently."] (181, 586-9, my emphasis)

For scholars concentrating on Marguerite de Navarre's texts, this language might evoke her own *Miroir de l'ame pecheresse*, the spiritual poem that was censored by the Sorbonne in 1533.[237] Hircain also borrows this specular metaphor in his exegetical opening of the discussion following his own *Heptaméron* 35, about a wanton wife's infatuation with her parish priest. As he announces, "Mesdames...quant vous aurez bien regardé en ce *myrouer*, en lieu de vous fyer en

[237] See Cholakian & Cholakian 187. In English, this poem is known as the *Mirror of the Sinful Soul*.

voz propres forces, vous apprandrez à vous retourner à Celluy en la main duquel gist vostre honneur." ["Ladies...when you have looked well into this *mirror*, instead of trusting in your own strength, you will learn to turn back to Him in whose hands your honor lies."] (316, 192-197, my translation and emphasis)

The idea of collections of short prose narratives nested within commentary as "mirrors" offering readers or listeners advice on how to think and act is a very old one, with examples abounding in ancient Chinese, Indian, Arab, and Persian literature as well as European literature of many nationalities. From the Carolingian period onward, Europeans tended to refer to such a collection as a "mirror for princes" or *specula principum*; in Marguerite's own time, prominent examples were produced by Machiavelli, Erasmus, and Castiglione. Hircain's and Parlamente's conversational battles are thus a struggle over the "mirror" of each novella, trying to turn it upon this or that (male or female) group of listeners and arguing over what it displays. Whereas the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* rarely shows a clear interest in this kind of interpretive ethical intent, the *Heptaméron* brings each and every short fiction into just such a focus. The types of court, meanwhile, that produce each collection, are also dissimilar. The *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* presents a courtly scene where only men speak, and in many ways Hircain's diegetical and exegetical efforts (like those of Saffredent and Symontault) recall, via the homosociality of their patriarchal, misogynist, and even rapist attitudes, a medieval past in which they might have felt more comfortable. Parlamente and the other *devisantes*, meanwhile, try to push the beginnings[238] of gender equality that appear in the *Book of the Courtier* much further than the fictionalized Urbino aristocrats did.

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[238] Joan Kelly famously disputes the idea that Castiglione's book and the Renaissance in general represented any real progress for women's rights and status in her essay, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?"

Parlamente, reacting combatively to Hircain's attempt to extend this one woman's deviance into a statement about all women, retorts: "Je suis bien ayse...de quoy vous estes devenu *prescheur* des dames" ["I'm glad to see…that you've started to *preach* for the ladies"] (316, 197-8; 351). Her sarcastic reference to Hircain as a preacher is not haphazard. In fact, her two perfect-lovers-gone-bad, Amadour and the bastard, are both described as preaching deceptively to women. When Amadour first attempts to consummate his relationship with Floride, she asks him, "Et où est l'honneur...que tant de foiz vous m'avez *presché*?" ["And what…has become of the honor you *preached* about so often?"] (89, 724-5; 141, my emphasis) When Rolandine first tries to justify her relationship with the bastard, she describes him very similarly to her governess: "J'ay trouvé ce gentilhomme icy saige et vertueulx comme vous sçavez, lequel ne me *presche* que toutes choses bonnes et vertueuses" ["I have found this gentleman wise and virtuous as you know, who never *preaches* anything but goodness and virtue to me"] (197, 49-52; my translation and emphasis). Parlamente is constantly aware not only of men's deviousness in general but of their tendency to deceive women using predicant speech.

VII. Conclusions

I construe "Rolandine" as emblematic of the ways in which the *Heptaméron* plays upon, contradicts, and challenges the (gendered) expectations of its readers, both in the sixteenth century and today. In "Recreating the Rules of the Game,"[239] Margaret Ferguson points out that the *Heptaméron* has frequently been compared unfavorably to Boccaccio's *Decameron*, even by people hoping to sell Marguerite's books to today's readers. What has sometimes been read as

[239] See M. Ferguson's "Recreating the Rules of the Games: Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron*."

Boccaccio's "consummate narrative skill,"[240] which would thus be lacking in the *Heptaméron*, seems to refer to the *Decameron*'s novellas' more clearly and consistently fulfilling certain functions. It is true that an effective piece of short fiction must typically match its register, idiom, tone, diction, characters, and plot to some degree; certain mixtures in this regard (unaccountable shifts in register, or characters speaking in dialects not of their own time and place, for example) will tend to mark a piece of writing as defective or incomprehensible.

Yet the contract between writer and reader need not always follow a pre-established generic pattern; indeed, for new genres to be born, old generic patterns have to be altered and occasionally broken. By tacking themselves on after mornings dominated by Oysille's Bible lessons, the *devisants*' stories transform Oysille's school into a laboratory for a new type of storytelling. The sort of freedom of expression that, for Marguerite, could only exist in a fictional place like the meadow of Notre Dame de Sarrance, allows for experiments in textual hybridity that, in turn, have implications for the larger social and political climate of early modern Europe. Even though the twists and turns of a story like "Rolandine" may seem unrealistic or implausible, we should keep in mind that our own criteria for determining plausibility in a fictional narrative are largely a constellation of calcified genre conventions. The energy that drives an innovative text like the *Heptaméron* is precisely the need to push the limits of conventional thought, to contribute to a strand of literary history (early modern European framed-novella collections) in such a way as to alter that history's course.

In order to forge a new genre, or family of genres, through which to rethink classic narratives, an author must draw on new material and combine it in new ways. The Queen of

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[240] Ibid. 156; the quote is drawn from Norton, Glyn P (ed. L. Sozzi). "Narrative Function in the *Heptaméron* Frame Story." *La nouvelle française à la Renaissance*. Geneva: Slatkine, 1981, page 447.

Navarre's access to *nouvelles* – literally "news" – in the form of pardon requests and other legal documents of the French national bureaucracy must have been unparalleled, especially during the periods when she was in favor at her brother's court. In any case, the documents of her own sovereign territories, such as Berry and, later, Navarre, would potentially all have been at her fingertips.[241] Like the material that "Rolandine" draws from *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 (or some closely related intertext), the non-fictional sources which influenced Marguerite's novellas came to her as discrete, formatted packets leaving historical traces in the fictional narrative. As *Fiction in the Archives* asks what it means to find hallmarks of fictive narration in supposedly true and accurate accounts of historical events, I think we can usefully explore the signs of non-fictional (martyrological, legal, predicant) discourse in the *Heptaméron*'s fictional stories.

In the broader religious and social context, the monopoly of Catholic France's priesthood upon on predicant activity reflects the sort of masculinist subjectivity to be found in the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*. Rolandine, a Renaissance heroine for whom the established *nouvelle*, *fabliau*, and romance genres could provide no model, transcends the boundaries of pre-existing literary forms and some of the ethical assumptions or guises that accompany them. In crossing those borders, she strays into territory unfamiliar to most of her readers, leading some observers to brand her a madwoman. Supplicant and saint, misfit and martyr, she surpasses Katherine/Conrard because she transforms through self-interpretation, speaking her metamorphosis to the reader rather than relying on a male storyteller to frame her transformation.[242]

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[241] For a historical perspective on the pivotal political position Marguerite de Navarre occupied in Renaissance France, see Stephenson's *The Power and Patronage of Marguerite de Navarre*.

[242] Although constraints of time and funding have prevented me from obtaining copies of the illustrated pages in early modern manuscript and book versions of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* and *Heptaméron*, I think that

One cannot say that *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 does little more than perpetuate the masculinist status quo. This tale, like *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 99, is informed by a more careful and morally upright ethos than that inhabiting the numerous *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* stories whose characters, were they a bit furrier, would seem to have sprung from the scurrilous medieval legends of Renard. Along with a more serious moral stance, these unusually long novellas of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* successfully create prolonged psychological suspense rather than collapsing quickly into punchlines. There remains important critical work to be done identifying several distinct genres of text present among the Burgundian novellas and perhaps accounting for the "Acteur" (who tells the twenty-sixth and ninety-ninth *nouvelles* and is the purported recorder in writing of all the novellas) as a storyteller distinct from the others at the Duke's court.

Still, *Heptaméron* 21's intergeneric transformations allow Rolandine to embody the principle, which the young adult, middle-aged, and elderly *devisants* also personify in their own way, that one individual has to play a series of different roles throughout one human life.

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consideration of these text-and-image combinations should be the next step in the comparative study of the two collections' approaches to iconographic narration. In addition, other segments of the *Heptaméron* could be examined to add an account of the other six storytelling frame-characters as preachers to the remarks made here, thus permitting a more holistic analysis of the Marguerite's diegetical-exegetical framed-novella structure. Lastly, I believe that some significant qualitative work could be done to prove or disprove the usefulness of Marguerite's structure as a tool for reorganizing and satirizing contemporary society. Data from students engaging in a study along the lines described by Olga Duhl, who imagines students being asked to play the roles of *devisants* in a "series of open-ended dramatic modules" making up an extended "writing [and speaking and acting] assignment on the *Heptaméron* as an open-ended modern play" should yield new insights as to how a frame-narrative device can function as an entertaining and incisive critical apparatus. See Duhl's "Dramatic Approaches to Teaching the *Heptameron*."

Katherine is a problematic figure for Philip the Good and his companion storytellers, given the ease with which she outwits first her parents and then her wayward lover; but upon completion of her ratiocinative quest, the heroine of *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 trades her masculine clothes and identity back in for typical feminine ones. The narrator's focus remains on the male lead and the injunction against infidelity that logically follows from his betrayal of his lover and subsequent disgrace. Rolandine's phases allow for a lesson on the primacy of one's relationship to God: love stories go awry, pardon can be denied the seeker, but the martyred saint's life need involve no *serviteurs* or earthly sovereigns. A good Christian death is a simple story of God and the self; *Heptaméron* 21 illustrates that for the woman whom early modern patriarchy has failed, the road to this glorious simplification of religious and social life must be a complex patchwork of other narratives.

CHAPTER 4

"THE MOTHER OF THE RENAISSANCE," "THE SOUL OF PARIS," AND AIMÉ MEIGRET: MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE'S ENGAGEMENT WITH CONTEMPORARY PREACHERS

I. The "Queen of [Religious] Dissent" and her storytelling preachers

This chapter focuses on Marguerite de Navarre's attitude towards and engagement with preaching because the *Heptaméron* itself strongly hints that preaching is a crucial concept for its frame-character storytellers and its author, and because Marguerite's actions in this arena are of general historical interest. She was, in the 1520s and 1530s (one might say the 1540s as well), the top political advocate of non-schismatic Reform preachers in France, as well as being one of the most prolific and versatile French female writers of the *ancien régime*. The *Heptaméron* clearly demonstrates Marguerite's adaptability as an author adding a final, seemingly quixotic, venture into novella-writing *à la* Boccaccio to an œuvre mostly made up of devotional poetry. But critics eager to connect her creative writing to her role as protector of the Circle of Meaux,[243] Calvin,[244] and so many other unorthodox religious figures (especially printers and preachers) have largely kept to analysis of her spirituality and mysticism as evidenced by her religious verses. Her innovations made to the *Decameron* template, her elaboration of Boccaccio's cornice into a much more fully integrated and realistic framed-novella structure, are referenced appreciatively by almost any reader familiar with both the *Heptaméron* and the *Decameron*. What this complication of the framing devices has to do with preaching, however, and with the historical Marguerite de Navarre's involvement with preachers ranging from ultramontane to

[243] See Stephenson 151-65 and Reid, *King's Sister - Queen of Dissent*.

[244] See Reid 84 and Stephenson 175.

schismatic, is a question that no one, to my knowledge, has yet asked, so this is the question that I pose in the present chapter. I propose to answer it by comparing the *Heptaméron*'s frame-narrators' and *nouvelle* characters' preaching to sermons preached during Marguerite's lifetime and likely to have been known to her in one form or another.

The closest thing to this type of comparative reading of the *Heptaméron* and nonfictional religious prose is probably the work that various critics have done on Marguerite's novellas and her correspondence with her spiritual adviser Guillaume Briçonnet; many of their letters from the early 1520s have survived.[245] Passages from the *Heptaméron* are compared to parallel passages in the Marguerite-Briçonnet letters,[246] which permits scholars to analyze the relationship of the *Heptaméron*'s language to that of the Queen and the Bishop of Meaux addressing one another in French, directly comparing their communication to the style and diction developing in her *nouvelles*. (What scholars call the "Circle of Meaux" consisted of some preachers in the town of that name, led by Briçonnet and Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, who set about evangelizing and reforming Catholic parishes in the early 1520s. Marguerite was Briçonnet's ally at court and obvious social superior, but she also sought him out for personal, religious advice, and their letters are full of references to his need for political support and her need for spiritual

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[245] Briçonnet, Guillaume and Marguerite d'Angoulême (eds. C. Martineau & M. Vessière). *Correspondance 1521-1524*. Geneva: Droz, 1975.

[246] See Vance, *Secrets: humanism, mysticism, and evangelism in Erasmus of Rotterdam, Bishop Guillaume Briçonnet, and Marguerite De Navarre*; Briçonnet, *Correspondance, 1521-1524*; Kong, *Lettering the Self in Medieval and Early Modern France*; Ahmed, "Guillaume Briçonnet, Marguerite de Navarre and the Evangelical Critique of Reason;" and Martineau & Grouselle, "La source première et directe du *Dialogue en forme de vision nocturne*: la lettre de Guillaume Briçonnet à Marguerite de Navarre, du 15 septembre 1524. Publication et commentaire."

guidance.[247]) Unorthodox reformers and suspected religious separatists in general, unfortunately, left very little documentation behind. Political activity likely to draw royal or ecclesiastical disapproval was generally conducted via human messengers expected to memorize messages and repeat them only to designated individuals. Such written messages as were created between important non-orthodox actors in religious controversies in early Reformation France were frequently destroyed by the recipients after reading or by Church and royal authorities after confiscation.[248]

Despite Marguerite's interest in and protection of many preachers and her benign stewardship of the unorthodox University of Bourges,[249] she could not, of course, preach – both because she was a woman and thus considered unworthy of preaching to men[250] and as an upper-echelon member of several executive arms of the governments of France, Navarre, Alençon, and Berry, whose duties did not include direct entry into doctrinal or ecclesiological debates.[251] To the dearth of extant textual evidence of her direct engagement with the preachers of her entourage and their controversies, then, we have to add that Marguerite could not address preachers as the latter addressed one another, through sermons. What I find compounded, fused in the crucible of the *Heptaméron*, are the frustrations of being biologically disqualified throughout her life from male-dominated religious discussions and of the decade of orthodox

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[247] See Stephenson, 149-69 and Cholakian & Cholakian, 72-80.

[248] For some discussion of Marguerite's use of oral and secret messengers, see Cholakian & Cholakian 68, 84, 238, 370.

[249] See Reid 241-7.

[250] See Taylor (1992) 176-8, 198-9.

[251] See Stephenson for succinct discussions of Marguerite's extraordinary political titles, responsibilities, and privileges.

religious repression (from the *Affaire des Placards* to the massacres of the Waldensians at Mérindol and Cabrières) that followed Francis I's initial tolerance of the Reform.[252]

In 1545, when Antoine le Maçon completed his French translation of the *Decameron* and she and Francis I had a major falling-out over the Waldensian killings,[253] Marguerite returned to her collection of novellas, with which she had been tinkering for an uncertain amount of time,[254] with a keen and sustained attention. She created for her *nouvelles* a frame structure with men and women engaging simultaneously in several levels of preaching and storytelling, a frame structure that would prove the most innovative aspect of her prose fiction work. Other critics have suggested that Marguerite, like Machiavelli writing *The Prince* in exile, turned to prose fiction as a way to pass the time in far-off Navarre after falling into disfavor with her brother and leaving court, noting that her creative emulation of Boccaccio's *novelle* must have been made easier by the new translation.[255] No scholar that I know of, however, has asked what the connection might be between the Waldensians' unusual if not unique policy permitting females to preach to males[256] and the equally unorthodox hierarchy of preaching and religious authority that obtains in the *Heptaméron*, where the oldest woman, Oysille, preaches to the other frame-characters every morning and most of the women present frequently hold their own in religious arguments with the men.[257]

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[252] See Reid, 23-5, 379-82.

[253] See Cholakian & Cholakian 264, 268.

[254] See Salminen XLI-XLIX.

[255] Cholakian & Cholakian 231, 244.

[256] Taylor (1992) 176.

[257] See, for example, Thysell (1998), Sommers (1984), and Sommers (1983).

The thoroughness with which Marguerite's novellas are connected to discussions about love, honor, and being a good Christian is one of the most distinctive features of her collection compared to its predecessors such as the *Decameron*. As I observe the *devisants* preaching to one another under the guise of recreational storytelling, telling stories about preachers, accusing one another of defective preaching, and figuratively using words related to "*prescher*" and "*sermon*" in describing even the speech of lay novella characters, I wonder how the sermons that Marguerite heard during her lifetime might compare to the preaching being performed at the levels of the frame-story and the *nouvelles*. If there are significant connections between extant sermons that Marguerite is known to have read or attended and the text of the *Heptaméron*, we could determine to some degree how the *Heptaméron* responds to the male predicant voices that ordinarily drowned out Renaissance Frenchwomen.

To my knowledge, none of the preachers with whom Marguerite was clearly involved as patron or protector in the years before the Placards has left any extant French-language sermons. As Larissa Taylor states in *Soldiers of Christ*, all the unorthodox sermons from the period prior to the establishment of the organized Reformed French church in the 1550s have disappeared with the exception of Aimé Meigret's inflammatory text preached to the people of Lyon in 1524.[258] It so happens that Marguerite was in Lyon a few months after Meigret preached his sermon; furthermore, the Duchess of Alençon (her title in those days) is thought to be responsible for allowing Meigret's sermon to be printed.[259] Meigret's reputation as a Reformer would seem to place him near Marguerite intellectually in any case, and we might logically expect his sermon to serve as a model for the sort of predicant discourse used by the

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[258] Taylor (1992) 200-208.

[259] Ibid. 200.

Heptaméron's *devisants*. Although Meigret's vision of the Reform was a more radical one than Marguerite herself favored, this variance only makes his *Sermon* the more useful as a text representing the radical end of the orthodoxy spectrum.

When searching, on the other hand, for conservative, orthodox, Catholic predicant intertexts that might help us understand what Marguerite's characters mean when they accuse one another of devious or deviant preaching, one has a variety of examples from which to choose. To narrow down this choice, I assume it will be easier to demonstrate these intertextual connections via a comparison of French to French. Catholic sermons from the early Reformation in France, like Protestant ones, are usually printed (if at all) in Latin, so focusing on Francophone texts narrows the present chapter's choice of predicant literature considerably. In the *Heptaméron*, Marguerite appears as a political actor above all, as she was in her historical dealings with preachers; in this light, one politically problematic man in particular stands out for both the quantity of his sermons still extant and his pronounced enmity towards Reformers of all stripes and Marguerite de Navarre in particular: François Le Picart (1504 – 1556).

François Le Picart left behind many French-language sermons in print, and he was once jailed for accusing Marguerite de Navarre and her husband Henri of employing heretical preachers.[260] Therefore, selections from Le Picart's massive and scrupulously orthodox sermon collection, which was printed, then reprinted and augmented twice all in the same year, 1566,[261] will serve the present study as the conservative Catholic end of a continuum of contemporary predicant discourse (as opposed to Meigret's *Sermon*, the radical Reform end of that continuum). I hypothesize that elements of Le Picart's preaching should reflect the sort of predicant technique

[260] Taylor (1999) 48-62.

[261] Taylor (1992) 328-29.

that the *devisants* criticize, while Meigret's might appear as a model for the *Heptaméron*'s Evangelical frame-characters. Whether or not this turns out to be the case, my study will contribute to our understanding of the intellectual apparatus that makes the *Heptaméron* possible, chiefly by indicating how Marguerite reuses elements found in both orthodox and unorthodox contemporary preaching in her framed-novellas.

As for methodology, in terms of selection of text to analyze, the Salminen *Heptaméron* is 508 pages long and the *Sermons & Instructions...* are over 700 pages, which means a sustained comparative close reading of the texts' preaching styles in terms of storytelling (diegesis) and interpretive commentary (exegesis) cannot be contained in a single chapter and probably not even in a single dissertation. To focus upon meaningful but manageable cross-sections of these three texts, I turn to Meigret's sermon (which is only 29 pages long) as a device for sorting the primary materials. I offer a comparative reading of Meigret's sermon and those parts of the *Heptaméron* and the *Sermons & Instructions...* that reference the same Bible passages that Meigret uses, meaning the same chapters if not necessarily the exact same verses.

II. Meigret's, Le Picart's, and Marguerite's biblical quotations and allusions

In searching for passages of Scripture that Marguerite, Meigret, and Le Picart all use in their writing, I located seven Bible chapters common to the entire group and revealing of the similarities and differences among the three writers' works: Genesis 1, Isaiah 40, Matthew 12, Luke 12, Romans 1, Hebrews 11, and Galatians 3. Since Meigret's text is the only one of these three to proceed from a systematic beginning to a purposeful ending, I will follow the order of biblical citations and references that he employs, comparing his use of Scripture to Le Picart's and Marguerite's along the way.

ROMANS 1

The first Bible chapter that Meigret uses and that his *Sermon* shares with both the *Sermons & Instructions…* and the *Heptaméron* is Romans 1. On pages 16 and 17, Meigret cites Romans 1:21 and 1:24 as part of an apparently humdrum homily about God's infinite power and goodness. He starts with a rhetorical question, asking his listeners, "Qui a esté (a vostre advis) la cause que, par si long temps, les humains (un seul people judaïque excepté) ont esté en si grandes tenèbres, de sens reprouvez, d'entendement alienez, faisantz (comme dict sainct Paul) oeuvres non convenables, mais contraires a leur nature?" ["What was (in your opinion) the reason why, for so long, humans (except one sole Judaic people) were in such great shadows, their sense reprobate, their understanding alienated, doing (as saint Paul says) works not corresponding, but contrary to their nature ?"] He proceeds to answer his own query: "N'est ce pas pource qu'ils ont dict ["Is it not because they said"]: *Non est Deus*? *Cum Deum* (inquit) *cognovissent, non sicut Deum glorificaverunt, aut gratias egerunt; sed evanuerunt in cogitationibus suis, et obscuratum est insipiens cor eorum… Propter quod tradidit illos Deus in immunditiam et passiones ignominiae*."[262]

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[262] English text: "There is no God;" "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened…Therefore God gave them over to shameful lusts." I do not translate the Latin quotations within my English translations of Meigret's and Le Picart's sermons, because having the entire text read smoothly through in one language, English or any other, does not reproduce the feel of the original diglossic expression. I will hereafter provide endnote translations in English of any Latin quotations used by the authors of this chapter's primary texts. For non-Biblical Latin quotes, I provide my own English translations. All texts of the Bible cited in this dissertation and not included in the primary texts studied are accessed via www.biblegateway.com. If the general sense and numbering of the sixteenth-century Vulgate quotations appearing in my primary texts match up with those of the New International Version (NIV), then it will be used. Where the general sense or numbering of the early modern Vulgate does not match the NIV, I will

Meigret makes a minor mistake in identifying his citation ("*Propter quod tradidit illos Deus in*" is part of Romans 1:24, whereas "*immunditiam et passiones ignominiae*" comes from Romans 1:26), but he does provide a fairly complete French translation of the quoted passages. However, the phrase "*Non est Deus*" ["there is no God"] is not part of Romans 1 at all. Readers soon find out why Meigret has slipped in these extra words. Meigret opines that "a mon jugement, c'est tout un dire *Non est Deus* et ne luy faire l'honneur et obeissance a luy deue. C'est tout un dire au Roy qu'il n'est pas ton prince, et ne vouloir rien faire pour luy. Autant vault dire *Non est Deus*, et transmuer la divine gloire en semblance de bestes, oiseaux, serpens, or, argent, pierre, bois, et semblables. Fol donc et veritablement hors de son sens est celuy qui d'œuvres, parolles ou de cueur dit: *Non est Deus*. » ["in my judgment, it is all the same to say *Non est Deus* and to not give him the honor and obedience that are due to him. It is all the same to say to the King that he is not your prince, and to not want to do anything for him. It is as much to say *Non est Deus* as to transmute divine glory into the semblance of beasts, birds, serpents, gold, silver, stone, wood, and the like. Mad, thus, and veritably out of his senses is he who in his works, his speech, or his heart says: *Non est Deus*."] In equating atheism to both anti-monarchism and idolatry, Meigret attempts to provide himself with some measure of protection against charges of sedition and obliquely criticizes the proliferation and adoration of sacred objects that characterizes the Catholic Church and infuriated the early Protestants.

François Le Picart cites Romans 1 at least six times in his *Sermons & Instructions…*, and these citations will serve the present study as examples of several trends in his preaching. In his

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use the Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition ("DAR"), which appears to have been based on precisely the same Vulgate cited by Meigret, Le Picart, and Marguerite.

first quotation of this chapter of Scripture, on leaf 5, Le Picart ties Romans 1:20 to an established Catholic axiom in a way that effaces the distinction between biblical and non-biblical Latin:

> N'avez vous pas ouy dire une reigle, que: *Facienti quod in se est Deus non denegat suam gratiam*.[263] Qui est ceste grace? c'est cognoistre nostre sauveur Jesus Christ estre nostre mediateur, propiciateur, sanctificateur & redempteur, c'est par lequel, & par son merite, on a remission de ses pechez, grace, & la vie eternelle, & Dieu ne denie point ceste grace à ceux qui font ce qui est en eux. Mais qu'est-ce à dire? Vous avez memoire, volonté & entendement, vous pouvez entendre par le discours de nature qui est le souverain bien qui gouverne tout, *Invisibilia Dei per ea que facta sunt a creatura mundi intellecta conspiciuntur*.[264] Par le discours de nature, comme par les creatures, la terre, le soleil, la Lune, &c. Donc vous pouvez cognoistre qu'il y a souverain qui gouverne toutes choses. Et le Prophete David dit: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui Domine,*[265] *&c.* Si vous entendez qu'il y a un souverain, vous entendez qu'iceluy doit estre craint, aimé & reveré sur tout: & quand vous ferez cela: vous ferez ce qui est en vous…Quand vous fuyez le mal et faictes le bien, vous faictes ce qui est en vous.

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[263] "[With man] doing what is in him, God does not deny His grace" (my translation).

[264] "God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made." (Romans 1:20, NIV)

[265] "The light of thy countenance O Lord, is signed upon us." (Psalm 4:7, DAR.)

> [Have you not heard a rule, that: *Facienti quod in se est Deus non denegat suam gratiam*. What is this grace? it's knowing Jesus Christ to be our mediator, propitiator, sanctifier & redeemer, it is by which, & by his merit, [that] one has remission of one's sins, grace, & eternal life, & God does not deny this grace to those who do what is in them. But what does this mean? You have memory, will & understanding, you can understand by the discourse of nature what is the sovereign good that governs all, *Invisibilia Dei per ea que facta sunt a creatura mundi intellecta conspiciuntur*. By the discourse of nature, as by creatures, the earth, the sun, the Moon, etc. Thus you can know that there is a sovereign who governs all things. And the Prophet David said: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui Domine, etc.* If you understand that there is a sovereign, you understand that he must be feared, loved, and revered above all: & when you do that: you will do what is in you…When you flee evil and do good, you do what is in you.]

Both Le Picart and Meigret assert that recognition of the sovereign as sovereign and submission to the sovereign's will are one and the same. But unless his audience already knows that "*Facienti quod in se est Deus non denegat suam gratiam*" is a stock phrase, a conventional formula that appears in the writings of medieval theologians such as Radulphus Ardens and

Thomas Aquinas[266] and not in the Bible, listeners could easily come to the incorrect conclusion that either "*Facienti quod in se est…*" is biblical or "*Invisibilia Dei…*" is non-biblical. In addition, Le Picart strongly suggests here that one has only to follow one's common sense, doing one's best to be a moral person, in order to receive grace from God. This implication runs directly counter to the views of Marguerite de Navarre, Aimé Meigret, and even Le Picart himself as expressed elsewhere in his *Sermons & Instructions…*

For example, on leaf 92, citing Romans 1:28, Le Picart claims that "nous ne sçavons pas si nous sommes predestinez, ou du nombre des damnez: si est-ce pourtant, que l'escripture veult qu'un chacun espere qu'il sera sauvé: & qu'il est predestinez, & la cause pourquoy je ne le sçay pas…[mais] ne se sentir point coulpable en sa conscience, ce n'est pas cause de dire, que je suis justifié ny juste: car je puis pecher par ignorance. Autrement la lumiere naturelle, la synderese sera tant esteinte en l'homme, qu'il ne cognoistra point son peché. Il pensera du mal estre du bien, & contera qu'il ne se trouve point coulpable: il ne faict conscience de rien. Parquoy S. Paul dit: *Tradidit illos Deus in reprobum sensum*.[267] C'est-à-dire, que Dieu les a permis de tomber en sens reprouvé, de sorte qu'ils ne se sentent point coulpables. Ils ne sont pas pourtant justifiez." ["we do not know if we are predestined, or of the number of the damned: so is it still, that Scripture wants everyone to hope that he will be saved: & that he is predestined, & the reason why, I don't know…[but] not feeling guilty in one's conscience, that's not a reason to say, that I am justified or just: for I may sin by ignorance. Otherwise natural light, synderesis will be so extinguished in man, that he will not know his sin. He will think evil is good, & will say that he

[266] See McGrath 83 – 90 for a summary history of this axiom as it appears in the *Homilies* of Radulphus, the *Commentary on the Sentences* and *Summa Theologiae* of Aquinas, and many other earlier and later texts, from the early patristic period to the Reformation.

[267] "God gave them over to a depraved mind." (Romans 1:28, NIV)

does not find himself guilty: he has no scruples about anything. [Which is] why S. Paul says: *Tradidit illos Deus in reprobum sensum.* That is to say, that God has permitted them to fall into reprobate sense, such that they don't feel guilty. Yet they are not justified."] While in his earlier sermon Le Picart has asserted that Christians need only do their best in order to acquire divine grace, now he claims that we cannot know for sure whether we err in God's sight or not. His audience might well wonder how they are to gain assurance about their own moral rectitude or lack thereof; as we will see, Le Picart has an answer for this conundrum as well.

On leaf 126, Le Picart imagines an iniquitous man bribing judges in order to win a trial, using this anecdote to illustrate the meaning of Romans 1:28: "Voyla un meschant homme, il a un procès, il sçait bien qu'il a mauvaise cause: mais il a si bien faict & pallié les juges, qu'il gaigne son procès, il pense que Dieu luy ayde, & dit: O que Dieu m'a faict grande grace. Tu penses que Dieu estoit pour toy, en gaignant ton proces: mais il estoit contre toy, c'est une grande punition, car Dieu a permis par son occult jugement, que tu ayes gaigné: & si tu eusses perdu, tu eusses restitué tout à la partie: à tout le moins la plus grand part, tu eusses eschappé le jugement de Dieu en restituant. Les juges sont participans du mal: car ils l'ont adjugé…Souvent quand nous pensons que Dieu est nostre auxiliateur, & que nous prenons le bien, venant comme de sa grace & misericorde, ce nous est un grand jugement de Dieu contre nous. Et c'est une punition dont parle sainct Paul: *Tradidit illos Deus in reprobum sensum*." ["See there a mean man, he has a trial, he knows well that he has a bad cause: but he has so well done and palliated the judges, that he wins his trial, he thinks that God is helping him, & says: O God has done me a great grace. You think that God was for you, in winning your trial: but he was against you, it's a great punishment, for God has permitted by his occult judgment, that you have won: & if you had lost, you would have restituted everything to the [other] party: at the very least the greater

part, you would have escaped God's judgment by restituting. The judges are participants in the evil: for they have adjudicated…Often when we think that God is our assistant, and we take the good, as coming from his grace & mercy, it is for us a great judgment of God against us. And it's a punishment of which Saint Paul speaks: *Tradidit illos Deus in reprobum sensum.*"] Romans 1 is about people who attribute accomplishments and knowledge to themselves when they ought to be attributing their achievements to God, which is precisely the opposite of what Le Picart is describing. Perhaps Le Picart's desire to indirectly inculpate the French legal system of his day is what leads him to this illogical use of Paul's epistle, cited out of context with no vernacular translation. Although the last verse of Romans 1 does assert that the people Paul is criticizing have a reversed sense of justice, these unrepentant sinners behave as they do not because they believe that God is with them, but because they do not care that He is against them. "Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them."

Literary texts of the *ancien régime* like Molière's *Le Misanthrope* assert the corruption of a French legal system whose judges are notorious for taking bribes. On the other hand, Le Picart might have wanted greater legal persecution of heretics and Reformers than French judges were willing to mete out. It would be interesting to know how frequently people known to be heretics or Reformers were actually subjected to serious punishment by the law courts in France in the years just before the Wars of Religion. If such punishment was infrequent, as Le Picart in fact suggests at other points in his sermons, such sporadic enforcement of orthodoxy - as well as Le Picart's own time in exile from Paris, of course - might explain his contempt for magistrates.

In his fourth citation of Romans 1, on leaf 299, Le Picart describes Paul in terms that recall Le Picart's own single-minded work ethic but also insists that even corrupt Church

officials must be obeyed: "Les tiltres d'honneur & de gloire que monsieur sainct Paul prend" ["The titles of honor & glory that Mr. saint Paul takes"], the preacher says,

> "c'est qu'il se dit estre serviteur de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Il dit: *Paulus servus Iesu Christi*.[268] Monsieur S. Paul estoit Apostre, prophete, Pasteur, docteur, & Evangeliste, mais il ne repute point à grand honneur ces tiltres là s'ils ne sont fondez au service de Jesus Christ. Il est possible d'estre Apostre, Evesque, & n'estre pas serviteur de Jesus Christ, comme Judas, car il estoit larron, & affecté à l'argent, il estoit Evesque: car l'escripture dit. *Episcopatum eius accipiat alter*...[269] ce n'est pas grand chose d'estre Evesque, & semblable, qui n'est fondé au service de Dieu. Neantmoins ce pendant que l'homme est en telle condition, il luy fault obeïr comme dit nostre Seigneur. *Super cathedram Moysi sederunt Scribae & Pharisaei: quae dicunt facite,*[270] *&c*…Estre prestre, Evesque, & semblables, ce sont graces qui peuvent compatir avec soy l'inimité de Dieu. *Sunt gratia gratis datae*,[271] pour lesquelles l'homme n'est pas toujours aggreable à Dieu. [it's that he says he's the servant of our Lord Jesus Christ. He says: *Paulus servus Iesu Christi*. Mr. St. Paul was an Apostle,

[268] "Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus." (Romans 1:1, NIV)

[269] "His bishopric let another take." (Psalm 108:8, DAR)

[270] "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you." (Matthew 23:2-3, NIV)

[271] "They are graces freely given." (my translation)

> prophet, Pastor, doctor, & Evangelist, but he does not accord those titles much honor if they aren't founded on the service of Jesus Christ. It is possible to be an Apostle, Bishop, & not be a servant of Jesus Christ, like Judas, for he was a thief, & affected toward money, he was a Bishop: for the scripture says. *Episcopatum eius accipiat alter*…it's not much to be a Bishop, & suchlike, who is not founded on the service of God. Nonetheless while a man is in such a position, one must obey him as our Lord says. *Super cathedram Moysi sederunt Scribae & Pharisaei: quae dicunt facite, etc*…To be a priest, Bishop, & suchlike, these are graces that can bring with them the enmity of God. *Sunt gratia gratis datae*, for which [alone] man is not always agreeable to God."]

The words from Romans 1:1 at the beginning of this quotation indicate one of the primary reasons Le Picart was so popular. Like Paul, Le Picart is unconcerned with grand titles (he turned down opportunities for promotion to remain the in-house preacher at St.-Germain l'Auxerrois), preferring to style himself simply as a servant of Christ. French people, including the vast majority of Le Picart's listeners, were quite poor in the 1500s. Le Picart is part of the high Parisian aristocracy, honor-bound to help that social group extend its power and influence, but his insistances that people must obey their lords even when those lords fail to do their duty are surrounded by so much criticism of the ungenerous rich and their callous attitude toward the poor that the reader or listener easily forgets where Le Picart's interests really lie. Even if Le Picart's famously impoverished lifestyle was not primarily carried out or performed in order to

allay any possible distaste for or distrust of his class alliances among his poorer listeners, his rhetorical efficacy is tied to his pose as a man of the people.

Paralleling this obfuscation of his sociopolitical position, Le Picart obscures several important aspects of the text he cites. First, his assertion that Judas was an actual bishop of the Church even after his betrayal of Jesus is backed up by a quote from Psalm 108:8 (not identified as such to his audience, of course) taken totally out of context. Reading this verse, "Episcopatum eius accipiat alter," along with the two following it, one finds, "May his days be few: and his bishopric let another take. / May his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. / Let his children be carried about vagabonds, and beg; and let them be cast out of their dwellings." (DRA) Although "may his days be few" might be taken as an instruction to simply wait for such an unjust bishop to die, the rest of this psalm strongly suggests that it would be better to act now and remove such a man from his office, disinheriting his whole family in the process.

Furthermore, the later quotation from Matthew 23:2-3, "Super cathedram Moysi sederunt Scribae & Pharisaei: quae dicunt facite" ["The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. / So you must be careful to do everything they tell you"], (NIV) is not translated or paraphrased. Unless Le Picart's Francophone audience pays very close attention to these verses rather than ignoring them because they are in a language they do not know, they could easily miss their meaning, greatly diminishing the association of immoral clergy with the reviled Pharisees (we will see that the *Heptaméron* pursues precisely the opposite strategy). Lastly, the words "Sunt gratia gratis datae" are not biblical; like "facere quod in se est," this is a Catholic concept appearing in the writings of Augustin, Thomas Aquinas, etc. It is, of course, possible that Le Picart's contemporaries knew which of his Latin phrases were from Holy Scripture and

which were not, but the marginal notes added by the editor or printer of Le Picart's sermons argue against this conclusion; "*Matt. 23*" is marked just to the left of the later non-biblical quote, not to the left of the actual citation of Matthew 23.

Having used Psalm 108 to encourage Catholics to submit to the authority of immoral clergymen, Le Picart draws on Romans 1:14 to reinforce the powers of the Roman Church still further on leaves 314 and 315. Speaking of the gifts that God gives humans and the obligations those gifts imply, Le Picart tells his audience,

> "Il n'est pas necessaire à mon salut de parler les langages. Je seray bien sauvé sans cela…mais Dieu regarde au salut de tout le monde. Il a envoyé ses Apostres pour prescher son Evangile à tous…Et pour ce faire il fault sçavoir les langues, car il y a diverses nations…Et afin que nostre Seigneur fut cogneu de tous les hommes, il a envoyé sainct Paul, & luy a donné le don de langues…A raison dequoy S. Paul dit, *Omnibus debitor sum Gracis & Barbaris*[272]…C'est un don de Dieu que de sçavoir parler les langues, mais…Plusieurs sont tombez en heresie & en toute meschanceté pour avoir abusé du don & grace de Dieu. Il leur a donné ce don pour l'edification de l'Eglise, & ils l'en destruisent, ils corrigent la Bible & prennent une translation nouvelle…il vaudroit mieux n'avoir point veu son alphabet." ["It is not necessary, for my salvation, to speak languages. I will be saved without that…but God looks to the salvation of all the world. He

[272] "I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks." (Romans 1:14, NIV)

> sent his Apostles to preach his Gospel to all…And to do this one must know languages, for there are diverse nations…And so that our Lord would be known to all men, He sent saint Paul, and gave him the gift of languages…Because of which St. Paul says, *Omnibus debitor sum Gracis & Barbaris*…It's a gift from God, knowing how to speak languages, but…Many have fallen into heresy and all meanness because they have abused this gift and grace of God. He gave them this gift for the edification of the Church, and they use it to destroy the Church, they correct the Bible and take a new translation…it would be better never to have seen one's alphabet."]

Here, as elsewhere, Le Picart's ideas are far removed from those of Paul, who speaks in Romans 1:14 merely of his desire to prosyletize among a variety of peoples.

The hostility towards "heresy" (which includes any attempt to correct the mistakes in the Vulgate Bible) is given fuller vent in the sermon where Le Picart last references Romans 1, on leaf 347. Returning to the twenty-eighth verse of that chapter, he contrasts the "Philosophes Gentils" ["Gentile Philosophers"] whom God allowed to fall into "*reprobum sensum*" with Saint Barbara, who understood "par le discours de nature" ["by the discourse of nature"] that she should not worship idols. "Tellement que selon le cours de nature on ne peult empescher l'homme qu'il ne cognoisse qu'il y a un Dieu: lequel sur tout fault adorer, reverer & aimer." ["Such that according to the course of nature one cannot prevent a man from knowing that there is a God: whom above all one must adore, revere & love."] Yet Le Picart is not primarily interested in contrasting good Catholics with ancient pagans, and he shifts gears to emphasize the

conflict between Protestant iconoclasm and conciliar tradition. "Escoutez, Le lutherien appele les ymages ydoles" ["Listen, The Lutheran calls images idols"], he declares, but this equation cannot be correct, since it contradicts the "deuxiesme concile [d]e Nice" ["second council of Nice"] where it was decided that images representing sacred things like Christ are themselves sacred. The council's judgment cannot be assailed, since "l'advis & sentence du concile est celle de Dieu & du S. Esprit" ["the advice and sentence of the council is that of God & of the Holy Spirit"].

He goes on to say that Paul wants us to have a living faith, asking his audience, "Pensez vous aujourd'huy que nous ayons ceste foy vive? On oït les censures Ecclesiastiques qu'on ait à accuser les heretiques: & on n'oyt mot dire. Endureras-tu mal parler des ceremonies de l'eglise sans le reveler? On se mocquera du purgatoire, nous appeleront idolatres. He Chrestiens, nous sommes trop actifs & prompts à venger l'injure qui nous est faicte. Si on me veult oster mon argent, qui n'est que chose temporelle, je me deffendray jusques à la mort. Et je seray en une table ou on parlera mal de Jesus Christ, & du S. Sacrement de l'autel. Je ne me dois taire." ["Do you think today that we have that living faith? One hears the Ecclesiastical censures that one has to accuse the heretics: & one hears not a word said. Will you suffer evil to be spoken of the ceremonies of the church without revealing it? They will mock purgatory, call us idolators. Ah Christians, we are too active & prompt to avenge the injury that is done us. If one wants to take my money, which is but a temporal thing, I will defend myself to the death. And I will be at a table where they speak ill of Jesus Christ, & of the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I must not be silent."] Rather than seek to revenge the temporal wrongs done them by their neighbors (in all likelihood fellow Catholics), Le Picart implies that his listeners should focus their anger on heretics who must be denounced.

To summarize, then, Le Picart manages to draw out the following ideas from Romans 1. First, people can know God by observing the world, without reading or understanding Scripture. Second, and in direct contradiction of the first point, people cannot know on their own whether God is pleased with them. Third, one cannot assume that human judges act justly, for they are apparently prone to undue influence in the form of bribes and thus may or may not act in accordance with God's will. Fourth, it is best to seek simply to serve Christ, although Church officials who do not do so still retain their authority. Fifth, knowledge of languages is good and desirable if people use this knowledge to spread the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church but damnable if such knowledge is used to improve biblical translations. Finally, the infidel Gentiles against whom Paul writes in his epistles are analogous to contemporary religious dissenters, whom orthodox Catholics should denounce.

Meigret, for his part, takes Romans 1 to mean that Christians should recognize God as God in the same way that they recognize the King as King. He draws an analogy, not between the irreligious ancient philosophers and present-day heretics, but between those philosophers and idolators. Idolatry, as Le Picart points out, is one of the main sins of which Protestants (or at any rate "Lutherans") believe Catholics to be guilty as a group. Protestants and non-schismatic Reformers alike were concerned that Christians' reverence and faith were being misdirected, invested in material objects, saints' cults, and the power of human ritual rather than in God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The greatest hope for Reformers in France during the period when Meigret delivered his *Sermon* was to alter French Christianity as English Christianity would eventually be altered, with its own national church headed by Francis I. French Reformers hoped the King's humanist tendencies would accord with the Reformers' desire to put modern biblical scholarship to work in the instruction of the faithful, and that his ambition to aggrandize

the power of the French crown would lead him to accept a position as head of his own national church. Francis, of course, had to reckon with French public opinion and weigh the benefits of going his own way à la Henry VIII versus continuing to negotiate with Rome as French Catholics traditionally had, via the peculiar privileges of the Gallican Church. Although it predates Henry's establishment of the Anglican Church by ten years, Meigret's *Sermon* already suggests that Reformers see a formula for social and spiritual healing in the combination of increased power accorded to the monarchical state and a facing-down of Roman authorities made possible by royal protection.

Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* uses Romans 1 in a way that is different from the methods of both Le Picart and Meigret. The reference shows up in Oysille's comments following Novella 34, a short comic story told by Nomerfide. In this story, a pair of Franciscans stay the night at a butcher's house and overhear him talking about slaughtering a couple of "cordeliers" ("Franciscans"). He, of course, means his pigs, though the fact that a butcher would call his pigs "cordeliers" tells us enough about the general populace's attitude towards Franciscan friars. Having misinterpreted their host's comments, the actual Franciscans try to escape his house by jumping out of a window, whereupon the younger friar scampers off to freedom and the older one breaks his leg. The crippled Cordelier takes shelter – where else? – in the enclosure that normally contains the pigs, which sets up his terrified plea for mercy when the butcher arrives in the morning and announces, "'Saillez dehors, maistre cordelier, saillez dehors, car aujourd'huy j'auray voz boudins!'" ["'Come on out, my plump little friar, come on out! I'm going to make sausage-meat of you today!'"] (307, 47-9; 342) still talking to and about his swine, of course.

During the discussion afterwards, Oysille connects the Franciscans' foolishness, which has become the butt of the story's joke precisely because of their mistaken belief that they are in possession of inside information, to a theme on which she has preached that morning in an exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. As she reminds the *devisants*, "ceulx qui ont cuydé estre plus saiges que les autres hommes, et qui, par une lumiere de raison, sont venuz jusques à congnoistre ung Dieu createur de toutes choses, toutesfoiz, pour se attributer ceste gloire et non à Celluy dont elle venoit, estimans par leur labeur avoir gaigné ce savoir, ont esté faictz non seullement plus ignorans et deraisonnables que les autres hommes, mais que les bestes bruttes. Car, ayant erré en leur escript, s'attribuans ce que à Dieu seul appartient, ont monstré leur erreur par le desordre de leurs corps, oublians et pervertissans l'ordre de leur sexe, comme sainct Pol aujourd'huy le nous a monstré en l'epistre qu'il escripvyt aux Ronmains.'" ["'Have I not read to you this morning...of how those who think themselves wiser than other people and who by the light of reason have come to know God, who created all things, only to attribute that glory to themselves and not to Him from whom it comes, how such people, believing that it is their own effort that has brought them such knowledge, have become not only more ignorant and unreasonable than other men but more ignorant and unreasonable even than the beasts? For, allowing their minds to go astray, attributing to themselves that which belongs to God alone, they have shown their errors by the disorder of their bodies, forgetting and perverting their sex, as Saint Paul has written in his epistle to the Romans.'"] (309, 114-26; 344)

Readers may recognize that Oysille is paraphrasing Romans 1:21-24[273] here. What exactly is the connection between these verses and Nomerfide's story about Franciscans and

[273] "[21] For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. [22] Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools [23] and

pigs, a story which already invites comparison between clergymen accustomed to claiming superior knowledge of Scripture and the dirtiest animals in the barnyard? The reader can fathom the overall meaning(s) by reading the novellas and discussions 34 through 38 very carefully, but the *Heptaméron* will not spell it out in plain language that could draw unwanted legal attention.[274] One should also note that the application of Romans 1:21-24 to the foolish friars is attenuated by the presence of a 25-line discussion about Plato and Diogenes between Nomerfide's initial explanatory remarks and Oysille's interpretation. The *devisants* are not generally very keen on ancient philosophy, and one might infer that this atypical digression exists specifically in order to give the impression that the analogy hinted at by *Heptaméron* 34 and the discussion afterward is the same one already present in Paul's epistle (those who do not give proper glory to God are like the pagan Greeks) rather than the one suggested by Meigret (those who do not give proper glory to God are like idolators or medieval Catholics).

GENESIS 1

In the *Sermon d'Aimé Meigret*, Meigret's lesson on Genesis 1 occurs shortly after the one on Romans 1, and there is little of interest to report on this quotation. Meigret provides a full translation of Genesis 1:31 – "*Vidit Deus cuncta quae fecerat, et erant valde bona*. Veit nostre Seigneur toutes les choses par luy faictes, lesquelles estoyent tresbonnes" ["Our Lord saw all the things made by him, which were very good"] – and derives from this verse only the apparently innocuous inference that God cannot be the cause of evil. As Meigret puts it, "si Dieu est cause de mal, il n'est pas bon; s'il n'est pas bon, il n'est pas Dieu" ["if God is the cause of evil, He is

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exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. [24] Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another." (Romans 1:21-24, NIV)

[274] See Chapter 2's analysis of *Heptaméron* 35 through 38.

not good; if He is not good, He is not God"]. Meigret uses Genesis 1 the same way that he uses Romans 1, to establish common ground with his listeners and to set them up for his later radical conclusions. This sort of procedure would make him able to argue that his conclusions follow from beliefs that he and his listeners share.

Le Picart's first use of Genesis 1 occurs on leaf 15, where he asserts that the plural grammatical forms in the phrase "*Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram*" ["Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness"] demonstrate that the Trinity was present even at the moment of Creation. This is a wholly conventional Christian interpretation of Genesis 1:26, recurring at least to Philo and Origen if not to the Kabbalah. He also points out that these words vary from those used at the moments when God created the Earth, the oceans, the animals, and so on, citing this variance as proof that man is God's most important creation. This is only important insofar as Le Picart makes claims about the hidden meanings of God's words in a way that Meigret and Marguerite would not. "Il y mist la main, comme s'il eust voulu dire, voicy mon principal ouvrage, auquel ie me veulx arrester," ["He put his hand to it, as if He wanted to say, here is my principal work, where I wish to stop"], Le Picart explains. This "comme s'il eust voulu dire" ["as if He wanted to say"] move is a liberty that the other two authors studied in the present chapter will not openly take with the Bible.

Such freewheeling exegesis is directly related to Le Picart's conservatism. Reformers were trying to stamp out extrabiblical practices and return to what they saw as the purity of the primitive Christian Church. The battle among different Reformation sects was largely over how strictly to insist that Christians believe precisely what was written in the oldest and best available manuscripts of the Bible. The distinctions among groups that still strongly resemble the Catholic Church (the Episcopalians or Lutherans for example) and ones that do not (such as Presbyterians

or Anabaptists) tend to hinge on how much of the non-Scripturally-based doctrine of the Catholic Church the new groups decided to reject, with each group having to decide "yea" or "nay" on each of the seven sacraments, the cults of the saints, the veneration of the Virgin Mary, confession, purgatory, and so forth. Reformers and humanists disliked extrapolatory and convoluted interpretations of the Bible and preferred the literal sense of the text, and although that hardly prevented them from adding remarks about what God meant to say, as authors/speakers dealing with literate audiences they did not have the freedom to carve up scripture and recombine it as indiscriminately and flagrantly as Le Picart.

On leaf 74, Le Picart cites Genesis 1:31, the same verse that Meigret uses. Le Picart uses this quote to set up the fact that man's offense must be very great to have aroused God's wrath, since God originally thought all his creations were good, spinning the Bible passage into a little impromptu story of a type he loves to use. "Quand il advient qu'un pere a desdaing envers ses enfans" ["When it comes about that a father has disdain for his children"], Le Picart says, "c'est signe que l'offense est grande…on en viendra parler au pere, il dira, ah! Ne me parlez point de ces mauvais garsons là, ie me repens d'avoir de tels enfans" [it's a sign that the offense is great…they'll come to talk about them to the father, he will say, ah! Do not speak to me about those hooligans, I repent having had such children"]. The grafting of these anonymous explanatory narratives onto the biblical text suggests that everyday life is clearer and easier to understand than Scripture, whereas the *Heptaméron* (and Meigret, following Luther) would have it the other way around.

On leaf 110, Le Picart's text makes a faulty or phony use of Genesis 1 as proof that the Catholic Church's continued existence must be the result of God's will. "S'il n'y avoit que la semence & l'industrie du laboureur, jamais la terre ne produiroit" ["If there were only the seed

and industry of the laborer, never would the earth produce"], he reminds his parishioners. "Elle produit en vertu du verbe de la parole de Dieu, qui dit: *Producat terra herbam virentem*. Et depuis le peché de l'homme il dit, *in sudore vultus tui, vesceris pane tuo*. C'est-à-dire qu'il nous fault labourer en la vertu de la parole de nostre Seigneur, & la terre produira. Aussi," ["It produces by virtue of the word of God, who said: *Producat terra herbam virentem*. And since the sin of man he has said, *in sudore vultus tui, vesceris pane tuo*. That is to say that we must labor in virtue of the word of our Lord, & the earth will produce. Also"], the preacher asserts, deftly leaping out of context, "qui est-ce qui garde l'Eglise de tomber? Ce ne sont pas les hommes: car sans la garde de Dieu & assistance, il y a long temps qu'elle fust abbatue. Et souvent les chefs offensent plus que les autres inferieurs. Et neantmoins…l'Eglise n'est point perie ny abbatue, & à Rome, tant de maux se sont faits. Il fault donc dire, que l'Eglise est soustenue par la parole & vertu de nostre Seigneur." ["What keeps the Church from falling? It is not men: for without God's keeping & assistance, long ago it would have been laid low. And often the leaders offend more than the inferior others. And nevertheless…the Church has not perished or been laid low, & in Rome, so many evils have been done. One must thus say, that the Church is sustained by the word and virtue of our Lord."] The editors of his sermons underscore this point by stating in the margin, "L'eglise est soustenue par la parole de nostre Seigneur" ["the Church is sustained by the word of our Lord"].

This comment might seem to associate Le Picart with the Scripturalism of the Reform movement, but his concept of God's "parole" is not that of the Reformers. Le Picart's sermon has "*Gene. I*" marked in the margin next to the phrase "*Producat terra herbam virentem*," but that phrase is from Augustine's commentaries on Genesis. The other scriptural quotation close enough to the marginal "*Gene. I*" that it could be plausibly associated with it is "*in sudore vultus*

tui, vesceris pane tuo" which is indeed biblical but is from Genesis 3:19.[275] Even if we take the inaccurate marginal notations as likely having been written by editors after Le Picart's death, their sloppiness is symptomatic of a sermon literature written for literate men dealing with illiterate congregations. The presentation of Augustine's words clearly leads the audience to believe that this Latin is from Scripture like most of the other Latin phrases Le Picart employs.

Indeed, this is my primary objection to Larissa Taylor's biographical portrait of Le Picart, which claims that he was a humanist like those he persecuted. Le Picart's statements could actually be those of a Reformer, although he doesn't mean these words the way a Reformer would. Le Picart states that the Church has endured, and the fact of its continued survival means that we must say that it is sustained by the word of God; I think he means that his listeners should logically conclude that God's word must be sustaining the Church, or else it would have fallen. Protestants and Reformers living fearfully under the Roman yoke, however, would say that because the Church's authority is so great, everyone is forced to repeat the notion that God's word is the foundation of the Catholic Church, even though this is not true. It is in this light that the Church appears most clearly as a continuation of the Roman Empire, founded on the principal that might makes right more so than on anything one can read in the Bible.

In his last use of Genesis 1, on leaf 182, Le Picart returns to verse 1:26, this time in order to contrast God's creation of the world (which required only that He speak) with the more painful and thus more significant gift of the life and death of Christ. God, Le Picart reminds his congregation, had to endure pain through Jesus in order to give us his Son and redemption through the resurrection, such that that second gift is more precious than the first, more precious than our creation in fact. It is interesting that the preacher assumes the absence of any pain on

[275] "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food." (Genesis 3:19, NIV)

God's part during the initial process of creating the world simply because Scripture does not mention it – this is the typical Protestant way of reading the Bible, refusing to interpolate anything that the text does not explicitly state. In this case, one cannot necessarily accuse Le Picart of willful deception - the conventional Catholic approach to interpolation concerns matters of doctrine and practice that Scripture does not explicitly mention, such as sacraments not mentioned in the Bible. But the Church's indifference to matters of circumstantial detail does allow Le Picart to draw specific conclusions based on the absence of such details from certain verses while reversing this logic when interpolation suits his purposes.

The *Heptaméron*'s use of Genesis 1 also involves a man attempting to add his own gloss onto the text of the Bible, but his literate audience proves rather less pliable than Le Picart's probably was. Marguerite's novellas begin after the end of the *Heptaméron*'s prologue, when Symontault announces that he will use his turns at storytelling to "'faire ung recueil de tous les mauvais tours que les femmes ont faictz aux pouvres hommes'" ["'collect together all the accounts of foul deeds perpetrated by women on us poor men'"], thereby avenging himself "'d'amour et de celle qui m'est si cruelle'" ["'on Love and on the woman who is so cruel to me'"]. (13, 398-401; 70) He is referring to Parlamente, whose coughing has prevented her husband Hircain from noticing the color that rises to her cheeks in response to Symontault's veiled reference to his desire to "command" her. As *Heptaméron* 1 begins, readers thus expect to find an exemplary tale of feminine villainy.

As it turns out, Symontault's story features several villains, including the "procureur nommé Sainct Aignan," the sexually immoral Bishop of Séez, Saint Aignan's wife – who is the lover of both the Bishop and a certain "du Mesnil," and the professional killer Thomas Guerin, whom the Saint Aignans hire to murder du Mesnil. As only one of these evildoers is female, the

story does not seem to live up to its billing. Nevertheless, Symontault insists on providing an interpretation of his novella focusing solely on the misdeeds of women, just as Lauretta does in her framing of *Decameron* IV.3.[276] The *Heptaméron* will not give such misogynists a free pass, however, and it is the object of Symontault's affections herself who shreds his exegesis to pieces.

"'Je vous supplie, Mesdames,'" he instructs his female companions, "'regardez quel mal il vient d'une meschante femme, et combien de maulx se firent par le peché de ceste cy. Vous trouvez que, depuis que Eve fist pecher Adam, toutes les femmes ont prins possession de tourmenter, tuer et dampner les hommes. Quant est de moy, j'en ay tant experimenté la cruaulté que je ne pense jamais mourir ny estre dampné que par le desespoir en quoy une m'a mis'" ["'Just consider now, Ladies, the amount of trouble that was caused by one woman. Just think of the whole train of disasters that this one woman's behavior led to. I think you'll agree that ever since Eve made Adam sin, women have taken it upon themselves to torture men, kill them, and damn them to Hell. I know. I've experienced feminine cruelty, and I know what will bring *me* to death and damnation - nothing other than the despair that I'm thrown into by a certain lady!'"] (20-21, 248-55; 78, emphasis in original) Such "cruelty" would seem like a good reason for Symontault to break off his service to Parlamente, but he insists that he will not do so. "'Suis encores si fol'" ["'And yet, I am mad enough'"], he admits, "'que fault que je confesse que cest enfer là m'est plus plaisant, venant de sa main, que le paradis donné de celle d'une autre'" ["'to admit that though I suffer Hell, it's a Hell far more delightful to me than any Paradise that any other woman could offer'"]. (21, 255-7; 78) Parlamente needs only two lines to cut through this prevarication. As she tells him, "'Puis que l'enfer vous est aussy plaisant que vous dictes, vous ne debvez doncq

[276] See above, pages 32-33.

poinct crainre le dyable qui vous y a mis'" ["'Since Hell is as agreeable as you say, you presumably have no fear of the devil who put you there'"]. (21, 259-61; 78)

This rejoinder may mean that Symontault is silly to imply that damnation is a consequence he fears, since he finds "Hell" so "pleasant," but who or what is "the devil that put [him] there?" Parlamente may be referring to Satan, but her expression may also demonically personify Symontault's lust in general or his penis in particular; in the latter case, the implication would be that he is likely to achieve more satisfaction via autoerotic activity than by pursuing unavailable women. He gets angry at her mockery and responds to her combative wordplay – "'Sy mon diable devenoit aussy noir qu'il m'a esté mauvais, il feroit autant de peur à la compagnye que je prans de plaisir à la regarder'" ["'If my devil...were to turn black, as black as it has been cruel to me, then the fright it would give you all would be as great as the pleasure the mere sight of her gives me'"], he says, but "'le feu d'amour me faict oublier celluy de cest enfer'" ["'the fire of love makes me forget the fire of this Hell'"]. (21, 262-5; 78) Sensing, perhaps, that his bad temper and lame metaphors will only lead to further ridicule, he then cuts the conversation short and calls upon Oysille to tell the next story, one which he hopes will display "'des femmes ce qu'elle en sçait'" ["'what she knows about women'"] and thus concur with his own "oppinion." (21, 267-8; 78)

ISAIAH 40

For Aimé Meigret, Isaiah 40:8 is part of the scriptural support for the notion that God distributes His grace and His word when and where He sees fit, independently of human actions and the transient material world. As Meigret states on page 21 of his *Sermon*, God "volontairement, non par contraincte, non par necessité de nature, non esmeu par nos merites, mais par la seule grace nous a engendrez et donné vie; non par transmutation des corruptibles

elements, mais par la vertu de sa veritable et vivificative parolle, qui est eternelle et incorruptible" ["voluntarily, not by constraint, not by necessity of nature, not moved by our merits, but by grace alone engendered us and gave us life; not by transmutation of corruptible elements, but by the virtue of his veritable and vivifying word, which is eternal and incorruptible"]. Although Meigret does not quote the verse directly, his sermon's marginal notes identify the latter portion of this declaration as a reference to Isaiah 40:8, which in modern English reads, "The grass withers and the flowers fall, / But the word of our God endures forever." Meigret ties his exegesis of Isaiah to Latin quotations from the Gospel of John and the Epistle of St. James. He quotes the full Latin text of the latter passage and provides a complete translation of it into French, but he skips part of the Latin text of the former passage and does not translate it.

From the epistle of St. James, Meigret cites the eighteenth verse of the first chapter on page 20, saying, "*Voluntarie genuit nos verbo veritatis suae, ut simus initium aliquod creaturae ejus*. Volontairement nous a nostre Seigneur engendrez par la parolle de sa verité, affin que soyons aulcun commencement des siennes creatures." The 1899 Douay-Rheims American Edition, which is basically an English translation of the same Vulgate used by Meigret, Le Picart, and Marguerite, has James 1:18 as "For of his own will hath he begotten us by the word of truth, that we might be some beginning of his creatures." So Meigret's reporting of James 1:18 and rendering of it into the vernacular is straightforward. He does not follow this procedure in citing John 1:12-13, however. Meigret gives this passage on page 21 as "*Quotquot receperunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his qui credunt in nomine ejus, qui non ex sanguinibus, sed ex Deo nati sunt*." The preacher then proceeds to the statements quoted above beginning with "volontairement, non par contraincte," which are in no way a translation of John 1:12-13. In

addition, the Vulgate text of the Bible contains more words than Meigret reports for John 1:12-13. Compare: "*quotquot autem receperunt eum dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri his qui credunt in nomine eius / qui non ex sanguinibus neque ex voluntate carnis neque ex voluntate viri sed ex Deo nati sunt*." The words "*neque ex voluntate carnis neque ex voluntate viri*" are omitted from Meigret's citation, and in the Douay-Rheims edition, those words read, "nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." These words are a reference to the sexual reproduction in which Meigret believes clergymen should be permitted to engage, and most dangerously for his argument, John 1:12-13 suggests that the engendering of new people through the flesh is inferior to the process by which, through belief in God's Word, Christians become His children. The celibate clergy would thus appear to be a symbol of the new and everlasting life offered by Christianity in contrast to the corruption and mortality of the flesh; Meigret wishes to associate the Catholic celibacy requirement with corruption and death, and he abbreviates and obscures his use of Scripture towards that end.

Le Picart chooses the beginning of Isaiah 40, emphasizing on leaf 158 of the *Sermons & Instructions…* the comfort that God offers His people. Exclaiming his surprise at people's failure to turn to God for assistance with the trademark "*Mater Dei*" that Théodore Beza ridicules, Le Picart informs his flock that "vous avez nostre seigneur Jesus Christ qui est Dieu & homme: allez à luy, comme dit sainct Paul: *Adeamus cum fiducia ad thronum gratiae eius, ut misericordiam consequamur, & gratiam inneniamus in auxilio opportuno*. Si j'estois au fond d'enfer j'en sortirois, par maniere de parler, en pensant à l'amour que Dieu me porte. Sainct Augustin dit: Je ne me sçaurois soucier & avoir frayeur & craincte de mes pechez, quand j'ay memoire de la mort & passion de Jesus Christ…voire que j'en eusse autant faict & commis comme tous les diables. L'Eglise chantoit à la minuict de Noel: *Consolamini, consolamini*

popule meus, dicit Deus vester. Peuple consolez vous, car vostre Dieu le vous mande." Before considering how Marguerite uses Isaiah 40, let us consider how Le Picart's sermon frames or explains this biblical citation.

The quotation from Isaiah 40:1 is translated into French, but the quote from Hebrews 4:16 ("*Adeamus cum…*") is not. Given that French translations of Latin Bible passages are generally cited, in Le Picart's sermons as well as in Meigret's text, just after the quotation from the Latin, Le Picart's audience might casually assume that his statement following the quote from Hebrews is a translation of Paul's phrase, but it is not. The marginal notes in the printed sermon identify the line from Isaiah by its book and chapter, but Le Picart's sermon identifies it as part of what the congregation sings at Midnight Mass. This emphasis on liturgy rather than Scripture indicates that it is important only for preachers to know what part of the Bible is being cited, while laypeople's attention should be focused on the rituals of the Church.

The *Heptaméron*'s reference to Isaiah 40 occurs after another story by Symontault, the fourteenth novella. As I discussed in Chapter 3, Symontault pursues a consistent strategy of telling stories about deceivers deceived and tying those stories to biblical passages suggesting that all people are similarly immoral, such that one may as well give tricksters a dose of their own medicine. *Heptaméron* 14 depicts a married Milanese lady who pretends, to the Frenchman Bonnivet, that she is too virtuous to take a lover. When Bonnivet discovers that she does in fact have an Italian paramour, he befriends the latter in order to create a situation in which he might take the Italian's place in bed with the lady. After putting on a disguise and substituting himself for his new friend, successfully copulating with the Milanese lady, and impressing her with his sexual prowess, Bonnivet reveals his identity by laughing at the woman he has deceived. Although she is at first stricken with shame and grief at having inadvertently taken on a lover she

does not want, Bonnivet is able to calm her with promises to "celler ce qui touchoit son honneur, sy bien qu'elle n'en auroict jamais blasme" ["conceal everything that concerned her honor and that he would be so careful that not the slightest blame would attach to her name"]. (140, 135-6; 184)

The lady's belief in his promises leads the storyteller to label her a "pouvre sotte" ["poor silly woman"], (140, 137; 184) and in the last line of the *nouvelle*, Symontault points out the biblical wisdom that could have combated her gullibility. Bonnivet's love only lasted, Symontault says, "selon la coustume, comme la beaulté des fleurs des champs" ["as usual, endured even as flowers of the field in their beauty endure!"] (142, 192-3; 186) That Bonnivet's promises of secrecy were no more durable than his love for the Milanese lady, one can infer from the presence of the novella in Marguerite's collection; if the dashing soldier had lived up to his pledge, the *devisants* would not be hearing the story at all. As Isaiah 40:6-8 informs readers, "All people are like grass, / and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. / The grass withers and the flowers fall, / because the breath of the LORD blows on them. / Surely the people are grass. / The grass withers and the flowers fall, / but the word of our God endures forever." Drifting with the wind, although proto-nationalist Frenchmen might see it as the Lord's breath, Bonnivet is not to be trusted, and the Milanese lady should have known it. Had she let her actions be guided by what the Bible tells us about the promises of sinful human beings, surely she would not have taken this duplicitous schemer at his word.

Bonnivet, in his painstaking deceptions and subsequent rapid abandonment of his prize, reveals his place in a tortuous economy of prohibition and *jouissance* that requires a bit of explanation. Early modern men hoped that for their own female relatives, paternal prohibitions against extramarital sex would maintain their virginity intact, maximizing their value as

bargaining chips in inter-familial marriage negotiations because of the near-absolute guarantee of legitimate paternity that may be attached to any child born to a wife who was a verified virgin at the time of her wedding. A man marrying off a daughter, sister, or other woman over whom he held legal guardianship who could be proven a virgin could demand, in exchange for her hand in marriage, much more land, money, livestock, etc. Conversely, a woman whose virginity could not be verified would not be worth as great a dowry, because the potential husband would refuse to expend as much wealth on a wife whose children might possibly be the offspring of another man, bastard usurpers, rather than his own flesh and blood, the legitimate heirs that marriage to a virgin – in combination with post-marital vigilance – could guarantee him.

Even if a woman was married as a virgin, she must guard her honor closely, for a wife known to have committed adultery would be worse off than an unmarried non-virgin. Numerous *Heptaméron* novellas and discussions confirm that men of the time could kill their wives to avenge adultery. The point is that a woman about whom a story like *Heptaméron* 14 was told, if her identity became known, would see her honor tarnished and her value in aristocratic society destroyed. She would likely be subject to physical abuse by her husband or other relatives, and she might pay for her transgression with her life. Even if she denied the tale steadfastly enough to appease her husband, her social life and marriage would be violently disrupted. The dire consequences of believing a man like Bonnivet when he promies to keep her granting him extramarital sexual favors a secret necessitate that, to be safe, women must either trust no *serviteurs* at all – the policy that Parlamente champions after *Heptaméron* 35 – or keep their lovers quiet by engaging in sexual intercourse with them willingly, free of all hypocrisy – the policy that Symontault favors. His story contains a veiled threat: that women like Parlamente, who want to be socially active and yet innocent of any wrongdoing and free of anyone's

suspicions about their chastity, cannot hope to preserve their good names simply by sanctimoniously refusing their *serviteurs*' pleas for mercy. The Milanese lady's fate implies that such wives will only anger their suitors, forcing the men to resort to deception and liberating embittered tricksters from any compunction about sullying their unwilling love-objects' reputations. Better to acquiesce to the man's illicit desire in exchange for his silence, or so many a rapist has argued, in the twenty-first century as well as the sixteenth.

Caught between their obligation to be chaste and their obligation to operate in a mixed-gender society, the *devisantes* and other early modern women do well indeed to heed Isaiah 40's warnings about men's faithlessness and remain on their guard. Parlamente's friend and traveling companion, Longarine, concurs with the frank admissions of the aged former lover, Geburon, provides a way out of Symontault's trap, and links the threat that such *serviteurs* pose directly to their deceptive preaching. "'Tous les serviteurs que j'ay jamais euz m'ont tousjours commancé leurs propoz par moy, monstrans desirer ma vye, mon bien et mon honneur; mais la fin en a esté par eulx, desirans leur plaisir et leur gloire'" ["'all the *serviteurs* I've ever had have always begun their chats about me, showing that they desire my life, my good, and my honor; but the end of it has been about them, desiring their pleasure and their glory'"], Longarine reports. "'Parquoy, le meilleur est de leur donner congé dès la premiere partie de leur sermon'" ["'Therefore, the best is to let them take their leave as soon as the first part of their sermon'"]. (142, 206-11; my translation)

Parlamente suggests, as she has before, that such men are better left to their own devices, even if one is not quite as severe with them as Longarine recommends. Although at first a lady should pretend not to understand what a man wants from her, "'quant ilz viennent à en jurer bien fort, il me semble qu'il est plus honneste aux dames de les laisser en ce beau chemyn que d'aller

jusques à la vallé'" ["'when he starts to swear on his oath, however, I think it's more becoming for a lady to leave him to continue that particular route alone, rather than accompany him down to the valley, so to speak'"]. (143, 220-22; 187) This statement might be read as a warning to Symontault that his presence will only be tolerated so long as he keeps his declarations of his love for Parlamente vague enough for her to plausibly deny having understood him. It is interesting, too, that this emphasis on plausible deniability mirrors what the Church expects of dissenters, according to Larissa Taylor's historical analysis. She explains that the fates of the reforming preachers (whether they were punished and, if so, the severity of the penalty) correlate more strongly to how they made their statements than to which statements they made. In other words, Parlamente's "'quant ilz viennent à en jurer bien fort" ("when he starts to swear on his oath") functions as does the Church's criterion of "pertinacité et contumace," reflecting that the stubbornness and repetition of inflammatory statements is the factor deciding whether propriety dictates the offending party's ostracism.

Symontault does his best to salvage his intended message, however. Reflecting his initial exegesis of *Heptaméron* 14, where he states that "'les finesses du gentilhomme vallent bien l'ypocrisie de ceste dame'" ["'the man's ingenuity was a match for the lady's hypocrisy'"], (142, 194-5; 186) he uses his last remarks of the discussion afterward to reinforce the notion that only *hypocritical* women are apt to be deceived. "'Le meilleur que je y voye…c'est que chacun suyve son naturel. Qui ayme ou qui n'ayme poinct le monstre sans dissimulation'" ["'The best thing in my view...would be for everyone to follow his natural disposition. Whether you're in love or not in love, show it without dissimulation!'"] (143, 233-5; 187) Hircain, whose wife Symontault hopes to seduce, agrees with this opinion, warning the ladies that if they were so fussy as to stop speaking with their *serviteurs* as soon as the women feel some spark of love, "'nous changerions

aussy noz doulces supplications en finesses et forces'" ["'we men would just have to give up submitting meek requests and turn to trickery and violence'"]. (143, 233-4; 187) Whereas the twists and turns of a story like *Heptaméron* 14 are bewildering (especially to those who, like the Milanese lady, are on the ignorant side of the dramatic ironies that courtly love intrigues inevitably entail), the vicissitudes of romantic life at court can be navigated successfully by those who know Scripture. The messages of men are mixed and muddled, and although the Word of God is not always clear – as the Reformation's exegetical conflicts clearly showed – it nevertheless remains the touchstone by which one must make sense of an apparently incoherent world.

MATTHEW 12

Between Meigret's allusion to Isaiah 40 and his allusion to Matthew 12, there is one moment in his sermon that deserves to be highlighted. On pages 22 and 23, Meigret makes a declaration of the intractability of his position that is either foolhardy or deliberately in search of punishment, although he has not yet made it clear to his audience what that position is. As he puts it, "pour la grande sollicitude que nostre Seigneur ha pour nous saulver, sommes obligez preferer son honneur a toutes aultres choses, obeir a ses commandements; et, avecques telle constance et (si voulez qu'ainsi je die) pertinacité et contumace, debvons soustenir son honneur et ses loix, que plustost debvons permettre tout le monde estre mal content de nous qu'en rien l'offenser. Pour reprimer les vices et pechez, plustost debvons user envers les maulvais de furieuse vengeance que permettre (s'il est possible d'y donner ordre) que Dieu ait occasion d'estre contre nous irrité." ["Because of the great solicitude that our Lord has as far as saving us, we are obliged to prefer His honor to all other things, obey his commandments; and, with such constancy and (if you want me to say it thus) pertinacity and contumacity, we must sustain His

honor and His laws, that we must sooner permit all the world to be malcontent with us than offend Him in anything. To repress vices and sins, we must sooner wreak furious vengeance on bad people than permit (if it's possible to control this) God to have occasion to be irritated with us."] Since "pertinacité" is precisely the quality ascribed by the Church to the actions of heretics worthy of excommunication,[277] Meigret's more astute or better-informed listeners must have realized now, if not before, that some sort of heresy is afoot in his *Sermon*. The reference to "furieuse vengeance" suggests that Meigret's intention is to convert what he knows will be his audience's anger at hearing Luther's ideas promoted from the pulpit in Lyon into anger at the ecclesiastics who – wrongly, in Meigret's opinion – insist upon the necessity of the Roman Church's extra-biblical traditions.

Having assumed this taint of heresy, Meigret proceeds to draw upon Matthew 12:31-32 and Luke 12:9-10 to support the notion that the only "peché irremissible" ["unremissible sin"] is "faulte de foy en Jesus Christ" ["lack of faith in Jesus Christ"]. The aforementioned verses from Matthew state that "every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. / …anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven." (NIV) It remains to be seen what sin(s) would constitute such "blasphemy against the spirit." Luke 12:9-10 states that "whoever disowns [Christ] before others will be disowned before the angels of God. / And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven." (NIV) Although the latter statement implies that speaking against Jesus (the "Son of Man") and speaking against the Holy Spirit are two distinct sins, Meigret concludes that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and a lack of faith in Christ are equivalent. Conventionally, the Holy Spirit instills faith, so denying faith

[277] See Thijssen for a discussion of the medieval Church's inquisitorial use of the term "pertinacity."

would constitute an act of blasphemy, and the doctrine of the Trinity would further encourage a listener to assume that an offense against Christ and one against the Holy Spirit cannot be distinct from one another. Meigret's use of Matthew 12 and Luke 12 here shows us that Reformers, like orthodox Catholics, were not wedded to a strictly literal interpretation of the Bible, nor did they typically insist on discarding all the Church's extra-biblical traditions. In claiming a lack of faith in Christ as the only unremissible sin, Meigret is preparing his audience for his later incendiary and very specific claim that the Church cannot rightly threaten its followers or clergy with *excommunication and damnation* for failure to obey extra-biblical tenets. This claim will act as a springboard to one of the most socially transformative elements of Protestantism, the renunciation of mandatory clerical celibacy.

On the remainder of page 25 and the following page, Meigret elaborates on the precise meaning of "croire en Jesus Christ" ["believing in Jesus Christ"]. He argues that believing in Jesus means having confidence in the sufficiency of Christ's "douloureuse mort" ["painful death"] and resurrection, Christ's redemption of human sinners, as the means by which people may reach heaven. If this sounds like typical Christian teaching, Meigret hastens to challenge his audience, "Or, juge chascun en soymesme si telle est sa foy, et si en ceste maniere nous a esté ordinairement preschée" ["Now, let each one judge within himself whether such is his faith, and if in this manner it has ordinarily been preached to us"]! Or better yet, "Demandez aux scholastiques Theologiens quelle est nostre foy...sçavez vous qu'ils disent? *Actus fidei est assensus cum certitudine ad id quod non videtur propter authoritatem primae veritatis*" ["Ask the scholastic Theologians what is our faith...do you know what they say? *Actus fidei est assensus cum certitudine ad id quod non videtur propter authoritatem primae veritatis*"]. Translating this non-biblical Latin citation, of which I have not been able to find the source, he

goes on to say that "l'operation de foy est croire certainement les choses non veues a cause de l'authorité de la première verité qui est Dieu…qui n'est aultre chose sinon croire sans aulcune doubte estre vray tout ce qui est contenu en la saincte Escripture" ["the operation of faith is believing certainly things unseen because of the authority of the first truth which is God...which is nothing other than believing without any doubt to be true everything that is contained in the holy Scripture"].

Of course, if believing in Jesus means "croire...[à] tout ce qui est contenu en la saincte Escripture" ["believing…everything that is contained in holy Scripture"], then to believe in Jesus one might need to know what Scripture actually says. This is clearly impossible if one is accustomed to getting one's information from preachers like Le Picart, who deliberately blur the line between Scripture and non-Scripture. Even Meigret, although his translations and use of the Bible are clearer than Le Picart's, is not above adding a few words into a Bible passage from time to time. Meigret agrees with the "scholastiques Theologiens" that Christian faith means believing absolutely in the words of the New and Old Testaments, but the theologians do not stop there, and now Meigret will take umbrage with them.

Moving into the more dangerous territory of the relationship among faith, good works, and salvation, Meigret states that "Après ils viennent a declarer l'operation de la vertu d'esperance, laquelle suit la foy, et disent: *Talis est actus spei[:] spero beatitudinem supernaturalem ex meritis et gratia*.[278] J'espère felicité supernaturelle par mes merites et la grace de Dieu." ["Afterwards they come to declare the operation of the virtue of hope, which

[278] "I hope for supernatural felicity by my merits and the grace of God" is simply my translation of Meigret's French version given just after the Latin. I have not found the source of Latin phrase, although it seems unlikely to have originated with Meigret.

follows faith, and say: *Talis est actus spei[:] spero beatitudinem supernaturalem ex meritis et gratia*. I hope for supernatural felicity by my merits and the grace of God.”] The mention of human actions’ merit as a way to gain God’s blessing is, for Meigret as for Luther, the sticking point. “Telle est la doctrine qu’avez accoustumé d’ouïr d’entre nous prescheurs et docteurs academiques, qui manifestement mettons la charrue devant les bœufs " ["Such is the doctrine that you are accustomed to hearing from us preachers and academic doctors, who manifestly place the cart before the oxen"], the preacher says colloquially, "nos œuvres preferons a la grace de Dieu, et contredisons a nousmesmes, conjoignants ensemble grace et debte, merite et liberalité, obligation et misericorde" [“we prefer our works to the grace of God, and contradict ourselves, conjoining together grace and debt, merit and liberality, obligation and mercy”]. In zeroing in on the "faith is to works as the ox is to the cart" analogy, the first proposition in the body of the sermon to be condemned, the ecclesiastical censors are in agreement with Henry Guy, the editor of the 1928 reprinting of the *Sermon d’Aimé Meigret*. As Guy writes, “la maîtresse pensée du sermon, on la découvrira dans les pages qui, abordant de biais le redoutable problème de la grace, comparent les oeuvres à la foi, et proclament la prééminence de celle-ci sur celles-là" ["the guiding thought of the sermon will be discovered in the pages which, obliquely touching on the redoubtable problem of grace, compare works to faith, and proclaim the preeminence of the latter over the former"].[279]

Le Picart uses Matthew 12 at least three times. First, on leaf 37 of his *Sermons & Instructions…*, LePicart offers an ordinary reading of Matthew 12:40, explaining (as Jesus does himself) that the three days and nights that Jonah spent in the belly of the whale were a prefiguration of the life of Christ, at the end of which “the Son of Man will be three days and

[279] Guy 2-3.

three nights in the heart of the earth." Second, on leaf 263, Le Picart cites Matthew 12:48-50, where Jesus tells a person who has informed him that his mother and brothers are waiting to speak with him that his biological family will have to wait because his disciples "are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." (NIV) Le Picart explains to his listeners that Jesus' statements are meant to suggest that "l'euvre spirituelle ne doit pas estre rompuë pour vne moindre" ["spiritual work must not be interrupted for something lesser"]. In Le Picart's discourse, as in Christ's, family members are not being criticized or insulted, but each preacher wants his listeners to understand that tasks undertaken in the service of God take priority over worldly concerns. *Heptaméron* 21 does show a character prioritizing her personal relationship with God over her guardians' commands, but this happens only in response to extreme provocation on the part of a neglectful and abusive family. Otherwise, the *Heptaméron* does not include stories promoting duty to God over duty to family, and the *devisants* decline to discuss biblical passages emphasizing any such conflicts.

Le Picart's last quotation from the twelfth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew occurs on leaf 278. There, he uses Matthew 12:30, "Qui non est mecum, contra me est" ["Whoever is not with me is against me"], to encourage individual and spontaneous punishment of religious dissenters. As he explains, "Celuy qui n'est auec moy, il est contre moy. Et vous oyez parolles villaines & lasciues, propos d'heretiques, & d'autres qui ne valent rien, & sont damnables. Et vous ne dictes mot : Vous n'aymez donc pas Dieu, mas estes contre Dieu. A tout le moins par gestes ou parolles vous debuez monstrer indignation, & que cela vous desplaist. Autrement vous vous damnez, car la reigle de droict dict : *Error cui non resistitur : approbatur : veritas autem*

cum non descenditur opprimitur."[280] ["He who is not with me, he is against me. And you hear villainous and lascivious words, heretics' talk, & others that are worth nothing, & are damnable. And you don't say a word: So you don't love God, but are against God. At the very least by deeds or words you must show indignation, & that this displeases you. Otherwise you damn yourselves, for the rule of law says: *Error cui non resistitur : approbatur : veritas autem cum non descenditur opprimitur*."] Although Le Picart does not explicitly incite laypeople to violence against whomever they might perceive as "heretics," he leaves the possibility open; his listeners should "at the very least" show their indignation at "heretics' talk," implying that it would be better for them to do more than that in opposing heterodox sentiment.

In *Heptaméron* 5, Géburon's novella about a boatwoman whom two Franciscans unsuccessfully attempt to rape, the villains are ridiculed by a crowd of townspeople who cite "tous les passaiges que l'Evangille dict contre les ypocrites" ["every text in the Gospels that condemns hypocrites"] (44, 67-8; 99) as the monks are led to prison. As one person puts it, "'Par leurs fruictz congnoissez vous quelz arbres ce sont'" ["'Every tree is known by its own fruit'"]. (44, 65-6; 99) This statement is a paraphrase of Matthew 12:33, "a tree is recognized by its fruit," drawn from the same section of Matthew 12 that Meigret and Le Picart quote. (Jesus also says something very similar in Luke 6:44, "Each tree is recognized by its own fruit," again warning against hypocrisy.) (NIV) So the *Heptaméron* interprets this passage as a forewarning against and commentary on the current moral and political crises of the Franciscan orders.

Most of Matthew 12 describes Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees, and in Meigret's, Le Picart's, and Marguerite's uses of Matthew 30:31-32, 30:30, and 30:33, respectively, readers can

[280] "Error which is not resisted: is approved: he who does not [defend] the truth oppresses it." This quotation is drawn from the Epistle to Acacius of Pope Felix III (r. 483 – 492).

gain an idea of these three authors' ways of combatting religious hypocrisy. For Meigret, the modern equivalents of the Pharisees are the theologians who insist that Christians believe what is written in the Bible, yet deny laypeople the right to read the Bible. For Le Picart, the Pharisees find their modern descendants in "the heretics," meaning anyone who questions the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church while claiming to work for the salvation of their fellow Christians. Since no one can be saved outside the Church, Le Picart reasons, anyone presenting his actions as salvific while encouraging others to question the Church must be a liar and a hypocrite. For Marguerite, her *devisants*, and their sympathetically presented *nouvelle* characters, religious hypocrisy is chiefly present in the persons of immoral clergymen, especially lascivious Franciscans who claim to be celibate.

LUKE 12

In Meigret's *Sermon*, Luke 12:9-10 is alluded to in the same passage as Matthew 12:31-32. Neither pair of verses is quoted directly, but the allusions are used as part of an argumentative movement (already discussed in some detail above) expressing surprise at "questionaires Theologiens" ["questioning Theologians"] (24) who have such a hard time figuring out "le peché qui est particulierement contre le Sainct Esprit" ["the sin which is particularly against the Holy Spirit"]. Meigret claims that such theologians simply fail to read Scripture closely: "si bien et diligemment eussent regardé ce passage [John 16:9] et ce qui est escript ès Evangiles du peché d'infidelité, et particulierement ce que dit nostre Seigneur en sainct Matthieu parlant du peché irremissible, clairement eussent veu que faulte de foy en Jesus Christ est le peché qui contre nous provoque l'indignation du Sainct Esprit, irrite divine fureur, et empesche qu'en nos cueurs ne resplendisse la lumière de divine bonté." ["if they had looked well and diligently at this passage and what is written in the Gospels about the sin of infidelity, and

particularly what our Lord says in saint Matthew speaking of irremissible sin, they would have seen clearly that lack of faith in Jesus Christ is the sin which provokes the indignation of the Holy Spirit against us, irritates divine furor, and prevents the light of divine goodness from shining in our hearts."] Luke 12:9-10 – "But whoever disowns me before others will be disowned before the angels of God. / And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven" (NIV) – are practically identical to Matthew 12:31-32, which is why Henri Guy lists both pairs of verses in his footnotes to page 25 of Meigret's *Sermon*.

Le Picart's first use of Luke 12 occurs on leaf 54 of his *Sermons & Instructions…*, and he prefers to cite the parable of the rich fool. Here, Le Picart summarizes Luke 12:16-18, then cites Luke 12:19-21 in Latin, without translation. In modern English, these verses read, "'And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." / But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" / This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.'" (NIV) (In this passage, Jesus is reporting the words and thoughts of the rich fool and God, hence the rather complicated quotation marks.)

Immediately after this quote, the preacher exhorts his listeners to consider the implications of Christ's words. "Pensons y, pour l'amour de Dieu: & que me sert il d'auoir tant de benefices, & de n'y resider point? Il fault que l'escripture soit faulse, ou que Dieu soit mensonger, si on n'est damné en faisant ainsi." ["Let's think about it, for the love of God: & what good does it do me to have so many benefices, & not to reside there? Scripture must be false, or God must be a liar, if one is not damned in so doing."] Although the Circle of Meaux,

acting under Marguerite's protection, had been interested in reforming pluralism and absenteeism in the 1520s, criticism of these practices is nowhere to be found in the *Heptaméron*'s discussions.

On leaf 219, Le Picart cites Luke 12:47 to remind his listeners that one's knowledge of the rules of Christian living obligates one to follow those rules. In an apparent answer to the challenge of those who, like Meigret, have accused Catholic theologians of reversing the proper relationship of faith to works, Le Picart asserts that

> "la foy ne sert de rien sans les bonnes euures faictes en icelle. Ayons donc la foy, laquelle est le commencement, & avec icelle les bonnes euures…que nous gardions ses commandemens, & de son Eglise: autrement nostre foy est vaine & inutile. Sainct Iacques dit: ainsi qu'vn corps sans esprit est mort, vain & inutile: aussi la foy sans l'obseruation des commandemens de Dieu, ne sert de rien sinon pour estre plus griefuement damné. Car celuy qui sçait & ne faict pas, il est digne de plus grande peine: *Servus sciens voluntatem Domini sui, & non faciens, plagis vapulabit multis*."[281]
> [faith serves no purpose without good works done thereby. Let us thus have faith, which is the beginning, & with this good works…that we keep His commandments, & [those] of His Church: otherwise our faith is vain & useless. Saint James says: as a body without spirit is dead, vain, & useless: also faith without the observation of God's commandments, serves no purpose if not to

[281] "The servant who knows his master's will and does not do it will be beaten with many blows" (Luke 12:47, NIV)

make one more gravely damned. For he who knows & does not do, he is worthy of greater punishment: *Servus sciens voluntatem Domini sui, & non faciens, plagis vapulabit multis*.]

At the end of leaf 220, Le Picart begins to tell another small story, this time about an arrogant woman who will remain nameless.

Voyla vne femme que lon doit mettre en vn feu: & neantmoins elle s'accoustre si pompeusement & curieusement: on dit quelle est bien folle. Et quand ie me pare si bien, par aduenture que la mort est prochaine. *Induite vos in habitis ornato*:[282] mais auoir vn mirouer deuant soy & se parer, c'est trop grande curiosité. Mirez vous à la mort, & quelque affection mauuaise que vous ayez: vous la vaincrez en pensant à la mort. Il y en a qui sont si curieuses à s'accoustrer, qu'elles font escouter les prestres iusques à douze heures pour dire messe: & madame n'est pas encore leuée. C'est grande m[e]schãceté: & monstrez bien que n'auez pas grand soing de l'ame…Si vous mettiez le temps à bien faire, & à visiter les pauures, au lieu que vous le mettez à vous accoustrer, vous auriez paradis…Comme ce folastre qui disoit: *Anima mea habes multa bona posita in annos plurimos: requiesce, comede, bibe, epulare.*

[282] "Dress yourself in ornate clothing" (my translation; I could not find the source for this Latin text).

Dixit autem illi Deus: Stulte, hac nocte animam tuam repetunt à te: quae autem parasti cuius erunt?[283]

[There's a woman who must be put into a fire: & nevertheless she dresses herself up so pompously and curiously: they say she is quite mad. And when I apparel myself so well, perhaps death is near. *Induite vos in habitis ornato*: but to have a mirror before oneself & apparel oneself, this is too great curiosity. Look into the mirror of death, & whatever bad affection you have: you will vanquish it by thinking of death. There are some women who are so curious to dress up, that they make the priests be heard till twelve o'clock to say mass: & madame has not yet risen. This is a great meanness: & you show well that you do not take great care of the soul…If you spent time doing good, & visiting the poor, instead of appareling yourself, you would have paradise…Like that fool who said: *Anima mea habes multa bona posita in annos plurimos: requiesce, comede, bibe, epulare. Dixit autem illi Deus: Stulte, hac nocte animam tuam repetunt à te: quae autem parasti cuius erunt?*]

Who is this woman who needs to do good for the poor and "se mirer à la mort" ("look into the mirror of death") instead of spending her time putting on finery in front of a mirror? The

[283] "And I'll say to myself, You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry. But God said to him, You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" (Luke 12:19-20, NIV)

priests must speak until she is ready to rise; if this means to rise from bed and come into the church, as Le Picart implies by his criticism of the woman taking too much time to dress herself, who but a very great lady would have such influence over the schedules of preachers? I wonder whether Le Picart is indirectly criticizing his enemy, Marguerite de Navarre, appropriating her "mirror" imagery much as Hircain does. Le Picart would thus be suggesting that for all her famously pious use of mirrors, Marguerite is nonetheless like the rich fool of Luke 12, more concerned with her own social status than with the plight of the poor or the fate of her own sinful soul.

The last use of the Gospel of Luke in the *Sermons & Instructions…* occurs on leaf 226, in the context of an "*Autre sermon du iour S. Geneuiefue*" ["*Other sermon of St. Genevieve's Day*"]. Here, Le Picart encourages his listeners to be like Saint Genevieve, who according to Catholic tradition led Parisians in a prayer vigil that saved the city from destruction by convincing God to turn Attila the Hun away from Paris. Genevieve's legend is bound up with that of Saint Germain of Auxerre, who is said to have been the first to encourage her to follow her impulse to devote her life entirely to God, which she did by becoming a nun. As Le Picart says, quoting Luke 12:31, "*Primum quaerite regnum Dei*" ["First seek the kingdom of God"] (NIV), although "primum" is not present in the Vulgate text. Le Picart provides numerous other details from the life of Saint Genevieve in his sermon, which he uses to remind people that poor folk far from the glitter of court life can prove more valuable than high-ranking nobles. His sermon states that "madame saincte Geneuiefue est vne pauure fille, bergere, & de nulle ou petite estimation deuant les hommes. Dieu l'a voulu monstrer & reueler à sainct Germain, & cõment les anges auoyent chanté en sa natiuité, cõme en la natiuité de nostre Seigneur JESUS CHRIST" ["missus saint Genevieve is a poor girl, shepherdess, & of little or no esteem before men. God

wanted to show & reveal her to Saint Germain, & how the angels had sung at her nativity, as at the nativity of JESUS CHRIST"]. Although Reformers would have agreed that Christians should seek God's kingdom before all else, they would not have recounted hagiographic details as though these were of equal veracity in comparison with Scripture. Certainly the direct parallel drawn here between the nativities of Genevieve and Jesus, for partisans of Reform, would have smacked of polytheism.

In *Heptaméron* 8, Luke 12 appears in a French paraphrase, as part of Longarine's closure of her novella. This story, a reworking of *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 9, tells of a husband who attempts to commit adultery with his chambermaid and to share the maid with his friend without the girl's knowledge. When the first man's wife learns of his plan to sleep with the servant, she substitutes herself in the dark for the harassed domestic; this leads to her own accidental adultery when first the husband and then his friend visit her in the place where the servant girl had previously been instructed to wait. The wife happens to drop a ring while cavorting with her husband's friend (whom she mistakes for her husband), and when the friend returns the ring to the husband, the latter realizes what has taken place. He then makes amends with his wife – who still does not know what has happened but is already "assez courroucée de l'amour qu'il avoit portée à sa chambriere" ["already angry enough about the chambermaid"] (56, 132-3; 111) – and begs his friend not to reveal his shame.

Since the *devisants* are hearing this *nouvelle* anyway, either the husband or his friend must have repeated the story regardless of the former's attempt to conceal it. Longarine concludes that "comme toute chose dicte à l'aureille est preschée sur le toict, quelque temps après, la verité en fut congneue, et l'appelloit l'on coqu sans la honte de sa femme" ["as everything said to the ear is preached on the roof, some time afterward, the truth of it was

known, and they called him cuckold without any shame to his wife"]. (56, 138-41; my translation) Although it is part of the novella itself rather than the discussion following *Heptaméron* 8, this last sentence begins the *devisants*' exegesis of the story by tying it to Scripture. "Everything said to the ear is preached on the roof" is a clear recollection of Luke 12:3 ("what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs"). (NIV) Like the other sections of Luke 12 quoted by Meigret and Le Picart, and the verses of Matthew 12 quoted by all three authors studied in the present chapter, this verse is a warning against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

Whereas Geburon has placed Matthew 12:30 into the mouth of one of *Heptaméron* 5's townspeople in order to lampoon lustful Franciscans, Longarine paraphrases Luke 12:3 in her own narratorial voice to implicate non-clerical males in the same patriarchal hypocrisy. In case her listeners have missed the point, she opens the discussion leading from the eighth novella to the ninth by making the connection between the philandering husband in her *nouvelle* and the philandering husbands in the storytelling circle explicit. "'Il me semble, Mesdames,'" ["'Ladies, it strikes me'"], she opines, "'que, sy tous ceulx qui ont faict de pareilles offences à leurs femmes avoient telle pugnicion, Hircain et Saffredent debvroient avoir belle peur'" ["'that if all the men who offend their wives like that got a punishment like that, then Hircain and Saffredent ought to be feeling a bit nervous.'"] (56, 142-5; 112) As Oysille will later point out after *Heptaméron* 37, "'d'autant que l'homme se dict plus saige que la femme, il sera plus repris, sy la faulte vient de son costé'" ["'as the man claims to be wiser than the woman, so he will be the more severely punished if the fault is on his side'"]. (328, 134-136; 361)[284]

HEBREWS 11

[284] See above, pages 84-5.

Aimé Meigret does not quote Hebrews 11 directly but paraphrases this verse on page 27 of his *Sermon*, arguing against those in his audience who are dipleased with his statements to the effect that faith is more important than good works. "Desja vous vois-je murmurer" ["I already see you murmur"], he declares, "et en vousmesmes disputer et dire que, si la foy est suffisante pour nous saulver, nous n'avons que faire de bonnes œuvres" ["and inside yourselves dispute and say that, if faith is sufficient to save us, we have no need of good works"]. Meigret goes on to quote and translate two Bible passages, then paraphrase a third verse of Scripture, in order to refute this idea. "Escoute sainct Jehan" ["listen to Saint John"], he says, "*Qui dicit se nosse Deum et mandata ejus non servat, mendax est*.[285] Qui se dit avoir la cognoissance de Dieu (qui n'est aultre chose que la foy) et n'observe pas ses commandements est un menteur. Pourtant sainct Jacques reprenant telles gens: *Ostende* (ait) *mihi fidem tuam sine operibus, et ego ostendam tibi ex operibus fidem meam*.[286] Monstre moy ta foy sans les œuvres, et je te monstreray par mes œuvres estre en moy la vertu de foy…De la vray foy procèdent bonnes œuvres, et sans elle ne povons faire chose a Dieu aggreable." ["*Qui dicit se nosse Deum et mandata ejus non servat, mendax est*. Whoever says he has knowledge of God (which is nothing other than faith) and does not observe His commandments is a liar. Yet Saint James reprimanding such people: *Ostende* (he said) *mihi fidem tuam sine operibus, et ego ostendam tibi ex operibus fidem meam*. Show me your faith without works, and I will show you by my works that the virtue of faith is in me…From true faith proceed good works, and without it we cannot do anything agreeable to God"]. The last statement is a paraphrase of Hebrews 11:6, which states in modern English that "without faith it is impossible to please God." (NIV)

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[285] "Whoever says, 'I know him,' but does not do what he commands is a liar." (1 John 2:4, NIV)

[286] "Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds." (James 2:18, NIV)

Le Picart's *Sermons & Instructions*... cite Hebrews 11 at least seven times. The first citation occurs on leaf 70, where the priest contrasts the good ancients like Abel and Abraham with the avaricious people of his own times. These "gens terrestres, mondains, delaissez de Dieu" ["Earthly people, worldly, God-forsaken"],

> ne regardent pas seulement à nourrir les enfants, mais il demãdent à acquerir terre. Cain à basty, aussi il bastissent, on voyt l'or sur leurs maisons: et les pauures de Iesuchrist sont tous nuds parmy les rues…& vous avez tant de superfluitez…c'est la premiere intention, à l'imitation de Cain, de bastir au monde, & de perpetuer leur nom: mais vous ne lisez point qu'Adam ait faict vn bastiment, ne Seth…En signe de ce ils n'auoyent que des tentes…habitants aux tabernacles. Sainct Paul dit: *quòd expectabant ciuitatem fundamenta habentem, cuius artifex, & conditor Deus*.[287] Ils attendoyent vne cité permanente...vn bon fondement, duquel le bastisseur, c'est nostre seigñr Iesuchrist.
>
> [do not look only to feed the children, but ask to acquire land. Cain built, also they build, one sees the gold on their houses: and Jesus Christ's poor are naked in the streets…& you have so many superfluities…it's the first intention, in imitation of Cain, to build in the world, & perpetuate their name: but you don't read that Adam made a building, nor Seth…As a sign of this they had only

[287] "For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God." (Hebrews 11:10, NIV)

> tents…living in tabernacles. Saint Paul says: *quòd expectabant ciuitatem fundamenta habentem, cuius artifex, & conditor Deus*. They were waiting for a permanent city, which has a good foundation, whose builder is our lord Jesus Christ.]

In a departure from his usual practice, Le Picart provides a close paraphrase, almost an exact translation, of the Latin text of Hebrews 11:10 (he only adds "good" to "foundation," changes "God" to "Jesus Christ," and drops the notion of an "architect," referring to Christ solely as the "builder" of the city awaited by the good men of the Old Testament). Hebrews 11, however, like its neighboring chapters, is full of encouragement for Jesus' early followers to persevere in their faith. These chapters have nothing to do with Christians' obligation to be generous toward the poor. In exhorting their author's Hebrew readers to ignore worldly tribulations, torment, and poverty with a view to accomplishing the more important goal of pleasing God, they clearly imply that early Christians were much more likely to be destitute themselves than to be in a position to philanthropically distribute their wealth. That the ancients' hope for a well-founded city was in fact a hope for the coming of Christ seems a typical figurative reading (this is the reading of Old Testament history promoted by the Epistle to the Hebrews itself), but the contrast with ungenerous rich people is Le Picart's addition. His abiding interest in combatting avarice among the affluent is one of the features of his preaching that most clearly sets him apart from the *devisants*. French aristocrats like themselves, or indeed like Marguerite or Francis I, could hardly bemoan the interest of lords and ladies in "perpetuating their name" and building magnificent houses when their own codes of honor and bridal exchange were directed toward the former goal, their humanistic and artistic interests most spectacularly manifested in the latter. The insistence on instead ignoring the contradictions inherent in

associating wealth and power with piety, in describing kings as "most Christian," would find its fullest expression in the caesaropapism of the Anglican Church, whose royally-controlled break with the Catholic Church provided a model that many French reformers hoped the Gallican Church might imitate.

On leaf 113, Le Picart returns to Hebrews 11, this time using a version of Protestants' arguments in favor of the primacy of faith over works against them. The heretics "ont vne apparence exterieure de religion, ils donneront l'aumosne, c'est une euure qui semble estre pitoyable: mais il n'y a qu'apparence, comme les euures des infideles, quelque espece de pitié qu'ils ayent, toutefois elles ne procedent point de charité qui est fondée en la foy de Iesus Christ. Les heretiques dient qu'ils croyent en Dieu & en Iesus Christ, ils mentent: car ils n'ont point la foy infuse, ny charité en leur cueur" ["have an exterior appearance of religion, they will give alms, this is a work that seems to be done out of pity: but there is only appearance, like the works of the infidels, whatever sort of pity they have, still they do not proceed from charity which is founded in the faith of Jesus Christ. The heretics say that they believe in God & in Jesus Christ, they lie: for they do not have infused faith, nor charity in their heart"].

Le Picart then specifies just how scrupulously orthodox a Christian has to be in order to count as having "faith" in his opinion, an opinion which was propagated to the French Catholic masses through his sermons both during his lifetime and after his death. "La foy" ["Faith"], he says, "c'est vn don de Dieu, lequel se demonstre selon les merites des hommes. De dire, ie croy en vn article de foy, & ie ne croiray pas les autres, c'est infidelité, ie n'ay point la foy infuse" ["is a gift from God, which is demonstrated according to the merits of men. To say, I believe in one article of faith, & I will not believe the others, this is infidelity, I do not have infused faith"]. Le Picart himself was one of the authors of the articles of faith for French Catholics, so in claiming

that his listeners must believe in every single "article of faith" or else be branded infidels and heretics, he is practically telling people that they must believe precisely as he decrees or else risk the stake.

Maintaining that the good works of "heretics" and their constancy in the face of torment and death at the hands of the authorities are only signs of their diabolical obstinacy, the preacher maintains that "les plus vertueux ils pallissent & changent de couleur, quand ce vient à mourir" ["the most virtuous pale & change color, when it comes to dying"], as Christ himself feared death when crucified. Torturing heterodox Christians to death is thus justified, because such torment brings the best of the "heretics" to repent the error of their ways; the death of the physical body is preferable to the spiritual death of remaining outside the fold of the Catholic Church. "Les heretiques…il est impossible qu'ils puissent faire euures aggreables à Dieu, car ils ont perdu la foy de l'Eglise catholique & universelle" ["The heretics…it is impossible that they can do works agreeable to God, for they have lost the faith of the catholic and universal Church"], Le Picart explains. "Et comme ceux qui estoient hors de l'arche sont perdus par le deluge, aussi tous ceux qui ne sont point uniz à la foy de nostre Seigneur, sont en la voye de damnation: car ils ont perdu le fondement. Bastirez vous sans le fondement, c'est-à-dire sans la foy de nostre Seigneur? *Nam fides est substantia rerum sperandarum*.[288] L'edifice ce sont les bonnes euures" ["And as those who were outside the ark are lost by the flood, also all those who are not united in the faith of our Lord, are on the path of damnation: for they have lost the

[288] Hebrews 11:1 in the modern Vulgate is "est autem fides sperandorum substantia rerum argumentum non parentum," showing minor differences from Le Picart's "*Nam fides est substantia rerum sperandarum;*" the New International Version has "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

foundation. Will you build without the foundation, that is, without the faith of our Lord? *Nam fides est substantia rerum sperandarum*. The edifice is the good works"].

To judge from the New International Version and modern Vulgate, Le Picart's Latin here seems to be some kind of rehashing of Hebrews 11:1 ("est autem fides sperandorum substantia rerum argumentum non parentum" or "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see"). His statements about building on the proper foundation, which is faith in God and Christ, clearly recall his earlier use of Hebrews 11:10. But where he has previously used Hebrews 11 to upbraid rich people for their extravagant architectural projects, undertaken in a spirit of indifference to the sufferings of the poor, now Le Picart turns his exegesis against his other favorite enemies, religious dissenters. Ostensibly virtuous French Christians, if they do not adhere unquestioningly to every article of faith promulgated by Church officials, have only the edifice of good works without the all-important foundation of the one and only true faith.

Le Picart's next two quotations from Hebrews 11 are both drawn from the twenty-sixth verse of that chapter. First, on leaves 166 and 167, Le Picart again suggests that his contemporaries misplace their priorities and worry more about this life than the next. "Vous voyez que nous prenons tant de peine pour complaire à quelque personnage, au prince, soubs umbre de promesses, qui sont incertaines: & nous ne mettons point peine de plaire à Dieu, duquel la remuneration est certaine & eternelle." ["You see that we take such pains to please some personage, a prince, under the shadow of promises, which are uncertain: & we do not take pains to please God, whose remuneration is certain & eternal."] "Voyla Moyse lequel s'il eust voulu complaire au Roy Pharao, il eust esté le plus grand en son royaume: mais il a mieulx aymé endurer l'impropere de Iesuchrist, que d'avoir tous les thresors, comme dit monsieur sainct Paul:

Maiores diuitias aestimans, thesauro Aegyptiorum, improperium Christi: aspiciebat enim in remunerationem." ["There is Moses who, if he wanted to please King Pharaoh, could have been the greatest in his kingdom: but he preferred to endure the disgrace of Christ, rather than have all the treasures, as says mister saint Paul: *Maiores diuitias aestimans, thesauro Aegyptiorum, improperium Christi: aspiciebat enim in remunerationem*."]

In this case, Le Picart provides a close paraphrase of Hebrews 11:26, which in the New International Version reads: "He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward." Interestingly, Oysille teaches a similar lesson to her fellow storytellers as part of the preface to her *Heptaméron* 51, when she states that "l'intencion de mon histoire ne sortira point hors de la doctrine de la Saincte Escripture, où il est dict: 'Ne vous confiez point aux princes, ny aux filz des hommes, ausquelz n'est point vostre salut'" ["the intention of the story that I shall tell you will not be out of keeping with the teaching of Holy Scripture, where it is written 'Trust not in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom there is no salvation'"]. (395-6, 24-7; 428) Oysille's quotation here is taken from Psalm 145:2-3, which reads "nolite confidere in principibus / in filiis hominum quibus non est salus" in the Vulgate and "Put not your trust in princes: / In the children of men, in whom there is no salvation" in the Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition. The political implications of Oysille's message for French readers, however, is softened by the fact that *Heptaméron* 51 is a story about an evil *Italian* "prince" (actually the Duke of Urbino). Le Picart, whose relationship to the Valois monarchy was obviously less cozy than Marguerite's, provides no such palliative deflection; his listeners probably thought first and foremost of the contrast between their own French lords' unreliable pledges and the unquestionable promise of God's kingdom.

On leaf 196 of his *Sermons & Instructions…*, Le Picart returns to Hebrews 11:26 while explicating a graduated distinction among "serviteurs" ["servants"], "mercenaires" ["mercenaries"], and "enfans" ["children"]. These three types of people exist within the Church, Le Picart says, because some Christians – servants – obey God out of fear, some – mercenaries – obey God in exchange for the rewards of heaven, and some – children, the best of them all – obey God simply because God is good. Le Picart wants his listeners to ascend the spiritual ladder implied by his gradations, because the best faith is that which considers God's goodness alone:

> Dieu vault mieulx tout seul qu'avec la creature, comme de servir à Dieu, de paour d'estre damné, cela est bon: mais s'il n'y avoit en moy autre chose que ceste craincte là, ie ne voiroys iamais Dieu en face, combien que telle craincte servile soit le commencement de salut: car par icelle on parvient à la craincte filiale qui est conduicte par amour & charité de Dieu…apres ie sers à Dieu en esperance, qu'il me donnera paradis…Et Moyse regardoit à la remuneration: *Aspiciebat enim in remunerationem*.[289]
>
> [God is worth more alone than with the creature, as serving God, out of fear of being damned, that is good: but if there were nothing else in me than that fear, I would never see God face-to-face, although such servile fear is the beginning of salvation: for by this one arrives at filial fear which is driven by God's love & charity…afterwards I serve God in hope, that he will give me

[289] "he was looking ahead to his reward" (Hebrews 11:26, NIV)

> paradise…And Moses looked to remuneration: *Aspiciebat enim in remunerationem*.]

Le Picart goes on to explain that contemporary Christians should move beyond this "mercenary" phase represented by Moses, serving God without consideration of the pain and torment of hell to be avoided or the "salaire" ["salary"] of heaven to be sought. Although this last stage, that of the "bon chrestien" ["good Christian"] is depicted in the sermon as the best aim of Catholics, the marginal notes to the *Sermons & Instructions…* also emphasize Le Picart's initial phase by summarizing the entire paragraph as "craincte servile est le commencement de salut" ["servile fear is the beginning of salvation"]. Those who will not serve the Catholic Church out of love must be made to do so out of fear, as Le Picart and other clergymen sanctioning the torture of heretics repeatedly confirmed.

On leaf 312, Le Picart cites Hebrews 11 twice, both times in support of the notion that faith is more important than good works. He has declared on the previous leaf that the Christian

> sera aulmosnier, pitoyable: il subviendra à son prochain, il ne calumniera point. Ainsi le fera le Turc, & le payen…il n'y a point de difference des chrestiens aux Turcs & infideles par ces oeuvres là. Car ils peuvent avoir tous, les vertus morales: mais les payens & infideles ne peuvent avoir foy, esperance, & charité ce pendant qu'ils demeurent en leur infidelité. Ce sont trois vertus divines, par lesquelles le chrestien est different du Turc & infidele…elles sont…vertus divines, theologales…l'object d'icelles c'est Dieu. Nous croyons en Dieu.

> [will be charitable, will have pity: he will provide for his neighbor, he will not slander him. So shall the Turk, & the pagan do…there is no difference between Christians and Turks & infidels in those works. For they can all have the moral virtues: but the pagans & infidels cannot have faith, hope, & charity while they remain in their unbelief. These are three divine virtues, by which the Christian is different from the Turk & infidel…they are...theologal, divine virtues…the object of these is God. We believe in God.]

It is in the context of this demonstration of the superiority of Christians to Turks and pagans that Le Picart comes to cite Hebrews 11:1 and 11:6 on the following leaf. As he reminds he listeners, "Sainct Paul dict: *Est autem fides substantia rerum sperandarum*. La foy, c'est le fondement qui soustient" ["Saint Paul says: *Est autem fides substantia rerum sperandarum.* Faith, this is the foundation that sustains"]. Or again, "*Accedentem ad Deum credere oportet*," although in the modern Vulgate Hebrews 11:6 reads, "*sine fide autem inpossibile placere credere enim oportet accedentem ad Deum quia est et inquirentibus se remunerator fit*," indicating once again either that Le Picart has recombined various words from the biblical verse, the version of the Vulgate he was using was quite different from the modern one, or the person(s) who recorded his sermon made a mistake. The point here is that, in Le Picart's view, no one will be saved who does not believe in God and Christ, no matter how virtuous that person may be. Since he has earlier explained that Christians who claim such belief while failing to comply with the Roman Catholic Church or any of its articles of faith are liars, his audience understands that such "heretics" are no better than Turks or pagans.

On leaf 319, Le Picart returns to Hebrews 11:6 to remind his audience that while good works without faith cannot lead to salvation, neither can faith without good works. Here, the citation of the Epistle to the Hebrews is noteworthy for its suggestion of the congregation's incomprehension of the Vulgate. Le Picart states that "la foy, c'est le commencement & entrée à Dieu. Apres nous faisons les bonnes œuvres conformes à la foy, & avons amour & charité en Dieu. S. Paul dict: *Accedentem ad Deum credere oportet quia est*.[290] Mais ceste foy ne profficte point si vostre vie n'est conforme à l'Evangile. Les escriptures conioignent la foy aux bonnes œuvres à fin que la foy soit consommee & receue de Dieu & meritoire de la vie eternelle" ["faith, this is the beginning & entry to God. Afterwards we do good works conforming to the faith, & we have love & charity in God. St. Paul says: *Accedentem ad Deum credere oportet quia est*. But this faith does not benefit you if your life is not in keeping with the Gospel. The scriptures conjoin faith to good works so that faith may be consummated & received by God & meritorious of eternal life"]. The Latin quote, in this case, begins in the middle of a sentence and stops on a relative clause; unsurprisingly, Le Picart does not bother translating the phrase into French. In addition, readers may note the thorny relationship between Le Picart's exegesis of Hebrews 11:6 and Meigret's. Meigret does not quite state that faith alone justifies Christians in the eyes of God, although he is adamant that faith is the source of good works, and of course solafideism was the hallmark of many new Protestant denominations. Le Picart, preaching decades later, is more explicit about the Catholic Church's doctrine that faith *with* good works

[290] "But without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and is a rewarder to them that seek him." (Hebrews 11:6, DAR) Modern Vulgate: "sine fide autem inpossibile placere credere enim oportet accedentem ad Deum quia est et inquirentibus se remunerator fit."

merits salvation or in other words, that the conjunction of these two is the only way that a Christian can deserve and guarantee his or her eternal life.

Le Picart's last use of Hebrews 11 occurs on leaf 325, in the midst of a long oration undertaken in the first-person plural and seeking continued faith in an invisible God. As the preacher says, beginning on the previous leaf, "Prions en tous noz dicts & pensees que nous voyons tousiours Dieu. Voila un serviteur qui voit son maistre, il ne fera rien de mal pour la reverence de son maistre…Mais nous ne voyons pas nostre maistre. Disons luy…Seigneur Dieu que ie ne die ne face rien que ie ne vous voye, c'est-à-dire que i'apprehende tousiours Dieu, comme present, ainsi que faisoit Moyse: *Invisibilem enim tanquam videns sustinuit*" ["Let us pray that in all our words & thoughts we always see God. There is a servant who sees his master, he will do nothing bad out of reverence for his master…But we do not see our master. Let us say to him…Lord God may I neither do nor say anything without seeing you, that is, may I always apprehend God, as present, as Moses did: *Invisibilem enim tanquam videns sustinuit*"]. Le Picart remains close to the literal sense of his biblical quotation; in the New International Version, Hebrews 11:27 reads, "By faith he [Moses] left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw Him who is invisible."

The relationship between the visible world and the invisible deity is used in a different way in *Heptaméron* 26. In that story, told by Saffredent, the young Seigneur d'Avannes attempts to seduce the wife of his guardian and benefactor. Saffredent labels his novella "l'histoire d'une folle et d'une saige" ["the story of a foolish woman and a wise one"] (255, 178-9; my translation), by which he means a married "dame demourant en la ville de Pampelonne" ["certain lady who lived in Pamplona"] (255, 8-9; 292) who commits adultery with d'Avannes and the wife of the "fort riche homme" ["very rich man"] (255, 10; 292) who adopts d'Avannes as his

heir. The wife of the man whom d'Avannes calls "par aliance son pere" ["his father by alliance"], (257, 55; 293) resists his attempts to involve her in an extramarital affair although she is as much in love with him as he is with her.

After he has lived disguised as a stable-boy in the household of the "folle" for some time, his lover's sexual appetite combined with his regular workload prove too much for "la jeunesse et delicate complexion du seigneur d'Avannes" ["the delicate constitution of d'Avannes, who after all was still very young"]. (260, 191-2; 297) Although "la folle amour qu'il avoit à ceste femme luy rendit tellement les sens ebettez qu'il presumoit de sa force ce qui eust defailly en celle d'Hercules" ["his wanton passion for this woman so dulled his senses that he made demands on his strength that would have exhausted Hercules"] (260, 194-6; 297), he is eventually constrained to go back across the street to his surrogate father's house. The lady of that house has already guessed, before his sojourn across the road, that "la Nostre Dame qu['il]…adore" ["the lady that [he] adore[s]"] is not the Virgin Mary, but his wanton neighbor, and she now scolds him for having ignored her advice and put his health in such danger. (258, 98-9; 294) D'Avannes, ashamed of himself, admits that "j'ay autresfoiz oy dire que la repentance suyt le peché, mais maintenant je l'espreuve à mes despens" ["I have always been told that repentance follows sin. To my cost I have now found out how true that is"], begging her to excuse his youthful indiscretion. (261, 219-21; 298)

After she and her husband have spent two weeks nursing d'Avannes back to health, he decides to reveal his feelings to her. His first declaration, however, makes no mention of sexual desire or even of his romantic sentiments towards her personally; instead, he leads her along by playing upon the sense of obligation that her preaching to him might foster. That is, since she has advised him extensively, both before and after his absence, about the wisdom of leading a

virtuous life, he knows that she will declare *herself* willing to help him become the sort of man she admires. As the young man puts it, "'Madame, je ne veoy meilleur moyen, pour estre tel et si vertueux que vous me preschez et desirez, que de mectre mon cueur à estre entierement amoureux de la vertu. Je vous supplie, Madame, me dire s'il ne vous plaist pas me y donner toute ayde et faveur à vous possible.'" ["'Madam, I can see no better way to be as virtuous as you preach to me and desire that I should be, than to devote my heart to being entirely enamoured of virtue. I beg you, Madam, to tell me whether it does not please you to give me in this [effort] all the aid and favor that you can.'"] (262, 240-44; my translation)

Perhaps not fully understanding where this man's speech is headed, but cautious enough to throw in a proviso, the lady replies, "'Et je vous promectz, Monsieur, que, *si vous estes amoureux de la vertu comme il appartient à tel seigneur que vous*, je vous serviray, pour y parvenir, de toutes les puissances que Dieu a mises en moy'" ["'And I promise, Sir, that, *if you are enamoured of virtue as befits such a lord as yourself*, I will serve you, to achieve this, with all the powers that God has put in me'"]. (262, 245-49; my translation and emphasis) So far, so good, from the Seigneur d'Avannes' point of view. Having obtained this promise, he decides to press his advantage, blending religious reasoning into his discourse in a 17-line argument justifying his desire to become the lady's *serviteur*. "Or, Madame," he declares,

> "souvienne vous de vostre promesse, et entendez que Dieu, incongneu de l'homme sinon par la foy, a daigné prandre la chair semblable à celle de peché, affin que, en attirant nostre chair à l'amour de son humanité, tirast aussi nostre esprit à l'amour de sa divinité; et s'est voulu servir des moyens visibles pour nous faire aymer par foy les choses invisibles. Aussi, ceste vertu que je

desire aymer toute ma vye est chose invisible, sinon par les effectz du dehors. Parquoy, est besoing qu'elle preigne quelque corps pour se faire congnoistre entre les hommes, ce qu'elle a faict, se revestant du vostre, pour le plus parfaict qu'elle a peu trouver. Doncques, je vous recongnois et confesse non seulement vertueuse, mais la seulle vertu; et moy, qui la veoy reluire soubz le voille du plus parfaict corps qui oncques fut, c'est celle que je veulx servir et honnorer toute ma vye, laissant pour elle toute autre amour vaine et vicieuse."

["Then you may heed your promise, Madame…and know that God, whom no man may know but by faith alone, did deign to take on flesh, even the same flesh as the sinful flesh of man, so that in drawing our flesh to the love of His humanity, he would draw our spirit to the love of His divinity. And by means of things visible did it please Him to make us love through faith the things that are invisible. Thus is that virtue, which my whole life through I desire to love, a thing that is invisible unless it show external effects. It must therefore take on a bodily form, so that it may make itself known unto men. Indeed, it has done so, for it has clothed itself in your body, Madame, the most perfect it could find. Therefore, I acknowledge and confess that you are not merely virtuous, but Virtue itself. And I, who see that Virtue shining through the veil of the most perfect body that ever existed do desire to serve and

honor it for the rest of my days, for its sake renouncing all vain and vicious love!"] (262, 249-265; 298-99)

Renja Salminen, in her notes to the 1999 Droz *Heptaméron*, asserts a connection between the phrase "s'est voulu servir des moyens visibles pour nous faire aymer par foy les choses invisibles" ["by means of things visible did it please Him to make us love through faith the things that are invisible"] and Hebrews 11:3. That verse, in its entirety, states that "fide intellegimus aptata esse saecula verbo Dei ut ex invisibilibus visibilia fierent" (Vulgate) or, in modern English, "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." (NIV) If there is an allusion to Hebrews 11 in d'Avannes' speech, it seems clearer in lines 249 and 250, where he reminds the lady that God is "incongneu de l'homme sinon par la foy" ["unknown to man except by faith"], which resonates with Hebrews 11:1, "est autem fides sperandorum substantia rerum argumentum non parentum" ("Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see"). (Vulgate; NIV)

In addition to this possible use of Hebrews 11, there is at least one other biblical idea that contributes to the young man's reasoning. Surprisingly, although Salminen identifies 1 John 4:20 as a source for Parlamente's comments after *Heptaméron* 19,[291] Symontault's later more explicit citation following that same story,[292] and Saffredent's remarks after *Heptaméron* 36,[293]

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[291] "Jamais homme n'aymera parfaictement Dieu, qu'il n'ayt parfaictement aymé quelque creature en ce monde" ["no man will ever perfectly love God, unless he has perfectly loved some creature in this world"]. (187, 333-34; 228)

[292] "Sainct Jehan dict que celluy qui n'ayme son frere qu'il veoit, comment aymera il Dieu qu'il ne veoit poinct." ["'St. John…says, "he who loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he cannot see? ""'"] (188, 378-79; 230)

the editor does not draw a connection between the First Epistle of John and the Seigneur d'Avannes. Yet the connection is at least as clear in the case of *Heptaméron* 26 as in those of the nineteenth and thirty-sixth *nouvelles*. D'Avannes states that "Dieu… s'est voulu servir des moyens visibles pour nous faire aymer par foy les choses invisibles" ["by means of things visible did it please Him to make us love through faith the things that are invisible"]. Symontault, immediately after his quotation of 1 John 4:20 in French following *Heptaméron* 19, says that "par les choses visibles on est tiré à l'amour des invisibles" ["it is through things visible that one is drawn to the love of things invisible"]. (188, 380-1; 230) The religiously-based argumentation of Symontault and the Seigneur d'Avannes, each of whom hopes to play his role as *serviteur* to a pious, married woman until said woman will acquiesce to his sexual desire, could hardly be more similar.

Saffredent's example of a wise woman, meanwhile, is a combination of preacher and martyr. The rich man's wife's priestly qualities are evident in her wise preaching to the Seigneur d'Avannes, who recalls her many sermons to him about his ethical duties using, precisely, the verb *prescher*. Furthermore, the words Saffredent chooses to describe his protagonists' linguistic interactions suggest that the pious wife acts as confessor as well as preacher. Although she is clever enough that she does not even need the Seigneur d'Avannes' confession in order to guess at his sins, his response to her chiding shows that she has produced in him exactly the emotions that an imperfect but contrite Christian ought to experience – as he says, he now realizes "que la repentance suyt le peché" ["that repentance follows sin"]. After having recalled her sensible

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[293] "sainct Jehan dict: 'Comment aymerez vous Dieu, que vous ne voyez poinct, si vous ne aymez celluy que vous voyez?'" ["'St. John says: "How shall you love God, whom you see not, unless you love him whom you see?"'"] (322, 143-5; 357) See also above, pages 86-8.

sermons, d'Avannes then "confesse" ["confesses"] to his beloved that she is the personification of virtue.

Her wisdom, however, is manifested in her response to his flattery and seductive manipulation of biblical tenets paraphrased from Hebrews 11 and 1 John 4. She remonstrates that "'je n'entreprandz pas de respondre à vostre theologie; mais, comme celle qui est plus craignant le mal que croyant le bien, vous vouldrois supplier de cesser en mon endroict les propoz dont vous estimez si peu celles qui les ont creuz'" ["I shall not attempt to reply to your theology; but as I am inclined rather to fear evil than to believe goodness, I would beseech you to desist from addressing such words to me, for I know how little you respect those women who have believed them"]. (263, 268-72; 299) She goes on to explain that while she bears the young man "telle affection que doit et peult faire femme craignant Dieu et son honneur" ["such love as a woman who fears God and cares for her honor can and ought"], this affection "ne sera declairée jusques à ce que vostre cueur soit susceptible de la pascience que l'amour vertueuse commande" ["will not be declared until the day when your heart shall be capable of the long-suffering that virtuous love demands"]. (263, 279-82; 299)

This is a rather curious paralipsis – after all, she has just declared the sentiments that she claims she will not yet declare – but her resistance to any illicit desires on d'Avannes' part proves steadfast. She later refuses to kiss him until ordered to do so by her husband, and when the young lord goes so far as to leap into her bed at a moment when the two of them are left alone by his clueless benefactor, she scolds him more vigorously than ever. The theory of virtuosity which she explicates on this occasion, that "ung cueur chaste, au millieu des temptacions, se treuve plus fort et vertueulx" ["a chaste heart proves itself stronger and more virtuous in the midst of temptation"] (264, 330-31; 301), is the driving principle behind all of the

Heptaméron's stories of women martyred in love. The lady's martyrdom is rendered complete upon her subsequent wasting and death due to "la guerre que l'honneur et l'amour faisoient en son cueur" ["the war in her heart between love and honor"]. (265, 361-62; 301)

The ironies of Saffredent's recounting of such a novella are multiple. Readers might expect this middle-aged but unrepentant lecher to continue telling stories more like *Heptaméron* 3, his contribution to the first day featuring the adulterous king Alfonso and the courtier who talks Alfonso's queen into a revenge affair of her own. A wise, pious female character like the Seigneur d'Avannes' beloved seems an odd person for Saffredent to celebrate, particularly in the hagiographic terms that he uses in his exegetical statements immediately following *Heptaméron* 26. "'Voyla, Mesdames'" ["'Well, ladies'"], he tells his audience, "'la difference d'une saige et folle dame, ausquelles se monstrent les differenz effectz d'amour, dont l'une receut mort glorieuse et louable, et l'autre, renommée honteuse et infame…Car autant que la mort du sainct est precieuse devant Dieu, la mort du pecheur est tresmauvaise'" ["'that shows you the difference between a wanton woman and a wise one, two women who demonstrate the different effects of love. In the one it led to a glorious death that we should all admire; in the other it led to disgrace, shame, and a life that was all too long. For as much as the death of a saint is precious before God, the death of a sinner is nothing worth'"]. (268, 460-5; 304)

Just as she has pointed out that Rolandine's refusal to renounce her marriage vow was all the more difficult and laudable in view of her clandestine husband's infidelity, Oysille hastens to add here that she has never seen "ung plus beau gentilhomme, ne de meilleure grace, que ledict seigneur d'Avannes" ["'a finer, more handsome gentleman in all my life than the Seigneur d'Avannes'"]. (268-9, 469-70; 304) The rich man's wife's resistance to temptation is especially impressive, then, since d'Avannes is the most desirable man that the aged and experienced

Oysille has ever seen. No sooner has Oysille uttered this praise, however, than Saffredent slips back into his accustomed role as flouter of sexual morality. "Pensez" ["'But just consider'"], he retorts, "que vela une saige femme, qui, pour se monstrer plus vertueuse par dehors qu'elle n'estoit au cueur, et pour dissimuler une amour que la raison de la nature vouloit qu'elle portast à ung sy honneste seigneur, se alla laisser mourir, par faulte de se donner le plaisir qu'il desiroit ouvertement et elle couvertement" ["'Here we have a wise woman, who, for the sake of showing herself outwardly more virtuous than she was in her heart and for the sake of covering up a passion which the logic of Nature demanded she should conceive for this most noble lord, goes and allows herself to die just becase she denies herself the pleasures that she covertly desires'"]! (269, 471-7; 304)

Not only do these remarks fly in the face of the interpretation of *Heptaméron* 26 that Saffredent has offered a mere six lines earlier in the framing debate, his second description of his novella is inaccurate. Once she knows that she is dying, the rich man's wife admits to d'Avannes that her feelings are equal to his own, "'hormis que l'honneur des hommes et des femmes n'est pas semblable'" ["'save only that in men and woman honor is never the same'"]. (267, 406-7; 302-303) Even before this deathbed confession, she explicitly denies that she is, as d'Avannes claims, the personification of all virtue. Immediately after refusing to answer his "theology," she tells him that she knows she is "'femme, non seulement comme une autre, mais tant imparfaicte que la vertu feroit plus grant acte de me transformer en elle que de prandre ma forme'" ["'a woman, not only a woman like any other, but a woman so full of imperfections that Virtue would be performing a greater act in transforming me into herself than in taking on my form'"]. (263, 273-5; 299) Furthermore, one of her last wishes as expressed to d'Avannes is that he tell her husband "'à la verité ce que vous sçavez de moy, affin qu'il congnoisse combien j'ay

aymé Dieu et luy'" ["'the truth…so that he will know how truly I have loved God and love him'"]. (267, 418-20; 303) She makes no attempt to conceal her imperfections either from d'Avannes or (so far as is possible, considering the danger that she and the young man would be in if she revealed her true feelings before being on the verge of death) her husband.

Saffredent reports correctly that the lady's self-denial leads to her untimely demise; she herself tells d'Avannes that "'le "non" que si souvent je vous ay dict m'a tant faict de mal au prononcer qu'il est cause de ma mort'" ["'though so often I said no to you, I confess that it has hurt so much to pronounce the word that it is now the cause of my death'"]. (266, 398-400; 302) But the storyteller's claim that his heroine restrains herself "pour se monstrer plus vertueuse par dehors qu'elle n'estoit au cueur" ["'for the sake of showing herself outwardly more virtuous than she was in her heart'"] is patently false. In making such an assertion, Saffredent ignores the chief motivation for the wise woman's actions, which is to attain salvation and enjoy the fulfillment, after death, of "'les promesses qui me sont données de Dieu avant la constitucion du monde'" ["'the promises that were made to me by God before the creation of the world'"]. (267, 422-3; 303)

How could Saffredent fail to understand this woman's reasoning to the point of twisting the facts of his own *nouvelle*? Readers might think that the attribution of *Heptaméron* 26 to Saffredent is a hasty or sloppy welding of frame-narrative to novella; perhaps Marguerite would have reassigned this story had she lived to complete her project. That is a possibility about which we can only speculate. I will nevertheless argue against it for two main reasons. First, Saffredent's character is defined by his failure to mature, his inability or unwillingness to learn from age and experience. Ennasuite points this out near the beginning of the *Heptaméron*, when she tells him that "'maintenant que les cheveulx vous blanchissent, il est temps de donner tresves

à voz desirs'" ["'you're beginning to go gray…and it really is time you began to give your appetites a rest'"]. (32, 198-9; 89) He insists that his bad luck in love and the passage of time have not managed to alter his demeanor: "combien que l'esperance m'en soit oustée par celle que j'ayme, et la fureur par l'aage, si n'en sçauroit dimyner la voulunté" ["'even if the lady I love gives me no hope, and even if age has dampened my ardor somewhat, my desires are as strong as ever'"]. (32, 200-202; 89)

Second, and most importantly for my analysis, his undiminished desire to engage in amorous follies is evidenced by his unsuccessful attempts to use the same sort of devious biblical exegesis employed by the Seigneur d'Avannes. D'Avannes tries to disguise his libidinous interest in the rich man's wife as an attempt to attain the love of invisible, Godly ideals through the love of their visible manifestations, not realizing that his listener is too wise to be taken in by his "theology." After *Heptaméron* 36, Saffredent likewise argues that the "'wild passion'" of love is "'readily pardonable'" and that "'God is not even angered by sin of this kind'" (the adulterous doings of men "'deeply in love'") "'since it is one step in the ascent to perfect love of Him, to which one cannot ascend without passing up the ladder of worldly love. For St. John says: 'How shall you love God, whom you see not, unless you love him whom you see?'"'"[294] Just as d'Avannes' "theology" is rebuffed by his female interlocutor, so Saffredent earns himself the scorn of the *devisantes*. In the sole instance of one of Marguerite's frame-characters explicitly accusing another of misusing biblical passages, Oysille rebukes him: "'There is not a single text in Holy Scripture, however beautiful…that you would not turn to your own ends. But take care lest, like the spider, you turn wholesome meat into poison.'" The similarities between

[294] The passage cited here is first quoted on pages 86-7. For a full discussion of *Heptaméron* 36, see above, pages 81-8.

Saffredent's specious interpretation of the Bible and the dishonest, thwarted exegesis of the Seigneur d'Avannes, suggest that this particular *devisant*'s association with *Heptaméron* 26 is anything but accidental.

GALATIANS 3

Meigret's citation of Galatians 3:21-26 on page 28 of his *Sermon* covers a full six verses, more than any other Scriptural quotation that he uses. Here, the preacher also makes explicit reference to the process of translation into the vernacular, and in general he seems very careful to render his argumentation transparent. Just prior to his use of Galatians, Meigret has drawn upon the Gospel of Mark in an attempt to make the same point about the primacy of faith over works. He realizes, however, that his audience may not yet be convinced. "Si les authoritez par moy alleguées ne vous contentent" ["if the authorities I have cited do not content you"], he says, "je prens sainct Paul pour confirmer mes dicts" ["I take Saint Paul to confirm my sayings"]. He then pronounces Galatians 3:21-26 in Latin,[295] pausing to reflect upon the proper function of the law before translating for his audience. "Avant que vous dire en françois ceste sentence, entendez que l'office de la loy n'est que commander ou prohiber les oeuvres" ["before I tell you this sentence in French, understand that the office of the law is only to command or prohibit works"], he says. It will become clear later in his sermon that this narrow definition of "la loy" ["the law"], set off by the restrictive expression "ne...que" ["only"], is intended to exclude the possibility that man-made laws can doom their transgressors to damnation. The law, after all,

[295] As Meigret cites the Vulgate here, "*Si* (inquit) *data esset lex quae posset justificare, vere ex lege esset justitia. Sed conclusit Scriptura omnia sub pecato, ut promissio ex fide Jesu Christi daretur credentibus. Prius enim quam veniret fides sub lege custodiebamur conclusi, in eam fidem quae revelanda erat. Itaque lex paedagogus noster fuit in Christo Jesu, ut ex fide Jesu justificemur. Ubi vero venit fides, jam non sumus sul paedagogo. Omnes enim filii Dei estis*."

concerns only works, not faith, and for Meigret this places the law in a positon of secondary importance.

Meigret's re-statement of this biblical passage in French on pages 28 and 29 is worth citing in its entirety, for he winds up giving more of a paraphrase than a translation, and his extra-Sciptural additions are telling. For an idea of what his "sentence in French" would look like if it were a mere translation, consider the following version of Galatians 3:21-26 given in the 1899 Douay-Rheims American Edition:

> [21] ...if there had been a law given which could give life, verily justice should have been by the law.
> [22] But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise, by the faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe.
> [23] But before the faith came, we were kept under the law shut up, unto that faith which was to be revealed.
> [24] Wherefore the law was our pedagogue in Christ, that we might be justified by faith.
> [25] But after the faith is come, we are no longer under a pedagogue.
> [26] For you are all the children of God by faith, in Christ Jesus.

Here is the New International Version's rendering of these same verses:

> if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. [22] But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

[23] Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. [24] So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. [25] Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

[26] So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith

Here, finally, is Meigret's version, with the statements not derived from Galatians 3:21-26 in italics:

Or dict sainct Paul que si la loy par son observance povoit vivifier, par nos oeuvres pourrions estre justifiez. *Mais la verité n'est pas telle, car la principale operation et vertu de la loy a esté nous monstrer que trestous estions subjects a peché,* et que la promesse que Dieu faisoit de nous saulver seroit accomplie non par nos oeuvres, mais par la vertu de la foy de Jesus Christ. Premier que la foy vint en ce monde, nous estions gardez et conduicts par la loy, enclos dedans la foy qui debvoit estre revelée, c'est a dire accomplie et mise en effect par les oeuvres de Jesus Christ. Parquoy fut la loy nostre pedagogue, qui nous conduisoit a la foy de Jesus Christ pour estre justifiez. Mais, après la foy publiée et accomplie, plus ne sommes subjects au pedadogue; enfans sommes de Dieu *constituez en liberté.*

[Now Saint Paul says that if the law by its observance could vivify, by our works we could be justified. *But the truth is not such, for*

> *the principal operation and virtue of the law has been to show us that we are one and all subject to sin,* and that the promise that God made to save us would be accomplished not by our works but by virtue of the faith of Jesus Christ. Before the faith came into this world, we were kept and led by the law, enclosed within [it] the faith that must be revealed, that is to say, accomplished and put into effect by the works of Jesus Christ. Therefore the law was our pedagogue, which led us to the faith of Jesus Christ to be justified. But, after the faith was published and accomplished, no longer were we subject to the pedagogue; we are children of God *constituted in liberty.*]

There are thus two statements present in Meigret's French text that cannot be construed as translations of the biblical verses he cites just beforehand. Both relate to his rejection of the Church's extra-biblical traditions, especially its commandment - backed by the threat of eternal perdition - that clergymen must remain celibate. What is most intriguing is that, in order to assemble this argument, Meigret presents his own words as though they were merely the vernacular version of these verses from Galatians. Both of his interpolations focus on Christians' relationship to "the law," which Meigret associates with the tutelage necessary in order to humble believers before the advent of Christ but superceded by the new covenant Jesus established with the faithful. When Meigret describes contemporary Christians as "constituted in liberty," he suggests that other parties are attempting to hold Catholics back and infringe upon their basic (constitutional?) rights.

François Le Picart's uses of Galatians 3, according to his usual procedures, manage to be more deceptive than Meigret's and are directed against heretics. First, on leaf 135, he cites this chapter in the context of an explicit defense of Church traditions as apostolically legitimized. Le Picart considers heterodox Christians' rejection of the sacrament of confession and the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, both of which are traditions that many Reformers rejected because they are not mentioned in the Bible. On the one hand, Le Picart makes an argument based on the fluid usage of the word "escriture," which encompasses not only what modern English refers to as "writing" but also "Scripture." As he puts it, referring to confession and transubstantiation, "L'heretique dit, qu'il n'y en a rien par escrit: Il ment par sa gorge...L'heretique dit, que l'escriture n'en dit rien: mais c'est la tradition de l'Eglise qui a tousiours esté tenuë depuis nostre Seigneur" ["The heretic says, that there's nothing written about it: He lies through his throat...The heretic says, that Scripture/writing says nothing about it: but it's the tradition of the Church which has always been kept since our Lord"]. One wonders what possible proof Le Picart could offer that this "tradition" has never changed since the lifetime of the historical Jesus, but actually Le Picart claims not to need such proof. He has already declared on the same leaf - and this statement is emphatically repeated in the margin notes - that "quand l'Eglise catholique dit cela, c'est assez" ["when the Catholic Church says that, it's enough"].

The tautology of the Church's infallibility illustrates the irreconcilable differences that hardened the division between Catholics and Protestants. If the Church needs no evidence to back its authority and can claim that any statement it issues must be believed even if it lacks a biblical basis, then anyone seeking to base her faith solely on Scripture will be cast out of the fold. This privileging of extra-biblical traditions is reflected in the way Le Picart uses Galatians 3; continuing his vituperation of heretics, the priest next upbraids them for their rejection of

masses for souls in purgatory. "Ils ont dit de nouveau qu'il ne fault point prier pour les trespassez...c'est une grande inconstance, comme dit S. Paul aux Galates: *O insensati Galatae, quis vos fascinavit non obedire veritati?* C'est bien estre enchanté & hors de son sens, d'avoir delaissé la tradition de l'Eglise" ["They have said again that one must not pray for the deceased...this is a great inconstancy, as Saint Paul says to the Galatians: *O insensati Galatae, quis vos fascinavit non ahedire veritati?* It is indeed to be enchanted and out of one's senses, to have abandoned the tradition of the Church"].

In the Douay-Rhaims American Edition, this same verse, Galatians 3:1, reads, "O senseless Galatians, who hath bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?" One can see where Le Picart gets his notion of unbelievers being "enchanted" and "out of [their] senses," and perhaps he is thinking of the rhetorical question in Galatians 3:2 - "'Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?'" (DAR) - in connecting this chapter to the Church's orally maintained traditions claiming apostolic authorization. Meigret would no doubt interpret that same question as indicating the primacy of faith over works, of the new spirituality in Christ over commandments and the threat of damnation. The line of Le Picart's sermon that immediately follows his quotation from Galatians 3:1 could easily be mistaken by his non-Latin-speaking listeners for a translation of the Latin biblical text, but of course it is not. Le Picart performatively writes the Church into Scripture, through his spoken message which encourages confusion about what Galatians 3:1 actually says.

On leaves 313 and 314, Le Picart returns to this same passage at the beginning of Galatians. Once more, the preacher uses this passage explicitly against heretics, who stand in for the Galatians addressed in the epistle. Here, he discusses the heretics' rejection of confession, following this critique with one addressing the (in Le Picart's view, Church-sanctioned and

undiminished) authority of immoral and reprobate clergy to perform sacrements like confession and absolution. Le Picart links his two arguments with the concept of "charité" ("charity," translated in the NIV as "love"), to which he claims Catholics relate differently than do "heretics" or "Turks," the lack of (the Church's idea of) charity thus becoming the criterion marking bodies for excision from the congregation. I have excerpted the relevant portions of his first argument, containing the citation of Galatians 3:1, is as follows:

> Ces malheureux heretiques disent: pourueu que vous ayez la foy, vous serez sauvez. Ils disent que contrition faict l'homme hypocrite...On peut nous dire comme sainct Paul. *O insensati Galatae, quis vos fascinavit non obedire veritati?* La verité est si manifeste & si patente: & neantmoins vn tas de meschans nous font vaciller. Il fault entendre que la iustice de l'homme deuant Dieu vient & procede de la foy, esperance, & charité...Et ces malheureux heretiques disent: croyez bien-fort, & vous estes absouls et sauuez...[Dieu] ne me contraint point: il me laisse en mon liberal & franc arbitre...Ces pauures malheureux heretiques sont en ceste resuerie que nous ne pouuons auoir la foy sans charité. Et S. Paul dit le contraire. En paradis on a charité sans foy & esperance, lesquelles deux vertuz ont imperfection...Mais quand nous tiendrons Dieu, que parfaictement nous le possederons, quand nous serons en son sein, & qu'il sera en nous, il ne faudra plus rien esperer...et vous aurez parfaicte charité...Donc la plus grande vertu c'est charite. Chrestiens, j'ay dit au commencement que ces trois

vertus mettent difference & distinction entre le Turc & le Chrestien. Mais en quoy cognoist on la difference qui est entre le bon & le mauuais chrestien? Le mauuais peut auoir la foy & le bon aussi...Il n'y a que la seule charité qui mette difference entre les enfans de Dieu, & les enfans du diable & de perdition. Le mauuais chrestien ne fait point les euures par amour, mais par crainte. Donc charité est la plus grande des vertus. (313)

[These wretched heretics say: provided that you have faith, you will be saved. They say that contrition makes man a hypocrite...One can say to us like saint Paul. *O insensati Galatae, quis vos fascinavit non obedire veritati?* The truth is so manifest and so patent: & nevertheless a bunch of mean people make us vacillate. One must understand that man's justice before God comes & proceeds from faith, hope, & charity...And these wretched heretics say: believe very strongly, & you are absolved and saved...[God] does not constrain me: he leaves me to my liberal & free will...These poor wretched heretics have this daydream that we cannot have faith without charity. And Saint Paul says the opposite. In paradise one has charity without faith & hope, which two virtues have imperfection...But when we will hold God, as perfectly we will possess Him, when we are in his breast, & he is in us, it will no longer be necessary to hope for anything...and you will have perfect charity...Thus the greatest

> virtue is charity. Christians, I said at the beginning that these three virtues place the difference & distinction between the Turk & the Christian. But in what does one know the difference between the good & the bad christian? The bad one can have faith & the good one too...There is but charity alone that places the difference between the children of God, & the children of the devil & of perdition. The bad christian does not do works out of love, but out of fear. Thus charity is the greatest of virtues.] (my translation)

Le Picart assumes that the existence, in heaven, of charity without hope or faith (he interprets this from 1 Corinthians 13), means that it is possible for Christians in this world to have faith without performing charitable works. Since charity (or love), the preacher also argues, is the only virtue to continue into the perfection of heavenly merging with God, it must be the greatest virtue. Here, Le Picart could be in direct dialogue with Aimé Meigret.[296]

Meigret, in 1524, had already heard and was reacting to the orthodox Catholic argument that if faith alone justifies people, they will no longer seek to do good works. Meigret uses James 2:18, "*Ostende* (ait) *mihi fidem tuam sine operibus, et ego ostendam tibi ex operibus fidem meam*" ("Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds."), as support for the notion - explicitly attributed to Saint Augustine, showing that Meigret uses Catholic patristic tradition when he can - that "*si est, operatur; et si non operatur, non est*...Si elle [la foy] est en toy, elle produira bonnes oeuvres; et si elle ne les produict, elle n'y est pas" ["*si est, operatur; et si non operatur, non est*...If it [faith] is in you, it will produce good works; and if it does not produce them, it is not there"]. (27) Le Picart, explicitly identifying Christians

[296] See above, page 184.

like Meigret as the "bad" Christians, those "heretics" who "have this daydream that we cannot have faith without charity," and cites the first Epistle to the Corinthians to show that "in paradise one has charity without faith & hope, which two virtues have imperfection...Thus the greatest virtue is charity."

Le Picart also follows a parallel line of reasoning to the same goal, concluding once again that "charity is the greatest of virtues," but for a different reason. It is all well and good to tell the difference between "the Turk" and "the Christian," but surely his listeners wish above all to distinguish between "good" Christians and "bad" Christians. "Charity alone [makes] the difference between "bad" Christians, those "children of the devil," and good Catholics, and *that* is why charity is the greatest of all virtues. Here we can see that the witch-hunt mentality has upended the exegetical system, and the rather shadowy political exigencies of the moment have overtaken a logic supposed at least to have been adopted or adapted from the Bible's text. Virtues are defined by the Church, then prized precisely for their value as markers of "good" and "bad" people, and any objects of biblical criticism (Galatians, Philistines, or whomever incurs the wrath of the Bible's God) who show up in a scrap of Latin Scripture appended to the sermon text will be subsumed by analogy into the blob of "heretics" threatening the Roman Catholic Church. "Charity" is the greatest virtue because its lack marks the heretic, because performing "charity" properly guarantees one's status as a Catholic in good standing.

On leaf 314, Le Picart further connects his arguments about "charity," which he introduced via a rather arbitrary use of Galatians 3, to an argument based on a blatant misuse of a passage from Psalm 108 he has already floated once on leaf 299.[297]

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[297] See above, page 146-9.

les malheureux heretiques anathematisez du benoist S. Esprit, mal vsans de la charité de Dieu, ne reputent & n'estiment point qu'vn homme soit chrestien s'il n'a charité, & que nul est prestre, Euesque, &c. sans charité. Ie te demande Iudas & Caïphe n'ont ils pas esté Euesques combien qu'il ne valoient rien, & estoient meschans? & à cause de la dignité estant en Caïphe Dieu luy a deferé l'honneur de dire des paroles de prophetie...Et n'a pas fait cest honneur aux gens de bien qui estoient pour lors, comme à Ioseph d'Arimathie, Nicodeme, & autres, car ils n'estoient pas Euesques comme Caïphe. Pourquoy vous voyez bien euidemment que la dignité & authorité episcopale n'est pas fondée en charité. Iudas aussi estoit Euesque comme l'escriture le dit: *Episcopatum eius accipiat alter.*

[the wretched heretics anathematized by the blessed Holy Spirit, bad users of God's charity, neither repute nor esteem that a man is christian if he has not charity, & that no one is a priest, Bishop, etc. without charity. I ask you Judas & Caiaphas were they not Bishops although they were worth nothing, & were mean? & because of the dignity that was in Caiaphas God deferred to him the honor of saying words of prophecy...And he did not do this honor to the good people that were then, like Joseph of Aramathea, Nicodemus, & others, for they were not Bishops like Caiaphas. Whereby you see quite evidently that episcopal dignity & authority

is not founded on charity. Judas also was a Bishop as the scripture says it: *Episcopatum eius accipiat alter*.]

As I noted above, the passage from the Psalm clearly indicates that the audience addressed should move against corrupt "bishops," remove them from office, and disinherit their families. Judas and his fellow villain of the Evangels, Caiaphus, are posited as examples of biblical figures proving that a man can possess episcopal authority without living justly. Therefore, episcopal authority is not founded on charity: "Iudas aussi estoit Euesque comme l'escriture le dit: *Episcopatum eius accipiat alter.*" The Latin phrase, drawn from Psalm 108, is obviously not about Judas or Caiaphus or written by anyone who knew them. But would Le Picart's audience understand or pay attention to this phrase after the word "*Episcopatum*," the sole import of which would thus be to indicate that Le Picart is citing a passage about a bishop?

Marguerite de Navarre, perhaps indicating her closer affinity for preaching styles like Meigret's as opposed to ones like Le Picart's, chooses from Galatians 3 the verse immediately following the ones Meigret uses. The radical preacher uses verses 21 through 26 as part of his argument in favor of salvation - really justification - by faith alone, and Le Picart uses Galatians 3:1 as part of his critique of heretics, totally unchained from scriptural logic. Marguerite, whose characters are not in the habit of criticizing anyone as a "heretic" or intoning solafideist doctrine, will include an allusion to Galatians 3:27 in quite a different way.

In the *Heptaméron*, there are feminist characters, patriarchal characters, misogynist characters, and rapist characters. The feminist characters include Parlamente, Oysille, and Longarine almost always, Ennasuitte and Dagoucin most of the time, Nomerfide sometimes, Geburon sometimes, and Saffredent, Symontault, and Hircain on rare occasions. The patriarchal characters include all ten *devisants*, who assume a host of things about how families should be

run and by whom that are all unqualified acceptance of patriarchal norms. The misogynist characters would include Hircain, Symontault, and Saffredent at almost all times; Geburon sometimes; Dagoucin at moments where his feminist pose wears thin; and from time to time one of the female characters in an indirect way, if one concludes a misogynist attitude or stance based on a *devisante*'s enmity towards another *devisante* (Parlamente and her younger rivals Ennasuitte and Nomerfide, or Oysille and the butt of her bullying, Nomerfide).

The rapist characters include, normally, only Hircain, Symontault, and Saffredent. Dagoucin adheres to patriarchal norms about family planning (he explains this in detail in his exegetical comments following *Heptaméron* 12), and his misogyny can be inferred from his word choice in describing both the chambermaid in *Heptaméron* 37 and the nun in *Heptaméron* 72. He will never, however, espouse a rapist position. Hircain, Symontault, and Saffredent, the three rogues, come to a climax of chauvinistic cameraderie after *Heptaméron* 18, and when the elderly and usually more level-headed Geburon casts his lot with them, Ennasuitte feels compelled to give an example of a young masculine gentleman who could have exhibited the rapist tendencies of Symontault or Saffredent but chose to behave honorably towards his female friend.

First, Saffredent is disappointed that Hircain got rid of the dirty bits that could have been at the end of Hircain's *Heptaméron* 18, which is about a young man who resists some very strong sexual temptations to prove his loyalty to his girlfriend and thus eventually gain access to her as a long-term lover. As Saffredent inquires, "'Et que savons nous...s'il estoit de ceulx que ung chappitre nomme *de frigidis et maleficiatis*? Mais sy Hircain eust voulu parfaire sa louenge, il nous debvoit compter comme il fut gentil compagnon, quant il eut ce qu'il demandoit; et à l'heure pourrions juger sy c'est vertu ou impuissance qui le fist estre sy saige.'" ["'And how do we

know...that he wasn't one of those referred to in a certain chapter headed *De frigidis et maleficiatis*? If Hircan had really wanted to sing this man's praises, he should have gone on to tell us how he acquitted himself when he got what he wanted. The we could judge whether it was his virtue or his impotence that made him so well-behaved!"] (175, 159-64; 218) Hircain, honestly enough, can only assure everyone that he would have told them if he knew or suspected his friend of having been bewitched into impotence and attest to his protagonist's manliness. Simontault then opines that if the main character of the eighteenth story is such as Hircain claims, "'il debvoit rompre son serment. Car, sy pour si peu elle se feust courroucée, elle eust esté legierement appaisée'" ["'he ought to have broken his oath. After all, even if she had got annoyed at a little thing like that, it wouldn't have been too difficult to calm her down again!'"] (175, 170-72; 218) Now Ennasuite breaks in with the crucial objection, framing the whole debate in a way that makes its relevance to the current problem of date rape quite obvious: "'Mais, ce dist Ennasuyte, peult estre que à l'heure elle ne l'eust pas voulu?'" ["'But perhaps she didn't want him to do it just then?' said Ennasuite."] (175, 172-3; 218)

III. Conclusions

I have tried to shed some light on the crucial relationship between Evangelicals and literacy; my contribution could be to add a third dimension to the coordinates one uses to locate an actor in Reformation intellectual life: along with soteriology (how and by whom souls get saved) and ecclesiology (how and to whom the authority of the church is distributed), we must consider literacy (how and by whom the Scriptures are to be read). It is a generally accepted claim that the Reformation spurred literacy greatly.[298] Marguerite performs a figurative reading of the Bible through her *devisants*, whose actions and stories are being compared, at least by the

[298] See Cressy, David, *Society and Culture in Early Modern England*, especially Chapter III, "Literacy in Context."

wiser of their fellows, to examples from holy writ in order to divine their meaning. Warnings from Isaiah against trusting the promises of men and from the Gospels against hypocrisy are placed, in the *devisants*' preaching, in the respective contexts of treacherous contemporary (conveniently Italian) political actors and lecherous clergymen. Oysille and Marguerite's other frame-characters connect their narratives and interpretive remarks during conversation to Bible passages that they have obviously read in Latin and French. This reading knowledge, along with their small, secret meetings in the mornings and their desire not to talk to the monks during the afternoons, makes them seem like precisely the kinds of heterodox believers François Le Picart wants his listeners to denounce and punish.

The *Heptaméron*'s storytellers include social and moral interpretation in their stories as well, looking at their short narratives as paradigmatic cases warranting universalist conclusions and reflections of the reality the *devisants* must navigate. The ten characters are, to a large extent, that courtly reality which they try to comprehend and strategize through by the practical knowledge of their *nouvelles*, their remembrance of God and his Word, and their observation of the speech and physical communication happening around them at Nostre Dame de Sarrance. François Le Picart's *Sermons et Instructions...* and the *Sermon d'Aimé Maigret* are also addressed to audiences that constitute each text's world-view and matrix of communication, but the large Catholic crowds to whom each man preached do not share in the exegetical activity of the men addressing them, and certainly none of the many women who came to see either priest ever got to stand up and answer him with her own interpretation of the Bible texts he was quoting. My analysis of these three authors together is intended to give readers a new idea of the political force and engagement of Marguerite's stories and an appreciation (indeed, for almost all readers,

an *awareness*) of Meigret and Le Picart as rare enduring Francophone predicant voices of the sixteenth century.

The present inquiry seeks principally to understand what uses each of three interconnected actors in the early French Reformation makes of the Bible chapters that each author employs as argumentative support. As a summary commentary, Marguerite de Navarre makes at least seven uses of Scripture through citation or obvious allusion. First, her *devisants* use the Bible to make sense of the vicissitudes and perils of life in Early Modern French society as represented in the *nouvelles*. The frequent introduction of Bible passages popular enough to have been included in both the radical Meigret's and the orthodox Le Picart's sermons into the exegetical discussions surrounding and connecting the *Heptaméron*'s stories makes those passages, as the *devisants* sometimes explicitly state that the Bible should be, the touchstone of interpretation. Even as the Word of God is being used to read and filter each novella in the *Heptaméron*'s storytelling conversation, the frame-characters are also obliged to apply this reading of the Bible as practical wisdom in the (actual as well as merely suspected or incipient) love affairs that entangle all of the storytellers except Oysille and Géburon.

Thirdly, the *devisants* like to cite Bible passages about human weakness when arguing that where faith is lacking, good works will not result, despite human intentions; a classic example of this interpretive technique is in the discussion surrounding *Heptaméron* 30. A fourth and fifth use of the Bible appear when Marguerite's storytellers use Scriptural allusion or citation to argue obliquely for free access to the Bible and against the celibacy of the clergy, as the present study demonstrates in its analysis of *Heptaméron* 35 through 38 in Chapter 2. Sixth, the *Heptaméron* uses Scripture to criticize the sexual criminality of the clergy and laypeople; a good example would be *Heptaméron* 5.

Seventh, finally, and most importantly, the *Heptaméron* uses the Bible to convert interpersonal tensions among Catholics (those resulting from the gender-based, economic, legal, marital, and religious obligations of the *devisants* as opposed to the liaisons those frame-characters desire or already carry on) into coeducational lay religious instruction and group enjoyment of prose narratives. The *Heptaméron* explains in its Prologue that Oysille's morning Bible study sessions and the ten storytellers' afternoon conversations in the meadow are meant to distract the aristocrats from the boredom, frustration, and anxiety of being trapped at the abbey while the bridge is being built. Authors like Carol Thysell have traced the development of what they see as an increasingly harmonious confessional concordance among the *devisants* as the *Heptaméron* progresses, even if a particular confessional term that might characterize Oysille and her pupils never existed (since they cannot be rightly held to be Calvinist, neo-Platonist, Lutheran, or - except in a very complicated way - Catholic). I would say, along with André Tournon, that:

> la prolifération des "nouvelles" trouve sa raison d'être dans les énigmes d'une réalité composite, variable selon l'enchevêtrement des "causes secondes" qui la déterminent. Cela se traduit, dans le recueil, en une *combinatoire* narrative dont les ressources dépassent peut-être celles du roman tel qu'il se constitue plus tard, avec ses soucis de cohérence, de vraisemblance ou de réalisme qui imposent, sauf exceptions, le respect des principes d'identité et de continuité. En composant son recueil selon un système propre à favoriser les agencements multiples, les superpositions et concurrences de versions, de configurations stylistiques, de

> significations, Marguerite de Navarre trouve le moyen d'articuler entre elles la vérité et la fiction, les messages religieux ou moraux et les jeux, le sens spirituel et le sens ludique.
>
> [the proliferation of the "nouvelles" finds its *raison d'être* in the enigmas of a composite reality, variable according to the entanglement of "second causes" that determine it. That is traslated, in the collection, into a narrative *combinatoire* whose resources perhaps surpass those of the novel as it is later constituted, with its worries about coherence, verisimilitude or realism which impose, exceptions aside, respect for the principles of identity and continuity. In composing her collection according to a system apt to favor multiple agencies, superpositioned and competing versions, stylistic confirgurations, and meanings, Marguerite de Navarre finds the means of articulating among them truth and fiction, religious or moral messages and games, the spiritual sense and the ludic sense.][299]

The "sens spirituel" (in terms of wit) corresponds to the *devisants*' readings of realistic cases of adultery in the *nouvelles* - this reading becomes the battle over polemic force in which Parlamente and Hircain take top billing but receive plenty of support from the other frame-characters. The "sens ludique" could mean anything from the *devisants*' figurative and literal readings of their short fictions as examples of behavior one might expect from the other nine, to their attempts to use their stories and framing conversations to try to cuckold or seduce one

[299] Tournon (1992) 18; my translation.

another or pretend to be trying to do so for some ulterior reason, to the ultimate diegetical, exegetical game. Preaching and religious instruction, like the *Heptaméron*, mix diegetical and exegetical discourse and take a particular pleasure in exploring how the two are related - I don't think that we need to argue that this exploration has a destination, especially given that Marguerite's book was never finished. There is an array of possible "composite realities" all simultaneously operating, threads that can thus be teased back out of the narratives through exegetical examination of each *nouvelle* by readers - or listeners - using literal, figurative, moralist, or social readings of the Bible. Such readings will lead us to different "second causes" determining the world around us, the test subjects will keep pushing the button on the "*combinatoire*" which is the Queen's textual machinery, and the different "stylistic configurations" which result, which can mix in the same collection without worrying about "coherence," provide readers with a range of examples of early modern Europeans' uses of storytelling and preaching.

What interests my own analysis most is the practical use made of the political power inherent in the predicant position. The intracommunity strife that might ordinarily weaken the cohesiveness of the flock is converted, in the case of the *Heptaméron*, the *Sermon d'Aimé Meigret*, and Le Picart's *Sermons et Instructions...*, into the energy to do something else. This "something else" in the *Heptaméron* resembles a (rather modern) university, indeed, something like a mixture of the Boccaccian *brigata*'s Tuscan countryside and Rabelais's Abbaye de Thélème. Men and women mix, instructional power is shared between the sexes, and students give themselves over to enjoyment of the Bible, creative writing, and recitation. The ever-threatening sexuality and transgressivity that cloud the *devisants*' world are partially sublimated into the narrative energy of the storytelling game and daily Scriptural instruction.

Aimé Meigret, for his part, makes at least six principal uses of the Bible. First, where Marguerite de Navarre, like Castiglione, prefers to argue obliquely, Meigret uses the Word to argue quite explicitly against the Church's celibacy requirement for the priesthood. Second, Meigret argues against any obligatory acts of piety not described in Scripture and demanded under threat of damnation. Third, Meigret argues for justification by faith alone. Fourth, Meigret also argues for the concomitant presence of good works with faith, despite the primacy of the latter. Fifth, Meigret, like Marguerite, cites Scripture while criticizing the criminal sexuality of the clergy, although unlike Marguerite, Meigret does not extend this criticism to laypeople.

Meigret's sixth use of the Bible is the key one for my analyis. Whereas the *Heptaméron*'s characters seem to accept a slow process of reform, one in which aristocrats like themselves play key roles, Meigret attempts to convert the interpersonal tensions among Catholics into the energy needed for radical reform. The *devisants* have many different currents of actual or potential hostility - Hircain could resent Symontault's pursuit of his wife, Parlamente is suspicious of young women like Ennasuite and Nomerfide, Saffredent's position as an aging courtier still engaged in love affairs invites the others' ridicule, and so on. In Meigret's case, the interpersonal tensions he seeks to galvanize in one particular political direction are largely between the muttering audience and himself, although the ideas he exposed in Lyon also caused no small amount of discord among his readers. He seeks, through his exegesis of and commentary on certain chapters, to convert this discord into belief in the ideals of the Reform and anger at the Church's non-Scriptural additions to the Christian faith. However, his resigned reaction to the crowd's hostility also suggests that his pose is somewhat disingenuous and his role that of the

wilfull martyr. If punishment, not power, was indeed what Aimé Meigret sought, his predicant discourse was structured appropriately.

Le Picart makes very different uses of Scripture, compared to Marguerite and Meigret, and the present analysis concentrates on seven principle uses. First of all, Le Picart uses Bible passages, such as those about Saint Paul's gift for languages, as support for the idea of a clear distinction between clergy and laypeople, establishing that the former must (regarding intellectual pursuits) assume more privileges and responsibility than the latter. Le Picart leans on the Gospel to support the notion that ordinary people should not seek education beyond their station in life and that Reformers are damned by the very fact of their having changed the Vulgate, regardless of the merits of Reformers' arguments for such emendations. The high frequency with which untranslated Latin appears in Le Picart's sermons turns the Vulgate text into an instrument of dominance, cited as the ultimate source of all truth yet comprehensible only to a small percentage of the audience.

Second, and here Le Picart differs from Meigret and especially Marguerite, Le Picart likes to use Scripture to admonish the rich to be more generous to the poor. He does mean by these admonitions to encourage more giving to the Church, but Le Picart also confronts the ungenerous rich with the plight of the poor in a more general way very frequently in his sermons. Third, Le Picart also cites Bible passages to chastise absentee clerical office-holders, again an abuse ignored by the *Heptaméron*'s conversations. Fourth, and in contradiction to his third purpose, Le Picart argues that immoral office-holders retain their spiritual authority until and unless they are removed by the Church. Fifth, Le Picart uses Biblical citation to argue that the abuse of France's legal system will profit its abusers nothing.

The sixth and seventh uses of Scripture are the most important for the present study as they most clearly demarcate Le Picart from both Meigret and Marguerite. Le Picart uses Latin biblical quotes as a cover for the introduction of non-biblical Latin text written by Catholic authorities into sermons designed to bolster people's confidence in all the Church's traditions - a practice that is hardly introduced in the *Sermon d'Aimé Meigret* or the *Heptaméron* but rampant in the *Sermons & Instructions...* Seventh, last and most important, Le Picart uses biblical quotation to convert interpersonal tensions among Catholics into anger at Protestants. Where Marguerite sublimates society's violent undercurrents into Bible study, creative writing, and conversation and Meigret tries to turn his audience's anger against what he sees as the corrupt ecclesiastic hierarchy of the Roman Church, Le Picart wonders aloud how his listeners can be so lax about "heretics," given that his parishioners will fight each other over money any day of the week.

The implication is clear: Le Picart's congregation needs to put aside its disputes pitting Catholic against Catholic in order to remain focused and vigilant in the fight against heresy. The historical Le Picart secured the privilege of reading practically everything and helping make up the rules as he went along, for he was personally involved in deciding which books to ban and in crafting the Articles of Faith that the Gallican Church asserted as its response against Lutherans (and later Calvinists). In many ways, the deficit between Le Picart as speaker of the *Sermons & Instructions...* and his audience is quite stark: he can quote Latin at will, sometimes providing translations and making more logical connections between biblical text and argument, other times citing totally out of context and in a way that does not make sense for his argument, and still other times citing non-Scriptural sources in close proximity to citations of the Bible, making

the non-Scriptural sources appear biblical. Le Picart's attempt is to capture the crowd's attention so as to refocus its anger on the enemies of orthodoxy.

All three texts make similar claims about humans' inability to attain salvation on our own and need for faith and God's grace to obtain eternal life, and other such Christian commonplaces. Le Picart's vituperation of heretics and scrupulous repetition of Church dogma concerning the intercession of the saints and any other issue of particular interest to Protestants sets him clearly apart from Meigret and the *devisants*, as does his citation of the Bible in Latin without translation and his presentation of non-biblical Latin quotes in a way that makes them seem biblical. Meigret, meanwhile, is unique among the three in his willingness to accumulate statements that antagonize the Church. Marguerite's characters would never condone the slide towards constitutionalism threatened by Meigret's rather ambiguous references to princes celestial, diabolical, and human, nor would they characterize the fasts and other outward acts of piety performed by some Catholics as "inventions of the devil." As I have demonstrated in Chapter 2, however, in the discussions after novellas thirty-five through thirty-eight they come close to the same conclusion as Meigret and Luther: that marriage is the best condition for most people, including most clergy. The *devisants* have a dismissive attitude towards fasts and ostentatious displays of piety, although this attitude can subside in the presence of a *nouvelle* character who performs these acts sincerely. That they agree in substance with Meigret's declarations and may actually go further is indicated (again more gracefully, more indirectly) by the top-level narrator's opening remarks in the Prologue to Day One as well as by stories like Novella 72, where pilgrimages or other such outward acts of piety believed to have a particular power are marginalized and ridiculed.

Marguerite's characters may share (or come to share over the course of the *Heptaméron*) a soteriological and ecclesiological viewpoint close to Meigret's. Nevertheless, Marguerite's presentation of this viewpoint is made from a delicate position of power whose advantages expand and contract according to the prince's whim. In the circumstances of her historical life and in the studied indirectness with which her *devisants* broach politically sensitive topics, Marguerite resembles Castiglione more than Meigret. The speakers in her dialogues will present enough evidence, via their diegesis and exegesis, their storytelling and their interpretations, for a reader to draw heretical conclusions; the women's active participation in (and frequent dominance over) the *Heptaméron*'s predicant debates indicates that women can preach to a mixed audience just as ably as men; but neither the top-level narrative voice nor the *devisants* dare make these radical declarations bluntly and openly, as Meigret makes his.

The power dynamics of the three texts, and the ways in which those power dynamics affected the lives of their historical authors, may be summarized as three different possible relationships of writer to audience. François Le Picart was a literate man writing for an illiterate audience, and his preaching – so clumsy to the informed reader, with all its sloppy uses of Scripture – was wildly successful. He was an honored, popular man of the Church, even if he was imprisoned briefly for castigating "heretical" preachers in the employ of Marguerite de Navarre. Marguerite de Navarre was a literate woman writing for a literate readership rather than preaching in the streets to the masses, and even so she never sought to publish the *Heptaméron* during her own lifetime, preferring to share manuscripts directly with friends. She was a woman who knew how to stay in power or, failing that, out of trouble.

Aimé Meigret wrote a sermon that might have been well-received among many of his fellow clergymen knowledgeable about Scripture and accustomed to disputing doctrine among

themselves. Unfortunately for him, he chose to publish his views not only in print but also in the form of his spoken sermon. The crowd's hostile reaction to his theology (much more accurate and Scripturally based than Le Picart's) was soon echoed by French national authorities, who most certainly drove Meigret into obscurity, if not necessarily into exile in Strasbourg, as is historians' current theory.

In creating the storytelling preachers Oysille, Geburon, Saffredent, Parlamente, Hircain, Longarine, Symontault, Ennasuite, Nomerfide, and Dagoucin, Marguerite provides a portrait of the inescapability of sexual tension even at an evangelically-minded court. She also indirectly asserts a connection between erroneous exegesis and personal immorality, keeping the focus on subjects in whom those habits are combined – ignorant or deceptive and lascivious clergymen – rather than those who, like François Le Picart, combine dogmatic intolerance, calculating manipulation of the ignorance of the faithful, and near-perfect moral rectitude, a combination that French partisans of Reform could not overcome.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

In **Chapter 2**, "Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Petrarch's *Epistolae Rerum Senilium or Letters in Old Age*, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron*: Four Frames for a Portrait of a Patient Wife," this dissertation argues that in framed-novellas, narratives threatening patriarchy provoke deployment of complex and innovative framing devices. Even though the frames constructed around such threatening stories in the *Decameron* and the *Canterbury Tales* are aimed at containing the tensions between heteronormative myths and the queerness of lived experience, their attempts at a controlling framework serve as a model for later authors – like Marguerite de Navarre – seeking to undo the very gender stereotypes that their predecessors shored up. Furthermore, readers attempting to decipher the meaning of temporally and spatially distant, very complex textually represented verbal interactions, like the *brigata*'s, the Pilgrims', or the *devisants*' conversations, can begin to map out the cultural horizons of these medieval and early modern European people by attending closely to the moments when frame-characters become unwilling or unable to continue talking about a certain example, story, or topic. Closures of discussion, for scholars studying framed short fictions (or closely related texts like the example-laden conversations of the *Book of the Courtier*), can provide clues to the cultural and political boundaries limiting imagined communities' freedom of speech.

In **Chapter 3**, "Intertextual Iconographic Narrative: How "Katherine/Conrard" of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* becomes "Rolandine" of the *Heptaméron*," the present study demonstrates a complex chain of filiation connecting *Heptaméron* 21 not only to *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* 26 but also to sixteenth-century pardon requests and saints' lives. Chapter 3 aims to

correct readings of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* that have overemphasized short, irreverant, bawdy stories in that collection and overlooked its more reflective, psychological, lengthy, and moralistic narratives. In reading one of the longest *Heptaméron* novellas, "Rolandine," in tandem with one of the longest of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*, "Katherine/Conrard," my analysis concentrates instead on comparing and contrasting the types of transformations that these two didactic tales about clever, virtuous women portray.

Although both the Burgundian story and its later French non-analogous descendant text assume a pro-female stance, the *Heptaméron* breaks from its predecessor in allowing the heroine to alter herself permanently through her own speech. Katherine becomes Conrard when she assumes the clothing and imitates the speech of men, but she does this only long enough to find out whether her lover has remained true to her. When she finds out that he hasn't, Katherine humiliates him not once but twice (in her letter and in her refusal to dance with him at her wedding) and repudiates him in favor of a wedding match arranged by her family. I suspect students will tend to find Katherine/Conrard a more appealing character than Rolandine, in contradiction of most literary critics, because Rolandine's identity as a martyr will make her appear weak and irrational, while Katherine's straightforward pursuit of her own interests is more easily identifiable as the course of action of a rational, self-maximizing subject.

The supplicant who addresses a pardon request to the authorities, like the protagonist of a martyred saint's life, is not in full possession of a subject position; the straightfoward pursuit of the supplicant's or martyr's own best interests is not an available option, because the exchange between supplicant and sovereign, or between martyr and God, is not a conversation between equals. In romantic intrigues in many types of *Heptaméron* novella, men's lasciviousness and agression conspire to reduce women to the status of objects (of sexual desire, exchange, etc.)

despite women's best efforts to conduct love affairs towards the ends that they desire – usually amounting to satisfaction with honor intact.

Chapter 4, "'The Mother of the Renaissance,' 'the Soul of Paris,' and Aimé Meigret: Marguerite de Navarre's Engagement with Contemporary Preachers," maintains that the *Heptaméron* answers and enters into dialogue with contemporary preachers with whom the historical Marguerite was involved, such as Aimé Meigret and François Le Picart, through the *devisants*' unusual uses of Bible passages also favored by the professional predicants. Whereas Marguerite's characters come very close to stating some of Meigret's most provocative "Lutheran" claims, they nonetheless remain allusive and ambiguous when preaching. Le Picart stakes out a position as defender - and authoritarian obscurantist author - of the contemporary officially sanctioned Catholic position. He and Meigret both add or subtract words to and from Scripture when it suits their purposes, and neither of them is interested in the relationship between religious hierarchy and gender hierarchy that appears to have fascinated Marguerite.

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