THE CHARACTERIZATION OF THE WIFE OF BATH

At line 9 the narrator moves on to the description of the Wife’s clothes and physcal appearance. Everything she wears is as cool as expansive and precious, and the reader may understands that she pays attention on how she appears to the others. The list of her clothing renforces the dame’s arrogant attitude, and conveys the image of someone rich who only thinks about appearance. Indeed the narrator tells about her “bold, handsome, red and blue face” only at line 14, instead he used 4 lines to tell about her way of dressing. Even tough her face seems to reinforce her pretentious personality. At line 15 the narrator continues insisting on the word “worthy” and, as he did in the first line, he renforces the adjective with the alliteration of the sound “w”, to underline the woman’s value. Furthermore the narrator tells about the dame’s past husbands. She married five times at church, but she had different partners in youth. This reinforces her beauty and makes the reader think that she wants to be independent and doesn’t need a man. At line 18 the narrator stops telling about her love stories, and it seems that he tries to hide that she got married too may times to the reader. Therefore he immediatly goes on illustrating her attitude to travel. She visited lots of differet towns all around the Europe. It seems that the narrator wants to justify the dame’s behavior by always underlining her religious spirit: she married at church, she always goes to church and stays in the forefront and she had been trice to Jerusalem, to Rome and to St James of Compostella too. They’re all typical piligrimage destinations and the dame had been there more than a time, and this conveys the image of someone who is really attached to God. The narrator ends the characterization of the Wife of Bath giving additional physical details and illustrating one more time her behavior. She has gap-teeth and large hips. She rides a horse and se wears a big hat on her head and a flawing mantle. She’s a woman who absolutely attracts the attention of everybody. Indeed she’s good at social relationships and she “knew the remedies for love’s mischantes” (line 32).