

The voice lurking behind: Chaucer's
use of Faus-Semblant in *The
Canterbury Tales*

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Le Roman de la Rose is a work on the art of love, but not merely on love. Guillaume de Lorris, the *Roman*'s first author, depicts in the poem a youth's desire for a rosebud and how Amour instructs the young man to be a qualified lover. But Guillaume's project stops abruptly at the point where Jalousie drove the young clergy away from the garden, leaving the latter in despair. His tranquil and exquisite style typical of the writings in a courtly tradition must then give way to that of his successor, who opens the continuation with a dynamic and rather vehement argument from Raison. Indeed, when Jean de Meun took over this unfinished job, he greatly expanded the range of the subjects discussed in the *Roman* by depicting various allegorical figures that eventually became a significant part of medieval literary tradition from which future outstanding writers kept drawing inspiration. Geoffrey Chaucer is one such writer who borrows extensively from characters in the *Roman*, one of whom is Faus-Semblant, a hypocrite who shamelessly reveals his true personality when he introduces himself to the Army of Amour. Faus-Semblant's imprint can be found in sundry places in *The Canterbury Tales*, which encompasses numerous issues such as immorality, problems in the medieval ecclesiastical institution, and people's attitude towards clergymen. This paper serves to explore how Chaucer uses the speech of this renowned hypocrite to mold his own stories and characters in the *Tales* including the Pardoner, Friar Hubert, Friar John in the Summoner's Tale, and even the Fiend and the summoner appearing in the Friar's Tale. Since many other contemporary works that spring from the same literary lineage share similar views or adopt expressions alike with the *Roman*, it is probable that some passages in the *Tales* submitted to comparison with the *Roman* might derive from another source. Nonetheless, an analysis concerning the resemblance and connection of Faus-Semblant's speech with the details in the *Tales* can help readers to

grasp more clearly Chaucer's understanding of not only the characters but also the social dilemma addressed in the *Tales* within a broader historical context characterized by hostility against mendicants, awareness of morality in sex, and religious reforms.

I. Chaucer and Le Roman de la Rose¹

Before offering concrete examples of comparison, a general relationship between the *Roman* and Chaucer should be established. The author obviously knew the poem at the time he wrote the *Tales*, because in the Prologue of *The Legend of Good Women*, written either "before or during the composition of *The Canterbury Tales*,"² Love blames Chaucer the protagonist:

"Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the Rose,
That is an heresy ayeins my lawe..."³

Although the "Chaucer" in the *Legend* is merely a literary figure, and Love's accusation against him cannot be fully treated as evidence that Chaucer the author really translated the *Roman*, the noteworthy mention of the text here at least shows that Chaucer is familiar with its content. Moreover, the *Legend* itself can be seen as modeled upon the Guillaume's part of the *Roman*, as the former is a dream vision with a Prologue narrating the conversation between Love and the protagonist just like

¹ Scholars have long established the tradition to explore the influence of the then available French texts, especially that of the *Roman*, on Chaucer's works. Dean S. Fansler gives a summary of early scholars' debate over which author of the *Roman* has comparatively greater influence on Chaucer. Although scholars' opinions diverge, they agree on Chaucer's extensive borrowing from the *Roman* in general. In particular, Sandras, Lounsbury, Skeat, Koeppel, Hammond, and Legouis all mark Jean's imprint on Chaucer as crucial, regardless of their views on Guillaume's influence. Fansler concludes that Chaucer takes some conventional situations and outdoor descriptions from the first part of the poem, whereas uses Jean's part as an encyclopedia from which he borrows various information and allusions. See Dean Spruill Fansler, *Chaucer and the Roman de la Rose* (New York: Columbia university press, 1914), 1-6, 229-234.

² Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 587.

³ Chaucer, "The Legend of Good Women," in *The Riverside Chaucer*, F 329-30.

the beginning part of the latter. *The Book of the Duchess*, another work of Chaucer that precedes the *Tales*, borrows from the passages by both Guillaume and Jean. The author not only was acquainted with the French poem but also had tried to implant its style and form into his own writings even before starting the project of the *Tales*. Hence, early attempts to adapt motifs from the *Roman* naturally pave the way for such further borrowings into the later *Tales*. Given the continuous interest of Chaucer in this French text, it seems proper to acknowledge that the great writer “was more deeply influenced by the *Roman de la rose* than by any other French or English work.”⁴

However, Chaucer’s relationship with the English translation of the *Roman* is ambiguous. On the one hand, enormous praises from Chaucer’s contemporaries for his translation of the *Roman* seem to suggest that the author indeed translates at least a part of the poem into English. “English poets who engage in translating and adapting later French *Rose* responses,” like Thomas Hoccleve and John Lydgate, often “depict Chaucer as the primary transmitter of the *Rose*.”⁵ And “Deschamps calls Chaucer ‘grand translateur’ on the basis of his supposed translation.”⁶ On the other hand, substantial proofs for such translation are rare. Chaucer did not mention the poem in the Retraction of the *Tales*, where a list of his important works is provided. Although the list is not conclusive, it makes people wonder why the *Roman*, for whose alleged translation Chaucer receives so much applause from his peers, is not included. The manuscript containing the extant Middle English version of the *Roman* is the 1532 printed edition of William Thynne. Though Thynne attributes the work to Chaucer, he

⁴ Larry Benson, *The Riverside Chaucer*, 685.

⁵ Stephanie A. V. G. Kamath, *Authorship and First-person Allegory in Late Medieval France and England* (Rochester, New York: D. S. Brewer, 2012), 16.

⁶ “Explanatory Notes,” in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 1103.

included too many spurious works that “his testimony means little or nothing.”⁷ The extant translation comprises three fragments: fragment A starts from line 1-1705; B is from 1706 to 5810; C from 5811 to 7696. Fragment A is generally considered to be Chaucer’s own work. Fragment B’s authorship is controversial since it “is set apart by many Northern forms..., by un-Chaucerian rhymes, by a much looser styled of translation.”⁸ It is unclear whether the first discrepancy listed here may be attributed to scribal transmission issues. Yet Alfred David, after summarizing the views of Brusendorff, Robinson, Kaluza, and Skeat, concludes that B is unlikely Chaucer’s.⁹ Because fragment C is an unfinished translation for the Faus-Semblant episode, it deserves some attention for the scope of this paper. “C, though again more literal and closer to Chaucer’s practice than B, contains a greater number of uncharacteristic rhymes than does A.”¹⁰ The widely accepted view is that C is a nice attempt to imitate Chaucer’s style.¹¹ A comparison between Chaucer’s own translation of the *Roman* and the *Tales* will be of great help to the study here, but an imitation of Chaucer’s translation might be less reliable. Therefore, I shall still use the original French poem as the primary subject for the research in the analysis below, and treat fragment C as a mere subsidiary reference.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Brusendorff argues for the Chaucerian authorship of B and attributes the Northern forms to corrupt scribal transmission, but this theory is refuted by Robinson, see “Explanatory Notes,” in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 1103.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Skeat proposes that C “is neither by the author of fragment B, nor by Chaucer, but is not so glaringly unlike Chaucer’s work as in the case of fragment B.” This paper accords with his idea. For Skeat’s examinations on dialects, rhymes, and specific wordings of all three fragments see Walter W. Skeat, “Introduction to the Romaunt of the Rose,” in *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899), 1-20.

II. Comparison of Structures

The analysis shall begin with a comparison between the structures of narrative plots. The Faus-Semblant episode in the *Roman* can be divided into two sections. First, Faus-Semblant is summoned to the court of Amour. This section is characterized by a monologue of Faus-Semblant, modeled largely upon William of St. Amour's *De periculis* with a few comments by Amour scattered in it. Second, on Amour's order, Faus-Semblant successfully attacked Male-Bouche by tricking the latter into receiving his absolution. The first section is further organized into two themes that sometimes interweave with each other: the hypocrite's self-revelation, followed by his preaching against the practices of mendicant orders. The tripartite structure of the Faus-Semblant episode may find its parallels in the frameworks of the Friar's Tale and the Pardoner's Tale respectively. In the following paragraphs, I shall first discuss the structural similarities and differences between Faus-Semblant's speech and the Pardoner's Prologue and Tale; then I will talk about how the Fiend's plot in the Friar's Tale resembles and transforms this corresponding narrative frame in the *Roman*.

1. The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale

The accounts of Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner seem to be two stories with the same process but different results. The Pardoner's Prologue parallels Faus-Semblant's self-revelation. Both brazenly declare that they act contrary to what they speak. Faus-Semblant's short interaction with Amour best catches this main point of his confession:

“– Tu vas préeschant astenance.
–Voire voir, mès g'emple ma pance
De bons morciaus et de bons vins,
Tiex comme il affiert à devins.
–Tu vas préeschant povreté.

–Voir, mès riche sui à planté...”¹² (11779-84)

In every pair of interlocations, Amour’s hesitant statement clouded with suspicion encounters Faus-Semblant’s absolutely assured answer. The statement and answer together form a double confirmation of Faus-Semblant’s fraudulent character.

Likewise, the Pardoner reveals the hypocritical nature of his preaching in the Prologue of his tale:

“I preche of no thyng but for coveityse.
Therefore my theme is yet, and evere was,
Radix malorum est Cupiditas.
Thus kan I preche agayn that same vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice.”¹³ (VI.424-8)

The Pardoner’s Prologue is a monologue without the voices of others. But a similar double confirmation can be found even within the Pardoner’s own statement. Perhaps due to the hypocrite’s drunkenness, he keeps repeating what has already been said. Line 424, “I preche of no thyng but for coveityse,” is repeated in line 433, emphasizing the avaricious behavior of the Pardoner. The Latin phrase from the Bible in line 426 is a replica of line 334, demonstrating the unchanging topic of the Pardoner’s sermons. Pardoner’s preaching subject is thus coupled with his contrary behaviors twice in the Tale’s Prologue, stressing his disingenuous and greedy personality. In this way both characters’ self-revelations serve to build up their identities: Faus-Semblant as one among the mercenary friars, and the Pardoner as an avaricious profit gatherer.

Yet when we move to the second part of Faus-Semblant’s speech, and compare it with the Pardoner’s Tale, we may find that in this section both figures are condemning their own sins. The former attacks the mendicant orders for their begging

¹² All quotations from *Le Roman de la Rose* are from Pierre Marteau, ed., *Le roman de la rose, tome III* (Orléans, 1878; Project Gutenberg, 2013), and thus are cited subsequently in parenthesis following the verses.

¹³ All quotations from *The Canterbury Tales* are from Larry Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer* (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), and thus are cited subsequently in parenthesis following the verses.

for profits instead of laboring, whereas the latter tells a story of three young men who died because of coveting treasures. Because Faus-Semblant openly claims that “laborer ne me puet plaire, de laborer n’ai-ge que faire,” (12070-1) his anti-mendicant speech not only classifies himself again as one of the avaricious but lazy friars, but also becomes a vivid example that strengthens his own claim that he is a hypocrite who speaks one way but acts otherwise. The Pardoner, after shamelessly debunking his tricks and skills of preaching in the Tale’s Prologue, now also gives an excellent example that probably draws from his usual sermons. His tale indeed warns people against cupidity, but at the same time, cupidity is precisely the sin that himself committed. For both Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner, the first and the second parts of their respective episode together form a paradox. The examples given in the second sections seem to prove the characters’ self-statements in the first sections, that they are both hypocrites whose deeds contradict the words. However, can one really believe the words of such a person with dubious personality? If the answer is “no,” the credit of both figures can be so undermined that not only their preaching is unconvincing, but their self-revelations as well. The unreliable nature of the self-statements may then trap readers in something similar to a “liar paradox”: no logical conclusion can be drawn to determine the truth or falsity of the two figures’ confessions. Therefore, the second part, that is, the anti-mendicant speech of Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner’s Tale respectively, serves to both strengthen and tear down the character’s credibility established in the first part. Through this contradiction Chaucer, like Jean, also inquires into a social problem that will be discussed later in this paper: should evil preachers be allowed to do their work?

The narratives of Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner both end with an attempt to trick others, and the difference lies only in that the former succeeds, whereas the latter

fails. When the audiences of the preachers are asked to receive pardon, Male-Bouche is persuaded by Faus-Semblant's eloquence and thereby obeys, but the Host and the rest of the fellowship in the *Tales* only laugh at the Pardoner. The reasons that Chaucer reverses the ultimate success in Faus-Semblant episode can be various. This choice to diverge from the French poem is indeed a natural decision considering that unlike Male-Bouche, who does not hear Faus-Semblant's confession, pilgrims in the *Tales* already learn the Pardoner's tricks and may easily see through it. Apart from the information learned by the audience, the author may think that preacher's preparation for the trick constitutes an important factor in deciding the trick's success as well. Faus-Semblant's trap is carefully and deliberately designed, while the Pardoner's attempt to trick may be taken as "mere forgetfulness" that reverts him to "his usual sales pitch."¹⁴ Moreover, Chaucer wants his character to be realistic rather than an allegorical figure who embodies craftiness and duplicity. By depicting the Pardoner's failure to give absolution, the writer places him at the lowest social stratum so that he can be both marveled at for his eloquence and derided for his effrontery. The transformation from Faus-Semblant's success to the Pardoner's failure represents Chaucer's ability to develop a human being with complex personality from an allegory with a set of definitive features.

2. The Friar's Tale

The structure of Faus-Semblant episode also parallels the speech of the Fiend in the Friar's Tale. The Fiend and Faus-Semblant share a trait distinct from the Pardoner: the former two are less outspoken of their true natures than the latter. It is true that all three figures reveal themselves, but when faced with enquiry from Amour and the summoner in the tale respectively, both Faus-Semblant and the Fiend show

¹⁴ "Explanatory Notes," in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 906.

some degree of hesitance to confess. The first comparison of the two narratives hence can be drawn between Faus-Semblant's delay in answering Amour about his dwellings and the Fiend's slow revelation of his identity only after the summoner's incessant questioning. In the *Roman*, when Amour asks Faus-Semblant where people may usually find him, the latter replies:

“Sire, j'ai mansions diverses
Que jà ne vous quier reciter,
S'il vous plect à m'en respiter;
Car, se le voir vous en raconte,
Avoir i puis damage et honte...” (11338-42)

The initial reaction of Faus-Semblant is a humble refusal because he fears that others' awareness of his whereabouts may result in retaliation or prevent him from plotting ill devices. When Amour forces him to respond by repeating the question, however, he gives the answer:

“Qui Faus-Semblant vodra congnoistre,
Si le quiere au siecle ou en cloistre...” (11393-4)

Interestingly, the summoner's questions for the Fiend begin with an enquiry about the latter's dwelling as well, to which the Fiend replies:

“‘Brother,’ quod he, ‘fer in the north contree
Whereas I hope som tyme I shal thee see.’” (III.1143-4)

Although the Fiend appears to have answered the question, “north” is an extremely vague and unspecific concept, which suggests that the devil is still cautious about confessing his true dwelling at this stage. Then the summoner asks the Fiend how to make profits, which sets off an enjoyable conversation in which they get familiar with each other. Finally the summoner demands to know the Fiend's name, to which the latter answers, but rather reluctantly:

“‘Brother,’ quod he, ‘wiltow that I thee telle?
I am a feend; my dwellyng is in helle...’” (III.1447-8)

The self-revelation in neither text comes out directly; rather, each is forced out step by step due to the other interlocutor's pressure. In the *Roman*, it is the Amour's authority that pushes Faus-Semblant forward. In the *Friar's Tale*, one may sense the fast pace

by which the summoner throws out one question after another – his loquacity not only adds to the vividness of the conversation but also urges the Fiend’s genuine reply. The Fiend’s choice to eventually give the true answer may also be because he knows the summoner better during the conversation, thereby letting his guard down to some extent. It is possible that Chaucer arranges the step-by-step self-revelation for the Fiend because he wants the devil to have the same hypocritical nature like Faus-Semblant, both of whom try to hide their secrets. Meanwhile, such arrangement creates multiple layers in the narrative so as to enable the plotline to develop in a flowing manner.

The second section of the Faus-Semblant episode, namely, the anti-mendicant sermon, can be compared to the Fiend’s argument on theology. While Faus-Semblant acknowledges that labor is the right path rather than begging, the Fiend admits that God is almighty. Both try to teach something contrary to their nature. The same problem that arises from the comparison between the second sections of Faus-Semblant’s speech and the Pardoner’s Tale, appears here as well. Although the Fiend’s theologizing is very clever, his demonic nature will always leave readers suspicious of his argument just as the audience of the *Roman* will be perplexed by Faus-Semblant’s self-contradiction. In addition, an anti-mendicant theme is inherent in the Fiend’s speech, which enhances its correlation with the Faus-Semblant episode. The Fiend tells the summoner that if the latter travels to Hell:

“...thou shalt, by thyn owene experience,
Konne in a chayer rede of this sentence...” (III.1517-8)

To learn theological matters through a trip to Hell is obviously sarcastic. However, the mention of lecturing in a professional chair is noteworthy here:

“Less than fifteen years after the arrival of the friars in Paris, three of the twelve regent masters of the Faculty of Theology, together with all their students...had gone over to the mendicant orders.”¹⁵

In the 13th century friars became very influential in the University of Paris, and “lecturing in a professional chair” naturally indicates a privilege mainly saved for the mendicant orders. The two lines cited above hence mildly ridicules that friars’ theological knowledge comes from the demon. The fact that the tale is told by a friar unaware of this piece of sarcasm only adds to the ironic flavor reserved for the mendicant. The detail that a demon can theologize is in return “corroborated” by Faus-Semblant, who refers to “[u]ng livre de par le Déable...l’Evangile pardurable.” (pp.132, RR) The 13th century also witnessed the rise of eschatological theories. Faus-Semblant is speaking of the heretic Eternal Gospel by Gerard of Borgo San Donnino who distorted the ideas of Joachim of Fiore – some Franciscans regarded it as the new Gospel in an age anticipating the arrival of Antichrist.¹⁶ As Faus-Semblant identifies himself as one faithful to Antichrist, we indeed find two fiends theologizing here: one in the *Roman*, the other in the Friar’s Tale.

The traps of both Faus-Semblant and the Fiend prove to work well at the end, which forms a sharp contrast with the failed trick of the Pardoner. The Pardoner may be an adept profit gatherer, but his unprepared attempt to collect money from the pilgrims after his self-revelation is not clever. On the other hand, Faus-Semblant and the Fiend both craft their wiles carefully in advance. When the Faus-Semblant goes to see the Male-Bouche, he has with him the equipment to kill:

“Et fist en sa manche glacier
 Ung bien tranchant rasoer d’acier,
 Qu’il fist forgier à une forge

¹⁵ Penn R. Szittyta, *The antifraternal tradition in medieval literature* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 13.

¹⁶ See Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, *Books under suspicion: censorship and tolerance of revelatory writing in late medieval England* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 56-7.

Que l'en apele cope-gorge..." (12657-60)

Likewise, the Fiend implies that he has a plan in mind to ensnare a victim quite early in the tale:

"Right so fare I, for ryde wolde I now
Unto the worldes ende for a preye." (III.1454-5)

In each narrative, clues appearing in the earlier part of the story lay foundation for the successful performance of the later trick. Just as what Faus-Semblant suggests, bailiffs are so avaricious that they hunt people down and "comme leus les deveurent." (12093) The Fiend, pretending himself to be a bailiff, becomes such a hunter. The hunting imagery that runs through the whole tale hence smoothly guides readers to the trap revealed in the end. Although the narratives of the Fiend and the Pardoner both resemble the pattern of the Faus-Semblant episode, the former two are not identical. By following the Faus-Semblant's "successful trick" model in the third section of his tale, Chaucer creates a completely evil being whose craftiness is even more sophisticated than that of the Pardoner. The author in this way draws the line between an allegory and a human character. He is fully aware that the Fiend is an incarnation of vices from a pilgrim's fictional tale independent of the real world and thus can be closer in nature to Faus-Semblant, yet the Pardoner as one of the pilgrims should be situated in his own context of social norms and hierarchy, and thereby requires more adaptations from the French poem. Chaucer's subtle discernment enables him to treat different characters with similar features in diversified ways so that each figure and tale's plotline can be non-repetitive.

III. Comparison of Characters

After comparing the narrative plot structures of Chaucer's two tales with the frame of Faus-Semblant episode in the *Roman*, we are now going to analyze how Chaucer uses the image of Faus-Semblant to create his own characters. Various correlations can be found between the hypocritical friar in the *Roman* and the *Tales'*

figures such as the Pardoner, the Fiend and the summoner in the Friar's Tale, Friar Hubert, and the friar John in the Summoner's Tale. In the following paragraphs, I shall explore Faus-Semblant's influence on each of the characters just mentioned according to the order listed above.

1. The Pardoner¹⁷

The most apparent evidence that Chaucer models the Pardoner on Faus-Semblant lies in that both figures are hypocritical recidivists who normally hide their sins but shamelessly reveal their sinful nature under the specific circumstances arranged by the authors. As the analysis of narrative structure above shows, both act contrary to their words. Whereas the Faus-Semblant explicitly says "[m]oult sunt li faiz aux diz divers," (11616) the Pardoner similarly claims that "I preche agayn that same vice [w]hich that I use." (VI.427-8) The sins that they privately commit also parallel those of one another. Both are intended to reap where they have not sown. After preaching against the practice of begging, Faus-Semblant announces:

"Trop a grant paine en laborer;
J'aim miex devant les gens orer..." (12071-2)

A short passage in the Pardoner's Prologue expresses exactly the same meaning:

"I wol preche and begge in sondry landes;
I wol nat do no labour with myne hands..." (VI.443-4)

As clergymen they blatantly use preaching as an excuse for renouncing labor. Yet their sermons are impure not only because they intentionally avoid working, but also

¹⁷ For the comparison studies of Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner by some earlier scholars, see: Patricia M. Kean, *Chaucer and the making of English poetry* (London, Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 215-227; Maik Goth, "The Pardoner," in *From Chaucer's Pardoner to Shakespeare's Iago: Aspects of Intermediality in the History of the Vice* (Frankfurt am Main; New York: Lang, 2009); Jeremy Tambling, *Allegory* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 52-5. All three studies note that Chaucer's adaptation of Faus-Semblant to the Pardoner is the creation of an individual from an allegory. In addition, Kean and Goth draw parallels from the two figures such as outrageously violating social norms and confessing to the public. For other sources of commentaries on the Pardoner see "Explanatory Notes," in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 905-6.

because of their mercenary purpose for preaching. The Pardoner's claim that "myn entente is nat but for to wynne" (VI.403) is exactly the counterpart of Faus-Semblant's verse that "[e]n aquerre est toute m'entente." (12114) The two figures' unredeemable attitude is further shown in their choice concerning to whom they are willing to preach. Faus-Semblant prefers gaining money from the rich, and:

“...se la male mort l’enosse,
Bien le convoi jusqu’à la fosse.” (11807-8)

Faus-Semblant seems to be so complaisant to people who pay him well that he takes care of them even to their graves. Amusingly, this description echoes another detail in the Pardoner's speech:

“I rekke nevere, whan that they been beryed,
Though that hir soules goon a-blakeberied!” (VI.405-6)

The Pardoner speaks in a more outright way than Faus-Semblant does – the latter only demonstrates that he likes serving the rich, but the former directly admits that even when he is serving people, he serves them merely for the earnings and cares nothing for their salvation. If Faus-Semblant's words only reveal the two characters to be money lovers, the Pardoner's words show them to be cold-blooded mammonists. Their cruelty is exposed when each clarifies his attitude towards the poor. The Faus-Semblant's attitude is one of nonchalance:

“Quant ge voi tous nus ces truans
Trembler, sor ces femiers puans,
De froit, de fain crier et braire,
Ne m'entremet de lor affaire.” (11781-4)

The Pardoner moves one step further – he extracts profits from those already penniless:

“Al were it yeven of the povereste page,
Or of the povereste wydwe in a village,
Al sholde hir children sterve for famyne.” (VI.449-51)

In the later passages we learn that Faus-Semblant used to engage himself in similar activities like the Pardoner's. Still, by transforming the Faus-Semblant's indifference into the Pardoner's ruthless exploitation, Chaucer adapt an allegorical figure to create

a human being equally or even more villainous than the former, that is, even worse than the concept “evil” itself. However, rather than the merciless, fearsome Faus-Semblant image found in the courtly assembly of Amour, what we get in the Pardoner’s Tale is a despicable scoundrel ridiculed by people from all social degrees. Though both figures tell their audience how to discern cheats but in the meantime hope their own schemes to be unnoticed, Chaucer places the Pardoner in a far more comical and informal setting. Unlike Faus-Semblant, whose confession is forced by a higher authority, the Pardoner spontaneously contradicts himself. Such slip of tongue enables readers as well as the pilgrims in the *Tales* to penetrate his shell of cleverness and awful cruelty and realize that he is in essence a vulgar and pathetic coward.¹⁸ By balancing many seemingly incompatible traits in one character, Chaucer successfully incorporates realistic personalities into the complex social panorama.

¹⁸ Many theories have been proposed concerning the motivation of the Pardoner’s self-exposure and his attempt to sell relics. Tambling suggests that the Pardoner “is willing to have the greed brought into the open, to validate it, perhaps as a screen so that his sexuality may not be acknowledged.” (Tambling, *Allegory*, 55) Sedgewick thinks the Pardoner is always in control when he speaks, see G. G. Sedgewick, “The Progress of Chaucer’s Pardoner,” *Modern Language Quarterly*, Vol.1 (Dec., 1940): 431-458. Beichner argues that “the Pardoner is simply trying to entertain his hearers.” (“Explanatory Notes,” in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 906) All above scholars express the view that the Pardoner’s behaviors are intentional.

I rather hold that the Pardoner usually conceals himself, but betrays his true vulgar nature in this specific circumstance. The cynical confession in the Prologue might be deliberate at first, possibly emboldened by drunkenness. But the Tale serves as a smooth transition that accidentally causes the Pardoner to activate his usual mercenary sermon. The divulgence is hence more or less unconscious. Kittredge’s “paroxysm of agonized sincerity” might be a good explanation as well. (*The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 906) Tambling’s idea may be too farfetched since, as I shall prove later in the paper, Chaucer deliberately leaves the Pardoner’s sexuality ambiguous. Moreover, the Pardoner’s interaction with the Summoner and his claim that he enjoys pursuing wenches demonstrate that he has no intention to hide his sexual activities. Judging from what Pardoner says about his usual practice, he is also too cowardly to openly defy the standard social values. His bold self-contradiction in this scene is thus abnormal. Considering the casual setting, it is very likely that the Pardoner’s self-betrayal may be attributed to some degree of carelessness.

The second feature that Chaucer transplants from Faus-Semblant to the Pardoner is the former's eloquence. Faus-Semblant's excellent oratory is well portrayed through his speech to Male-Bouche, who gives in to the false hypocrite's rhetoric:

“Faus-Semblant ainsinc le li prueve.
Cil ne set respondre à la prueve,
Et voit toutevois aparance...” (12899-12901)

Male-Bouche, as his name suggests, is the embodiment of venomous speech.

Amour's order to let Faus-Semblant attack Male-Bouche is actually an eye-for-an-eye tactic. The fact that the hypocritical friar conquers the guard renowned for vicious words through persuasion is strong evidence that can prove the enormous power of Faus-Semblant's speech. But such a depiction of eloquence may have negative connotation: if one is able to verbally defeat a person with extremely malicious tongue, does not it mean that his language is even more malicious than the already acrimonious tone of the other? The Pardoner inherits Faus-Semblant's eloquence, but his outstanding preaching skill is presented negatively just like the latter. The Pardoner's superior voice quality helps him to attract a mass of audience:

“I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche,
And rynge it out as round as gooth a belle...” (VI.330-1)

Similes that associate a smooth-tongued villain with percussion instruments are not uncommon in Christian tradition:

“...[T]he image of the bell would have reminded at least a section of Chaucer's audience of I Corinthians 13:1, ‘If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy brass or a clanging cymbal.’”¹⁹

The biblical passage cited above has long been interpreted as a warning against the disastrous result that might be brought by the fair words from an immoral preacher. It seems to be true that fraudulent preachers like Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner may

¹⁹ Alastair J. Minnis, *Fallible Authors: Chaucer's Pardoner and Wife of Bath* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 125.

use their verbal attack to harm others. Chaucer expresses this view through the

Pardoner's confession:

“Thanne wol I styngge hym with my tonge smerte
In prechyng, so that he shal nat asterte
To been defamed falsly, if that he
Hath trespassed to my bretheren or to me.” (VI.413-6)

These lines sufficiently prove how grave the problem can be if the power of rhetoric

is in the hands of a calumniator: an innocent man being slandered will possibly bear a
groundless notoriety forever since he is unable to refute the powerful accusation from
the libellant. Or perhaps he is even deprived of the right to refute, because the

Pardoner develops a strategy so that neither can he be blamed for calumny nor can the
victim clear his name openly:

“For though I telle nocht his propre name,
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same,
By signes, and by othere circumstances.” (VI.417-9)

Rumors spread in the dark are more injurious than attacks in the open. Preachers who

bear ill will thus resemble serpents hidden in the grass, searching for preys secretly
and waiting for the right moment to assault. It is curious that in Matthew 10:16, Christ

advises his disciples to “be wise as serpents” when they give sermons. “In late-

medieval commentaries on Matthew this serpentine wisdom is usually identified as

prudence.”²⁰ In other words, preachers should be cautious against the snares and

trickeries in the temporal world so that they shall not be lost in worldly pleasures and

sophism. Ironically, the Pardoner is indeed a serpent, but he becomes the one to set

the trap instead of the one to avoid it. The distorted serpentine image found in the

Pardoner may have its root in *Faus-Semblant*. To give prominence to the parallel

between the two texts, I shall put the fragment C translation here as reference:

“For what word that hem prikke or biteth,
In that word noon of hem deliteth...”²¹

²⁰ Ibid., 123

²¹ Geoffrey Chaucer, “The Romaunt of the Rose,” in *The Riverside Chaucer*, C6097-8.

“Stynge,” “prikke,” and “biteth” are snake-like behaviors. But vicious attacks are not the only way in which the Pardoner resembles serpents. Pliny the Elder notes in that snakes “travel in mated pairs, and if one of the pair is killed the other will go to great lengths to take revenge.”²² Likewise, the Pardoner is intended to defame the one who offends his “bretheren” – yet he performs this action not for his loyalty to his brothers, but out of cowardice. Indeed, he “dar noon oother weyes debate.” (VI.412) These evil preachers come together as a group for fear of the exposure of their sins; meanwhile, when a single force is joined by multiple ones a more virulent attack can be launched. The inclination to act together as a group may be another trace left by Faus-Semblant as well. When the false hypocrite in the *Roman* depicts his verbal assaults to his enemies:

“Ce que l’ung het, li autres héent,
Tretuit à confondre le béent...” (12201-2)

Chaucer borrows this detail to enhance the self-contradictory character of the Pardoner: the latter is a figure who takes revenge but fears to be revenged, who joins his kind but at the same time is segregated from the mainstream of the society. As a result, the author is able to pose a question through the character by presenting a series of paradoxes: can such a man of dubious nature be allowed to preach?

The English cleric Robert of Basevorn proposes three necessary conditions for preaching in 1322: “appropriate authority, sufficient knowledge, and fitting attributes or *conditiones* – including an impeccable moral character and fine reputation.”²³

Apart from the Pardoner’s questionable authority, whether the morality of the two figures prevents them from preaching appears to be the focus for both authors. In the preceding paragraph we have discussed the hindrance of permitting an evil preacher

²² Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham (London: Harvard University Press, 1940), book 8, 35.

²³ Minnis, *Fallible Authors*, 36.

to speak because he may use his authority to libel. The two texts nevertheless demonstrate to us another possibility, that “bone predicacion [v]ient bien de male entencion,”²⁴ a sentence that resonates with the Pardoner’s words:

“But though myself be guilty in that synne,
Yet kan I maken oother folk to twynne
From avarice and soore to repente.” (VI.429-31)

In late-medieval *de facto* practice, morality is not a strict requirement for preaching as long as preachers do not disclose their sins to the public. If the sins are exposed, “the risk of scandal is great”²⁵ as in the case of the Pardoner. Truly, the Pardoner’s self-revelation greatly undermines his authority so that his sermon is not believed but mocked, which seems to justify the non-disclosure principle. After all, the doubt in a man’s character may lead to the doubt in the fundamental doctrine that the man teaches as well. But concealing the preacher’s sin also proves to be problematic by Faus-Semblant’s case. Male-Bouche, not knowing Faus-Semblant’s misdeeds, is deceived and killed by the latter even though he repents. Therefore, if the audience encounters a sinful preacher, they may be harmed regardless of their knowledge of the preacher’s crimes. Both Jean and Chaucer show their figures’ primary intent to preach as gaining profits. By emphasizing the two character’s sin “perpetrated in the very act of teaching,”²⁶ the authors ensure that both Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner are unredeemable. Yet how to evaluate their roles as preachers in their respective stories is left to the readers to decide. As one who hides his sins from Male-Bouche, Faus-Semblant through his sermon harms his audience but eventually benefits the army of Amour. As one who reveals his sins, the Pardoner through his tale makes himself unreliable, but his personal example as an immoral figure that deserves and does receive insults may be useful as a lesson for the pilgrims. In this way both authors

²⁴ Ibid., 126.

²⁵ Ibid., 18.

²⁶ Ibid., 46.

seem to suggest that an individual's own intent may be independent from the crowd's realization of a greater goal. They are not in haste to give a definite answer as to who is able to preach, but seek to maximally complicate the situation so that the tension between morals, doctrines, and rationality is best presented.

After exploring the preacher's role of both Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner, we are going to enquire into the two figures' effeminization in each of their texts. Faus-Semblant mentions several times during his course of speech his "habiz," a word "variously understood during the Middle Ages not only as religious garb, but also as innate disposition, outward behavior."²⁷ Consequently, putting on different kinds of "habiz" signifies acquiring various identities. It is thus interesting to find out that Faus-Semblant spends quite a few lines describing his women's "habiz":

"Autre ore vest robe de fame,
Or sui damoiselle, or sui dame,
Autre ore sui religieuse,
Or sui rendue, or sui prieuse,
Or sui nonain, or sui abbesse,
Or sui novice, or sui professe..." (11601-6)

Faus-Semblant is used to disguising himself as a female by wearing woman's clothes, but the depiction of his effeminate characteristics remains at the most superficial level.

The Pardoner, however, possesses certain more persuasive physical traits:

"A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have;
As smothe it was as it were late shave.
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare." (I.688-91)

Both men's sexuality has aroused discussion among scholars. My task here is to examine their sexual identities as well as authors' purpose for this feminine depiction.

Faus-Semblant dresses like a woman to please his partner, Contreintenance, often depicted as a beguine. Beguines were semi-monastic religious orders of laywomen with sundry degrees of literacy. Considering the late-medieval

²⁷ Tracy Adams, "Faus Semblant and the Psychology of Clerical Masculinity," *Exemplaria* Vol. 23.2 (Summer, 2011): 172.

controversy over women's participation in preaching and the orders' less rigid admission and organization, it is no wonder why beguines became a target for libelous rumors as male clergy went to teach in their houses. William of St. Amour "finds their intimacy suspect."²⁸ Faus-Semblant and Contreinte-Atenance are such a typical pair in unlawful liaison – the womanly depiction of the former does not contradict his relationship with the latter. In fact, it is quite common for effeminacy to mean "too great a concern with women."²⁹ Physical enervation, or womanlike weakness, became the synonym for sexual intemperance in the Middle Ages when various motifs exemplifying heroes' falls for women gradually enriched this tradition. Most famous examples from the time period include Mars trapped with Venus and Samson's loss of power by Delilah's wiles. The name of Contreinte-Atenance, partly indicating sexual incontinence, confirms that Faus-Semblant becomes a similar "fallen hero." This line of argument seems to imply the friar as heterosexual, yet a mid-14th century Parisian manuscript of the *Roman* provides another perspective. In Walters Art Museum, W. 143, Contreinte-Atenance is "depicted as a tonsured friar."³⁰ The reverse of her gender does not seem to be a problem for the illustrators: this treatment is still able to present the pair's failure to abide by the vow of chastity. The "habiz," which serves as a disguise for the hypocrite's covetous appetite, hides hetero and homosexual lust indiscriminatingly. "Faus Semblant's unbridled desire represents the undifferentiated sexual impulses...marshaled behind different 'habiz.'"³¹ The difficulty to maintain clerical celibacy lies not in women, but in sexual desire in general.

²⁸ Szittyta, *The antifraternal tradition*, 59.

²⁹ Richard F. Green, "The Sexual Normality of Chaucer's Pardoner," *Mediaevalia* Vol. 8 (1982): 253.

³⁰ Timothy L. Stinson, "Illumination and Interpretation: The Depiction and Reception of Faus Semblant in Roman de la Rose Manuscripts," *Speculum* 87.2 (2012): 478-9.

³¹ Adams, "Faus Semblant and the Psychology of Clerical Masculinity," 181-2.

picture removed

visit <http://romandelarose.org/#read;Walters143.073r.tif>

Fig. 1. Amour takes Faus-Semblant into service.
Walters Art Museum, MS W. 143, fol. 72v.
From: *Roman de la Rose* Digital Library, <http://romandelarose.org>

The Pardoner's sexuality is a hotspot for debate. Passages that may constitute evidence for the Pardoner being a eunuch come from mainly two parts, the one above suggesting him to be a gelding or a mare, the other a mockery from the Host:

"I wolde I hadde thy coillions in myn hond
In stide of relikes or of seintuarie.

Lat kutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem carie..." (VI.952-4)

Comparing the Pardoner's testicles to nonexistent relics, the Host points out the genital defect of the sly preacher. It nevertheless should be noted that no direct proof can confirm this defect, since "a geldyng or a mare" is only Chaucer the pilgrim's guess, and the Host's joke may simply be a groundless insult. Evidence that the Pardoner is homosexual may be found in his interaction with the Summoner:

"Ful loude he soong "Com hider, love, to me!"
This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun..." (I.672-3)

“Burdoun has also been taken to mean staff or phallus,”³² making the Pardoner’s being homosexual likely. Yet again, it must be pointed out that the passage may simply imply that the Pardoner and the Summoner are just drinking companions in taverns and brothels. Neither do eunuchry and homosexuality have correlation with one another. The only thing that we are sure of is the Pardoner’s effeminacy, which can be interpreted in various ways as the case of Faus-Semblant has already shown. It can mean an excessive love for women – we cannot neglect the Pardoner’s resemblance in appearance with Absolon in the Miller’s Tale. Both have strands of curly gold hair and high-pitched voice – typical feminine traits, and Absolon is another “hero along the tradition,” debilitated by the desire for the carpenter’s wife. That the Pardoner’s effeminacy is due to his lust for women is corroborated by his own claim that he will “have a joly wenche in every toun.” (VI.453) But this claim, along with his interruption in the Wife of Bath’s Prologue, may be mere boasts of his unwarranted sexual capability. It is almost certain that Chaucer deliberately blurs the borderline that measures off the Pardoner’s sexual identity so that the character’s behaviors can be subject to various and sometimes even opposite interpretations.

The effeminate details of neither Faus-Semblant nor the Pardoner can form substantial evidence which determines the sexual orientation of each. In fact, the straight/gay classification seems to be a notion too modern to be applied to literary works in a period when people concerned more about the distinction between chastity and sensuality. Both authors treat effeminacy as the outward manifestation of unrestrained desire, regardless of its object. No clear cut exists between heterosexual and homosexual lust, the latter “being seen as an extreme version of the former.”³³ By superficially effeminizing Faus-Semblant, Jean presents the dilemma of cleric

³² “Explanatory Notes,” in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 824.

³³ Minnis, *Fallible Authors*, 147.

masculinity brought by celibacy. The struggle between misogynic and homophobic mentality is hidden beneath the idealization of the self-mastery for physical desire. “Faus Semblant and Astenance Contrainte are representative of the folly and unnaturalness of religious celibacy whereby generative love is thwarted.”³⁴ Effeminate depiction hence satirizes cleric’s failure to maintain masculinity in a situation characterized by outer hostility for sexual union and inner carnal impulse. Pardoner, on the other hand, is sexually deviant – his insatiable appetite is reflected in his effeminate appearance and bold speech. It is likely that Chaucer intentionally makes the quaestor’s sexuality ambiguous precisely because he wants us to believe that the Pardoner is indiscriminately engaged in both hetero and homosexual intercourse. The character’s sexual deviancy is thus measured not by his sexual identity, but by his incontinence. If the effeminacy of Faus-Semblant is due to the suppression of insatiable lust, the womanlike Pardoner signifies the complete release of such lust. The effeminization thereby allows Chaucer to transform the dilemma of cleric celibacy in the *Roman* into the disordered and disoriented desire of the Pardoner.

Chaucer must have noticed the Faus-Semblant’s position as an outsider in the *Roman*, and places his Pardoner in similar circumstance.³⁵ Among the list of barons who come to aid Amour, Faus-Semblant is the last to mention, paired with

³⁴ Szittyá, *The antifraternal tradition*, 188.

³⁵ Kean also compares the tension between Faus-Semblant and the court of Amour with that between the Pardoner and the Host. Amour and his barons show “something of the same mixture of outrage and amusement with which the Host and the Knight, between them, finally silence the Pardoner...” (Kean, *Chaucer and the making of English poetry*, 218) I agree with Kean here – the laugh and the outcry let out by the Pardoner’s fellow pilgrims well correspond Amour’s exclamation and final smile during Faus-Semblant’s speech.

M. Goth, too, hints at the Pardoner’s awkward position within his society by suggesting “the Pardoner is also the victim of his own vanity.” (Goth, *From Chaucer’s Pardoner to Shakespeare’s Iago*, 30) Goth mentions that the Pardoner lives in the self-delusion (e.g. dress himself in the latest fashion) that is constantly unmasked by the fellow pilgrims. This similarly shows the Pardoner’s unpopularity in the social frame.

Contreinte-Astenance. In the General Prologue of the *Tales*, the Pardoner is also the last one who comes onto the stage, paired by the Summoner. Although Jean claims through Amant's narration that his list is "sans ordre," (10819) this rule obviously only pertains to other names except for Contreinte-Astenance and Faus-Semblant, the latter two being singled out for their immorality. Such isolation will not be so apparent at the onset of the *Tales*, as the Pardoner enjoys the same form and a proper length of introduction as the rest of the pilgrims. Yet the list starts from the Knight, next moves down to the various members of the clergy, and then to workers of all sorts, roughly forming a ladder of social classes ranging from high to low. Although this explanation of order is not definite, it still leaves readers the impression that the Pardoner as the last in the list ranks lowest in social status. Not only does the social ranking differentiate the two figures from the rest, others' refusal of acceptance also creates barriers for the two to join them. When Amour first assembles his troops, he is shocked that Faus-Semblant is among them. It is only through Contreinte-Astenance that the friar may stay. Later barons of Amour act as mediators to admit Faus-Semblant into their plan, which Amour reluctantly grants. All these negotiations proceed between Amour and his barons including Contreinte-Astenance. Faus-Semblant, though present and a party of the issue, remains silent and excluded all the time – his voice will not be heard until Amour grants his participation in the plan. In this way Jean successfully introduces Faus-Semblant to the audience by shaping him as an intruder whose shadow engenders disharmony – indeed, many regard his speech as a digression from the subject of love and thereby discordant with the rest of the text. His ties to the society are weak, sustained merely by an unnatural liaison and fragile common interest. The Pardoner is not welcomed, either. Chaucer chooses to present the Pardoner's situation in a more straightforward way than Jean does by directly

tucking him into the social frame to face the reactions of the insiders. He stirs quite a few outcries in his turn to tell a tale while eating and drinking:

“But right anon thise gentils gonne to crye,
‘Nay, lat hym telle us of no ribaudye!
Telle us som moral thyng...’” (VI.323-5)

It is a surprise to the readers that all pilgrims already anticipate what kind of story the Pardoner may choose even though the latter has not started it yet. Before the Pardoner, the Reeve, the Miller, and the Summoner told their tales, all being fabliaux. It therefore seems that the pilgrims have no objection to ribald jokes, but concern about who is the teller. The Pardoner’s bad reputation may have contributed to the audience’s disapproval. The pilgrims’ concern appears to be necessary when Pardoner brazenly confesses. The latter’s shouting “hoold youre pees” (VI.462) at the end of his self-revelation is very possibly due to the indignant murmurs of the audience stirred up by his effrontery. When the Host insults the quaestor after the tale, “al the peple lough.” (VI.961) Despite the rejection from the public, the Pardoner tries to fix his anomalies into the social standard. His interruption in the Wife of Bath’s Prologue is interesting:

“I was aboute to wedde a wyf; allas!
What sholde I bye it on my flessh so deere?
Yet hadde I levere wedde no wyf to-yeere!” (III.166-8)

He thinks the Wife’s arguments against marriage can justify his own lecherous lifestyle. By seeking the view from one of the insiders as the excuse for his own deviancy, the Pardoner intends to make himself acceptable according to the normal values. Needless to say, his attempt tragically fails. Chaucer thus adds one more paradox to his self-contradictory character: he is an outsider inside the community.

Both Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner eventually reach superficial reconciliation with the community. The seal of reconciliation for Faus-Semblant is Amour’s smile which symbolizes his trust; for the Pardoner, the seal is the

“forgiving” kiss between him and the Host. But both settlements remain at the surface level. Amour accepts Faus-Semblant’s loyalty without a pledge: “ge t’en croi sans plevir.” (12570) As Faus-Semblant suggests, the burden of risks falls entirely on Amour:

“Metés-vous en à l’aventure;
Car se pleges en requerés,
Jà plus aséur n’en serés...” (12560-2)

Since Faus-Semblant will never abandon duplicity, the pledge would be null even if he swore it. Yet, a pledge means the formal allegiance of a vassal to his lord, thereby creating substantial bonds between them. The lack of such vow signifies the lack of the relationship. Faus-Semblant in this sense is still dissociated from the mainstream community: he is not in the relationship. Meanwhile, the Pardoner and the Host are forced to make peace under the authority of the Knight. After several lines of the Knight’s command, only a single line that follows describes the actual action of the reconciliation: “Anon they kiste, and ryden forth hir weye.” (VI.968) This hasty sentence is also the final line of the entire tale. It is as if all the pressure imposed by the Knight and accumulated through the preceding lines is suddenly manifested and disappears in this final act, and both parties still “ryden forth” to their opposite paths. Consequently, the settlement remains a reluctant one. The Knight as the one with the highest status and moral authority in the group serves well as a symbol of common social values and standard morals. Then the forced reconciliation between the Pardoner and the Host may be regarded as the compromise under harmonious disguise necessary for the implementation of social principles. The temporary peace means no acceptance, but rather hostility and alienation. For both Faus-Semblant and the Pardoner, the reconciliation represents a camouflage that sugars up their tenuous connections with the community and conceals a series of conflicts not only between the society and themselves, but also within their own characters. Amour’s smile of

trust “is Jean de Meun’s perfunctory gesture toward the discontinuity between character and speech implicit in the paradox of the truthful hypocrite.”³⁶ Similarly, Pardoner is a character whose deeds contradict his words, who joins his own kind but at the same time leaves the mainstream community, who harms and yet is harmed by others. Abruptly ending the tale with a cursory pacification, Chaucer temporarily unifies the different contradictory facets of the figure under a seemingly agreeable disguise that on the contrary gives more prominence to his conflicts with others. In both cases, readers’ ambivalent feelings towards the two characters are augmented by the unresolved settlements.

2. The Fiend and the Summoners

If Chaucer borrows Faus-Semblant’s facet as a confessing hypocrite to create the Pardoner, he may have used the former as an example of *antichristi* to build up the character Fiend in the Friar’s Tale. The scandalous *Introductorius in evangelium eternum* published in 1254 by the Franciscan Gerard of Borgo San Donnino provoked a huge anti-mendicant wave which demonstrates “that all friars were apocalyptic forerunners of the Antichrist.”³⁷ Like Faus-Semblant, the Fiend is one of those called by William of St. Amour as “hypocrites of our own time”³⁸ who wears “habiz” for disguise:

“Or elles make yow seme we been shape;
 Somtyme lyk a man, or lyk an ape,
 Or lyk an angel kan I ryde or go.” (III.1463-5)

The protean nature of the Fiend parallels that of Faus-Semblant:

“Trop sai bien mes habiz changier,
 Prendre l’ung, et l’autre estrangier.

³⁶ Kerby-Fulton, *Books under suspicion*, 146.

³⁷ Guy Geltner, “William of St. Amour’s *De periculis novissimorum temporum*: a false start to medieval anti-fraternalism?” in *Medieval Franciscans, Vol. 6: Defenders and Critics of Franciscan Life: Essays in Honor of John V. Fleming*, ed. Michael F. Cusato and G. Geltner (Boston: Brill, 2009), 108.

³⁸ Szittyá, *The antifraternal tradition*, 39.

Or sui chevalier, or sui moine,
 Or sui prélat, or sui chanoine..." (11581-4)

Faus-Semblant claims himself to be a better trickster than Prothéus who can change into various forms. Both figures' ability to change constitutes one deceptive strategy of the false prophets, namely, Antichrist's followers, which derives from Matthew 24:24: "false messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce great signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, even the elect." It is worth noting that William uses Matthew 24 as the basis for one chapter in his *De periculis*, in which he lists eight signs of the Last Days. William's eschatological work features largely in the speech of Faus-Semblant, especially the part where the latter talks about the wide transmission of the Eternal Gospel and the coming of the End. This passage in the *Roman*, as a result, is replete with an apocalyptic tone that signifies the rise of Antichrist. If we examine the Friar's Tale closely, we may trace a similar microcosmic eschatology in the Fiend's words – he is indicating the end of the summoner even at the beginning of the tale:

"'Brother,' quod he, 'fer in the north contree,
 Whereas I hope som tyme I shal thee see.'" (III.1413-4)

This is the first prophecy made by the Fiend, when he has not yet revealed his true identity. He makes a second prophecy after theologizing:

"Thou shalt hereafterward, my brother deere,
 Come there thee nedeth nat of me to leere,
 For thou shalt, by thyn owene experience,
 Konne in a chayer rede of this sentence..." (III.1515-8)

The structural analysis earlier in the paper has mentioned how this line through the image of professional chair links friars to the Fiend. The last prophecy that the summoner will go to hell and explore the devil's secrets better than "a maister of dyvynytee" (III.1638) happens right before the Fiend's seizure of the summoner, making a total of three. The Friar's admonition against Satan at the end of the story also echoes Christ's warning to his disciples against *antichristi* in Matthew 24:25:

“Take note, I have told you beforehand.” Whereas Faus-Semblant is looking forward to the coming of Antichrist, the Fiend in the Friar’s Tale realizes his expectation by actually coming to prey upon the summoner. The textual coherence between the two works shows the lasting influence of associating the imminence of Last Days with contemporary friars in the eschatological tradition during the time period.

Chaucer’s two summoners are closely related to the Pardoner and the Fiend respectively, and it is no wonder that one may find traces of Faus-Semblant on them. “Faus-Semblant himself swaggers about the power of his ilk to drag people before justice or inquisition of any sort,”³⁹ a characteristic exhibited by both summoners of Chaucer:

“Ou s'il iert trop luxurieux,
.....
Ou repris de qu'exconques vice
Dont l'en devroit faire justice:
Par tretous les sainz que l'en proie,
S'il ne se deffent de lamproie,
.....
Il aura de corde une longe
A quoi l'en le menra bruler,
.....
S'il ne nous a bien procurés,
Ou sera pugni du meffait,
Plus espoir qu'il n'aura meffait.” (12290-12320)

The summoners’ ability to extort money by fair means or foul is clearly demonstrated in the Friar’s Tale, where one of Chaucer’s summoners reveals his true intention to the Fiend. It is interesting that Chaucer repetitively uses the modified versions of some passages in Faus-Semblant’s speech. Specifically, one of these passages is recycled extensively in Chaucer so that it may adapt to different tales. The sentence in its original context is about Faus-Semblant’s avarice – the false friar’s primary purpose to hear confession is to gain profits:

“En aquerre est toute m’entente,

³⁹ Kerby-Fulton, *Books under suspicion*, 152.

Miex vaut mes porchas que ma rente.” (12114-5)

In section III(1) of this paper we have seen the first verse of this sentence being adapted to the Pardoner’s Tale; later in section III(3) we shall see that another line in Chaucer’s General Prologue depicting Friar Hubert is directly translated from the second verse above. Chaucer also rearranges both lines from Faus-Semblant to describe the summoner in the Friar’s Tale:

“And for that was the fruyt of al his rente,
Therefore on it he sette al his entente.” (III.1373-4)

Curiously, the two verses are modified and recycled once more in this single tale, spoken by the Fiend and serving to echo the personality of the summoner:

“My purchas is th’effect of al my rente.
Looke how thou rydest for the same entente...” (III.1451-2)

As shown in the citations, the rhyming words in both the description for the summoner and the Fiend’s confession exactly follow those from Faus-Semblant’s self-revelation: all the verses end with “rente” and “entente,” indicating that these sentences from Chaucer are descendent of the same origin. Considering that in the *Tales*, passages depicting the Pardoner, the summoners, the Fiend, and the friars all contain adaptations from the two verses previously listed, it seems that “rente” and “entente,” or rather, the greed for wealth and the intent behind one’s deeds, form the two themes that unite these Chaucer’s characters together. Through recycling the verses from Faus-Semblant, the author emphasizes the summoner’s intent to gain in the Friar’s Tale, which enables the latter to stand out as a conscienceless and covetous figure.

3. The Friars

Chaucer also uses Faus-Semblant’s image to create his own friar characters in the *Tales*. I shall first discuss Friar Hubert, that is, the pilgrim friar.⁴⁰ Compared to the

⁴⁰ Sources that associate Faus-Semblant with Friar Hubert include: Muriel Bowden, *A commentary on the General prologue to the Canterbury tales* (New York: Macmillan,

violent attack against the friars incorporated in the Faus-Semblant's speech, the subtle portrait of friar Hubert in general contains less hostility to the mendicant but no less witty sarcasm. "Friars were tough enemies. They had friends in high places."⁴¹ Therefore, Jean depends on the illusive form of dream vision and an unreliable narrator to make his anti-mendicant theme less credible, whereas Chaucer uses amusing hyperboles and euphemistic puns to soften his criticism. Nevertheless, both texts fully encompass the bad habits for which friars are attacked. Faus-Semblant enthusiastically engages himself with rich women:

"Ces empereris, ces duchesses,
Ces roïnes, et ces contesses,
.....
Por que soient riches ou beles,
Soient nuës ou bien parées,
Jà ne s'en iront esgarées." (12137-46)

In Friar Hubert this wantonness is more prominent, and its depiction is sprinkled in a more casual and salient way in the narration than in the *Roman* so that this trait seems to be lasting and habitual. Hubert is depicted in the General Prologue as busying himself courting "yonge wommen," (I.213) "worthy wommen," (I.217) and "faire wyves." (I.234) Such dalliance becomes extremely ironic when the biography of St. Francis reminds readers that for friars, any contact with women should be cautious:

"He bade that intimate intercourse with women, holding converse with them, and looking upon them – the which be unto many an occasion of falling – should be zealously shunned..."⁴²

Recalling the purity of St. Francis, one may easily find that not only Faus-Semblant fails to behave properly, but Friar Hubert as well, though the latter seems to be a

1956), 137-9; G. Geltner, "The Friar," in *Historians on Chaucer: The "General Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales*, ed. S. H. Rigby and A. J. Minnis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 156-69. Geltner regard Friar Hubert as modeled upon Faus-Semblant, but emphasizes that both figures should be examined in a broader tradition of antifraternal polemics that dates back to William of St. Amour. This paper acknowledges William's influence on both characters and shall give an analysis that explores how William's thoughts are interwoven into the two works.

⁴¹ Kerby-Fulton, *Books under suspicion*, 152.

⁴² Bowden, *A commentary on the General prologue*, 126.

courteous, decent man. In fact, it is precisely this courtesy that makes him a depraved friar, since such manners belong to the court, not the Church. By other details in the texts we learn that the courtesy is only saved for certain people, not all, as Faus-Semblant honestly indicates:

“Mès de povres gens est-ce hontes.
Je n'aim pas tel confession,
Se n'est par autre occasion;
Ge n'ai cure de povre gent,
Lor estât n'est ne bel, ne gent.” (12132-6)

Faus-Semblant regards the poor as indecent people with whom it is improper to associate. This view finds its counterpart exactly in Hubert:

“Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce.
It is nat honest; it may nat avaunce,
For to deelen with no swich poraille...” (I.244-7)

Hubert looks down upon the poor and the sick, regarding himself as of high status and using it as an excuse for not serving those people. This again contrasts the deed of St.

Francis recorded by St. Bonaventura:

“...he put on the spirit of poverty, the feeling of humility...
aforetime...even the distant sight of lepers had inspired him with
violent loathing, now...he would render unto the lepers humble and
kindly services in his benevolent goodness.”⁴³

For Jean and Chaucer, nowhere can be a better starting point to launch an assault at the fallen friars than from the teaching of St. Francis, the founder of one of the four prestigious mendicant orders. The lifestyle of contemporary friars completely reverses that of their predecessors – we may even present this reversal according to St.

Bonaventura's structure: “aforetime,” Franciscans embraced the sick; “now,”

Franciscans avoid them. Jean's representation of Faus-Semblant is straightforwardly lecherous and arrogant, but Chaucer renders his Hubert some degree of sophisticated treatment. The author skillfully blends chivalric terms and courtly conventions into Hubert's arrogance and lechery so that the friar becomes a seeming knight, making

⁴³ Ibid., 128-9.

the criticism milder but in the meantime more satiric. By picking out traits precisely the opposite to those of St. Francis, Jean and Chaucer implicitly remind readers of the austerity and simplicity that a true friar should practice. Chaucer's narration further points out that the friars transgress both the original mendicant principles and social hierarchy as they move to the luxurious life and delicacy especially reserved for the aristocrats.

William of St. Amour traces three biblical predecessors of friars: the Pharisees, the *pseudoapostoli*, and the *antichristi*, all of which together form the core of his exegesis. Faus-Semblant as a model constructed after Jean's thorough study of William's anti-mendicant works includes features of all three. The Fiend in the Friar's Tale, as discussed earlier in the paper, can be regarded primarily as an example of *antichristi*. Friar Hubert, however, possesses salient characteristics of the *pseudoapostoli*. "He was the beste beggere in his hous." (I.252) William, in proving that friars are pseudoapostles, presents the argument "that St. Paul and his fellow apostles lived not by begging but by manual labor on their missionary journeys."⁴⁴ This argument is borrowed directly into Faus-Semblant's lecture on begging:

"Car saint Pol commanda ovrer
As apostres por recovrer
Lor necessités et lor vies,
Et lor deffendoit truandies,
Et disoit: 'De vos mains ovrés,
Jà sor autrui ne recorés.'" (11931-6)

William denies the practice for begging from its root – in other words, he disagrees with St. Francis' view that the apostles did not have any possessions. Truly, for many church fathers Christ and the apostles did possess common goods, and for William this fact makes begging of friars illegitimate. But friars became so well connected during William's time that the latter's arguments were considered too radical by the

⁴⁴ Szittyá, *The antifraternal tradition*, 48.

authority. “Decades later, even a staunch supporter...aimed at curbing the Franciscans’ privileges, not abolishing the order, however much it was founded on certain errors.”⁴⁵ Only the English polemicists such as FitzRalph and Wyclif fully inherited William’s original ideas, yet their efforts were thwarted when they met counterattacks from friars’ highly influential friends. It is thus natural for Chaucer to curtail his tone of disapproval on begging as a general practice while depicting Friar Hubert. Rather, Chaucer is more inclined to impugn friars’ intention for begging. Initially, the goods gained from begging were means to sustain the minimum livelihood of the mendicant; as time proceeds, they now become the purpose itself instead of mere means of sustenance. In *De periculis* this “is one of the largest themes in William’s forty-one signs; false apostles preach for material gain rather than the spiritual good of the faithful.”⁴⁶ Chaucer directly borrows the line from Faus-Semblant, “[m]iex vaut mes porchas que ma rente,” (12115) to describe Hubert for whom, “[h]is purchas was wel bettre than his rente.” (I.256) The author expands on the theme by giving a vivid example of Hubert’s practice:

“For thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,
So plesaunt was his ‘In principio,’
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng, er he wente.” (I.253-5)

This account corroborates Faus-Semblant’s narration: whereas the Fiend in the Friar’s Tale “[l]obans lobés et lobéors,” Friar Hubert “[r]obe robés et robéors.” (12101-2) Hubert exploits not only the rich but also the poor. Chaucer in this passage also borrows the beginning verse of St. John’s Gospel, traditionally regarded as “the limiter’s saying.”⁴⁷ In this way he implicitly criticizes that begging is improper for those friars who are able to work to gain things in need by linking this passage in the General Prologue to verses in Faus-Semblant’s lecture:

⁴⁵ Geltner, “A false start to medieval anti-fraternalism?” 113-4.

⁴⁶ Szittyá, *The antifraternal tradition*, 52.

⁴⁷ Bowden, *A commentary on the General prologue*, 130.

“Mès qu'il ovre des mains itiex,
Non pas de mains esperitiex...” (12029-30)
In certain *Roman* manuscripts,⁴⁸ such as the 13th century version Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr.1573, fol. 96v, the second verse above is accompanied by an illustration of *manus spiritualis*, with the words *In principio* inscribed to it. Such an illustration in contrast with manual labor suggests that the phrase *In principio* is commonly associated with friars' begging practice that aims at gaining profits. Chaucer's creative account of Friar Hubert hence uses the ideas from Jean and William as basis to vividly individualize a typical degenerate friar in the mind of contemporaries.

picture removed

visit <http://romandelarose.org/#read;Francais1573.097r.tif>

Fig. 2. *Manus Spiritualis*.
Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr.1573, fol. 96v.
From: *Roman de la Rose* Digital Library, <http://romandelarose.org>

William's image of friars as *pseudoapostoli* not only is summarized and extracted by Jean's Faus-Semblant, but also helps to shape Chaucer's Friar John in the

⁴⁸ Apart from Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr.1573, Ernest Langlois lists other manuscripts of the *Roman* that contains either the illustration of *manus spiritualis* with words *In principio*, or simply an inscription of the phrase *In principio* between the verses, see Ernest Langlois, *Les manuscrits du Roman de la Rose: description et classement* (Paris: H. Champion, 1910), 354-5.

Summoner's Tale. In Friar John's speech, we may sense the author's implicit differentiation between works done by actual bodily hands and by spiritual hands as suggested by Faus-Semblant above:

“‘God woot,’ quod he, ‘laboured I have ful soore,
And specially for thy savacion
Have I seyde many a precious orison...’” (III.1784-6)

When Thomas, the host of the house, asked why John has not come to see him for so long time, John underscores the intensity of his spiritual labor, which certainly creates humorous effect for readers who has read Faus-Semblant's lecture on begging. This kind of spiritual work for gain, according to both William and the *Roman*, should only be reserved “[p]or maladie qu’il éust, [o]u por vellece, ou por enfance.” (11996-7) It is thus easy to imagine how “intense” such work can be if even the sick and the old can do it. “N’il n’est pas, ce sachiés, raison [d]’escuser soi par oraison.” (11881-2) Faus-Semblant confesses that it is wrong to use praying as an excuse for not doing manual work, but Friar John does just the opposite. Like Faus-Semblant, who “por le sauvement des ames” (12147) goes to visit the rich people's household, John, as indicated above, “for thy savacion” (III.1785) says many prayers. Both justify their lucrative practice through a reason seemingly beneficial to others, so that they may appear noble-minded and trustworthy on the surface. To sum up, instead of doing manual work like St. Paul, Friar John preaches and prays for profits and excuses himself from laboring. Chaucer in this sense incorporates the pseudoapostolic motif into his character: a lack of humility to work physically and a false intent in begging.

Another pseudoapostolic trait that links Faus-Semblant and Friar John together is that they are both intruders into the ecclesiastical hierarchy who are involved in intraclerical power struggles. Friars' “business was *in* the world, primarily in apostolic preaching and pastoral care – in fact, in the very domain of the parish

clergy.”⁴⁹ Before the intrusion of mendicant orders, bishops were seen as the only successors of the twelve apostles and priests, receiving their authority from bishops, paralleled the seventy-two disciples. This established church hierarchy turned chaotic at the coming of the mendicant, who were independent of the bishops’ power but in the meantime claimed the right to practice the same jobs as of the priests in the same region. The superposition regarding the geographical distribution of powers and the overlapping duties made conflicts between them inevitable. Faus-Semblant’s hostility towards parish priests is obvious when he calumniates against them in front of his benefactors:

“Et lor fais croire et metz ès testes
 Que lor prestres curez sunt bestes
 Envers moi et mes compaignons...” (12151-3)

He debases his rivals before his clients in order to elevate his own status in the eyes of the almsgivers, so that his interest is maximized. Friar John does the same when he preaches to his audience on masses for souls:

““Ye, whan that they been hastily ysonge,
 Nat for to holde a preest joly and gay –
 He syngeth nat but o masse in a day.
 Delivereth out,’ quod he, ‘anon the soules!’” (III.1726-9)

“Friars sometimes assembled to perform all thirty masses in one day,”⁵⁰ which lends John the opportunity to boast that they can deliver souls faster than priests do, because parish priests have to give masses in a total of thirty consecutive days. The friar differs from Faus-Semblant in that the former neither shamelessly confesses his wiles nor reviles his enemies in a marked way. If readers take into consideration that Chaucer’s main purpose of the tale is not to depict friars as degenerate as possible, they may find that John’s ridicule at the parish priests is written in a mild and comic

⁴⁹ Szittyá, *The antifraternal tradition*, 46.

⁵⁰ “Explanatory Notes,” in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 877.

way rather than vicious. Nonetheless, this sly friar pretends to accidentally drop sentences abasing priests so as to win the clients, Thomas and his wife, to his side:

“Thise curatz been ful necligent and slowe
To grope tendrely a conscience
In shrift...” (III.1816-8)

Discrediting the curates’ ability to hear a confession, Friar John attempts to persuade the couple that his own service is more effective than that given by the parish priest. The friar’s sale promotion of himself aims at snatching profits from the priests’ domain. At this point I would like to mention the concept of *penetrantes domos*, false preachers who penetrate people’s homes to deceive through their enchanting words. A certain allegorized Penetrans domos appears in Passus XX of *Piers Plowman* by Langland, Chaucer’s contemporary, testifying to the prevalent use of the term in literary works. Faus-Semblant is a typical figure of such type because he claims that “[s]’en me devoit tuer ou batre, [s]i me voil-ge par tout embatre.” (12116-7) The fact that Friar John “broke into” two houses, that of Thomas and that of the village lord, makes him a good example of *penetrantes domos* as well. “And, since *domus* signifies the conscience, to penetrate houses is to...probe the secrets of the consciences of men not properly belonging under their care and governance.”⁵¹ If we interpret the exploration of the secrets of the consciences as hearing confessions, in the light of the concept, we may regard the passage cited above as the friar’s daring declaration of war against the parish clergy – “I am about to penetrate your domain since your action is too slow.”

However, the clients may also be able to reject the friar’s offer by using parish clergy as an excuse:

“I have be shryven this day at my curat.
I have hym toold hoolly al myn estat;
Nedeth namoore to speken of it,’ seith he...” (III.2095-7)

⁵¹ Szittyta, *The antifraternal tradition*, 60.

The sick man Thomas turns down the friar's proposal to perform a confession through mentioning his curate's service in the dialogue. Although the whole conversation between Thomas and John remains ostensibly polite, one may feel the tension beneath the courtesy exhibited by the two figures. Neither Faus-Semblant nor Friar John chooses to encounter their opponents face to face. Instead, both make their benefactors' households battlefields where they may launch attacks behind the shield of their clients. Like the Pardoner who hides his conflicts with the community under superficial reconciliation with the Host, Friar John wraps his assaults against the parish clergy in his complaisant manners. Yet unlike Faus-Semblant, the Pardoner, and the Fiend, all of whom more or less confess their true nature in the special setting arranged by the authors, Friar John manifests himself in the usual hypocritical mode. The intraclerical struggles are also more vividly demonstrated in the Summoner's Tale than in Faus-Semblant's speech, because what the *Roman* presents is a straightforward polemical argument told through Faus-Semblant's monologue, but in the *Tales* Friar John and Thomas actually serve as performers who act out this argument. Moreover, Chaucer explores deeper into the intraclerical tension than Jean does: while Jean identifies faus-Semblant as one of the friars, all of whom seem to share the same interest and thus form a single group, Chaucer subdivides the mendicants into different units that compete with each other for profits. Chaucer's observation of intramendicant conflicts is well expressed when Friar John shows dissatisfaction for Thomas' spending money on friars from other convents:

“What nedeth yow diverse freres seche?
 What nedeth hym that hath a parfit leche
 To sechen othere leches in the toun?
 Youre inconstance is youre confusioun.
 Holde ye thanne me, or elles oure covent,
 To praye for yow been insufficient?” (III.1955-60)

Chaucer through this detail points out that the mendicant orders as a whole are not a coherent group where the interests of the members never contradict. As the dialogue flows, the author gradually blends conflicts on various levels into the conversation subjects so that readers may attain a general impression of the scuffles within ecclesiastical hierarchy after the introduction of mendicant orders.

Apart from the pseudoapostolic theme, both Faus-Semblant and Friar John receive another heritage from William's work: they take on traits of the Pharisees, one of "William's three antifraternal types."⁵² The signs of the Pharisees are clearly written in Matthew 23:6-7: "(The Pharisees) love the first places at dinners, and the first seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the marketplace, and to be called by men 'rabbi.'"⁵³ The biblical lines picked out by William is literally paraphrased in Faus-Semblant's speech:

"Et des sieges aiment as tables
Les plus haus, les plus honorables,
Et les premiers es sinagogues,
Cum fiers et orgueilleus et rogues,
Et ament que l'en les salue
Quant il trespasent par la rue,
Et vuelent estre apelé mestre..." (12187-93)

Pharisees thus almost become the synonym of friars. Chaucer skillfully fuses some of these signs into his tale as the plotline develops. After enraged by Thomas, Friar John indeed comes "[w]here as this lord sat etyng at his bord." (III.2167) Although John does not explicitly show his wish to sit in the highest place at table, he surely puts on an important air. But the most evident parallel between the depiction of John and Faus-Semblant's lecture is that both authors are aware of the anti-mendicant motif that friars, like Pharisees, wish themselves to be called "rabbi" or "master." We have seen Jean treating of this feature in the passage above. Chaucer, however, designs the

⁵² Ibid., 34

⁵³ Ibid., 37.

Summoner's Tale more exquisitely so that John's pharisaic trait persists through the whole story but goes undetectable until the last part of the tale. Thomas calls the friar "deere maister" (III.1781) and the wife calls him "maister" (III.1836) as well. The honorary title so naturally slides into the conversation that readers may only treat it as an ordinary appellation out of courtesy. It is only when the village lord calls John "maister" (III.2185) and the latter suddenly opposes this appellation that we begin to notice something wrong here:

"No maister, sire,' quod he, 'but servitour,
Thogh I have had in scole that honour.
God liketh nat that 'Raby' men us calle,
Neither in market ne in youre large halle.'" (III.2185-8)

Friar John is indeed "fiers et orgueilleus" as Faus-Semblant suggests, because while correcting the way that the lord addresses him, he maintains that he has deserved the title in school. The contrast between "market" and "large halle" is also interesting, since the former represents the mass of lower class and the latter refers to people with certain social status. Similar notions like "large halle" appear in neither Matthew nor the Faus-Semblant's lecture listed above; rather, phrases that have meanings close to "in market" can be found in both passages – "in the marketplace" in Matthew and "par la rue" in Faus-Semblant's speech. Ironically, it is precisely in the house of the commoners (the "market" people) that Friar John contentedly accepts his title as a "maister." Deviating from Jean's treatment of the self-revealing Faus-Semblant, Chaucer chooses to reveal John's true character in a special way at a special moment: it is exactly when the friar puts on his disguise, that is, feigns modesty and refuses to be called master, that he truly shows himself to be a hypocrite. The modest camouflage at the same time becomes his method of confession – a counterexample of the Pardoner. It is thereby clear that although Chaucer borrows themes or even specific lines from the character Faus-Semblant, he uses these materials in a more

creative way so that they may be adapted to various figures in his own tales to avoid repetition.

Compared to Jean's blatant denunciation against friars through the tongue of Faus-Semblant, Chaucer "avoids making the outright accusations that mark more strident satire"⁵⁴ when he creates friars in his tales, partly to escape censorship, partly because anti-mendicant arguments are only a means that serves the completion of his tales, but not an end in itself. We have shown that Faus-Semblant parallels Friar Hubert in that both flirt with women, though Chaucer treats the latter in a milder way. Friar John's dalliance is treated with the same care:

"The frere ariseth up ful curteisly,
And hire embraceth in his armes narwe,
And kiste hire sweete, and chirketh as a sparwe..." (III.1802-4)

It is true that slyly inserted satire cannot be ignored. While the word "curteisly" links John to Friar Hubert whose chivalric manners are merely of face value, "sparwe" often symbolizes lechery, somehow making John less trustworthy. Yet such interpretations are mere allusions, and the passage's superficial meaning indicates nothing stepping beyond the boundary. Another example of Chaucer's alleviated criticism against friars can be discerned when we compare the gluttony depicted in Faus-Semblant's speech to that in the Summoner's Tale. Earlier in the paper I cite a passage in the *Roman* to show the similarity between Faus-Semblant and Chaucer's summoners. In that passage Faus-Semblant demands defendants to send gifts to him and his colleagues, or else he shall have them burnt, imprisoned, or tortured in all sorts of ways that he may think of. The gifts that he asks for are delicacies:

"S'il ne se deffent de lamproie,
De lus, de saumon ou d'anguile,
.....

⁵⁴ Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, Melissa Mayus, and Katie Bugyis, "Anticlericalism and Vernacular Theology," forthcoming in the *Oxford Handbook to Chaucer*, ed. Suzanne Akbari (Oxford University Press, 2016).

Ou la poire de cailloel,
Ou d'oisons gras, ou de chapons
Dont par les geules nous frapons;

.....

Ou de porc au mains une longe,
Il aura de corde une longe
A quoi l'en le menra bruler..." (12300-13)

This extortion demands a much longer list of delicacies than that of Friar John does, not to mention that Faus-Semblant's demand situates the victim in a far more sinister condition than does the request of Friar John. The threat and severe exploitation from Faus-Semblant makes his sin of gluttony appear particularly wicked to the readers. Friar John, on the other hand, gives his list of foods in a much gentler fashion when the wife of Thomas asks him what he would like to eat for dinner:

"Have I nat of a capon but the lyvere,
And of youre softe breed nat but a shyvere,
And after that a rosted pigges heed --
But that I nolde no beest for me were deed --
Thanne hadde I with yow hoomly suffisaunce.
I am a man of litel sustenance..." (III.1839-43)

To fit the friar's gluttony into his fabliau, Chaucer renders the sin in a less serious manner. The setting is relaxing – a household without the threat of death and torture. By calling the rich recipe "litel sustenance" the author introduces a sharp yet amusing contrast into the scene that aims at bringing forth a laugh from the audience, not aversion. Therefore, although two authors expand on the same subject, and it is very likely that Chaucer borrows from Jean (even a few dishes in their lists resemble each other), their purposes to import the subject are different. Whereas Jean intends to evoke scholarly debates by Faus-Semblant's flagrant argument, Chaucer wants to tell a story that may entertain the readers while reflecting certain social realities. For Chaucer, the anti-mendicant idea prevalent in his time is part of that reality that can be and should be incorporated into his work, but it is not necessarily equivalent to his own attitude.

IV. Summary

The survey thus connects Jean's Faus-Semblant to the narrative structures and specific characters in Chaucer's *Tales*, so that we can safely conclude that Chaucer borrows various themes and even specific verses from the Faus-Semblant episode to enrich the contents of his own stories. It is also worth pointing out that Jean and Chaucer write in the same literary tradition, and both can trace their lineage to William of St. Amour, the anti-mendicant pioneer. However, Jean's depiction of Faus-Semblant more resembles a polemic argument in scholarly debate rather than a real person with development in mental activities and complex personalities – it is, indeed, an allegory. Chaucer, on the other hand, disassembles the original text of the *Roman* and distributes the various details and traits of Faus-Semblant to each character in the *Tales*, so that although many figures possess certain similar features, they are nonetheless distinct beings who perform diverse actions that result in sundry consequences. Compared to Jean's adaptation of William's works to create his Faus-Semblant, which consists of large paragraphs of paraphrasis in the form of a monologue, Chaucer's adaptation from Jean is more subtle and flexible. The great writer of the *Tales* absorbs abundant sources apart from the *Roman* and skillfully inserts the borrowed details into his narration to vividly individualize his characters. The Faus-Semblant episode, along with other works, provides flesh for the tales during the pilgrimage which constitute the bones of the Chaucer's writing. It is in this way that the *Tales* becomes a work independent of any single subject yet in the meantime encompassing a wide range of ongoing social issues that attract contemporary audience.

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