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Global Chaucers: Reflections on Collaboration and Digital Futures

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Candace Barrington
Jonathan Hsy

What happens when the Chaucerian pilgrimage is translated into Arabic as a *hajj*? How does re-imagining the Wife of Bath as a Jamaican aunty reshape our understanding of the housewife's performance? Can a poet map all of Chaucer's manifold voices onto varied registers of Brazilian Portuguese? How does a Chinese translator of *The Canterbury Tales* make medieval English cultural practices legible to present-day readers?

These kinds of surprising and wide-ranging questions animate and propel *Global Chaucers*, our multilingual, international, and multi-year project that began as an effort to locate, catalog, translate, archive, and analyze non-Anglophone appropriations and translations of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.* Since its founding in 2012, this project has rapidly changed in response to scholars' diverse interests and our expanding discoveries, thereby surpassing our original archival impulses. Almost all the changes were prompted and made possible by our online presence (including a blog and Facebook group), and digital media constitutes our primary means for gathering information, disseminating our findings, advertising conferences and events, and promoting the resource to other scholars. Because digital media allows widely dispersed participants to traverse geographical and linguistic barriers, *Global Chaucers* has become a network of scholars, translators, and students seeking to engage in manifold ways with reworkings of Chaucerian material from around the world. Digital media have shaped *Global Chaucers* in ways not foreseen in 2012.

In this way, *Global Chaucers* shares scholars' increased interest in the interface between medieval literature and digital media. Not only have academic venues such as *postmedieval: a*

journal of medieval cultural studies and *Digital Humanities Quarterly* investigated the conversation between medieval studies and new media studies, but they have also created productive spaces for medievalists to explore innovative forms of scholarship that rework received genres of academic writing. These journals have promoted thought experiments—such as theoretical reflections on the similarities between medieval and online modes of textual creation—as well as endorsed mixed-media "digital essays" that break open the form of the academic essay.[1] For instance, Sarah L. Higley's recent article, a study of machinima remediations of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* via Second Life, deftly moves between academic realms of theory and practice.[2] In particular, Higley examines both scholarly conversations about "neomedievalist" modes of storytelling and the practical realities of creating such collaborative digital productions.

Our present discussion of *Global Chaucers* also negotiates theory and practice, addressing both the abstract conceptual framework of a collaborative project and the ongoing tangible practicalities of building a digital network of dispersed participants.[3] In addition to

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1. See Jen Boyle and Martin Foys,"Becoming media,"*postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies* 3.1 (2012): 1–6. Note also in this volume a digital essay that requires the reader to dynamically interact with the web interface in order to navigate the work: Whitney Anne Trettien, "Plant → animal → book: Magnifying a microhistory of media circuits," *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies* 3. 1 (2012): 97–118, accessed June 21, 2015, http://www.palgrave-journals.com/pmed/journal/v3/n1/plantanimalbook/index.html. For a "Janus-faced" reading of how medievalist and digital humanist approaches link the past and future and thus have the potential to reshape theoretical paradigms of book history, see Alison Tara Walker, "The Boundless Book: A Conversation between the Pre-modern and Posthuman," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 7. 1 (2013), accessed June 21, 2015, http://digitalhumanities.org:8081/dhq/vol/7/1/000140/000140.html.

2. Sarah L. Higley, "'For it Accordeth Noght to Kinde'": Gower's *Confessio Amantis* in Machinima," *Accessus: A Journal of Premodern Literature and New Media* 2.1, article 2, accessed June 21, 2015, http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/accessus/vol2/iss1/2.

3. To invoke the discursive conventions of Digital Humanities (DH) communities, our discussion strikes a balance between "DH 1" approaches (which focus on building, using, and

providing a broad overview of our project's origins, its evolving digital presence, and the texts it promotes and celebrates, we use this opportunity to consider how *Global Chaucers* models new forms of collaboration for Chaucerians specifically and medieval-literature scholars more generally. While we continue to develop answers to the questions in our opening paragraph, these reflections will present some of the practical challenges we face and future directions our efforts might take. Our account also serves to describe in broad terms how we have sought to integrate new conceptual paradigms with online tools (including blog platforms and social media). We hope thereby to provide a potential model for others wanting to experiment with new ways of creating an intellectual and artistic collective that traverses academic and nonacademic communities.

Origins

Global Chaucers began as a collaboration using digital media in order to ask new questions about understudied materials and to make good on David Wallace's challenge to explore "new Chaucer topographies" when we trace the medieval author's literary reception.[4] The project has allowed us (its lead collaborators) to build on our different perspectives, research agendas, and theoretical orientations. For Jonathan Hsy, *Global Chaucers* extends his interests in the polyglot contexts of Chaucer and his contemporaries.[5] In addition, Hsy's extensive

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connecting digital data) and "DH 2" concerns (which invest in cultural analysis). See Adeline Koh, "Niceness, Building, and Opening the Genealogy of the Digital Humanities: Beyond the Social Contract of Humanities Computing," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 25. 1 (2014): 93–106; Stephen Ramsay, "DH Types One and Two," accessed April 20, 2015, http://stephenramsay.us/2013/05/03/dh-one-and-two.

4. David Wallace, "New Chaucer Topographies," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 29 (2007): 3–19, at 5.

5. Jonathan Hsy, *Trading Tongues: Merchants, Multilingualism, and Medieval Literature* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2013). Hsy's book examines the craft of polyglot

bibliography of non-Anglophone reworkings of Chaucer amassed over the years formed the kernel for our archive. For Candace Barrington, *Global Chaucers* is an extension of her long-term scholarship on the presence and uses of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in American popular culture.[6] The meeting of our combined research interests shaped *Global Chaucers*' most distinctive features: an interest in the ways languages shape meaning, historical contexts shape interpretation, and digital methods enhance collaboration across disparate cultural settings.

We turned to Chaucer because we sensed that worldwide dissemination of his work made him an ideal author for a multi-site, pluralistic approach to reception studies. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a repeatedly updated and frequently translated Chaucer had moved across the planet, first through the nineteenth-century imperial project to disseminate British values to so-called unruly heathens and later as a part of the institutionalization of those values. Students in British colonial schools encountered excerpts, and adults carried anthologies and pocket volumes featuring Chaucerian selections. In these various formats, Chaucer's poetry, especially *The Canterbury Tales*, continues to be taught (generally in translation) to young readers around the world. Initially, such use of Chaucer helped shape the literary imagination of those educated in former British colonies. More recently, an increasing pedagogical emphasis on global diversity has coincided with Chaucer's entry into non-Anglophone countries' classrooms through world literature courses, and his work is increasingly translated and reshaped to fit the needs of vastly different cultures.

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writing in Chaucer's day and modern-day contexts, and provides a theoretical foundation for thinking about Chaucer in comparative contexts and non-Anglophone frameworks.

6. Candace Barrington, *American Chaucers* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). In addition to *American Chaucers*, Barrington has published a series of articles, all using a historicist lens inflected by other relevant theoretical paradigms to explore Chaucer's reception in American popular culture.

In building a worldwide network of scholars and others with interests in Chaucer reception, the *Global Chaucers* project lends insight into the divergent ways Chaucer's work has been adapted into local contexts. We have found that many reworkings of Chaucer generally target the non-expert reader, and liberties are freely taken as a result. His verse has been switched to prose, his tales imagined as novels and plays, and his Christian audience imagined as Maoist secularists. *The Canterbury Tales* is especially amenable to adaptation; its variety of narrators, genres, forms, and styles provides ample opportunities for making *The Canterbury Tales* adapt to new cultural environments. The process of reinterpreting Chaucer's tales and remaking them to suit new purposes need not be brazen: omitting a tale or two, skipping a few lines, bowdlerizing a translation here or there—each alteration gives the tales a new valence. Add to that process the need to explain peculiarly medieval or British details, and the opportunities for reworking and appropriating *The Canterbury Tales* can seem endless. Whether careful translations or freer adaptations, these locally specific Chaucers not only reacquaint English speakers with familiar tales, but also provide a rich repository for addressing a range of contemporary concerns.

Prior to our project, however, Chaucer reworkings created in non-Western countries or outside of English-speaking settings received little critical or scholarly attention. The extensive scholarship examining and analyzing Chaucer's reception in the British Isles, Australasia, and North America indicated significant interest in Chaucerian appropriation, so a lack of interest does not explain why his reception outside a so-called "inner circle" of English-speaking countries has historically attracted so much less attention, or why scholarship is almost non-existent for Chaucer's reception in post-1945, non-Anglophone cultures.[7] In a broad sense, an

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7. This term "inner circle" was first popularized by Braj B. Kachru in *The Other Tongue: English across Cultures* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1992) and "World Englishes: Approaches, Issues and Resources," *Language Teaching* 25.1 (1992): 1–14. Examples of scholarship in this vein are very limited; see Mari Pakkla-Weckström,"Translating Chaucer's

academic disinterest in Chaucerian reception beyond the Anglophone inner circle reflects

longstanding conventions in medieval literary and linguistic historiography. As Mary Catherine

Davidson has astutely observed, a "typically monolingual, often nationalist, and sometimes

collective sense of Anglophone belonging across time and space" has long structured academic

discourses about Chaucer and his legacy worldwide.[8] According to this perspective, the

presumed "normative monolingualism" of dominant modes of English literary historiography is

disrupted by efforts from outside the Anglophone context to assert claims to Chaucer and by

attempts to acknowledge how Chaucer's own multilingualism redefines his Englished texts.[9]

Either effort provokes resistance.

 While postcolonial and sociolinguistic theory (as invoked by Davidson) can provide one

explanation for the dearth of scholarship outside the inner circle of mainstream Chaucer studies,

we have learned that a number of more practical issues play a role as well. Structural causes for

the scarcity seem twofold: many post-1945 adaptations and translations around the world are

difficult for Anglophone scholars to locate, and no common forum has existed for scholars

working on Chaucerian reception in different parts of the world to interact and share their

findings. A Turkish translation might be a steady seller in Istanbul, but few readers or scholars

beyond Turkey's borders know about or have studied it. By providing access to untapped

resources, *Global Chaucers* addresses the practical needs of those wanting to understand the

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Power Play into Modern English and Finnish," in *Interfaces Between Language and Culture in Medieval England: A Festschrift for Matti Kilpiö* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 307–27; Ebbe Klitgård, *Chaucer in Denmark: A Study of the Translation and Reception History, 1782–2012* (Odense, Denmark: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2013); Mimi Chan, "On Translating Chaucer into Chinese," *Renditions* 8 (1977): 39–51.

 8. Mary Catherine Davidson, *Medievalism, Multilingualism, and Chaucer* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 2.

 9. Ibid., 5.

ways non-Anglophone cultures have adapted British literary traditions for their own local purposes, audiences or objectives. Providing a repository of texts was not enough, however. To address the linguistic and national barriers constraining the scholarship on Chaucer's reception, we adjusted our vision of *Global Chaucers* and transformed it into an international forum for digitally sharing all things concerning Chaucer's global reception. *Global Chaucers* has thence shown itself to have broader implications than we initially imagined. The enterprise not only tests new theoretical paradigms for Chaucer studies (moving away from a presumed normative monolingual model to a flexible multilingual orientation); it also seeks to transform the infrastructure of scholarly practice.

Global Chaucers' Digital Presence

Currently, *Global Chaucers*' primary digital presence is its website, temporarily located at www.globalchaucers.wordpress.com, where we deposit everything we have collected: a master list of translations; lists and links to literary, musical, and performance adaptations; online resources; a bibliography of scholarship; statements on our research methods; and recordings of translators reading short passages from their translations. Much to our surprise, though, we have primarily used the website as an international bulletin board where we apprise our readers of the latest discoveries, announce publications, summarize conference proceedings, review scholarship, and post the initial findings made by us and our guest bloggers. The blog postings range from conventional historical and scholarly analysis—Megan Cook and David Hadbawnik's query of Francis Kynaston's Latin translation of *Troilus and Criseyde* as a seventeenth-century global Chaucer—to the playful and experimental—an eleven-language collection of the General Prologue's opening lines that observe the first *Whan That Aprille Day*

in 2014, social media's joyful celebration of "al the langages that have come bifor."[10] Eventually our website will house transcripts of translator interviews and feature non-Anglophone translations for crowd-sourced back translation and annotation. All the while, we announce updates through Twitter and on our Facebook page to ensure that readers remain informed. These modes of social media help make *Global Chaucers*' artifacts into "likeable objects" and encourage otherwise unwitting collaborators to help us make sense of them.[11]

The website has benefitted the project in other ways as well. To help establish the credibility and legitimacy of the project, we have found it useful to provide the website's link when we follow leads or make cold calls contacting authors or translators. Conversely, by providing us with a searchable internet presence, the website allows authors and translators to find us before we find them. For instance, Martin Ciura used the website to tell us about *Sejm Ptasi*, his new translation of Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules* into sixteenth-century Polish;[12] and within an hour after Barrington posted an announcement that we had learned about a new Brazilian Portuguese translation of *The Canterbury Tales*, the translator, José Francisco Botelho,

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10. Megan Cook and David Hadbawnik, "'His Latin stile hath Englisht thee': Kynaston's 1636 *Troilus and Criseyde*, "*Global Chaucers* blog, published November 4, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/11/04/his-latin-stile-hath-englisht-thee-kynastons-latin-troilus-and-criseyde-2. Candace Barrington and Jonathan Hsy, "Whan That Aprille Day 2014," *Global Chaucers* blog, published April 1, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/04/01/whan-that-aprille-day-2014. *Geoffrey Chaucer Hath a Blog*, "Maken Melodye on Whan That Aprille Day," published March 20, 2014, http://houseoffame.blogspot.com/2014/03/maken-melodye-on-whan-that-aprille-day.html.

11. Michael Cobb, "A Little Like Reading: Preference, *Facebook*, and Overwhelmed Interpretations," *PMLA* 128. 1 (2013): 201–206, at 201.

12. Candace Barrington, "*Sejm ptasi*: A new translation of the *Parlement of Foules* in 16ᵗʰ-century Polish," *Global Chaucers* blog, published January 17, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/01/17/sejm-ptasi-a-new-translation-of-the-parlement-of-foules-in-16th-century-polish.

contacted her to volunteer any help he could provide.[13] Both contacts have resulted in extensive interviews, and Barrington has presented a paper on Botelho's *Contos da Cantuária* at Real Colegio Complutense at Harvard's I International Conference in Transatlantic Literature.[14] The website also allows us to bring together media from multiple sources. Thus, anyone interested in Patience Agbabi's *Telling Tales* (2014), a verse recasting of Chaucer's tales, can follow its development through our links to her blogs, website, YouTube readings, humorous Twitter exchanges with the Chaucer blogger (@LeVostreGC), and open-access journal publications, as well as our own postings and (forthcoming) article on her retelling of *The Tale of Melibee*.[15]

Placing various blogs on the homepage has generated interest in the larger project and its constitutive texts. Guest bloggers have included Ebbe Klitgård, Gail Ashton, Joseph Stadolnik, Megan Cook, and David Hawbadnik. On our blog, Klitgård, author of *Chaucer in Denmark: A Study of the Translation and Reception History 1782–2012* (2013), previews his work on Flemming Bergsøe's translations of *Konen fra Bath* [*The Wife of Bath*];[16] and Ashton reports on

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13. Candace Barrington, "*Contos da Cantuária* translated into Brazilian Portuguese by José Francisco Botelho," *Global Chaucers* blog, published November 20, 2013, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2013/11/20/contos-da-cantuaria-translated-into-brazilian-portuguese-by-jose-francisco-botelho.

14. Candace Barrington, "Spaces of Dialogue: I International Conference in Transatlantic Literature," *Global Chaucers* blog, published June 28, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/06/28/spaces-of-dialogue-i-international-conference-in-transatlantic-literature.

15. Candace Barrington, "Coming soon: Patience Agbabi's *Telling Tales*!" *Global Chaucers* blog, published January 27, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/01/27/coming-soon-patience-agbabis-telling-tales. Candace Barrington and Jonathan Hsy, "Remediated Verse: Chaucer's *Tale of Melibee* and Patience Agbabi's 'Unfinished Business,'" *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies* 6.2 (2015): forthcoming.

16. Ebbe Klitgård, with introduction by Candace Barrington, "Chaucer in Denmark," *Global Chaucers* blog, published August 2, 2013, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2013/08/02/chaucer-in-denmark.

a ticketed performance, the Poet in the City's *Chaucer: Modern Echoes*, held at Southwark

Cathedral in April 2014.[17] Stadolnik ruminates on José Luis Romero's post-Peronist

appropriation of Chaucer,[18] while Cook and Hawbadnik join forces to consider Kynaston's

seventeenth-century translation of *Troilus and Criseyde* into Latin, a global language

nonpareil.[19] In addition to announcing publications and performances of interest, we have each

provided summaries of medievalism conferences we attend, papers we present at those venues,

and roundtables we have organized directly related to the *Global Chaucers* project. Along the

way, we have shared samples of scholarship being prepared for publication. Our use of the blog

space and social media collapses the time between our initial work on the project and getting it to

an audience; it also collapses geographical and institutional space, allowing us and our guest

writers to receive feedback from a forum wider than our immediate circles, an important factor

for a cutting edge and experimental endeavor such as ours.

Clearly essential to *Global Chaucers*, the website has been a clearinghouse that allows us

to amass data, produce scholarship, and promote our project. With this digital presence, *Global

Chaucers* supplements current Chaucer scholarship in at least two fundamental ways. First, it

enlarges our sense of Chaucer's reception and diminishes the gap between Chaucerians

worldwide and the Anglophone elite. Before we began this project, no one had attempted to

determine and study the full extent of Chaucerian translations and appropriations in non-

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17. Gail Ashton, "Poet in the City & *Chaucer: Modern Echoes*," *Global Chaucers* blog, published April 6, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/04/06/poet-in-the-city-chaucer-modern-echoes.

18. Joseph Stadolnik, with introduction by Candace Barrington, "Chaucer, Historiador: Chaucer in Post-Peronist Argentina," *Global Chaucers* blog, published September 3, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/09/03/chaucer-historiador-chaucer-in-post-peronist-argentina.

19. Cook and Hadbawnik, "His Latin stile hath Englisht thee."

Anglophone cultures or Anglophone Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. The project's international, multilingual vision affords scholars a newfound sense of *The Canterbury Tales*' global reach. Second, unlike some already established digital projects (including *The Geoffrey Chaucer Website*, *The Chaucer Pedagogy Page*, and *Chaucer Metapage*), the *Global Chaucers* website both catalogs previously available material (such as bibliographies and digitized translations and appropriations) and invites new material (such as the blog postings, unpublished translations, audio recordings, plus interviews with translators and other authors).[20] These two hallmarks of the project encourage us to engage in a form of digital scholarship simultaneously archival and generative, thereby making *Global Chaucers* a dynamic, ongoing, and virtually unfinishable venture, attributes in keeping with the *Tales*' reception history marked by a shifting corpus, repeated interpolations, and inexhaustible interpretative provocations.

Scholarship

When we launched *Global Chaucers*, we imagined several fields of research that could benefit from and contribute to the effort**.** One was the expanding area of descriptivist research: its efforts to map a literary field would be aided by our initial cataloging and archiving efforts. By locating and accurately presenting each text with a short descriptive essay (which includes biographical information on its author or translator, the circumstances of its production, and the conditions under which it was published), *Global Chaucers* could be used to trace networks of influence invisible from the perspective of one culture. We also saw the project as setting the stage for more closely theorizing circuits of linguistic translation in more nuanced ways. For instance, post-Chaucerian adaptors working in French or Italian can provoke Chaucer scholars to

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20. Larry D. Benson (creator), *The Geoffrey Chaucer Website*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer; Daniel T. Kline, *The Chaucer Pedagogy Page*, accessed May 31, 2015, http://hosting.uaa.alaska.edu/afdtk/pedagogy.htm; Joseph Wittig (site tender), *Chaucer Metapage*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://www.unc.edu/depts/chaucer.

revisit Chaucer's relationship to the original French or Italian sources he first engaged. Reorienting Chaucer's own French-derived work via modern French adaptations might invite new understandings of the role of French in the late Middle Ages. We also imagined *Global Chaucers* provoking other questions surrounding linguistic transformations. When an amateur linguist adapts Chaucer into an artificial language like Esperanto (by definition a new and invented tongue), does this mean he must create archaisms and back-formations? When a living playwright creates a song and dance adaptation of *The Miller's Tale* in Nigerian Pidgin English, does she accommodate an ethnically diverse Anglophone audience with disparate frames of reference?

To date, however, the translations and adaptations themselves have been the primary focus of the research generated by *Global Chaucers*. As work in appropriation studies has repeatedly shown, even the most innocuous translation or distorted adaptation has much to tell about the receiving culture.[21] Studying these texts based on a single author allows us to think about the process of transporting languages and cultures across enormous geographical and chronological barriers. These characteristics become more potent when viewed alongside Chaucer's self-perception of his "belatedness": he understood that he was a poet crafting an emergent vernacular English literary tradition in the wake of more prestigious Latin, French, and Italian models. Together, these Chaucerian elements become a potential point of contact between Chaucer's own period and later, post-1945 settings, especially postcolonial and non-Western

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21. Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation*, New Critical Idiom (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 2–3. For extensive examples of this process, Claire Sponsler, *Ritual Imports: Performing Drama in America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

contexts where writers and artists are articulating a sense of identity that both appropriates and veers from longer established and influential (often Anglophone) literary and cultural models.[22]

This scholarship has revealed that these Chaucerian reworkings have much to tell Chaucer's professional readers, for they are like his non-Anglophone readers in some important, often overlooked ways. Both groups come to Chaucer's texts as non-native readers and speakers of Middle English. Their similar status reminds us that Middle English—despite the patently absurd comments in some texts that the language is easy to learn—is a foreign language to his post-sixteenth-century readers. All twenty-first-century readers have to struggle with how his words create meaning. All have to translate his words and his concepts into words and concepts that make sense in another time, place, and language. Non-Anglophone Chaucers highlight the linguistic and cultural alterity confronted in each Chaucerian text, and they reacquaint professional readers with canonical texts sometimes perceived as all too familiar.

Just as importantly, the scholarship also suggests that these non-Anglophone Chaucers have much to tell about Chaucer's work itself. Comparable to the ways Chaucer's sense of belatedness provides a point of contact with his postcolonial appropriation, these living authors can help all readers understand aspects of Chaucer's subaltern positionality. These translations provide intriguing test cases for such influential Western theories of translation as those of Walter Benjamin and Hans-Georg Gadamer, who considered translation as sometimes revealing what is not fully apparent in the source language or as sometimes providing access to embedded

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22. Ruth Evans, "Historicizing Postcolonial Criticism: Cultural Difference and the Vernacular," in *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Theory, 1280–1530*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor, and Ruth Evans (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 366–70.

meanings otherwise unavailable in the original text.[23] For scholars who have invariably relied on Middle English texts, these translations reveal moments in Chaucer's language we might otherwise miss. They direct us toward forgotten etymologies and meanings excluded in the Present Day English (PDE) but embraced or exposed in the receiving language, and they let us hear more distinctly the range of diverse voices making up *The Canterbury Tales'* chorus. Most importantly, the *Global Chaucers* project generates questions that we had not yet asked—or even knew we *could* ask.

Adaptations

Our bibliography and archive of adaptations began with Hsy's initial cache, including Lük Bey's comic book *Verhalen voor Canterbury*, Josef Škvorecký's novel *Nové canterburské provídky*, and Caroline Bergvall's verse *Meddle English*. We expanded this core list with internet searches and queries on social media. It became clear that Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* provides a rich source of inspiration for adaptations due to its own internal diversity. The original text features a diverse range of narrators—young and old, male and female, from various professions and walks of life—who engage in a storytelling contest. The multiple narrators, genres, and styles included in Chaucer's work allow adaptors to pick and choose, creating appropriations that range from the pious to the bawdy, from the politically charged to the apolitical. In other cases, adaptors transport the storytelling context across temporal and cultural boundaries. These adaptations and translations display an overriding interest in polyvocality and multiple perspectives, a welter of intricate styles and narrative layers, and an acute awareness of the ways stories are always-already mediated via many previous sources. Chaucer, the poet-translator and

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23. Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," in *Selected Writings, 1913–1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, trans. Suhrkamp Verlag (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 253–63; Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd ed., revised (London and New York: Continuum, 2004).

ironic narrator, is an ideal figure for different translators, poets, novelists, graphic artists, librettists, and dramatists to experiment with disparate notions of cultural orientation and perspective.

For now, some of our more fascinating examples come from a vibrant cluster of adaptations by women writers of Africa and the African diaspora: Ufuoma Overo-Tarimo's play *The Miller's Tale: Wahala Dey O!*, Patience Agbabi's verse collection *Telling Tales*, Louise Bennett's *Aunty Roachy seh,* Jean "Binta" Breeze's poem "The Wife of Bath Speaks in Brixton Market," and Karen King-Aribisala's *Kicking Tongues*.[24] Instrumental in our understanding of adaptations as "both process and product," these works prove their authors to be innovative heirs of the Chaucerian treasury; such adaptations help expose new audiences to Chaucer.[25] Because they are written in Black dialects and patois of English, these adaptations have received more scholarly attention than other global Chaucers, and they have captured the interest of Anglophone readers.[26] We include such items in the *Global Chaucers* project because they fall outside that inner circle of modern English varieties. These works embrace non-standard forms

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24. Ufuoma Overo-Tarimo, "Wahala Dey Oh! The Miller's Tale," accessed June 21, 2015, http://www.sagatiata.net; Patience Agbabi, *Telling Tales* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2014); Louise Bennett, *Aunty Roachy Seh*, ed. Mervyn Morris (Kingston, Jamaica: Sangster's, 1993); Jean Binta Breeze, *The Arrival of Brighteye and Other Poems* (Hexham, Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books, 2000); Karen King-Aribisala, *Kicking Tongues* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998).

25. Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 31.

26. Michelle R. Warren, "Classicism, Medievalism, and the Postcolonial," *Exemplaria* 24. 3 (2012): 282–92; Kathleen Forni, *Chaucer's Afterlife: Adaptation in Recent Popular Culture* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2013).

of English that engage a practice of "transhistorical identification [that] telescopes time." [27] That

is, they imagine local modern-day dialects as analogous to Chaucer's emerging literary language.

As scholars working with Chaucers updated into postmedieval English have recognized,

modernizations demonstrate how Chaucer's difficult alterity and canonical caché combine to

create a chameleon text suitable for adaptation to multiple concerns and values. Overo-Tarimo's

play, which premiered at the 2012 Edinburgh Fringe Festival, was one of the earliest texts we

examined, and we were excited to help promote its performance at Reykjavík during the 2014

New Chaucer Society Congress. It transfers Chaucer's iconic text to a twenty-first-century

Nigerian context, thereby tapping into a global medievalism that revivifies medieval culture

outside the confines of Western Europe. Agbabi's *Telling Tales*, which *Global Chaucers* and the

Chaucer blogger/tweeter (@LeVostreGC) heavily promoted when it was published in 2014,

includes "Unfinished Business," a reformulation of Chaucer's *Tale of Melibee* that "allegorizes

the folly of thinking that all meaning can be preserved in translation."[28]

Because non-Anglophone adaptations have not received similar attention, *Global

Chaucers* invites scholars to investigate how these cultures appropriate Chaucerian tales. Which

tales are chosen? Who instigates the appropriation? How are they changed to reflect different

cultural values or new political conditions? In order to spur scholarship in non-Anglophone

adaptations, we have the long-term goal of commissioning back-translations into PDE where

necessary.

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27. Michelle R. Warren, "'The Last Syllable of Modernity': Chaucer in the Caribbean," *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies* 6.1 (2015): 79–93.

28. Barrington and Hsy, "Remediated Verse."

Translations

Like our adaptation bibliography, our translation bibliography was built on Hsy's core list. From there, we relied on two sources for additions to our list. Our first source for translations was the *Index Translatorium*, a reference published annually first by the League of Nations, then by UNESCO, and now available on a fully searchable online database; it provided leads to tantalizing Mongolian and Friulian translations.[29] The second source consists of Chaucerians associated with college and universities outside the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Australasia, identified through the New Chaucer Society membership lists; having contacted about fifty members and explained our project, we heard back from most. They shared lists and leads, proving to be invaluable resources toward identifying over 125 translations into over fifty languages within a year of the project's start.[30] (These scholars also form the heart of a contingent of Chaucerians who have accepted our invitation to consider writing about non-Anglophone translations.[31] Such concerns are outside their bailiwick, and their willingness to venture into the new territory of translation and adaptation studies speaks to their intellectual daring.)

Once we identified these translations, we had to determine the best way to learn from them. We began with a fundamental premise—Paul Ricœur's "linguistic hospitality"—that

29. Candace Barrington, "Tracking down Global Chaucers," *Global Chaucers* blog, published September 26, 2013, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2013/09/26/tracking-down-global-chaucers.UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), *Index Translationum*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://www.unesco.org/culture/xtrans.

30. Candace Barrington and Jonathan Hsy, "Translations and adaptations, listed by country," *Global Chaucers* blog, accessed June 21, 2015, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/resources/translations-and-adaptations-listed-by-country.

31. We are developing a volume of collected essays by these scholars tentatively entitled *A Global Pilgrimage: Chaucer's Worldwide Readers, Translators, and Scholars.*

renounces the ideal of the perfect translation and accepts in its place the ideal of the competent and well-intentioned translator. In this atmosphere of linguistic hospitality, the careful study of each translation as coequal to its English counterpart respects and maintains the ways languages and cultures differ from one another, allowing us to be concerned less about what judgment and evaluations we confer on the translations and more about what the differences reveal. In such a generous atmosphere, *Global Chaucers* creates a linguistic *civitas* that grapples with the ways languages and texts create meaning. Here, a translation is examined not for its adherence to an ideal Chaucerian text, a standard impossible to measure much less attain, but for its ability to address points of incommensurability: textual moments where the two cultures struggle to understand one another, where the translator must intervene and enact a form of mediation. Chaucer is chock full of those points, and translations fruitfully engage them.[32]

Rather than oversee extensive back translations as we envision for the adaptations, we are experimenting with another strategy for these translations: crowdsourced annotations and translations of pertinent passages. In an early effort, we asked readers to consider the words "pilgrimage" and "martyr" (*General Prologue* 12 and 17) and the ways they are translated; we learned that in many cases the distance between these Christian concepts and similar concepts in non-Christian cultures is too great for the translator and the translation to close. For instance, an Arabic reader explained that though the Arabic translation seems to bridge that gap when it translates "pilgrimage" as "*hajj*," the supporting pylons are whacked away with a note apologizing for the blasphemy and cautioning readers not to be lured into thinking Chaucer's pilgrimage was an authentic *hajj*. A similar ambivalence occurs in Fang Chong's mid-twentieth-

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32. Candace Barrington, "Traveling Chaucer: Comparative Translation and Cosmopolitan Humanism," *Educational Theory* 64.5 (2014): 463–77.

century Mandarin translations referencing the martyr Thomas à Becket.[33] Rather than fear

blasphemy, Fang has instead needed to navigate Maoist China's highly secularized and regulated

culture. Because the earliest Chinese translations of European and American texts were the

consequence of the West's colonial and imperial relations with China, any translations tagged as

Western were colored by the Chinese ambivalence toward Western Learning; it was seen as both

a source of new knowledge and an effort to enforce religious conversion and political

subjugation.[34] Thus, Fang's translation has to find a narrow path between sounding like a vehicle

for Christian theology and acknowledging the Maoist revolution. In translating "martyr," Fang

avoided one word choice, "*lieshi*" (烈士), which refers specifically to a martyr of the revolution;

instead, he begins with "*xun*" —from "*xundao*" ("殉道") "to sacrifice one's life for a way"—and

builds around it a complex locution: "福泽无边的殉难圣徒" ("good fortune without limit,

having died for just cause saint"). However, by associating the martyr with a just cause while

also eschewing the revolutionary martyr ("*lieshi*"), Fang might be treading on dangerous ground,

so he rectifies any lapse by adding another form of "martyr" in his reading of Chaucer's next line

(which refers to the martyr with the relative pronoun "that"); he describes the martyr "that hem

hath holpen, when that they were seke" (18) as the "*jiu bing en zhu*" (救病恩主, "savior from

sickness"). In this construction, "savior" is sacralized by taking a term used by Christian

missionaries, "*jiu en zhu*" (救恩主, "the Lord of Salvation"), and referring specifically to Jesus

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33. Jonathan Hsy, "Chaucer in China: Reading Fang Chong (Fang Zhong)," *Global Chaucers* blog, published June 7, 2013, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2013/06/07/chaucer-in-china-reading-fang-chong-fang-zhong.

34. Michael Gibbs Hill, *Lin Shu, Inc.: Translation and the Making of Chinese Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Christ. Although Fang's translation implies the pilgrims are traveling to honor Jesus Christ, the text also highlights the fact that the concept of salvation is foreign to classical Chinese culture. In the absence of a precise Chinese word for "salvation," Fang resorts to conflating the one who delivers people from illness (a concept the Chinese have) with the one who delivers people from their sins (a concept the Chinese did not have before the introduction of Christianity); Fang thereby justifies his avoidance of "*lieshi*" and walks a thin line between secular and religious discourses.[35] In such cases the translations reveal much about the complex (and often dangerous) conditions of their production.

We continue to build on this early effort to solicit feedback from bilingual readers and experiment with ways to incorporate *Global Chaucers* into classroom instruction, and we have been able to share several rewarding examples. Rebecca McNamara included an editorial assignment for bilingual students in her Spring 2014 Chaucer course at the University of Sydney, Australia. The students worked with Korean, German, Mandarin, and Arabic translations using a set of guided questions (we expect to report on this pedagogical and translation experiment later in 2015).[36] Hsy has offered his reflections on teaching the *Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* through contemporary video adaptations (including the poetic works of Agbabi and Breeze).[37] In these, Chaucer's medieval text is made both contemporary and alien to students. Agbabi

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35. Our readings of the Arabic and Mandarin translations derive from reader interviews with Waad Abdulrahman and Tim English. Any insights belong to them; any errors are our responsibility.

36. Candace Barrington, "Question Bank for Translator Interviews," *Global Chaucers* blog, accessed June 21, 2015, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/resources/question-bank-for-translator-interviews.

37. Jonathan Hsy, "Teaching the Wife of Bath through Adaptation," *Global Chaucers* blog, published November 21, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/11/21/teaching-the-wife-of-bath-through-adaptation.

transforms the medieval English Alisoun of Bath into a Nigerian clothseller named Mrs. Alice Ebi Bafa. The online recording of a live performance—simultaneously an autobiographical dramatic monologue and a sales pitch—is punctuated by spontaneous audience laughter, and the poet / performance artist embodies for a new audience the Chaucerian character's claim that her "entente nys but for to pleye" (3.192). Carol Robinson has encouraged and recorded collaborative adaptations of the *Wife of Bath's Prologue* in her classroom. She shared one of those recordings in the *Global Chaucers*-sponsored session on "Trans-Medievalisms" at the BABEL conference in Santa Barbara in October 2014. It features one student's engagement with Deaf culture through an American Sign Language (ASL) translation that narrates the moment when Jankyn renders Alisoun deaf and a queer student's performance (in drag) that slyly shows how polygamy haunts contemporary political debates about the institution of marriage.[38] These kinds of teaching strategies not only provide students with engaging ways to hone their skills in close reading and literary interpretation, but the very collaborative nature of such activities also demonstrates students taking ownership of Chaucerian material by either analyzing translations and adaptations or creating new works.

In addition to introducing readers and students to the work of living poets and performance artists, we have also decided to take advantage of the unusual opportunity (for medievalists, that is) to learn from living authors, for many of Chaucer's modern translators and adaptors are currently working and eager to share what they have learned. So far, we have conducted four extensive translator interviews, beginning in April 2013 with Nazmi Ağıl, Chaucer's Turkish translator, and continuing with extensive email interviews with John Boje,

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38. Jonathan Hsy, "Trans-Medievalisms at BABEL (Santa Barbara)," *Global Chaucers* blog, published November 17, 2014, https://globalchaucers.wordpress.com/2014/11/17/trans-medievalisms-babel-ucsb. Carol Robinson will reveal more about how she bridges medieval literature and Deaf culture in teaching-related blog postings at the *Medieval Electronic Multimedia Organization* (MEMO) website: http://medievalelectronicmultimedia.org.

(Afrikaans), José Franciso Botelho (Brazilian Portuguese), and Alirez Mahdipour (Farsi). As a

start, their translations tell us about the receiving culture and allow us to understand the other

culture as co-equal to our own. Sometimes we can see that Chaucer's fourteenth-century England

and the translator's own culture are different but mutually intelligible to one another; at other

times, substitutions and gaps point to moments when aspects of the originary text cannot be

tolerated in the receiving culture. Within the receiving culture, Chaucer's texts become a flexible

means of expressing dissent or recovering a lost past. When John Boje translates *The Canterbury

Tales* into Afrikaans, Chaucer's voice in *'n Keur uit die Pelgrimsverhale van Geoffrey Chaucer*

gains a certain edge inherent in any skeptical observer of Afrikaans culture during the apartheid

period. A similar dissenting voice speaks when Iranian Alireza Mahdipour translates the *Tales*

into Farsi. By appropriating the stance of the Chaucerian pilgrim who abrogates responsibility

for the tales' message—طبع من كند است و قاصر این زبان منقبت—Mahdipour acerbically

appraises the conservative government's mismanagement and misunderstanding of the values it

claims to control and interpret. In other cases, the Chaucerian voice embodies the old ways.

Nazmi Ağıl's Turkish *Canterbury Hikâyeleri* domesticates Chaucer's text with Turkish oral

folktales and idioms he heard from his grandfather and on the radio. By reimagining Chaucer's

Christian voice as an old-fashioned Islamic one, he creates a text sympathetic to contemporary

Turks. Similarly, José Francisco Botelho's Chaucerian voice speaks a Brazilian Portuguese

associated with the south of his country, far from the urban modernity of São Paulo or Rio de

Janeiro, and where the old *cavalheiro* of the pampas still sits around telling tales and dispensing

wisdom.

Such acts of translation not only reveal the unexpected ways Chaucerian material enables

fresh exploration of local cultural contexts and concerns; these works also invite Anglophone

readers to attend more carefully to the artistic and interpretive craft of translation itself. In considering each Middle English word, a translator must interpret, transform, and instantiate an interpretation of Chaucer's language. Few professional readers—even those who have read every word multiple times—can claim to have grappled so thoroughly with Chaucerian language. To varying degrees, these translators share with all modern readers the question of how to interpret six-hundred-year-old poetic expression. Then they must deal with how to embody (without calcifying or betraying) that poetry. Chaucer's Middle English differs vastly from many of their receiving languages, especially those with no ties to Indo-European or with semantic and syntactic rules as well as literary forms far different from those in English. The problem of cultural difference compounds the difficulty. How does a translator express in Chinese a notion of sin requiring divine forgiveness when that culture does not carry such a concept? Footnotes and glosses are possible resources, but they do not eliminate the need to express in literary language an approximate concept. The translators' reflections on the translation process—what they have learned about Chaucer and about translation—can provide invaluable insight on steps too often taken for granted in reading and understanding of Chaucer's texts. Through extensive interviews with these translators, we now have fresh perspectives on what collaborating with Chaucer in a new language means.

Together, the bilingual-reader surveys and translator interviews provide evidence that can be used in an attentive philological study of a single author's work across multiple translations, a methodology we call "comparative translation." A useful methodological tool, comparative translation corrects the essentializing tendencies of what we might call "functional translation." Blurring the roles of subject and object, comparative translation acknowledges translation as a dialogic, incomplete activity. Here, the cultural artifact and its message are not imposed on one

culture by another; instead, they are received, via translation, by new cultures with varying degrees of familiarity and foreignness as a way to learn about the originating culture and its values.

But comparative translation does not allow the exchange to stop at this point. The now-translated text is returned transformed to its originating culture—via a philological, descriptive re-translation—to reveal what the originating culture might otherwise not understand about either the receiving culture or itself. In this exchange, the receiving culture has as much to give to the originating culture as it received. Comparative translation thus takes translation studies beyond the cultural turn. Building on the translator's insight into the originary text, comparative translation makes us privy to one of the most intimate forms of close reading—for who knows a text better than a conscientious translator who labors to account for every word in the original? And by retranslating the translation back into (a form of) the originating language, we can listen to the receiving culture speak back, both describing itself and revealing hidden aspects of the originary text.[39]

When studied via comparative translation, the translations are collected not as exotic curiosities, but as ways to take seriously Gadamer's claim that translations disclose what is not fully apparent in the source language and provide access to embedded meanings otherwise unavailable in the originary text. [40] On this foundation and within the boundaries of our project, Chaucer and the translator become co-equals, and each translation of *The Canterbury Tales* becomes co-equal to the tales in Middle English.

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39. For a more developed theory of comparative translations, see Barrington, "Traveling Chaucer."

40. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 387–89.

Model of Collaborative Scholarship

The idea of a large-scale international collaborative project organized around a single medieval or other early foundational literary figure is not entirely new. *The Princeton Dante Project (2.0)* provides a facing-page translation of *The Divine Comedy* and other works that allows the user to navigate and consult multiple commentaries previously published.[41] *Danteworlds* situates the author's work in a broader social context through a "multimedia journey," including postmedieval illustrations of Dante's works over time.[42] *The Decameron Web* provides access to the complete text of Boccaccio's *Decameron* in a previously published Italian edition and two English translations (along with links to maps and other pedagogical tools).[43] *The Gower Project* provides access to the full editions of John Gower's corpus with links to digitized manuscripts and crowd-sourced transcription and translation projects,[44] and *Global Shakespeares* provides (among other things) an extensive digital archive of audiovisual recordings of modern Shakespearean performances around the world.[45] In fact, a digital archive is not entirely new regarding Chaucer's literary corpus, which has several websites housing the Middle English texts as well as links to contextualizing medieval texts, pertinent scholarship, and guides for teaching and understanding Chaucer's medieval verse.

41. Robert Hollander, *The Princeton Dante Project (2.0)*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://etcweb.princeton.edu/dante/index.html.

42. Guy P. Raffa, *Danteworlds*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://danteworlds.laits.utexas.edu.

43. Michael Papio (co-editor) and Massimo Riva (creator and co-editor), *The Decameron Web*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/index.php.

44. Georgiana Donavin and Eve Salisbury (co-directors), *The Gower Project*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://www.gowerproject.org.

45. Peter S. Donaldson (director and editor-in-chief) and Alexa Huang (co-founder and co-director), *Global Shakespeares*, accessed June 21, 2015, http://globalshakespeares.mit.edu.

Global Chaucers differs from other Chaucer projects in that it embraces translations and adaptations, both those within and those beyond the Anglophone inner circle. Because such an ambitious venture is more than a single scholar, or even scholars from a single field, could hope to achieve, it improves with extensive collaboration. Because Chaucer's work has been transformed into films, dramatic enactments, graphic novels, children's illustrated books, web-based hypertexts, and other manifestations, we solicit further collaboration from scholars, readers, authors, and translators from every continent, fluent in many languages, expert in many fields, and schooled in various media. A sense of collaboration has always distinguished *Global Chaucers*; the moment the project was informally announced at the 2012 New Chaucer Society Congress, numerous Chaucerians immediately volunteered to contribute to the project as needed. Eventually, in subsequent phases of the project, *Global Chaucers* will also need to include web-designers and information technology specialists able to archive, display, and maintain the collection.

This necessary network of interdisciplinary scholarship has required a fresh approach to collaboration, one different from those usually found in literary studies. *Global Chaucers* seeks to be more than a collective of multiple inputs with little say about the final product; it strives, instead, to become a way for all collaborators to determine their roles in the project. Together all collaborators will reenvision and reshape the reception history not only of Chaucer but of any literary tradition contacted by Chaucer's work. For example, although we—the initial collaborators—are Chaucerians, the larger collaborative needs the perspective of scholars with expertise in postcolonial and non-Anglophone literatures and cultures. These scholars see the documentary evidence in ways unimagined by Chaucerians and contribute ideas about the best means to understand the various translations and adaptations. Their input has allowed *Global*

Chaucers to shift the project's original parameters from post-1945 non-Anglophone appropriation and translations of *The Canterbury Tales*. When collaborators suggested contributions dating from before 1945, the inclusion of a non-Chaucerian text once considered part of Chaucer's canon, or translations into regional, non-standard variations of English, *Global Chaucers* has been nimble enough to adjust to the unknown data set, making it a shapeshifting project in which collaborators come and go as they see fit.

The resulting serendipitous community has become a hallmark of *Global Chaucers*. Ultimately, whatever becomes of the *Global Chaucers* project, it will be important to emphasize the humans—the translators, adaptors, scholars, and readers—who contribute to its digital presence. For medievalists accustomed to studying texts of long-dead authors, it is exciting to engage with living writers whose destabilizing, illuminating translations and adaptations redefine our relationship to *The Canterbury Tales*.

Global Chaucers' Challenges and Promises

Just under three years old, *Global Chaucers* has already met many of our initial goals and established new ones. Now we are considering the prospect of expanding by transferring the website to a server at Central Connecticut State University, where Barrington teaches. Because the new site will give us more space and flexibility, we can add larger video and audio files. As a result, *Global Chaucers* may become a digital refuge for works unable to be published in more traditional ways. For instance, we can provide a platform for John Boje's complete Afrikaans translation of the *Tales* (and not only selected tales as currently published). Or perhaps we can provide a publication venue otherwise unavailable for Alireza Mahdipour's Farsi translation of *The Canterbury Tales* censored by Iranian authorities.

As a digital project, *Global Chaucers* faces several challenges. Because *Global Chaucers* demands consistent updating and referencing as we archive and study our newly discovered cultural artifacts, the website we create must reflect the project's dynamism. At the same time, we must be aware of and account for the ways the website and its presentation determine the dissemination of the texts and shape their interpretation**.** And, as with any digital project that has long-term aspirations, we must try to imagine and plan for how it will be used in the future. These challenges are magnified by the project's cross-disciplinary, collaborative, multilingual, and international aspects. Whatever we design must be somewhat intuitive for global users, for whom it must be made easy to download and engage with the texts; and the interface must be able to accept and manipulate texts in multiple scripts. Blog postings linking online videos (for instance) may link to websites accessible by people in (say) the US or Canada but not accessible by internet users in other countries. In short, the new website needs to permit and anticipate widespread use and long term development.

Global Chaucers has the potential not only to encourage the emergence of a new field of scholarship that sees anew global cultural currents, but also to harness our collective potential to create, synthesize, and transform knowledge. This project can be a model for subsequent projects that seek to bring together materials and scholars spanning the centuries and the world. This project's simultaneous balance of wide scope and close detail can dynamically reshape how we think about translation theory and practice, as well as how we describe processes of cultural appropriation in local contexts around the globe. As we consider the adaptation of Chaucerian materials' diverse settings and contexts, the digital components of this project provide the potential to chart new paths for translation studies as well for medievalism studies and postcolonial theory. The unique integration of collection, translation, digital collaboration, and

conventional essay publishing that *Global Chaucers* envisions will create new opportunities for exploring undiscovered literary fields and developing cutting edge theory, while also maintaining well established and respected standards of peer review and scholarly rigor. In its ideal form, *Global Chaucers* can offer limitless opportunities for inquiry and exploration, not only for scholars, researchers, and students, but also for interested members of the general public who wish to be educated as well as entertained.

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