

the violent passion threatening to spill forth are not completely gone, but they are presented so thinly that they lack impact. Chaucer has learned the well the art of abbreviation. (pp. 136-139) ~~Thamunithing~~ The effect of the cutting "... has been to rob them (Philemela and Peregne) of forceful action or even a sense of will." All the weeping in the final scene even removes "any feeling that Peregne 'rescues' Philemela." Peregne's relationship with Tereus emphasizes innocence. In the rape scene "The fragmentary cries which end the scene express the innocence and helplessness and the sense of suffering and violation characteristic of Chaucerian pathos. Furthermore, this scene has power. It communicates totally and does so (except for the lamb-dove metaphor from Ovid) by an exclusively narrative means. I believe he overestimated the degree of the pathetic in the original - or, rather, he underestimated the cost to his material involved in an intensely pathetic treatment."

"Tereus is the most curious victim of the transformation. The villains in Chaucer's pathetic tales can rarely be very interesting; it is enough that they be pure evil. Their victims, not they, are the center of attention. Since the victims are helpless and offer no resistance, the villain is robbed of any chance to display a strong will or even impressive strength." Even "The general condemnation of men with which the poem ends, therefore, though it seems sincere and even intense, is not very moving." Frank concludes by telling us, "The poem, read as a tale of pathos, is a competent narrative but nothing more. It remains insufficiently developed, not merely overcut. Ariadne had too much talk. There is not enough here. Ironically, if he had preserved the horrors of his original, he might have achieved more pathos, not less."

We are hit over the head by Frank's praise in his first line of the legend of Phyllis and Demopheon. "The story of Phyllis and Demopheon is so simple in both outline and substance that it might serve as the archetypal tale of betrayed love." And on page 149 lays out in order Chaucer's tasks; "... to switch attention from Phyllis to Demopheon, to alter the tone radically by ~~en~~lightening it, and to create something fresh (and not repetitious of the other glass male lovers) out of the very staleness of Demopheon's story." "The tone (that starts the story)... if not ribald, at least practical and certainly not pious." "God, for his grace, for which we can keep us!" The quote from Chaucer is directed at Demopheon. The narrative begins by asking our attention of Demopheon and his troubles at sea, in which, "Rapidly of movement, the quick accumulation of detail, and the creation of a desperate scene by a few touches," and makes "vivid Demopheon's indebtedness to Phyllis." Demopheon is hardly shown in a heroic light in the first scene either, mundane elements are introduced and he is not in control. Going to court Demopheon is "spoken of in (an) ... antiheroic vein," being compared to "Renard, the foxes sene." (2448)

Phyllis can hardly reuse our pity; ~~with~~ she is too easy a mark for this purloiner of purses and maidenheads. It is a generic, not a personal weakness, as Chaucer's greed of satiety shows; she shares it with most womankind." (2452) With Ovid as a source Phyllis's letter must be included, and "the modulation into the epistle maintains the mocking tone and prolongs the talk about Demopheon!" Frank says in this case, "Never was an occupatio put to mere skillful use. The epistle is introduced with the sound of jeers still ringing in the air with Demopheon still in the mind's eye." "The epistle, we can see, never escapes for too long the poem's amusement at a man's neural itch, its comic genealogy of Casanova and Letharics!" (2453) Her last line is "Ye ben harder than any stone" (2254) "the image is trite because it is so true." (p. 154)