

**THE DEVELOPMENT AND DECLINE
OF BRITISH ANTIFRATERNAL LITERATURE**

THE DEVELOPMENT AND DECLINE
OF BRITISH ANTIFRATERNAL LITERATURE

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Abstract

This thesis presents the results of an investigation of antifraternality materials produced in France during the thirteenth century and in England during the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries. Primary materials include theological tracts such as William of Saint Amour's *De periculis novissimorum temporum* and *De phariseo et publicano* and Richard FitzRalph's *Defensio curatorum* and vernacular works such as several of Rutebeuf's *dits*, Jean de Meun's continuation of *The Romance of the Rose*, John Gower's *Vox clamantis*, Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*, John Skelton's "Collyn Clout," Thomas More's *Utopia*, John Heywood's *The Pardoner and The Friar*, Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, William Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, and Thomas Fuller's "Chaucer."

These materials collectively confirm that, during the late Middle Ages following FitzRalph's influential attack on friars, a particularly British body of antifraternality literature, distinct from its French progenitor, emerged. The distinctly British treatment of friars, marked by its emphasis on fraternal oratories and friars as peddlers, continued until the Reformation when it faded away as the friars themselves silently dissolved into the rapidly changing British religious landscape. Despite the appearance of antifraternality motifs and images in post-Reformation literature, this body of literature lacks a particularly British colouring.

Any study that fuses Medieval and Renaissance ingredients runs the risk of granting more weight to one period than to another. Although I have attempted to be always aware of this problem, an imbalance does remain.

Chapters one through four address various medieval aspects of the antifraternel tradition while Chapter five and the Epilogue examine antifraternel literature of the early Renaissance and Renaissance. The Prologue looks at both periods. I can only hope that the light shed on the ghostly Renaissance antifraternel figure, a figure infrequently discussed in scholarly criticism, partly rights the imbalance.

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Preface

This thesis sets forth a literary history of the appearance and decline of the antifraternality tradition in British literature. Its objective is two-fold. First, it aims to identify and describe both the existence and characteristics of a literary tradition of antifraternality that is uniquely British. Secondly, it offers a commentary on what I judge to be significant, antifraternality texts composed in Britain during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

No identification of a particularly British antifraternality literary tradition, as far as I know, has yet been made. Scholars such as Decima L. Douie, L. L. Hammerich, and Penn Szittyá have set out the general history of the medieval antifraternality movement. Scholars such as Janet Coleman and James Dawson have related antifraternality polemics to theological disputes. Many scholars, including Jill Mann, Edmond Faral, and Julia Bastin, have discussed the influence and impact of traditional antifraternality materials on vernacular antifraternality writings by various medieval authors. Moreover, scholars like Penn Szittyá have discussed the prominent role biblical types occupy in medieval antifraternality literature. As a result, we now know a great deal about the medieval antifraternality tradition: its historical background, its manifestations in both theological and vernacular literature, its sources, and its characteristics.

What critics have overlooked, however, is the presence of a particularly British antifraternality tradition. This tradition, I argue, differs subtly yet significantly from the continental tradition of antifraternality. It appears during the mid-fourteenth century, first manifesting its presence in the

writings of Richard FitzRalph. It gathers momentum in the late fourteenth century, perhaps making its strongest appearance in writings by Gower, Langland, and Chaucer. But, in the fifteenth century, the particularly British antifraternality tradition starts, I argue, to lose the vitality it earlier had, and many antifraternity works produced in Britain during this century are less easy to identify as belonging to a British tradition of antifraternity literature.

Critics have not, so far as I know, offered a discussion of the antifraternity tradition in both medieval and Renaissance literature. Most critics focussing on antifraternity discuss only medieval texts; although Penn Szittya traces the emergence of the antifraternity tradition and what he considers traditionally antifraternity (biblical) language in medieval literature in his 1986 *The Antifraternity Tradition in Medieval Literature*, his discussion, not unsurprisingly, ends chronologically with John Skelton's antifraternity. What I draw attention to is the presence of medieval antifraternity conventions in various Renaissance texts, and I endeavour to show how the antifraternity tradition presents itself in works appearing long after it began. I also illustrate how the antifraternity tradition dissipates by the seventeenth century.

My reading of the figure of the friar in Renaissance literature such as Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is completely informed by my understanding of the medieval antifraternity tradition. As such, I place various literary Renaissance friars into the framework of the antifraternity tradition instead of looking at them only in terms of their role in an individual work.

Prologue

In Book IV, Century 14 of *The Church History of Britain* (1655), Thomas Fuller devotes one of his biographical sketches to Geoffrey Chaucer who, as he relates, was

fined in the temple two shillings, for striking a Franciscan friar in Fleet-street, and it seems his hands ever after itched to be revenged, and have his pennyworths out of them, so tickling religious orders with his tales, and yet so pinching them with his truths, that friars in reading his books know not how to dispose their faces betwixt crying and laughing.¹

As an entertaining piece of prose, this anecdote is certainly engaging and lively, striking as it does, both syntactically and imagistically, a balance between Chaucer's punishment for physically abusing a Franciscan and his attainment of "poetic" revenge -- one which is, according to Fuller, humorous yet humbling, gentle yet gripping. As a reliable explanation of the motivation behind Chaucer's expression of antifraternel sentiments, this anecdote, however, is notoriously suspect: it is apocryphal -- its source remains unknown. But despite its lack of an authenticated historical basis, Fuller's anecdote is interesting as more than just a piece of entertaining prose because it alludes to a movement -- antifraternelism -- poetically treated by Chaucer in his portrait of Huberd, the *Summoner's Tale*, and the *Canterbury Tales'* dramatic quarrel between the Summoner and

¹ Thomas Fuller, *The Church History of Britain*, ed. J.S. Brewer, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1845), II, 384.

2 Prologue

Friar Huberd. Chaucer's satiric treatment of friars is only one of many composed during the fourteenth century in Britain. Various anonymous poems such as "The Layman's Complaint" and "On the Minorites," as well as John Gower's *Vox clamantis* and William Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, all contain long, anti-fraternal passages. The appearance of this relatively large corpus of antifraternial writings in the latter half of the fourteenth century is not surprising, appearing as it does twenty years or so after the outbreak of a conflict between the secular clergy and the fraternal orders in Britain, particularly in London. Such timing suggests, at least ostensibly, that the corpus represents a literary response to a conflict, volatile and controversial enough and sufficiently wide-reaching to provoke and receive a reaction not only from religious men but also from society's commentators. This reaction was neither ambiguous nor equivocal. Unlike Fuller's anecdote, which neither strongly condemns nor harshly castigates friars, many fourteenth-century British writings containing stories and descriptions of friars relentlessly and unequivocally criticize members of all the fraternal orders.

Fuller's anecdote appeared, of course, almost three centuries after both Chaucer's antifraternial writings and the historical conflict between the secular clergy and fraternal orders had happened. It appeared during a time when friars no longer conspicuously populated and threateningly dominated the universities, pulpits, and byways of Britain. And it appeared during a socially and politically tumultuous time when Presbyterians and Baptists, Congregationalists and Quakers, Anglicans and Papists vied for religious expression and

supremacy. The mid-seventeenth-century religious milieu in which Fuller composed his pseudo-biographical sketch of Chaucer perhaps underlies his gentle treatment of both Chaucer's antifraternality and contemporary friars who "know not how to dispose their faces." Critically distant from what was a momentous political issue affecting the fraternal orders and secular clergy, and witnessing the unravelling of the monarchical political system and the Church of England, Fuller was probably detached from anachronic, antifraternality polemics that must have seemed to him quaint, perhaps even insignificant.

Nevertheless, despite Fuller's gentle treatment of contemporary friars, contrasting with Chaucer's antifraternality, his sketch bears traces of antifraternality sentiments. According to Fuller, Chaucer 'pinches' the fraternal orders 'with his truths' -- a comment that indicates Fuller unquestioningly accepts as accurate Chaucer's poetic portrayal of fraternal flaws, even though many are literary commonplaces. As an assertion of the validity of Chaucer's antifraternality sentiment, Fuller's comment serves to reinforce a stereotype of friars as corrupt religious agents. This stereotype actually predates Chaucer's: as early as 1254, in France, opponents of the fraternal orders questioned the friars' untraditional organization, apostolic ideals, preaching, and pastoral practices, providing itemized critiques of fraternal shortcomings and wrongdoings that British antifraternality later adopted and adapted. But as an example of antifraternality, vernacular literature, Fuller's anecdote is remarkably tame and genial. It represents one of the last vestiges of a movement whose sole purpose was to berate friars -- a movement which noticeably penetrates British literature of the late fourteenth

and fifteenth centuries, only to lose its impetus and to decay in the early sixteenth century so that only traces, and not full relics, are usually to be found in Fuller's time.

Fuller's gentle and genial antifraternality is not the only seventeenth-century remnant of a literary tradition that castigates friars. In Book III of *Paradise Lost* Milton puts into the Limbo of Vanity the builders of Babel such as Empedocles,

Cleombrotus, and many more too long,
Embryos, and Idiots, Eremites and Friars
White, Black and Grey, with all thir trumpery.²

These inhabitants of Limbo represent

All who have thir reward on Earth, the fruits
Of painful Superstition and blind Zeal,
Naught seeking but the praise of men (III 451-53).

Even though Catholic antifraternality does not usually criticize the friars' 'blind Zeal,' they nonetheless allege that friars are vain, idolatrous, and desirous of temporal goods -- an allegation Milton also puts forth. Similarly, his suggestion that friars promise false paradise is an antifraternality convention. According to the narrator, the wandering inhabitants include those

who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of *Dominic*,
Or in *Franciscan* think to pass disguis'd
(III 478-80)

who will eventually be propelled by a violent wind and vanish "Into a

² John Milton, *Paradise Lost* in *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis: The Odyssey Press, 1957), III, 473-75. All further quotations from this work will be identified by book and line number.

Limbo large and broad, since call'd / The Paradise of Fools" (III 495-96).

In *Areopagitica*, too, Milton expresses traces of antifraternality sentiments. Briefly listing and discussing "the inventors and the original of book-licensing,"³ he pays particular attention to the role Popes -- and friars -- played. The "Popes of Rome ...," claims Milton, "extended their dominion over men's eyes as they had before over their judgments, burning and prohibiting to be read what they fancied not" (*Areo.* 724). The Popes, according to Milton, initially confined their censoring to so-called heretical writings, but eventually extended this activity to "any subject that was not to their palate" (*Areo.* 724). Actively aiding censorship were friars; Milton remarks,

To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also out of paradise) unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three glutton friars (*Areo.* 724).

Even though Milton perhaps saw some "glutton friars" when he visited Italy in 1638-39, his pairing of friars and gluttony is not at all unusual. As we will see, this charge first appeared in the mid-thirteenth century in France and quickly became an antifraternality commonplace, one used in both French and British antifraternality writings.

And in *L'Allegro* Milton again expresses traces of

³ John Milton, *Areopagitica* in *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis: The Odyssey Press, 1957), p. 725. All further quotations from this work will be identified by page number.

antifraternal sentiments, even though he does not use any particular, long-established antifraternal conventions. Describing the carefree rustics' entertainment when "the livelong daylight fail[s],"⁴ the vanquisher of Melancholy says they go "to the Spicy Nut-brown Ale,/ With stories told of many a feat" (*L'Allegro* 100-101). Included in these tales of feats are those of Faery Mab and the Goblin; the tale-teller,

by Friar's Lantern led,
Tells how the drudging *Goblin* sweat
To earn his Cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy Flail hath thresh'd the Corn
That ten day-laborers could not end
(*L'Allegro* 104-09).

Entertaining though the tale may be to the mirthful rustics and beneficial as it may be as an antidote to melancholy, it nonetheless amuses and cures by invoking its audience's attraction to tales of the unknown, to a world of mischievously helpful yet sinister walking spirits.

Such an attraction is perhaps foolish and frightening, and the image of a friar's lantern guiding the tale-teller reinforces this interpretation. Because the image alludes to the phosphorescent light flickering on marshy ground (*ignis fatuus*), it conveys mysterious or sinister light; it only illuminates little and possesses elements of the unexplainable, of the unknown, as does a parallel image of *ignis fatuus* or foolish fire in Book IX of *Paradise Lost*. Here, Eve's

⁴ John Milton, *L'Allegro* in *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis: The Odyssey Press, 1957), l. 99. All further quotations from this work will be identified by line number.

acquiescence to Satan's request to follow him to the Tree near
"blowing Myrrh and Balm" (IX 629) kindles his spirits

as when a wand'ring Fire,
Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night
Condenses, and the cold invirons round,
Kindl'd through agitation to a Flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,
Misleads th' amaz'd Night-wanderer from his way
To Bogs and Mires, and oft through Pond or Pool,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succor far
(IX 634-42).

As Kester Svendsen notes in his discussion, "Cosmological Lore in
Milton," John Swan's description of *ignis fatuus* in *Speculum
Mundi* (1643) is "startlingly like [a] prose paraphrase[] of Milton's
lines."⁵ According to Swan, foolish fire

is a fat and oily Exhalation hot and drie (as all Exhala-
tions are which are apt to be fired) and also heavie in
regard of the glutinous matter whereof it consisteth: in
which regard the cold of the night beats it back again
when it striveth to ascend, through which strife and
tossing it is fired ... and being fired it goeth to and fro
according to the motion of the Aire in the silent night by
gentle gales These kinds of light are often seen in
Fennes and Moores, because there is always great store
of unctuous matter fit for such purposes.⁶

As a hot and heavy exhalation, *ignis fatuus*, known also as foolish
fire, Will-o-the-wisp, Jack-o-lantern, and Friar's Lantern,⁷ provides a
false light; it does not illuminate but misleads and deludes. Specifi-

⁵ Kester Svendsen, "Cosmological Lore in Milton", *ELH*
(1942) 9:220.

⁶ John Swan quoted in Kester Svendsen, "Cosmological Lore in
Milton", *ELH* (1942) 9:220-21.

⁷ See "Jack o'Lantern" in *The Oxford English Dictionary*,
2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), VIII, 171.

cally, it misleads and deludes the ignorant and the superstitious, a group that certainly includes the tale-teller in *L'Allegro*. As Swan explains,

wherefore the much terrified, ignorant, and superstitious people may see their own errours in that they have deemed these lights to be walking spirits They are no spirits, and yet lead out of the way, because those who see them are amazed, and look so earnestly after them that they forget their way; and then begin once out, they wander to and fro, not knowing whither, sometimes to waters, pits, and other dangerous places; whereupon the next day they will undoubtedly tell you strange tales (as one saith) how they were led up and down by a light, which (in their judgment) was nothing else but some devil or spirit in the likenesse of fire which fain would have hurt them.⁸

Like Swan's "ignorant, and superstitious people" who tell a "strange tale," *L'Allegro*'s superstitious tale-teller, himself once led by a "Friar's Lantern", later relates a "strange tale" of a goblin.

As a synonym for *ignis fatuus*, Jack-o-lantern, and will-o-the-wisp, and as a false light associated with both "walking spirits" and "some devil or spirit in the likenesse of fire," "Friar's Lantern" is certainly an antifraternial image. How this image became synonymous with foolish fire is unknown, but that it was synonymous with *ignis fatuus* during Milton's time is not at all surprising. For years antifraternialists presented friars as duplicitous wanderers. Because friars were not assigned to a specific, ecclesiastical district, because they did not regularly visit parishioners or minister to all their needs, medieval antifraternialists emphasized the friars' physical wanderings -- an unfixed state signifying spiritual wandering

⁸ Swan, 221.

-- and their lack of familiarity, their non-societal role as 'eternal strangers.' Antifraternalists, particularly British ones, as we will see, also frequently presented friars as cohorts of Satan, as "noon-day devils," and as demons who supplant elves and incubi. The seventeenth-century connotations of a friar's lantern bear diminished yet significant similarities to these medieval antifraternal types. Like the allegedly duplicitous and demonic friars who wander abroad and unfixed, leading Christian wayfarers astray, the friar's lantern misleads and confuses travellers, convincing them that demonic spirits wander abroad at night.

Milton's use of the antifraternal image, "Friar's Lantern," constitutes a brief attack on the fraternal orders. To maintain that Milton briefly attacks friars in *L'Allegro* perhaps seems over-ambitious and arcane, yet Peter Tomory in his study, *The Life and Art of Henry Fuseli*, remarks that Fuseli, too, interpreted Milton's image as antifraternal. "There is even a Miltonic echo in 'Titania and Bottom,'" observes Tomory,

Next to the gnome is the Faery Mab from *L'Allegro*, not only identified by her companion carrying a dish of junket, but by the diminutive friar who leads her: And by the Friars' lantern led, wrote Milton, with a thrust at the orders of Friars, who deceived people as much as *Jack-o'-Lantern* or *Will-o'-the-wisp*. A reference not lost on Fuseli, either.⁹

While the diminutive friar in Fuseli's "Titania and Bottom" (1786-89) actually appears benevolent, indeed aged and downtrodden (see figure 1), the friar in his "Jack o'Lanthorn" (1799) is assuredly mis-

⁹ Peter Tomory, *The Life and Art of Henry Fuseli* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), p. 100.

chievious and malevolent (see figure 2). Uniting Shakespeare's Puck of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Milton's "Friar's Lantern", Fuseli creates an imp, his body cherubic yet his face malevolent, who, leaping uninhibitedly aloft, startles a rustic youth.

Yet by incorporating the image of a friar's lantern into *L'Allegro*, Milton not only takes a quick "thrust at the orders of Friars" but also characterizes the tale-teller as irrational. Indeed, like the friars condemned to the Paradise of Fools in Book III of *Paradise Lost*, the tale-teller is superstitious: his fear and reverence are as misdirected as the friars'. To Milton, the friars are idolatrous, seeking as they do salvation through the instruments of the Catholic faith. Earlier British antifraternalsists similarly accused the friars of worshipping idols, yet, unlike Milton, they did not attack the friars' Catholicism. Rather, they attacked their alleged reverence for carvings and wall-hangings.

These two distinct treatments of a particularly British antifraternals convention point to a significant difference between Milton's antifraternalsism and medieval authors': Milton denounces friars because they are Catholic; medieval antifraternalsists such as Langland and Gower censure friars because they are allegedly corrupt. Another significant difference exists between Milton's and medieval antifraternalsists' censuring of friars. Unlike various, medieval works such as *Vox clamantis* and the B-text of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, both of which contain long, antifraternals attacks central to each works' ideas, Milton's works contain comparatively short, antifraternals passages peripheral to the works' purposes. Indeed, like Fuller's brief anecdote expressing traces of



Figure 1



Figure 2

antifraternal sentiments, Milton's 'thrusts' at the fraternal orders represent one of the last vestiges of a literary movement berating friars.

Both Fuller's gentle antifraternalism and Milton's pointed antifraternal sentiments possess a long but colourful past. Perhaps the first appearance of the antifraternal tradition in British vernacular literature is "The Order of Fair-Ease," an anonymous poem composed, according to Thomas Wright, during the reign of Edward I (1272-1307).¹⁰ In this satire ridiculing various religious orders such as the Hospitallers and Benedictines, the speaker creates a new, corrupt order -- the Order of Fair-Ease -- by taking a characteristic from various, contemporary orders. From "Les Frere Menours" whose order "est fondé en poverté" (is founded in poverty),¹¹ the speaker takes the vow of poverty. The Franciscans, explains the speaker, do not actually uphold this vow:

Quaunt il vont par le pays,
Al chief baroun ou chivaler
Se lerrount il herberger,
Ou à chief persone ou prestre,
Là ou il purrount acese estre;
Mès par Seint Piere de Ronme,
Ne se herbigerount ou povre honme, --
Taunt come plus riches serrount,
Ostiel plustost demanderount (ll. 178-86).
(when they travel through the country, they

¹⁰ Thomas Wright, ed. & trans., *The Political Songs of England* (New York: AMS, 1968), p. 136.

¹¹ "The Order of Fair-Ease" in *The Political Songs of England*, ed. & trans. by Thomas Wright (New York: AMS, 1968), l. 173. All further quotations from this poem will be identified by line number. All translations are Wright's and will be identified by Wright and page number.

take up their lodgings with the chief baron
 or knight, or with the chief person or
 priest, there where they can be satiated;
 but, by St. Peter of Rome! they will never
 lodge with a poor man, -- so long as there
 are richer men to be found, they prefer
 asking a lodging of them (Wright 145).

Just as the speaker's new order is indebted to the Minorites so, too, is
 it to the Dominicans. Unlike the Franciscans who go barefoot,

Eynz vont precher tot chaucéez,
 E s'il avient ascune feez
 Qu'il seient malades as piés,
 Yl purrout, s'il ount talent,
 Chevalcher tot plenerement
 Tote la journée entière (ll. 196-201)
 (they go preaching with shoes on, and if
 it happen any time that they have sore
 feet, they may, if they like, ride on
 horseback at their ease all the day long)
 (Wright 146).

This attack against the Franciscans and Dominicans is mild; unlike
 most of those appearing during the latter half of the fourteenth
 century in Britain, it censures only one attribute traditionally associ-
 ated with each order: Franciscan poverty and Dominican preaching.

This attack is also not unusual. In France during the thirteenth
 century a strong antifraternial movement emerged, its supporters
 expressing their dissatisfaction with and perhaps envy of the fraternal
 orders in both theological and vernacular writings. Foremost in this
 body of writings are William of Saint Amour's; in *De pharisaeo et
 publicano* and *De periculis novissimorum temporum* he vehe-
 mently attacks the friars, putting forth a series of characteristics that
 allegedly define and reveal fraternal corruption. This series strongly
 influenced subsequent antifraternial writings. French
 antifraternialists such as Rutebeuf and Jean de Meun reiterate and

rework many of William's ideas as does the anonymous author of "The Order of Fair-Ease." In fact, the anonymous author's critique of Franciscans' seeking of luxurious lodgings and intemperance recalls William's allegation in sign twenty-eight of Chapter Fourteen of *De periculis* that friars are pseudo-apostles because they seek good lodgings and tasty fare.¹² Later British antifraternalsists such as Gower and Langland similarly draw upon antifraternals sentiments first expressed in French theological and vernacular literature: they, too, adopt and rework what quickly become antifraternals commonplaces and types.

Yet many British antifraternalsists of the latter half of the fourteenth century did not merely reiterate French antifraternals commonplaces: they placed special emphasis upon certain corrupt acts the friars allegedly performed, stripping them of their French heritage, planting them in British soil, and defining them in terms of British ecclesiastical politics. They also contributed their own ideas to the antifraternals tradition. By so doing, British antifraternalsists redefined antifraternals polemics; in fact, they gave birth to an antifraternals tradition inextricably bound to its thirteenth-century French parent yet independent from it. This literary tradition, both its development and decline, is the subject of this study.

Part One of this study essentially summarizes the historical antifraternals movement in France during the thirteenth century and

¹² Guillielmi De Sancto Amore, *Tractatus Brevis De Periculis Novissimorum Temporum Ex Scripturis Sumptus* in *Opera Omnia* (Constantiae: Ad Insigne Bonae Fidei Apud Alithophilos, 1632), p. 67.

its British counterpart that appeared approximately one hundred years later. Because historical considerations inform both French and British antifraternality literature, the historical events reflected in it are central to any study of antifraternality. Briefly described also are some of the fraternal orders' unique characteristics and religious ideals. Though still present in the twentieth century, friars are no longer, as Chaucer's Wife of Bath so pertly says, "As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem."¹³ 'Numberless' friars do not usually beg in the streets, preach in the parish priests' pulpits, or control many chairs at universities, and despite the recent controversy involving both apparitions of the Virgin Mary in the Franciscan church at Medjugorje, Yugoslavia and the Franciscans' refusal to obey their superiors' wishes, friars are infrequently involved in contemporary religious and political controversies that attract attention from the outside world. As a result, common knowledge of friars' history and ideology is usually limited. One aim, then, of Part One of this study is to provide a historical and ideological landscape in which vernacular writers' handling of the issue of antifraternality may be seen for what it is and for what it means. Another, equally important aim, is to demonstrate that, while the historical, antifraternality movement in Britain was similar to its French predecessor, it also significantly differed from it.

Theological considerations, like historical ones, inform both French and British antifraternality literature, and Part Two of this study

¹³ Larry Benson, ed., *The Wife of Bath's Tale in The Riverside Chaucer* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), III (D), 868.

addresses these concerns. Theological writings, particularly the influential *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, *De pharisaeo et publicano*, and *Defensio curatorum*, represent responses to issues raised during the historical antifraternial movement and contain information pertinent to the study of literary antifraternialism. The significance of antifraternial, theological polemics for literary writings was noted as long ago as 1953 by Arnold Williams. In his article, "Chaucer and The Friars," Williams discusses the general sources and characteristics of antifraternialism, concluding that

the attitude of the whole of Chaucer's treatment of the friars is paralleled in the writings of William and FitzRalph. What Chaucer did, it is clear, was merely to give artistic form to the most important of the charges against the friars made by William, repeated in every generation over a century and a quarter, and naturalized in England, stripped of their apocalyptic costume, by FitzRalph.¹⁴

More recent scholarship has established how vernacular writers such as Langland and Chaucer incorporate various elements of antifraternial, theological materials into their writings. In *The Antifraternial Tradition in Medieval Literature* (1986) Penn Szitty points out that William of Saint Amour's *De periculis*

not only began the long history of antifraternial theology; it also inaugurated a tradition of the use of Biblical language against the friars for centuries, in poetry and theology alike, language that identified them with a recurring set of Biblical malefactors -- primarily the antichrists prophesied for the end of time, the false

¹⁴ Arnold Williams, "Chaucer and The Friars", repr. in *Chaucer Criticism II*, eds. R. Schoeck and J. Taylor (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1960), 81.

apostles of the New Law, and the Pharisees of the Old Law -- and that described their faults in words taken from the text of Scripture.¹⁵

According to Szittyá, ideas about the friars

derive from a characteristically medieval perception of the friars, a perception more symbolic than realistic, more theological than political or economic, concerned more with what the friars were *sub specie aeternitatis* than with what they actually did in the world. They were not viewed simply as competitors for university posts and ecclesiastical privileges but as fulfillments of Scriptural prophecies and analogues of Biblical types predicted for the Last Days.¹⁶

William of Saint Amour's influential *De periculis novissimorum temporum* and *De phariseo et publicano*, however, serve not only as the source of both the theological tradition of antifraternism and literary, antifratern types, analogous to a range of scriptural types but also as a yardstick by which British antifraternism can be measured, compared, and distinguished. To distinguish the distinctly British antifratern allegations from French ones that rapidly became antifratern commonplaces, both Richard FitzRalph's *Defensio curatorum* and William of Saint Amour's *De periculis* and *De phariseo* are examined in Part Two of this study. The aim of this comparative analysis is to identify the differences between the French and British theological treatments of friars.

Part Three of this study focusses upon vernacular antifratern

¹⁵ Penn Szittyá, *The Antifratern Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 4-5.

¹⁶ Szittyá, p. 6.

literature. Both French and British writers of vernacular antifraternel texts drew upon already existing antifraternel materials; they reworked, for instance, William of Saint Amour's sermons, the main source of antifraternel commonplaces. Yet, as these authors reworked pre-existing antifraternel structures and ideas, they interpreted friars and antifraternelism by selectively emphasizing and omitting certain structures and ideas. These emphases and omissions are central to this study's reading of the antifraternel tradition in Medieval and Renaissance literature because they serve to differentiate British vernacular antifraternel literature from its French parent. The omissions also tidily trace the decline of the tradition in fifteenth and sixteenth-century literature.

Part Three is divided into three sections. The first one examines thirteenth-century French vernacular literature, focussing on several of Rutebeuf's 'university' poems and Jean de Meun's continuation of *The Romance of the Rose*. The second section addresses the antifraternel literature that is composed in Britain twenty years or so after the appearance of Richard FitzRalph's influential *Defensio curatorum*, focussing primarily on John Gower's *Vox clamantis*, William Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (B-text), and Geoffrey Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*, portrait of Friar Huberd, and dramatic quarrel between Huberd and the Summoner. Even though this section primarily explores the work of these three authors, attention is also given to some anonymous late fourteenth-century lyrics. The third section explores antifraternel works appearing during the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, offering an analysis of *Jack Upland*, *Friar Daw's Reply*, and

Upland's Rejoinder, the anonymous *Mum and the Sothsegger*, the anonymous *Jak & his stepdame, & of the Frere*, John Skelton's "Collyn Clout," the anonymous "The Friar and the Nun," Thomas More's *Utopia* and "The Sergeaunt that became a Fryar," and John Heywood's *The Pardoner and The Friar*.

The epilogue of this study addresses the dissolution of the antifraternel tradition. It examines some late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century works, many of which contain rather ambiguous treatments of friars. Perhaps entangled in a tradition that neither strongly interests them nor serves their artistic purposes, authors such as William Shakespeare and John Ford imbed antifraternel conventions into some of their plays yet produce works that are not clearly antifraternel. Also addressed in the epilogue are two works that contain noteworthy uses of the antifraternel tradition: Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* and Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*.

The antifraternel tradition in British literature is a rich and varied one. It appears during the fourteenth century, its contributors adopting yet adapting antifraternel characteristics and types put forth by their thirteenth-century French predecessors. These characteristics and types pass into the literature of the next century, gradually losing their vitality as the sixteenth century moves forward so that only remnants of the tradition usually remain in the seventeenth century, the age of Fuller and Milton.

Part One

The Historical Antifraternal Movement

Chapter One: "...habits strange appear": The Historical Background of the Medieval Antifraternal Movement

... habits strange appear.

The Romance of the Rose

In March of 1253 a violent clash occurred between scholars of the University of Paris and the local townspeople. According to university documents, a patrol of constables brutally attacked four students without provocation. "One student was killed and the others thrown into prison, where in the course of an official interrogation, their bones were broken."¹ The secular masters of the university quickly responded to what they considered a "monstrous outrage against innocent scholars"² by immediately suspending lectures -- the medieval equivalent of a protest strike. The Parisian authorities reacted somewhat less quickly, but, within a few months, the constables were duly punished: "two of the offending guards had been

¹ Penn Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 11.

² Gordon Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New York: John Wiley and Son, 1968), p. 35.

dragged through the streets behind horses and then hanged by the neck until dead, the others banished from the city forever."³ The university strike thus achieved its desired end, and the struggle between the scholars and the local people ceased.

This conflict of 1253 was not the first nor the last such one arising between 'town and gown.' During the carnival of 1228-29, for instance, a series of riots broke out in a tavern. According to Matthew Paris, an English chronicler and monk, the disturbances "finally led the queen regent, Blanche of Castille, to call out the provost and his soldiers who killed and wounded some of the students."⁴ To protest this brutality, the secular masters cancelled lectures; "when no redress was made they met on Easter Monday and resolved to leave the city in a month for six years if none was by then forthcoming. It was not; so they went, some to other schools in France, some to Oxford in England."⁵ The university, however, did not remain dispersed for the agreed upon six years. Instead, it returned to Paris after approximately two years, probably at the beginning of 1231. Upon its return, the faculty secured several privileges, one of which was the "right to suspend lectures in the case of death, or injury, or extortionate rents."⁶ The secular masters,

³ Szittyá, p. 11.

⁴ Leff, p. 31.

⁵ Leff, p. 31.

⁶ Leff, p. 32.

therefore, ultimately received recognition of their right to strike -- a right that they would later exercise.

These two seemingly disparate disputes between the university and the local people actually share one historically significant feature: during both the dispersal of 1228-29 and the strike of 1253 the friars studying in Paris refused to support the secular scholars in their attempts to attain academic rights. During the dispersal, the friars dissociated themselves from the conflict and continued to offer courses in their own conventual schools established for members of their orders. Moreover, during the dispersal, the Dominicans, members of the *ordo praedicatorum* (preaching order) recognized by the Pope in 1216, gained the right to instruct secular students and subsequently opened their schools to these students. Previously, from the time of their arrival in Paris in 1217-19, the friars only instructed fraternal students and, as a result, did not directly compete with the University of Paris. In fact, "the fame of Paris in theology led them ... to send students to study for degrees in the theological faculty."⁷ One such student was the Dominican, Roland of Cremona, who studied at this faculty under the guidance of the secular master John of Saint Giles. In 1228, Roland, in spite of the strike, completed his courses under the supervision of John of Saint Giles "who apparently opposed the strike [and] remained in Paris."⁸ Then, in 1229, William of Auvergne, the bishop of Paris, bestowed

⁷ Leff, p. 36.

⁸ Szittyá, pp. 12-13.

the license in theology upon Roland of Cremona without the approval of the absent theological faculty. "The Dominicans, whether by design or accidentally, thus gained their first chair in the theological faculty"⁹ and with it the right to teach secular students.

When the secular masters returned to Paris in 1231, the Dominicans retained this chair and its accompanying privilege. Shortly after the strike ended they gained another chair in the faculty of theology: John of Saint Giles, Roland of Cremona's master, became a Dominican without surrendering his position at the University of Paris. And then, Alexander of Hales, a distinguished secular theologian, entered the Franciscan order yet continued to occupy his chair in the theological faculty. Thus, by 1231 the Dominicans and Franciscans possessed three of the twelve available chairs in theology at the University of Paris.

The friars' possession of these chairs ultimately led to two momentous events, both of which adversely affected the secular masters and considerably altered both academic policy and the academic curriculum at the University of Paris in the thirteenth century. First, the friars' occupation of chairs destroyed the secular masters' monopoly on instruction. During the thirteenth century the Franciscans and in particular the Dominicans established themselves as notable teaching orders and produced a number of distinguished theologians and teachers. The secular masters thus faced formidable competition from instructors such as Alexander of Hales, Roger

⁹ Leff, p. 37.

Bacon and Bonaventure, all Franciscans, and Hugh of Saint Cher and Thomas Aquinas, both Dominicans -- both Bonaventure and Aquinas occupied chairs. That the secular masters did not do well in the face of such competition is evident from a letter written in February 1254: the secular masters themselves confess

that the state of the city and the reputation of the theological faculty ... could hardly support twelve chairs because of the scarcity of the scholars studying with [them], since now in cities and other large-sized places generally the said subject is taught by the same friars and others not without great peril.¹⁰

The secular masters, then, lost students to the friars and, therefore, their control over teaching.

To make matters worse from the secular masters' point of view, such eminent theologians as Aquinas, Bacon, and Bonaventure emerged from the ranks of friars and endeavoured to reconcile traditional Augustinian ideas with Aristotelian ones. Prior to the thirteenth century the scholastic organization of the Theology Faculty was based on a system sketched by Saint Augustine: it was generally conservative in nature and focussed on the study of the Sacred Scriptures, commentaries of the Church Fathers, moral theology, sacramental theology, and pastoral theology. The scholastic organization of the Arts Faculty was based on a system of the liberal arts, initially worked out by the Greeks and Romans, and this faculty was regarded as preparation for the theological one. During the early thirteenth century, however, works of Aristotle were introduced at the University of Paris. And, even though the study of Aristotle

¹⁰ Leff, p. 38.

provoked a crisis and was prohibited first in 1210 and again in 1215, it penetrated into the scholastic system.¹¹

The prohibitions against the teaching of Aristotle were formally operative from 1210 to 1255 but were largely ignored from 1240 to 1255, and masters such as the Franciscan Roger Bacon taught the physics and metaphysics of Aristotle at Paris' Arts Faculty in the 1240s.¹² At first the Faculty of Theology was neither directly nor greatly affected by the teaching of Aristotle because the professors of theology separated philosophy from theology, but then on March 19, 1255 the Faculty of Arts introduced a new curriculum: it added all the known works of Aristotle to its current syllabus.¹³ In effect, the Arts Faculty became a Philosophy Faculty, and it encouraged the study of pagan doctrines. The new syllabus was both independent from and incompatible with the teaching of Christian doctrines in the Theology Faculty. Further, it upset the conservative Faculty of Theology because the study of Aristotle would encourage an interest in speculation that would eventually penetrate into their faculty when ex-students of the Arts Faculty entered their program (students normally completed a Bachelor of Arts before entering the Faculty of Theology to begin a Master of Arts).

Friars such as Bonaventure and Aquinas attempted to resolve

¹¹ Fernand Van Steenberghen, *The Philosophical Movement in the Thirteenth Century* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1955), pp. 24-37.

¹² Decima Douie, *Archbishop Pecham* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 4-5.

¹³ Douie, p. 5.

the conflict between pagan and Christian doctrines by formulating a system of theology that acknowledged some Aristotelian ideas yet upheld Augustinian ones. It was not exclusively friars who reconsidered theological problems with the aid of Aristotelianism; yet the doctrinal influence of secular masters was minor during this period primarily because "by intensive recruiting in university circles, the mendicant orders attracted the elite of the academic populations."¹⁴

Secondly, the friars' possession of three chairs in the Faculty of Theology eroded the secular masters' influence in this faculty. After the friars initially gained control of these chairs, "other religious orders began to do the same -- Cistercians, Premonstratensians, and later Augustinian and Carmelite friars."¹⁵ By 1254 the secular masters occupied only three of the twelve available chairs:

The cathedral canons had another three and the mendicants the remainder: in addition to the three that had originally gone to the Dominicans and the Franciscans, new religious orders had established schools and had swallowed up, it would seem, another six.¹⁶

The seculars not only claimed that the Dominicans surreptitiously acquired their first two chairs, "the first behind the university's back 'with the connivance of the bishop and chancellor of Paris' [and] the second 'against the will of the then chancellor',"¹⁷ but they also

¹⁴ Fernand Van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West*, trans. Leonard Johnston (Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts, 1955), pp. 116-17.

¹⁵ Leff, p. 38.

¹⁶ Leff, p. 38.

¹⁷ Leff, p. 38.

resented "the multiplication of 'successive doctors for themselves' that resulted from having two chairs."¹⁸ To the seculars, the friars' possession of the majority of the chairs was an encroachment depriving them of both their rights and livelihood.

A papal edict of 1250 further weakened the secular masters' control over the faculty. Innocent IV ordered the University's Chancellor to grant licenses in theology to whomever he considered suitable candidates, especially the religious, regardless of whether or not he was asked. Such an edict gave friars entry into the Faculty of Theology independently of the seculars. In order to minimize their loss of control, the secular masters passed a statute in 1252 which removed the possibility of further fraternal chairs:

henceforth candidates for the *magisterium* would have to have studied, been examined and approved and to have lectured at one of the approved colleges or schools of the university. And furthermore each religious order (monastic as well as mendicant) was to have no more than one college and one master in theology. Anyone not abiding by the statute was excluded from the corporation of masters of theology.¹⁹

Because the Dominican friars possessed two chairs and refused to relinquish one, they were expelled from the Faculty of Theology.

For thirteen months, uneasy but relatively uneventful relations existed between the secular masters and the friars. But, when the friars refused to participate in the university-wide strike of March 1253, the secular masters released their pent-up resentment against the friars: "the consortium of all the masters of all the faculties, not

¹⁸ Leff, p. 38.

¹⁹ Szittyá, p. 13.

just theology, this time not only expelled but also excommunicated the three mendicant masters."²⁰ In order to reinforce their position, these secular masters also

decreed that in future no one would be admitted as a master unless he had first sworn before three other masters to observe the university's statutes, papal privileges, and secrets, to comply with any future cessation of lectures, and to bind the bachelors whom they taught and examined by the same oath. Failure by a master, bachelor, or scholar to observe a cessation would lead to eternal exclusion from the university.²¹

The friars refused to accept excommunication passively. They appealed for help to their powerful friends at the French court and in the papacy; the seculars, in turn, sought assistance from their allies and issued a torrent of polemics against the friars. Thus began the first outburst of open controversy between the secular clergy and the friars.

It was William of Saint Amour, Professor of Theology and Procurator of the University of Paris, who instigated the first determined attack against the friars in the 1250s. In a series of sermons delivered in 1254 and 1255 William articulated a number of charges against the friars which, as Robert P. Miller points out, "were given definitive expression in 1256 with the publication of the *De periculis novissimorum temporum* ("The Perils of the Last Times"), a treatise which became the standard reference in antifrat-

²⁰ Szittyá, p. 14.

²¹ Leff, p. 40.

ernal writings for the next two centuries."²² One of the numerous signs in this treatise distinguishing true apostles from friars is number thirty-nine: "*veri Apostoli non intendunt nec innituntur rationibus Logicus, aut Philosophicus*"²³ (True Apostles neither devote their attention to nor use rational logic, or philosophy).

William's condemnation here of the friars' involvement in the new scholasticism situates his polemics at a particular historical time and place: the University of Paris during the 1250s. So too does his criticism of Gerard of Borgo San Donnino's *Introductorius ad Evangelium Aeternum* (c. 1253), which prophesied the overthrow of the New Law by the Eternal Gospel, a gospel that would be administered by the friars, particularly by the Franciscans.²⁴

William's criticisms of specifically fraternal activities at Paris are

²² Robert P. Miller, *Chaucer: Sources and Backgrounds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 237.

²³ Guilielmi De Sancto Amore, *Tractatus Brevis De Periculis Novissimorum Temporum Ex Scripturis Sumptus* in *Opera Omnia* (Constantiae: Ad Insigne Bonae Fidei Apud Alithophilos, 1632), p. 71.

²⁴ Apocalyptic speculations were particularly rife among members of a wing of the Franciscans during the 1250s. Arnold Williams explains that these speculations "were based on the work of Joachim, abbot of Fiore, which had been developed by Burgo of Santo Donnini in the famous *Introductorius* to the 'Eternal Gospel.' No copy of this has survived, but we know that the *Introductorius* saw the world as divided into three great periods, that of the Old Law ('the gospel of the Father'), that of the New ('the gospel of the Son'), and that of the 'Eternal Gospel' ('the gospel of the Holy Ghost'). As the Old Law had been superseded by the New, so the New was now to be superseded by the 'Eternal Gospel.' The friars, particularly the Franciscans, were the forerunners of this third age, as John the Baptist had been of the second" ("Chaucer and the Friars," 66). See also Szittyá, 1986, p. 15.

nonetheless few in number. He focuses instead on friars as pseudo-apostles who are in league with antichrist. Of particular significance is William's undermining of the friars' apostolic claims because it touched upon an issue that not only interested a limited audience composed of members of the Parisian secular clergy, but also concerned members of the secular clergy in all Western Christendom. William of Saint Amour, in fact, attacked fraternal practices and privileges that had excited hostile opposition almost immediately after the fraternal orders first received papal recognition.

When the friars first appeared in the early thirteenth century they claimed to be the "new Apostles" replacing an apostolic succession which began, according to Scripture, with Christ's instruction to his disciples.²⁵ As Szittya succinctly explains,

the Franciscans in particular associated themselves with the biblical Apostles. Early biographers report that the order was founded when Saint Francis, during a 'missam de Apostolis' at the church of the Portiuncula, heard a passage from Christ's instructions to the Apostles before sending them out to preach the Gospel (primarily Luke 10:1-12; cf. Matt. 10:5-15; Mark 6:7-13). Saint Francis made these verses into guiding principles for the young order, eventually incorporating many of them into the Rule Likewise the Dominicans, the *Ordo Praedicatorum*, conceived of themselves as evangelical preachers, following in the footsteps of the Apostles.²⁶

The scriptural verses from Mark, Luke, and Matthew collectively provide a synopsis of the ideal apostolic way of life. Christ's Apostles

²⁵ Miller, p. 240.

²⁶ Penn Szittya, "The Antifraternal Tradition in Middle English Literature", *Speculum* (1977) 52:301-02.

were to preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 10:8) and were to heal the sick and cleanse the lepers (Matt. 10:7). They should not possess gold, silver, or money (Matt. 10:9), and, when they journeyed, they were not to carry scrip, two coats, shoes, staff, or bread (Matt. 10:10; cf. Mark 6:8). The Apostles were to travel "two by two" (Luke 10:1; cf. Mark 6:7) and salute the houses they entered with "Peace be to this house" (Luke 10:4). Finally, they were to eat what was set before them (Luke 10:8) and not go from house to house (Luke 10:7).

The friars of the early thirteenth century endeavoured to imitate Christ's Apostles by preaching the Gospel of Christ and by practising evangelical poverty. They possessed no property, and their means of livelihood was "what they conceived to be the apostolic [one]: begging"²⁷-- hence the common appellation of mendicants. Unlike members of the secular clergy who were assigned, according to their position in the traditional pyramid of ecclesiastical authority, to a specific locale, the friars were itinerant, preaching the Gospel anywhere, though particularly in populated areas. Unlike monks, members of the regular orders, who owned land and retreated from the temporal world, the friars rejected ownership of property and actively participated in the temporal world. The fraternal orders thus represented a new and welcomed addition to the established structure of the Roman Catholic Church.

The fraternal orders, however, were more than just a novel

²⁷ Penn Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 8.

addition to the structure of the medieval Church; they were papal orders as opposed to secular ones. Whereas the parish priests received their authority from the bishops, the friars received their powers as well as their privileges directly from the popes. Whereas the parish priests were part of the traditional church hierarchy which regulated their activities, the friars were situated outside this hierarchy and, therefore, "were exempt from the authority of the bishops, who had no power to expel them or even to force them to co-ordinate their activities with the local priest."²⁸ Further, when the fraternal orders received papal approval in the early thirteenth century, they were also granted papal license to perform three ministrations previously reserved exclusively for members of the secular clergy. These three pastoral privileges -- preaching, hearing confession, and burial of the dead -- were the most lucrative ministrations, and when the friars undertook them, they automatically competed for the revenues of the parish priests. Thus, the friars, as orders receiving authority and privileges solely and directly from the popes, posed both an economic and a political threat to the secular establishment of Western Christendom.

William of Saint Amour's attacks in the 1250s on the friars' apostolic claims, privileges, authority, and interest in the new scholasticism attracted an audience of sympathetic seculars as well as the attention of the popes. At first the attention was favourable. After William visited Rome in the spring of 1254 and presented argu-

²⁸ Szittyá, 1986, p. 8.

ments against the friars on behalf of the University of Paris, Innocent IV issued an edict reprimanding "certain unnamed privileged orders" for abusing the offices of confession and burial.²⁹ He subsequently issued another bull, *Etsi animarum*, in November 1254 which severely restricted the friars' pastoral privileges: the friars

might no longer, for example, administer confession without permission of the parish priest; they must provide to the latter one-fourth of any bequests if burial took place at the friars' church; they could not celebrate Mass in their churches at a time when it was being celebrated in a parish church.³⁰

The secular clergy's success at Rome was short-lived, however. Pope Innocent IV died shortly after the introduction of *Etsi animarum*, and Alexander IV, the cardinal protector of the Franciscans, succeeded him. The new pope immediately revoked *Etsi animarum*, thereby restoring all of the friars' pastoral privileges. He then insisted the friars be reintegrated into the consortium of masters at the University of Paris; when reintegration was not forthcoming, Alexander IV ordered that William of Saint Amour and "three of his confrères, Odo of Douai, Nicholas of Bar-sur-Aube, and Christian of Beauvais ... be deprived of their benefices, expelled from the body of masters, and excommunicated."³¹ This papal order of 1256 was followed by the pope's condemnation of William's *De periculis novissimorum temporum*; Alexander IV "banned it eternally with every copy to be burned within eight days; anyone found in possession

²⁹ Szittyá, 1986, pp. 15-16.

³⁰ Szittyá, 1986, p. 16.

³¹ Leff, p. 45.

of one after that, or espousing its doctrines, would be excommunicated."³² He then concluded his direct attack on William of Saint Amour by exiling him from France.

The struggle between the secular clergy and the fraternal orders did not suddenly cease when William was banished, even though its intensity dwindled.³³ Nor did papal attempts to resolve the conflict end satisfactorily. In fact, almost every pope in the latter half of the thirteenth century endeavoured to find an acceptable solution to the conflict. Each pope issued at least one bull to regulate relations between the Church hierarchy and the secular clergy and friars. Alexander IV, as time passed, adopted a more conciliatory attitude towards the secular masters at the University of Paris, and in 1260 he "authorized the bishop of Paris to absolve those who had been excommunicated for possessing copies of *De periculis*."³⁴ The doctrinal conflict over the teaching of Aristotle was momentarily resolved by the Condemnation of 1277 that Stephen

³² Leff, p. 45.

³³ After William of St. Amour's banishment, "an anonymous author, probably a Franciscan, answered William in a tract called *Manus quae Omnipotentem tenditur*. Gerard of Abbeville continued the attack of the seculars in *Contra adversarium perfectionis*, which, in its turn, was answered by two leading figures among the friars, Thomas Aquinas in *Contra impugnantes* and Bonaventure in at least three separate tracts. The prominent English Franciscan, John Pecham, subsequently archbishop of Canterbury, wrote a prose tract, *Tractatus pauperis*, and a debate in Latin quatrains called *Defensio fratrum mendicantium*"(Williams, "Chaucer and the Friars," 67).

³⁴ Leff, p. 46.

Tempier, Bishop of Paris, proclaimed at the request of John XXI.³⁵ Aristotelian philosophy was denounced, and a neo-Augustinian philosophical movement emerged to replace the Aristotelian one. Boniface VIII resolved the dispute over the friars' pastoral privileges. In 1300 he issued a bull, *Super Cathedram*, which finally seemed to offer a compromise acceptable to both sides in the dispute. Although Benedict XI later nullified this bull, the seculars restored it at the Council of Vienne under the title of *Dudum*.³⁶

Dudum stipulated that friars could perform ministrations of preaching, hearing confession, and burying, but it placed the friars' execution of these pastoral privileges under the control of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. First, the friars could preach in their own churches and common places except when the prelate of the place was to preach there. In order for a friar to preach at the parish church the parish priest must invite him or the bishop must ask him to do so. Secondly, the bishop or another ecclesiastical authority could issue a license regulating the confessional activities of friars. The secular authority could both limit the number of friar confessors and specify the extent of the friars' confessional power. Thirdly, the friars retained the right of sepulture in their own graveyards and churches but had to give to the local curate one quarter of the income they

³⁵ Van Steenberghen, *The Philosophical Movement*, p. 94.

³⁶ Arnold Williams, "Chaucer and the Friars", repr. in *Chaucer Criticism I*, eds. R. Schoeck and J. Taylor (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1960), p. 67.

received from the burial.³⁷

Dudum answered the secular clergy's complaint that the pastoral activities of the friars were uncontrolled and therefore easily abused, and it seemed to be relatively effective for the early part of the fourteenth century was not marked by a major disagreement between the secular clergy and friars. Then, forty years after the restoration of *Dudum*, a bitter attack on the fraternal orders erupted in England.

Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland, was the leader of the attack, and he preached several sermons in London during 1356-57. In these sermons FitzRalph questioned the reality of the evangelical life upon which the friars based their existence and accused them of abusing the office of confession and of not fulfilling their vow of poverty.³⁸ Even though he died in 1360, FitzRalph left a legacy of agitation: works of academic disputations by monks, laymen, and seculars continued to appear, and vernacular literature by authors such as Langland, Gower, and Chaucer contained scathing criticisms of friars.

In England, disagreements between the secular clergy and friars were infrequent and minor prior to FitzRalph's invective. England, unlike France, did not have a notable antifraternial movement during the thirteenth century. Instead, the period follow-

³⁷ Williams, p. 67.

³⁸ Katherine Walsh, *A Fourteenth-Century Scholar and Primate: Richard FitzRalph in Oxford, Avignon and Armagh* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), pp. 415-20.

ing the arrival of Dominican preachers in 1221 and of Franciscans in 1224 was primarily one of harmony between the fraternal orders and secular clergy. The friars established themselves in England, particularly at the universities, and although the works of Aristotle were introduced at the same time as they were at the University of Paris, no doctrinal struggle ensued.

There were some minor disputes between the secular clergy and friars during the early fourteenth century. The rectors of the London Churches presented a petition to the Provincial Council of the Province of Canterbury, probably held in London in 1309, and in this petition the seculars claimed that friars abused their privileges of preaching, hearing confession, and burials. According to the rectors, "by these [abuses] of the friars the hearts of laymen are hardened and turned against their parish churches and their rectors, and these laymen presume to work wonderfully and contemptuously against the liberties of the Church."³⁹ The rectors further complained that the laymen's neglect of their parish priests reduced these curates to beggary, yet, while the parish priests suffer from neglect, "the friars grow rich and erect grand buildings."⁴⁰

This complaint of 1309 against friars was followed soon after by Jean de Pouilly's attack. Jean de Pouilly, a secular theologian at the University of Paris, not only contended friars abused their pastoral privileges but also argued, "or was accused of arguing, that

³⁹ William Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 157.

⁴⁰ Pantin, p. 157.

the pope had no powers to dispense the faithful from the obligation to confess to their own parish priests, as being contrary to the divine and natural law."⁴¹ This argument arose partly out of a particularly influential constitution of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, known by its opening words, *Omnis utriusque sexus*, which decreed that all parishioners must "confess all mortal sins once a year privately to their respective parochial priests and to no other."⁴² Jean de Pouilly's dispute, then, was not simply over friars' privileges but also about the pope's power to delineate the rights and duties of bishops and priests -- issues which concerned both British and Continental friars and curates.

One consequence of the implementation of *Omnis utriusque sexus*, the papal decree to which Jean de Pouilly objected, was the production of a body of writing on the subject of pastoral care -- manuals of confession, summae of moral teaching, and collections of sermons and sermon exempla.⁴³ Of particular interest is the *Memoriale Presbiterorum* or *Memoriale Sacerdotum* (1344), an example of this "pastoralia," as it contains antifraternel remarks which seem to anticipate some of FitzRalph's. This anonymous

⁴¹ Pantin, p. 125.

⁴² Leonard E. Boyle, O.P., "The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology", *The Popular Literature of Medieval England*, ed. Thomas J. Heffernan (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1985), p. 32.

⁴³ See Boyle, pp. 30-43 and W.A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), pp. 189-95 for discussions of the connection between the constitutions of the Lateran Council of 1215 and the development of pastoralia.

handbook for parish priests was probably written by a Doctor of Canon Law at Avignon who, Pantin convincingly argues, "seems to have been an Englishman or at least writing for an English audience."⁴⁴ Friars, the author claims, possess a lax moral theology, slander the secular clergy, erect elaborate edifices, steal the clergy's livelihood, and violate the rights of parish churches by celebrating Mass in private chapels.⁴⁵ Yet what incenses the author most of all is the friars' abuse of the office of confession. Only friars, after all, would absolve those who plunder in war:

there is scarce anyone who confesses to this sin, and if at any time anyone does do so, then many modern confessors, and especially those of the mendicant orders, blind leaders of the blind, having altogether no power to absolve such a sinner in this case, if some part of the plunder or something else is given to them, absolve *de facto* the plunderer and his adherents, taking altogether no care about seeing that restitution is made, as the law demands; but woe unto all such confessors!⁴⁶

The author further maintains the friar confessor insinuates himself into the courts of powerful people and absolves them with too easy a penance: "and in this matter sin and err almost all those who hear confessions nowadays and especially religious confessors who serve and live in the courts of princes and magnates."⁴⁷ To the anonymous

⁴⁴ Pantin, p. 205.

⁴⁵ Szittyá, 1986, p. 119. See also Pantin, p. 211.

⁴⁶ Pantin, p. 209.

⁴⁷ Pantin, p. 211.

author of *Memoriale Presbiterorum* friars, "infected with the poison of adulation," both mislead and corrupt powerful people.⁴⁸

The issues addressed by the rectors of London, Jean de Pouilly, and the anonymous author of *Memoriale Presbiterorum* indicate both that relations between the secular clergy and friars were not always harmonious and that certain disputes had appeared before FitzRalph's powerful invective against the friars in the 1350s. But these issues also reveal an important point about the nature of the antifraternial movement in general: the British antifraternial movement differed from its French counterpart. Unlike the French movement, the British one did not develop solely at a university and did not involve academic policy. Despite a struggle between the secular masters and friars at Oxford from 1303 to 1320 and at Cambridge from 1303 to 1306 -- a struggle which stemmed from the friars', particularly the Dominicans', desire to allow "friars to proceed to a doctorate in divinity without having previously graduated in arts or taken the bachelor's degree in theology."⁴⁹ -- a strong antifraternial

⁴⁸ Pantin, p. 211.

⁴⁹ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, I (Cambridge: University Press, 1948), 191. The struggle between the friars and seculars was perhaps less comprehensive at Cambridge than it was at Oxford. David Knowles explains that the struggle at Cambridge "was clearly inspired by what was happening at Oxford. In this case the university endeavoured to secure that its statutes should be ordained by the *major et sanior* of the regent and non-regent masters, thus putting legislative power into the hands of the masters of arts, among whom the friars had few if any representatives. The challenge was met by the Dominicans, who appealed to Rome, and after a number of proposals agreement was reached before arbitrators at the Dominican house in Bordeaux" (*The Religious Orders in England*, I, 191). See also Gordon Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968), pp. 103-05.

movement did not emerge at Oxford and Cambridge as it had at Paris. Instead, the primary focus of the English antifraternial movement was upon the friars' pastoral privileges, their influence upon laymen, and their ability to draw parishioners away from the seculars. And although French antifraternialists such as Jean de Pouilly complained from time to time about the friars' privileges, the English antifraternialists such as Richard FitzRalph focussed chiefly on the friars' infringement on parochial rights.

FitzRalph's sermon, *Defensio curatorum*, clearly indicates he believed friars interfered with the parish priest's relationship with his parishioners and infringed upon parochial rights. He preached this sermon on 8 November 1357, and its "manuscript circulation and early printings reveal it to have been the most influential piece of antimendicant polemic published during the later middle ages."⁵⁰ Through the citation of biblical texts and the interpretation of both papal bulls and Franciscan documents, FitzRalph undermines not only the fraternal right to beg, hear confession, preach, and bury the dead, but also the credibility of the friars as religious people.

Of greater interest, however, are his statements about the detrimental effects friars have upon parishioners and parishes. FitzRalph regularly asserts that fraternal oratories are not the God-chosen place for confession and burying the dead:

for schrifte & buryng of parischones, her owne parische

⁵⁰ Walsh, p. 31.

chirche is more profitable place þan eny place of freres.
First for hit is a place y-chose of God.⁵¹

He also maintains parishioners will not be truly forgiven if they confess to a friar because friars hear confession in order to gain wealth. According to FitzRalph, a parishioner should assume "bycause of getyng somme releue of her beggerie, [friars] beþ so busy to here schriftes" (47), and this parishioner should then deduce that a friar "wole ioynne me almes dede for to releue his owne beggerie, & so y schal nouzt be cleneliche byquyt of my synnes" (47). FitzRalph further contends that parishioners who confess to friars live in deadly sin:

euereche parischone that y-schryue to freres & leueþ þe ordenaries by þe power þat þei haueþ, after sich a schrifte, lyueþ in dedliche synne & of no dedliche synne is assoyled (48).

Moreover, he also claims the parish priests suffer harm because friars withhold offerings and withdraw tithes upon which the livelihood of the parish church depends. Such tithes, FitzRalph asserts, "beþ ordeyned to hem for her liflode" (54). Finally, friars, according to FitzRalph, "haueþ y-bilde fayre mynstres & rial palyces" (47-48) yet never give the alms they receive to repair "parische chirches, noþer of heyȝ weyes, noþer of broken brigges" (48). Consequently, throughout his influential sermon FitzRalph weaves a picture of the economic and religious differences between friars and curates: he pits the

⁵¹ Richard FitzRalph, *Defensio curatorum* in John Trevisa, *Dialogus inter Militem et Clericum Richard FitzRalph's Sermon: 'Defensio curatorum' and Methodius: 'Pe Bygynnyng of þe World and þe Ende of Worldes'*, ed. Aaron Jenkins Perry (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 42. All further references to this work will be identified by page number.

wealth and greed of friars against the poverty of curates, the huge buildings of friars against the parish churches badly needing repair, and the spiritual corruption of friars against the Christian perfection of curates. He ultimately presents a solution for bridging the gulf: friars must make restitution to the curates. They should restore "priuyleges & profites þat comeþ þerof" (76).

There is some historical evidence to support the antifraternalists' grievance that friars violated both their privileges and the precepts established when their orders were first founded. As the historian David Knowles has shown, both the Minors and the Preachers lived an austere life, appropriate to the ideal of apostolic poverty, for approximately fifty years after their arrival in England.⁵² From 1270 onward, however, this austere life changed as they began to build large churches, often at the request of wealthy clients who wished to establish chantries and find burial there and who provided both the lands and funds.⁵³ A Minorite church, begun in London in 1306, for instance, "was three hundred feet long, ninety-five wide, and sixty-four feet high, with the columns all of marble as well as the pavement. Kings and princes had enriched this building; some had given the altars, others the stall; Edward III, 'for the repose of the soul of the most illustrious Queen Isabella, buried in the choir,' repaired the great middle window which had been blown down by the wind. There was in the same church the heart of Queen Eleanor, mother of

⁵² David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1953), p. 37.

⁵³ Knowles and Hadcock, p. 37.

Edward I."⁵⁴ The friars also exceeded at times their powers of confession and disregarded the authority of the local bishop. The Austins of Dartmouth were some such friars. As the historian G.G. Coulton relates, in 1347 they were erecting a chapel, "thus encroaching upon the spiritual and temporal preserves of the Abbot of Torre: Grandisson [the Bishop of Exeter] had forbidden this."⁵⁵ When an appeal to Rome was unsuccessful, the Austins contacted the friar, Hugh, Bishop of Damascus *in partibus infidelium*,⁵⁶ who arrived at Dartmouth, disguised as a layman.

At the Austin convent he doffed his lay attire, put on a friar's frock, and then, crozier in hand and mitre on head, he assembled the people of Dartmouth and told them he was the Bishop of Damascus, sent by the Lord Pope and the Lord Cardinals to consecrate this chapel; which he duly did, and gave an indulgence of 100 days to all the congregation present.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ J.J. Jusserand, *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, trans. Lucy Toulmin Smith, 3rd ed. (Williamstown: Corner House, 1974), pp. 293-94.

⁵⁵ G.G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946), p. 133.

⁵⁶ G.G. Coulton in *Medieval Panorama: The English Scene from Conquest to Reformation* explains the evolution of this type of emissary: "the recapture of the Holy Land by the infidels had naturally involved the exile of a whole hierarchy: equally naturally, Rome was unwilling to accept this loss as final. Thus there had grown up a whole hierarchy *in partibus infidelium*; prelates who had never seen, nor would ever see, their diocese, but who were utilized as suffragans, or to whom the Pope gave roving commissions. These were nearly always friars; for the ubiquitous organization of those four orders, and the natural conformity of their interests with those of the Roman see, singled them out for this kind of work" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946), p. 133.

⁵⁷ Coulton, p. 133.

Hugh further violated his power of confession by absolving some people from the excommunication they incurred as a result of laying violent hands on members of the clergy.

There are, however, some historical data gathered by Arnold Williams that just as clearly indicate friars did not always abuse their privileges nor receive large sums of money. After examining the episcopal records of fourteenth-century bishops, Williams discovered

the relations between seculars and mendicants are full of strife and misunderstanding. But that is only part of the picture. There is also a measure of toleration and cooperation. Some bishops, and not all of these notable for their laxity, got along with the mendicants who, on their part, often showed Christian humility in taking less than canon law allowed them.⁵⁸

He found that the chief bone of contention evolved from the confessional privileges of friars. Although bishops had extensive powers to license this activity, they were lazy in their supervisory roles, and contentions may have resulted from this laxity. Secondly, Williams discovered that the complaint about friars abusing the right of sepulture was generally unsubstantiated: few people actually wanted burial by the friars, and although bequests to friars were fairly numerous, the majority of them were for small sums only. Moreover, he believes "there is good reason to suppose that friars were often denied the three-quarters of the dues and bequests to which they were entitled."⁵⁹ Thirdly, Williams found that the friars were licensed to

⁵⁸ Arnold Williams, "Relations Between the Mendicant Friars and the Secular Clergy in England in the Later Fourteenth Century", *Annuaire Mediaevale* (1960) 1:93.

⁵⁹ Williams, "Relations", 92.

preach by bishops who had extensive control, and the episcopal records did not verify the complaint that friars abused this privilege.

He concludes:

both laity and not a few of the secular clergy showed their gratitude to friars by their alms and bequests. The number of secular clergy who left bequests to the friars is itself proof that the normal relationship between the two clergies was not that of war.⁶⁰

The results of Williams' study strongly suggest the complaints leveled at friars in both theological tracts such as the *Defensio curatorum* and secular literature such as Langland's *Piers Plowman* and Chaucer's "Summoner's Tale" are not necessarily realistic or accurate. Such a suggestion is, of course, not altogether surprising. Even though the antifraternial movement emerged in both France and England because the secular clergy believed they had just complaints against the friars, it quickly generated polemical and propagandistic works that deliberately exaggerate or over-emphasize a fraternal flaw. These works enter into the mainstream of medieval antifraternial literature that neatly divides itself into two separate but related traditions. The first one is theological and includes works such as *De periculis novissimorum temporum* and *Defensio curatorum*. These writings are important to the study of antifraternism for two reasons. First, they represent an influential body of religious writings, thereby giving us profound insight into the nature and characteristics of antifraternism. Secondly, they are both important sources for and major influences upon the medieval

⁶⁰ Williams, "Relations", 93.

literary tradition of antifraternality, the second type of the medieval antifraternality tradition, found in vernacular works by such authors as Jean de Meun, John Gower, and Geoffrey Chaucer.

Part Two

William of Saint Amour and Richard FitzRalph

Chapter Two: "bad habits": The Theological Tradition of Antifraternalism

Know also this, that, in the last days, shall come dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, Without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent, unmerciful, without kindness, Traitors, stubborn, puffed up, and lovers of pleasure more than of God: Having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid. For of these sort are they who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, who are led away with divers desires: Ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth.

2 Timothy 3: 1-7¹

William of Saint Amour, a Professor of Theology and the spokesman for the secular masters at the University of Paris, defended the secular clergy against the encroachments of the fraternal orders in a series of sermons, disputations, and pamphlets. Included in this series are: two *quaestiones* produced in the autumn of 1255, *De quantitate eleemosyne* (On the measure of alms) and *De valido mendicante* (On the position of begging); *De periculis novissimorum temporum* (The Perils of the Last Times), a tract

¹ This scriptural text follows the Douay Rheims version of the Bible. Most biblical quotations are from this version. Any from the King James version will be identified by KJV.

completed in March of 1256; an untitled sermon delivered 1 May 1256 and based on the text, "*Qui amat periculum peribit in illo*" (Ecclus. 3:27) ("Who loveth danger shall perish in it"); another sermon called *De Phariseo Et Publicano* (On the Pharisee and the Publican), delivered 20 August 1256; an untitled defense presented in October of 1256 to the commission of cardinals assigned to investigate William after the publication of *De periculis novissimorum temporum*; and the *Collectiones* (Collections), a tract completed in exile in 1266.² All of these works circulated widely, and their influence outlived William of Saint Amour who died in 1272. In fact, as J.D. Dawson points out,

William's writings became the standard texts of anti-mendicant polemic, drawn upon by every enemy of the friars in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; their influence did not entirely die until the seventeenth.³

In these sermons, disputations, and treatises, William undermines the friars' privileges, authority, and credibility as religious people. For instance, in *De quantitate eleemosyne* and *De valido mendicante*, both of which address the subject of the legitimacy of absolute poverty and mendicancy, William examines the meaning of the *vita apostolica*, or the apostolic foundation of valid

² All of these works by William of Saint Amour are available in the 1632 edition: William of Saint Amour, *Opera Omnia*, Constance: Alithophilos, 1632. William's untitled defense of 1256 was titled *Responsiones* by a modern editor and has been critically edited by Edmond Faral in "Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge," 18 *Années* 25-26 (1950-51), 337-94.

³ J.D. Dawson, "William of Saint-Amour and the Apostolic Tradition," *MS 40* (1978), 238.

religious institutions and contends that monasticism, rather than fraternalism, was of apostolic foundation.⁴ In *De Pharisaeo Et Publicano* William does not attack the friars' practice of poverty and begging but, rather, their credibility as religious guides. Near the beginning of this sermon about the biblical Pharisees, based on Luke 18, William states:

*notandum est, quod Pharisaei erant quidam Religiosi apud Iudaeos, sicut sunt apud nos Regulares; quorum quidam in habitu, in austeritate vitae, in observantiis spiritualibus, & traditionibus suis praetendebant sanctitatis speciem, quam non habebant in corde; Et isti erant hypocritae Per praedictum Phariseum, qui erat hypocritae ut ostendetur inferius, significantur Hypocritae nostri temporis.*⁵

(It should be noted that the Pharisees were a religious order among the Jews, as among us now there are Regular orders; in habit, in austerity of life, in spiritual observances, & in their teachings, some of the Pharisees would exhibit a show of sanctity that they would lack in their hearts; and these were hypocrites By the aforementioned Pharisee, who was a hypocrite by displaying inferiority, the hypocrites of our own time are signified).

⁴ For a discussion of William of Saint Amour's role and position in the mid-thirteenth-century debates on the definition of true religious life, see Dawson, 223-38. Dawson posits that "William's position consisted essentially in a revival of the ancient ideal of apostolic tradition. In opposition to the mainstream of thirteenth-century thought about Church polity and law, William reaffirmed those neglected principles of theology and common law that emphasized the immutable nature of ecclesiastical order and its continuity with the *forma ecclesiae* established by Christ and the apostles" (226).

⁵ William of Saint Amour, "*De Pharisaeo Et Publicano*" in *Opera Omnia* (Constance: Alithophilos, 1632), 8-9. All further references to this sermon will be identified by *De Pharisaeo* and page number.

William's association here of the Pharisees of the Gospels with contemporary members of regular orders -- specifically the fraternal orders which were subject to rules or *regulae* -- serves to identify friars as hypocrites.⁶ This charge of hypocrisy both calls into question the sincerity of the friars' outer display of sanctity and later becomes a commonplace idea.

Similarly, several other comments in *De Pharisaeo Et Publicano* develop into antifraternat conventions. These other conventions all stem from William's exegesis of Matthew 23. For instance, he emphasizes the Pharisees' disobedience of the evangelical precept: "*Nec vocemini magistri*" (Be not called masters) (Matt. 23:10). The Pharisees' desire to be called *magister* corresponds to the friars' desire to gain the academic title of master at the University of Paris during the 1250s. But, even though this charge against the friars relates to a specific and topical issue, nonetheless it is voiced long after the quarrel at Paris had been settled. To antifraternatists in both England and France, friars desired to be honoured by being called masters or *magistri*, despite the biblical injunction against this title pronounced by Christ in Matthew 23:10: "Neither be ye called masters; for one is your master." And such a desire reveals their search for worldly acclaim, a search that undercuts their devotion to the life of the spirit.

⁶ Penn Szittya considers the Pharisees a prominent antifraternat type first used by William of Saint Amour. For a discussion of this type, see Penn Szittya, *The Antifraternat Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 34-41.

Thematically related to William's charge that Pharisees and, by association, friars like to be called master or rabbi are three other Pharsaic characteristics. Pharisees, relates William drawing upon Matthew 23:6-7,

*amare primos recubitus in coenis ... primos
cathedras in Synagogis ... [&] salutationes in fore
(De Pharisaeo 10-12).*

(love the first places at dinner ... the first seats in
Synagogues ... [and] greetings in the marketplace).

According to William, Pharisaic hypocrites are always attending the public dinners of kings, princes, and prelates at which they sit at the head of the table in order to be honoured and delicately fed (*De Pharisaeo* 9). These hypocrites also forcefully gain the office and pastoral privilege of preaching in the pulpit or synagogues; in fact, they preach to people not entrusted to their pastoral care. Worldly affairs engage these Pharsaic hypocrites, and, consequently, they are wrongly found in the "forum" or, as William following Isidore's interpretation of the term defines the word, the place where lawsuits are brought (*De Pharisaeo* 12). Unlike William's allegation that friars like to be called masters, his claims that friars love the first places at dinner, the first seats in synagogues, and greetings in marketplaces cannot be definitely connected to specific historical events.

This lack of direct association between William's citation of the passages from Matthew 23:6-7 and specific historical events has led Penn Szittyta in *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* to comment that

Matthew 23:6 says nothing about dinners of kings ...
Matt. 23:7 speaks of first seats in synagogues, not of
pulpits ... while most readers of Matt. 23:7 thought the

Pharisees loved salutations in the marketplace, not in a court of law.⁷

The use of these passages is thus an accident of association in the Bible, concludes Szittyá; William, he speculates, used these particular passages to deride the friars because they cluster around Matthew 23:9 which contains the only charge directly connected to friars.

Szittyá, however, neglects to allow for the common practice of exegesis. It was not unusual for medieval theologians to draw from encyclopedic works of, for instance, Isidore of Seville who summarized the commentaries of Origen, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Fulgentius, Cassian, and Gregory in *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*. Nor was it unusual for medieval theologians to concern themselves with the spirit rather than the letter or literal meaning of the text. Indeed, during the early Christian centuries, symbolic interpretations of the Scriptures were systematized, and, as Emile Mâle summarily remarks in *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*,

the vast legacy of symbolism inherited from the early Christian centuries was received with deep respect by the Middle Ages, which changed nothing and made but few additions.⁸

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, continues Mâle,

the doctors were teaching *ex cathedra* that Scripture was at one and the same time fact and symbol. It was generally admitted that the Bible might be interpreted in

⁷ Penn Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 39.

⁸ Emile Mâle, *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Dora Nussey (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 137.

four different ways, and have historical, allegorical, tropological and anagogical meaning.⁹

As a trained theologian, William of Saint Amour would have made use of symbolic interpretation of the Scriptures as he, in fact, does in *De Pharisaeo et Publicano* and other treatises. Thus, his allegorical interpretation of Matthew 23:6-7 was not unconventional nor unexpected; readers of Matthew 23:7 would, contrary to Szittya's claim, not think only of its literal meaning.

Moreover, Szittya's conjecturing that William of Saint Amour used Matthew 23:6-7 to censure the friars because these passages cluster around Matthew 23:9, the verse containing the only charge directly connected to friars, does not allow for the popular usage of the label, pharisaic. The friars, explains A.G. Rigg in a brief discussion of the anonymous fifteenth-century *De Supersticione*,

are described as Pharisees partly because of their alleged intolerance, arrogance, and hypocrisy, but also because of the Medieval Latin adj. *phariseus* 'divided (from)', as they are separated from God's clergy.¹⁰

The etymology of the term pharisaic, as well as its common usage, invites the application of the term to any anti-establishment religious movement such as the Jesuits and the fraternal orders. The adjective readily identifies those so labelled as ostentatious, spiritually blind men of religion resembling, as Jesus says according to Matthew 23:27, "whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but

⁹ Mâle, p. 139.

¹⁰ A.G. Rigg, "Two Latin Poems Against The Friars," *MS 30* (1968), 117.

within are full of dead men's bones, and of all filthiness." Szitty's conjecturing is thus flawed.

Similarly, Szitty's claim that the three characteristics listed in Matthew 23:6-7 "specify moral rather than political flaws, and have no bearing on the political claims of the friars at Paris" is suspect.¹¹ Associating with the wealthy and the powerful, usurping the office of preaching, and engaging in worldly rather than spiritual affairs certainly expose moral shortcomings; yet these actions did have some bearing on the political activities of the friars. Indeed, despite the lack of direct association between William's citation of the passages from Matthew 23:6-7 and specific, historical events at Paris, indirect associations exist between his interpretation of Matthew 23:6-7 and political issues and activities involving the friars. Like William's pharisaic hypocrites who attend the public dinners of kings, princes, and prelates, friars did dine at the court of Louis IX. Like William's pharisaic hypocrites who usurp the privilege of preaching, friars received the right to perform the office of preaching. The Dominicans, or the Preachers, in fact achieved papal recognition and the privilege of preaching as early as 1216. And, like William's pharisaic hypocrites who enjoy salutations in a court of law, friars participated in the ecclesiastical courts, including inquisitional proceedings. These general parallels between William's allegations and historical events certainly suggest his accusations possessed at least some political currency. To the antifraternalist, they point both to

¹¹ Szitty, p. 39.

political flaws in the friars' organization, and their right to exist and to moral shortcomings in the individual friar. The moral was and is the political flaw, and endeavouring to distinguish the type of flaw is misleading. Morality is not, after all, independent of political activity on the part of someone ostensibly under a *regula*.

The complaints that friars associate with the wealthy and the powerful, usurp the office of preaching, and engage in worldly rather than spiritual affairs are repeated and developed in *De periculis novissimorum temporum* and enter, as does William's claim that friars desire to be called *magistri*, the arena of antifraternality criticism, eventually appearing as conventions in both French and British antifraternality literature. In fact, William's sermon on the biblical Pharisees became, as Szittyá points out,

sufficiently popular not only to be taken over into the poetry of Rutebeuf and Jean de Meun, but to circulate until the Reformation, when it was published twice in the course of sixty years.¹²

Yet of all of William's tracts, it was the *De periculis novissimorum temporum* (March of 1256) that became the most important antifraternality treatise of the medieval period. In spite of the intervention of Pope Alexander IV, who condemned it in October of 1256, ordered it burned, and exiled William from France, *De periculis* was widely propagated. In fact, this text became, Robert Miller explains, "the standard reference in antifraternality writings for

¹² Szittyá, p. 35.

the next two centuries,"¹³ and both its "signs" and its techniques penetrated not only French writings such as Jean de Meun's *Romance of the Rose* and Rutebeuf's *Dit des règles* but also British literature written by, for instance, Richard FitzRalph and Geoffrey Chaucer. As the wellspring of the antifraternality tradition of literature, the *De periculis novissimorum temporum* is certainly central to any study of antifraternality. Its importance, however, extends beyond its role as the *auctorite* of antifraternality thought. Because it also confirms and amplifies the historical, antifraternality events in France, *De periculis novissimorum temporum* serves as a yardstick by which British antifraternality may be compared with and distinguished from the continental variety. Thus, in order to identify the charges and techniques that enter the mainstream of antifraternality literature, the *De periculis* will first be considered. Richard FitzRalph's *Defensio curatorum* will then be examined in light of the *De periculis* and *De Pharisaeo et Publicano* in order to distinguish the particularly British antifraternality allegations from the French ones that had become antifraternality commonplaces by the late fourteenth century.

¹³ Robert P. Miller, ed., *Chaucer: Sources and Backgrounds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 237.

Section I: William of Saint Amour

In *De periculis novissimorum temporum* William of Saint Amour focuses upon the friars as a threat to man's salvation. Despite the economic, political, and academic repercussions of the arrival of the friars on the religious scene, he does not generally demonstrate a concern for the economic, political and academic consequences. Instead, William reveals an awareness of and sensitivity to the biblical implications of their arrival. To William, the appearance of the friars coincides with the beginning of the period of the *last days*, a scripturally significant event of Salvation History.

According to the widely accepted medieval theological theory of apocalypticism, Antichrist, the 'son of the devil,' would appear near the end of the world or in the *last days*. These *last days* would conclude the sixth and final age of Christian world history -- a type of history developed by theologians and exegetes who used scripturally numerical patterns first to identify and then to systematize six periods of temporal church history. Because Antichrist, the "son of perdition and the mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. 2), closes the sixth age opened by Christ, he is a key figure in the Christian interpretation of history. Further, because Antichrist will effectively parody Christ and will successfully deceive many "righteous" people, he is considered the most powerful and frightening figure of evil in a long series of persecutors of Christians -- a series which includes Antiochus Epiphanes, Doeg Idumaeus, and Simon Magus. The theologians' and exegetes' understanding of Antichrist's central role

in a future eschatological crisis stemmed from their allegorical rather than historical readings of various scriptural passages such as Apocalypse 6:1-8:5, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-11, the Book of Daniel, and Matthew 24. As a result, the events marking the end of the sixth age were usually associated not so much with actual dates as with particular characteristics (hypocrisy, heresy) and general trends such as an increase in the number of the vices or universal moral and religious decay.¹⁴

At times, however, apocalyptic symbolism was interpreted in terms of contemporary events. In the thirteenth century, anticipation of Antichrist

revolved around the year 1260 especially. Expectations of the pseudo-Christ were based on interpretations of the 1,260-day prophecies [Apocalypse 11:3] and on later speculations influenced by the radical eschatology of Joachim of Fiore.¹⁵

Unlike exegetes who postulated and developed theories of the seven ages of Salvation History, Joachim of Fiore developed a theory of three *stati*, each affiliated with a member of the Trinity and each concluded by an Antichrist figure. Joachim of Fiore's first *status*, Richard Emmerson succinctly explains,

begins with Creation and encompasses most Old Testament history. It represents the age of law, associated with God the Father, and brought to an end by the type of Antichrist the tyrant, Antiochus Epiphanes. The second *status* begins with Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, and ends in the forty-second generation,

¹⁴ Richard K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), pp. 19, 52.

¹⁵ Emmerson, p. 54.

approximately the year 1260. It represents the age of grace, associated with Christ and the church The third *status*, a modification of the traditional millennium, is the age of 'spiritual men,' whose forerunner is Saint Benedict, the great monastic reformer. It represents the age of love, is associated with the Holy Spirit, and is brought to an end by the hordes of Gog and Magog.¹⁶

Even though Joachim of Fiore departed from the traditional system of six -- or seven -- ages of Salvation History, he nevertheless generally conflated the traditional number of ages into his three *stati* and thus did not radically undermine tradition.

Nevertheless, Joachimist ideas did later become the center of religious controversies. One particularly volatile religious controversy stemmed from the Franciscan Gerard of Borgo San Donnino's appropriation of Joachimist concepts for the Franciscan order. Gerard had intended, Marjorie Reeves explains,

to publish the three main works of Joachim, the *Liber Concordie*, the *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, and the *Psalterium decem chordarum*, as the Eternal Evangel, together with a *Liber Introductorius* and a gloss of his own.¹⁷

By announcing the Eternal Evangel or the "Gospel of the Holy Ghost," Gerard was essentially proclaiming both the imminent arrival of the third *status*, the age of "spiritual men," and the overthrow of the New Testament by the Third Testament. To Gerard, the Eternal Evangel "was especially committed to a barefoot order which would

¹⁶ Emerson, pp. 60-61.

¹⁷ Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 187.

proceed equally from the clerical and lay orders."¹⁸ He also claimed that "about the year 1200 '*exivit spiritus vite de duobus testamentis ut fieret evangelium eternum*'. "¹⁹ Moreover, according to the commissioners assigned to investigate Gerard, "Gerard himself identified St. Francis as the angel of the sixth seal of the Apocalypse."²⁰ Thus, Gerard posited that the friars, particularly the Franciscans, would embody the life of the third *status* and would supersede all members of the clerical clergy.

Gerard's proclamation was denounced as heretical, Gerard himself was imprisoned for eighteen years, and his *Liber Introductorius*, as Reeves notes, "dropped like a stone into the pool of Paris University in 1255, creating a series of ever-widening ripples."²¹ One ripple or reaction was William of Saint Amour's: he seized upon Gerard's work as an opportunity to attack all friars. The immediate result of this attack was the *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, a work which dropped, like Gerard's, into the pool of the University of Paris in 1256, creating a series of everwidening ripples. In fact, William's theological perception of friars as well as his identification and exegesis of fraternal flaws survived the time of the conflict at the University of Paris and became polemical weapons in later antifraternel writings.

¹⁸ Reeves, p. 188.

¹⁹ Reeves, pp. 187-88.

²⁰ Reeves, p. 188.

²¹ Reeves, p. 187.

In Chapter Eight of *De periculis novissimorum temporum* William of Saint Amour makes clear his position on Gerard's proclamation. Drawing upon the patristic tradition of apocalypticism, William places the contemporary events involving Gerard's heresies into the framework of the sixth age of Salvation History. To William, the perils of the "Last Times" are no longer remote; we are, claims William, "*in ultima aetate huius mundi; & ista aetas iam plus duravit quam aliae, quae currunt per millenarium annorum; quia ista duravit per 1255. annos*"²² (in the last age of this world; and this age has now outlasted the others, which run for one thousand years, because this one has lasted for 1255 years). To support his position that the perils preceding the *adventum antichristi* are near, William not only cites scriptural passages, specifically James 5:9, Hebrews 10:37, John 2:18, and Matthew 20:6, but also presents eight "signs," all of which serve as a polemical commentary on the recent events involving Gerard of San Donnino. The first sign demonstrating the beginning of the perils of the last times is

quoniam iam sunt 55. anni, quod aliqui laborant ad mutandum Evangelium Christi in aliud Evangelium, quod dicunt fore perfectius, melius, & dignius; quod appellant Evangelium Spiritus Sancti, sive Evangelium Aeternum; quo adveniente evacuabitur, ut dicunt, Evangelium Christi, ut paratissimus ostendere in illo Evangelio maledicto (De periculis 38).
(that for 55 years certain men have laboured to change the Gospel of Christ into another Gospel that they say

²² Guilielmi De Sancto Amore, *Tractatus Brevis De Periculis Novissimorum Temporum Ex Scripturis Sumptus* in *Opera Omnia* (Constantiae: Ad Insigne Bonae Fidei Apud Alithophilos, 1632), p. 37. All further references to this tract will be identified by *De periculis* and page number.

will be more perfect, better, and worthier; that is named the Gospel of the Sacred Spirit, or the Eternal Gospel; whose advent will overthrow, so they say, the Gospel of Christ, but which we are prepared to show as an abused Gospel).

William's general allusion here to exegetes' interpretations of Joachimist ideas, undertaken after the time of Joachim's death around 1200, serves to situate his apocalyptic vision at a specific time: the early thirteenth century. Sign two moves beyond the generalities of various interpretations and focuses upon one man's interpretation of Joachimist ideas:

*Secundum signum est, quod illa doctrina, quae praedicabitur tempore Antichristi, videlicet, Evangelium AEternum, Parisius, ubi viget sacrae Scripturae studium, iam publice posita fuit ad explicandum anno Domini 1254. unde certum est, quod iam praedicaretur, nisi effet aliud, quod eam detineret unde caveant Episcopi, ne dicti Pseudo-praedicatores procurent eorum excussionem, id est, ablationem potestatis eorum, sicut significatur In Evangelio AEterno (De periculis 38). (the second sign is that this doctrine, which will be preached in the time of Antichrist, has already been made public for explication in 1254 at Paris where the study of sacred Scripture is active and is revealed to be the Eternal Evangel. Wherefore it is certain that it will be preached unless someone otherwise weakens it so that it be withheld. Wherefore the Bishops must guard against it or the pseudo-preachers will administer its execution and will take away their power as it is signified in the *Eternal Gospel*).*

William's antifraternel sentiments become readily apparent here.

Even though he does not specifically mention friars, he nevertheless refers to "pseudo-preachers," a tacitly evocative reference to

Gerard's friars, the "spiritual men" of the third status "signified in the *Eternal Gospel*." Such a subtle reference to friars certainly suits

William's method and purpose: it both accommodates his use of the

apocalyptic tradition, which posits that the pseudo-religious will arrive to deceive many of the righteous, and permits William to condemn the fraternal orders. William would again employ this strategy effectively in Chapter Fourteen of *De periculis novissimorum temporum* and later use its subtlety to defend himself. In fact, as Szittyá notes,

when [William] was summoned before a synod of bishops, shortly after the appearance of the *De periculis*, to answer charges of defamation brought by the friars, he said he had never attacked any order approved by the church.²³

William's subsequent six signs in Chapter Eight provide further "evidence" that the *last days* are no longer remote. Gerard's *Eternal Gospel*, claims William in sign three, signifies the wrath to come; in fact, his work is actually the "handwriting on the wall for the church, like the mysterious 'Mane, Tekel, Phares' that appeared to Babylon at Belshazzar's feast as a sign of the wrath to come."²⁴

²³ Szittyá, p. 18.

²⁴ Szittyá, p. 30. Szittyá subsequently explicates William's conception of the *Eternal Gospel* as the mysterious handwriting on wall:

In Daniel, *Mane*, *Tekel*, and *Phares* are interpreted etymologically as three prophecies of the coming destruction of the kingdom. William finds in the *Evangelium Aeternum* three similar prophecies of the passing of the church. Daniel interprets *Mane* to mean ... God has numbered thy reign and ended it; similarly, says William, the *Evangelium Aeternum* asserts that the reign of the church according to the Gospel of Christ is numbered, to be replaced 1,260 years from the Incarnation by a new gospel and a new law, the *lex Spiritus sancti*. According to Daniel, *Tekel* signifies ... [Belshazzar's reign] has been weighed in the balance and found lacking; correspondingly, in Gerard's odious book, the Gospel of Christ is compared to the Eternal Gospel and found to have less perfection and dignity

Further, according to William in signs four and seven, the universal, moral decay of the world provides clues of the approaching end; for instance, "*omnia Anitia sunt dolorum ... qui erunt in tempore Antichristi* (*De periculis* 40)(all existences are grievous that are in the time of Antichrist) and "*REFRIGESCET charitas*" (*De periculis* 40) (love will become cooler). Similarly, man's actions during the persecution of the "Last Days" reveal the end: as the final destruction approaches, reads sign five, "*scandalizabuntur multi*" (*De periculis* 40) (many will be offended) and, according to sign six, "*multi Pseudo-Prophetae surgent, & seducent multos*" (*De periculis* 40) (many pseudo-apostles will appear and seduce many). All of the last signs are significant not simply as portents of the approaching End, however. As William makes clear in the eighth and final sign of Chapter Eight, the End will be announced in the Church by signs of the "*consummatio*": "*quoniam appropinquante consummatione saeculi annuntiabuntur in Ecclesia signa propinqua consummationis*" (*De periculis* 40-41) (the approaching end of the world will be announced in the Church with signs of the near End). In one sense, a sign of the *last days* is, therefore, the signs

than the latter In Daniel, *Phares* is interpreted ... Thy kingdom has been divided from thee; similarly in Gerard's work it is found written that after the predicted time, the church will be divided from those who hold to the *Evangelium Christi* and given to those who receive the third Testament, the *Evangelium Aeternum* (p. 30).

See *De periculis*, pp. 38-39.

themselves -- ones to which men must be alert and ones which William sets out in Chapter Fourteen.

Many of William's signs in Chapter Eight are conventional. According to Matthew 24 -- a chapter sometimes called the *Little Apocalypse* and one frequently interpreted by exegetes interested in apocalypticism -- after the beginning of the End, "then shall many be scandalized" (Matthew 24:10), "the charity of many shall grow cold" (Matthew 24:12), and "there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall ... deceive (if possible) even the elect" (Matthew 24:24). Similarly, William's use of the apocalyptic tradition as a polemical weapon is conventional. As Emerson convincingly demonstrates, during the thirteenth century there was an increasingly polemical manipulation of the Antichrist tradition; both

orthodox and heretic alike cited interpretations of Antichrist and the legends associated with him to champion specific causes, condemn one another, and predict the last days.²⁵

William, however, was conventional not only in his use of the tradition to champion the local cause of the orthodox at the University of Paris and in his condemnation of the 'heretic', Gerard of San Donnino, but also in his manipulation of the tradition to explain contemporary political events.

Specifically, William uses the Antichrist tradition to undercut all the friars' increasing power and influence in the religious community. Drawing upon the patristic tradition of apocalypticism, William bases the title of his treatise, *De periculis novissimorum*

²⁵ Emerson, p. 63.

temporum, upon 2 Timothy 3:1: "Know also this that in the last days, shall come dangerous times." This scriptural chapter also describes the type of men appearing in these dangerous times: they will be greedy, proud, blasphemous, wicked, slanderous, incontinent, and hypocritical. Later in his treatise, particularly in Chapter Fourteen, William develops charges against the friars which correspond to the type of men described in 2 Timothy 3: 1-7, and, consequently, William identifies all friars -- not just Gerard's "spiritual men," the Franciscans -- as precursors of Antichrist, as harbingers of the *Last Days*. This identification surfaces in later antifraternel literature, such as the anonymous *Jack Upland*, as well as medieval iconography,²⁶ and such surfacing signifies the first of the ever-widening ripples of William's antifraternel sentiments.

Similarly, further identifications by William of friars' duplicitous nature and behaviour become commonplaces of the antifraternel tradition. To William, the friars' apostolic claims are suspect and unsubstantiated, so in *De periculis novissimorum temporum* he 'exposes' these claims by presenting friars as the antithesis of the true apostles. Of particular significance is Chapter Fourteen because in it William sets forth forty-one

signa infallibilia, quaedam vero probabilia, per

²⁶ See D. W. Robertson, Jr., *A Preface to Chaucer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 251-52 for a discussion of the symbolism of the fox in late medieval art. Robertson points out both that friars represented Antichrist during and after the time of William of Saint Amour and that "in the earlier Middle Ages the fox was a frequent symbol for the heretical *seductor* of the faithful. ... in late Medieval art ... the foxy friar is a common figure on English misericords" (pp. 251-52).

quae discerni poterunt Pseudo-Apostoli a veris Apostolis Christi (De periculis 57).
 (signs, some infallible, others very probable, by which Pseudo-Apostles can be distinguished from the true Apostles of Christ).²⁷

Most of the forty-one signs identifying pseudo-apostolic attributes and actions follow a specific pattern of presentation: William puts forth a characteristic or action that distinguishes true apostles from false ones, cites at least one scriptural passage to support the identifying attributes, glosses the passage, and finally formulates a conclusion about pseudo-apostles from the gloss. For instance, sign one, which derives, as does the treatise's title, from 2 Timothy 3, posits

quod Veri Apostoli non penetrant domos, nec captivas ducunt mulierculas oneratas peccatis; sicut faciunt Pseudo; 2. ad Timoth. 3. Ex his sunt, qui penetrant domos, & captivas ducunt mulierculas oneratas peccatis. Et hoc expositum est supra, 2. & 5. capitulis. Illi ergo Praedicatores, qui penetrant domos, & captivas ducunt mulierculas oneratas peccatis, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 57).
 (that True Apostles do not creep into houses, nor lead captive silly women laden with sin, as do the Pseudo. 2 Timothy 3. Out of these are they who penetrate houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins. And this is against the exposition, Chapters 2 & 5. Therefore, Preachers who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo).

The composition of this representative sign creates three effects.

²⁷ Robert P. Miller, trans., "William of Saint Amour's 'Signs of the True and Pseudo Apostles'" in *Chaucer: Sources and Backgrounds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 246. All further translations of William's "Signs" by Miller will be identified by Miller and page number. Other translations are my own.

First, despite William's polemical use of biblical passages and glossing, his citation of a scriptural passage and a gloss serves both to add patristic *auctoritas* to the warning or sign and to convince his audience of its reliability. Secondly, the repetition of the distinguishing attribute or, as in sign one, the reiteration of the distinctive action performed by the Pseudo-Apostles draws attention to it, reinforces the characteristic, and establishes it as the predominant feature of the sign. Finally, the provision of a relatively simple yet dramatic description of the behaviour of the Pseudo-Apostles -- a description which is reinforced by the repetition -- promotes visualization. During the medieval period, *signum* denoted both an indication of the future or a warning and an expressible or picturable representation of a person or thing.²⁸ William's signs certainly function on both levels: they simultaneously provide a warning about the Pseudo-Apostles while creating a picture of them.

Such effects perhaps help to explain the wide influence and popularity of many of William's signs. Long after the supposed immediacy of the End had died away, representations of friars based upon complaints first voiced by William appeared in a variety of art forms: poetry, prose, drama, illuminations, and woodcuts, all of which present a visualization of pseudo-apostolic behaviour, whether it be achieved by imagistic language, the portrayal of dramatic actions and interactions, or iconography. These translations of an attribute originally articulated in William's theological treatise

²⁸ *Revised Medieval Latin Word-list*, prepared by R.E. Latham (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 439.

usually focus upon the trait described rather than the biblical passage cited or the gloss provided -- a focussing that is surely not surprising given the emphasis on the trait and its expressible quality. Furthermore, the effects stemming from the structure of the sign perhaps reveal one of the reasons later antifraternalists prefer to interpret William's sign one historically or literally rather than allegorically. According to his discussion of 2 Timothy 3:6 in Chapters Two and Five of the *De periculis*, silly women are any persons of weak rationality, and houses are the consciences of confessants. Yet in later antifraternal writings such as Rutebeuf's "Des Règles" and Gower's *Vox clamantis* friars often appear as literal seducers of women and "*penetrantes domos*" -- a rather loose and provocative, certainly non-theological, adaptation of sign one, but one which is, nonetheless, easily visualized. Similarly, in iconography friars are sometimes portrayed as lecherous seducers of women, sometimes shown 'chin-chucking' a woman, sometimes depicted using the technique favoured by Chaucer's "hende Nicholas" who is vividly described in *The Miller's Tale*.²⁹

William again refers to the Pseudo-Apostles' propensity to seduce in sign two, although he focuses upon a different type of seduction. True Apostles, claims William,

non decipiunt corda simplicium verbis compositis,

²⁹ See l. 3276 in Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* in Larry D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, Third edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987). This image is visualized in British Library MS Yates Thompson 13, fol. 177 (Taymouth Hours) reprinted in Robert Miller, ed., *Chaucer: Sources and Backgrounds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 239.

quibus traditiones suas commendant, sicut faciunt Pseudo; Rom. vlt. Per dulces sermones & benedictiones, si ducunt corda innocentium.

Glos. Compositis verbis traditiones suas commendant, quibus simplicium corda decipiunt. A deo autem seducunt corda simplicium, quod faciunt eos ingredi sectam suam, quam Religionem appellant; Qui prius in simplicitate vivebant, post ingressum suum, siunt astuti, hypocritae, pseudo, & penetrantes domos, una cum illis; & quandoque siunt illis peiores. Unde Matth. 23. Va vobis Scribae, & Pharisei hypocritae, quia circuitis mare, & aridam, ut faciatis unum proselytum; & cum fuerit factus, facitis eum filium gehennae duplo, quam vos. Illi ergo qui hoc faciunt, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 57).

(do not deceive the hearts of simple folk with studied speech with which they praise their own teachings, as do the Pseudo. [Romans 16:18.] 'By pleasing speeches and good words, they seduce the hearts of the innocent'; Gloss: 'With studied words they commend their own teachings, with which they deceive the hearts of simple men.' [Those men also seduce away from God the hearts of the simple, when they make them enter their Order, which they call a Religious Order;] and then they who lived before in simple honesty, after entering, become crafty, hypocrites, pseudo, and creepers into houses, just like those men, and sometimes they become even worse. Concerning whom Matthew xxiii:15 states: 'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves.' Those, therefore, who do these things are not true Apostles, but Pseudo (Miller 246).

To William, the friars' seductive language is actually a substitute for spirituality; their powerful speech only serves to beguile the simple and convert them into corrupted men highly reminiscent of those coming in the "Last Days": "Having an appearance indeed of godliness but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:5).

William's criticism in sign two of the Pseudo-Apostles' verbal ability to entice people to their orders perhaps reflects the political

and academic issue facing the secular masters at the University of Paris in the 1250s: many students were entering the fraternal orders. Yet it is his assertion that friars manipulate language and praise their own teachings which develops into an antifraternality commonplace. This assertion again appears with some variations in several other signs. In sign four, William posits

quoniam Veri Apostoli non commendant seipsos; 2 Corinth. 4. Non praedicamus nos metipsos; & 2. Corinth. 19. Non audemus nos inserere, aut comparere quibusdam, qui seipsos commendant; Glos. sicut Pseudo, qui seipsos commendant quibusdam artibus, non Deus eos. Item, veri Apostoli, etsi per bona opera reddant se commendabiles ad omnem conscientia hominum, non ad oculos tantum ... Non tamen commendant se in comparatione ad alios Qui ergo contrarium faciunt, dicentes statum, aut traditiones suas esse meliores aliis, si sunt Praedicatores, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (58).

(that True Apostles do not commend themselves. [2 Corinthians 4:5.] 'For we preach not ourselves, & [2 Corinthians 10:12.] For we dare not match, or compare ourselves with some, that commend themselves;' Gloss: 'As do the Pseudo, who commend themselves with certain arts, while God does not commend them.' Also, true Apostles through good works render themselves commendable to every man's conscience, not so much to their eyes ... yet they do not commend themselves in comparison with others Those, therefore, who do the opposite, declaring their order or their teachings to be better than others, as do the Preachers, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo (Miller 246-47).

Here, in the sign's concluding statement, William seems to censure specifically the Dominicans, members of the *Ordo praedicatorum* -- the Order of Preachers formulated and its members trained to preach the Gospel of Christ. His specification, if it is one, of the Dominicans as false apostles who boast of the superiority of their teachings nevertheless becomes generalized as antifraternality senti-

ment becomes widespread, and later antifraternalists accuse members of all orders of friars -- Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, and Austins -- of boasting of their own superiority.

William continues his attack on the Pseudo- Apostles' propensity for boasting in sign thirty-eight. True Apostles, alleges William,

non iactanter loquuntur, nec sibi attribuunt, nisi quae facit Deus per eos; Rom. 15. Non enim audeo aliquid loqui eorum, quae per me non efficit Christus. Glos. Id est, ea tantum loquor, quae per me, id est, ministerio meo efficit Christus. Illi ergo, qui multa iactanter loquuntur, & multa sibi attribuunt, quae per eos non sunt, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 71).

(do not speak boastfully, and do not attribute to themselves anything except that which God performs through them. [Romans 15.] 'For I dare not speak of any of those things which Christ worketh not by me;' Gloss: 'That is, I speak only of those things which Christ works through me, that is, by my ministry.' Those, therefore, who speak many things boastfully, and attribute many things to themselves which have not been done through them, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo) (Miller 249).

William's charge of boasting here serves to recall the type of men who will appear in the last days: men of this type "shall be lovers of themselves" and will possess the "appearance ... of godliness, but deny ... the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:2, 5). Yet his charge of boasting also serves to bestow the quality of pride upon the Pseudo-Apostles -- a quality which is, of course, a corollary of boasting and another characteristic of the men of the dangerous times (2 Tim. 3:2). From William's attack on the Pseudo-Apostles' boastful speech stems the stereotype of friars as pompous boasters, a stereotype that receives a particularly colourful and humorous treatment, as we will later see, in Thomas More's *Utopia*.

William extends his attack on the Pseudo-Apostles' abuse of speech beyond boasting and eloquence. Not satisfied with presenting the friars simply as "haughty" men (2 Tim. 3:2) who manipulate language to praise themselves and their works, William accuses them of unduly complimenting others. In sign fourteen, for instance, he establishes "*quod Veri Apostoli non adulantur hominibus quaestus causa, sicut Pseudo adulantur*" (*De periculis* 62) (that True Apostles do not flatter men in order to acquire property and collect alms as do the Pseudo). Similarly, in sign thirty-three William points out that True Apostles "*non frequenter conveniunt ad alienam mensam, ne adulatores siant*" (*De periculis* 68-69) (do not frequent the tables of strangers and become flatterers). Indeed, those "*qui ad alienam mensam libenter, & frequenter conveniunt, cum otio corporali, non videntur esse veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo*" (*De periculis* 69) (who frequently and freely assemble at the tables of strangers, at corporeal leisure, are not seen as true Apostles but as False). To William, friars use flattery as a means to temporal ends: money, property, and corporeal pleasures. Both this means and these ends reveal the friars as hypocrites -- a revelation which later becomes established as an antifraternial convention and which William first articulated in *De Pharisaeo Et Publicano*. As "lovers of [temporal] pleasures" (2 Tim. 3:4) who desire money and property, and as sycophants who manipulate language to attain temporal goods, friars only seem to be religious when, in fact, they are actually covetous men of the "Last Days" who only display "an appearance of godliness" (2 Tim. 3:5).

William's presentation of friars as flatterers becomes an

antifraternal convention and reveals his concern with what he evidently considered a misuse of language. Indeed, his diatribe against the friars' flattery and boasting in signs four, thirty-eight, fourteen, and thirty-three as well as his criticism in sign four of their use of *certain arts* -- what he called "studied speech" in sign two -- indicates a preoccupation with the proper and improper use of language and the instruments of rhetoric. This preoccupation again surfaces in sign thirteen:

Tertiumdecimum signum est, quod Veri Apostoli non student eloquentiae, aut compositioni verborum; Pseudo autem e contrario Non erant eloquentes Apostoli, sed Pseudo verba componebant Malebat enim Apostolus verba sua sola veritatis puritate ostendere, quam eloquentia orationem suscare. Illi ergo qui student eloquentiae, aut compositioni verborum, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 61-62).

(The thirteenth sign is that True Apostles do not study eloquence or the composition of words, as do the Pseudo The Apostles were not eloquent, but the Pseudo will arrange words in a particular way Certainly, he of the Apostolic order will be verbally persuasive only to reveal truth and purity, rather than to show off an eloquent style. Those, therefore, who study eloquence or the composition of words are not True Apostles but Pseudo).

William's distinction here between the proper and improper use of eloquence suggests a sensitivity on his part to the power of persuasion. As a preacher of sermons, William would certainly have been aware of the persuasive power of spoken language -- of the 'word' -- as both a communicator and an inculcator of ideas. Not surprisingly, he therefore focuses many of his signs upon the Pseudo-Apostles' abuse of language; by stressing that every fraternal speech is flattery or boasting or empty rhetoric or verbal seduction, William, in fact, undermines the friars in the very sphere in which they operate:

verbally communicating the Gospel to the common people.

Similarly, as a professor of theology, William was assuredly aware of the sacred role of language -- of the Word. According to Saint Paul, whom William cites repeatedly, speech is a divine gift. In his First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul declares, "my speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in shewing of the spirit and power" (1 Cor. 2:4) while in his Second Epistle he confesses he is "rude in speech" (2 Cor. 11:6), quickly pointing out that such rudeness does not convey a lack of divine knowledge. Indeed, unlike plain speech, eloquent language and attractive speech mislead their listeners and, therefore, are undesirable. In particular, fiction should be shunned. "Avoid foolish and old wives' fables," Paul counselled Timothy, "and exercise thyself unto godliness" (I Tim. 4:7). Not surprisingly, William cites Saint Paul in signs two, thirteen, thirty-eight, and four; by emphasizing both the friars' perversion of the divine gift of speech and their dissimilarity to Paul, William, in fact, forces his audience to question their authenticity as purveyors of the Word.

William's preoccupation with the friars' verbal agility perhaps reveals his awareness of, even his concern for, their developing reputation as powerful preachers. The Franciscans, as G.G. Coulton points out, "became the greatest mission-preachers of the Middle Ages."³⁰ Similarly, the Dominicans, members of the *Ordo praedicatorum*, quickly established themselves as distinguished

³⁰ G.G. Coulton, *Five Centuries of Religion*, Vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927), p. 131.

preachers, and audiences which usually would support the parish priests, many of whom were unschooled and untrained despite the mandates of the Fourth Lateran Council, would be drawn to the fraternal preachers, many of whom were trained in the schools of Paris. It is not unexpected, then, that William undermines the friars' preaching by suggesting that they manipulate language and unnecessarily embellish it. It is not unexpected, too, that William attempts to destroy the friars' reputation as preachers.

William's attack on the friars' preaching takes several forms and appears in several signs. He first alleges that friars preach without being sent:

Sextum signum est, quod Veri Apostoli non praedicant nisi missi. Rom. 10. Quomodo praedicabunt, nisi mittantur. Glos. Non sunt veri Apostoli nisi missi, nulla enim signa virtutum eis testimonium perhibent. Qui autem missi sint, dictum est supra, 2. capitulo. Qui vero non missi praedicant, Pseudo sunt (De periculis 58-59). (The sixth sign is, that True Apostles do not preach unless they are sent. [Romans 10:15] 'How shall they preach unless they be sent?' Gloss: 'They are not true Apostles unless they are sent, for no signs of virtue provide testimony for them.' Who may be sent has been dealt with earlier [in Chapter 2]. Those, therefore, who preach without being sent, are Pseudo) (Miller 247).

In Chapter Two of *De periculis novissimorum temporum* William cites verse eleven from Matthew 24, the *Little Apocalypse*, to establish that in the last days many false prophets will appear and seduce many. True preachers, he then explains, are only those authorized by bishops who call them into their sees (*De periculis* 24). Because the Pseudo-Apostles or the friars received their authorization not from the bishops but directly from the Pope, they are,

contends William, unauthorized preachers. Such a polemical position clearly indicates William's desire to uphold the traditional power structure of the Church yet simultaneously exhibits his animosity toward the fraternal orders: he is willing to incur the Pope's displeasure by tacitly denying his authority to establish a papal order.

William further queries the friars' right to preach by exposing their system of carrying letters of commendation. True Apostles, reads sign five,

non indigent commendatys literis; nec faciunt se ab hominibus ad homines per literas commendari. 2 Corinth. 3. Numquid egemus commendatitys literis, sicut quidam? Glos. sicut Pseudo. Ergo, qui contrarium faciunt, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 58).

(do not require letters of commendation nor are they recommended from men to men by letters. 2 Corinth. 3:1: 'Do we need epistles of commendation to you or from you?' Gloss. as do the Pseudo. Therefore, those who do the contrary are not true Apostles but Pseudo).

Unlike the true apostles -- parish priests, curates, and other members of the secular clergy -- friars needed preaching licenses which either the Pope or bishops provided. The possession of these letters again divides the members of the fraternal orders from those of the secular clergy and draws attention to the friars' untraditional organization.

William continues his diatribe against the friars' untraditional organization and their right to preach by arguing that they do not even possess the authority from God to undertake religious ministrations. Unlike members of the secular clergy who possessed an assigned position in the traditional pyramid, at the top of which rested the Pope who received his power from God, the fraternal

orders were outside the traditional structure and, thus, according to William, did not possess authority from God:

septimum signum est, quod Pseudo, cum auctoritatem a Deo non habeant, nomini suo vendicant auctoritatem Pseudo non accepta a Deo potestate, sed usurpata dominari volunt, nomini suo vendicantes auctoritatem (De periculis 59).
 (The seventh sign is that the Pseudo, without possessing authority from God, sell the name of authority The Pseudo, not receiving authority from God but wilfully usurping lordship, sell the name of authority).

Because the friars are unauthorized by God or the bishops, they are not, continues William, receptacles of true wisdom and knowledge. A consequence of this spiritually barren state is false teachings. Friars' teachings are as duplicitous as their authorization to preach; in fact, William argues in sign eight that friars preach a simulated religion:

Pseudo praetendentes sapientiam in superstitione, & humilitate, traditiones suas Religionem appellant, quae potius sunt sacrilegium Id est, in simulata Religione; quia traditioni humanae nomen Religionis applicant, ut Religio appelletur, cum sit sacrilegium; quia quod contra Authorem est, sacrilega mente inventum est Illi ergo Praedicatores, qui traditiones suas contra Scripturas Divinas, factas, Religionem appellant, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 59-60).
 (The Pseudo-Apostles, pretending wisdom and humility in their arrogance, call their teachings Religion, which are better called sacrilege That is, in simulated Religion, in which they give the name Religion to human teachings, as they call Religious those things that are sacrilegious; because this is against Authority, it is invented by a sacrilegious mind Therefore, those Preachers, whose teachings are against God and are against the Divine Scriptures, and who, in fact, call them Religion, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo).

William's invective here against *traditiones humanae* reflects his disapproval of the friars' interest in the works of Aristotle and their attempts to formulate new theological ideas with Aristotelian

concepts. As a member of the conservative Faculty of Theology at the University of Paris that both opposed the introduction of Aristotle's works and supported the study of the Bible and commentaries of the Church Fathers, William quite possibly was incensed at the friars' conflation of traditional theological ideas and *traditiones humanae*.³¹ Indeed, later French antifraternalsists such as Rutebeuf and de Meun continue to criticize the friars' teachings of new methods of argument and their stress on logic, not theology, and this continuation suggests the issue was particularly sensitive and heated. Yet, despite the reappearance of William's attack on the friars' teaching in antifraternals tracts of late thirteenth-century France, this particular complaint rarely surfaces in English antifraternals tracts. Instead, English antifraternalsists criticize the friars' prominent role in academia -- a criticism which perhaps evolves from a generalization of William's complaint about the fraternal, academic world, but one which more likely stems from the friars' active role in learning and teaching at Oxford and Cambridge.

Many of William's other criticisms of fraternal preachers, however, become antifraternals commonplaces in both French and English antifraternals writings. For instance, in sign twenty-three William implies that friars attack the apostles who live the true apostolic life:

vigesimum tertium signum est, quod Veri Apostoli non vadunt ad praedicandum illis, qui alios habent Apostolos; quia nolunt gloriari in plebibus alienis (De periculis 65).

³¹ Sign thirty-nine of *De periculis*, which I have already discussed in Chapter One, p. 30, lends support to this possibility.

(the twenty-third sign is that True Apostles do not strive to preach nor strive to preach against those who have the apostleship; nor do they glory in drawing away the common people).

Thematically related to sign twenty-three is number thirty-six:

trigesimum sextum signum est, quod Veri Apostoli non vadunt praedicaturi eis, qui iam per alios conversi sunt Illi ergo Praedicatores, qui non vadunt ad convertendos, sed potius ad conversos, habentes proprios Apostolos, & proprios Episcopos, & Sacerdotes, & ita gloriantur in plebibus alienis; non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 69-70).

(The thirty-sixth sign is that True Apostles do not strive to preach to those who are already suitably converted Therefore, Preachers who do not move toward people who need conversion but, instead, toward the converted who have proper apostolate and proper priests, and who glory in drawing away the common people are not true Apostles but Pseudo).

Both of these signs point toward the professional rivalry that existed between the secular clergy and the fraternal orders and give definitive expression to the charge that friars unjustly vilify the secular clergy. This professional rivalry continued to increase, and complaints of friars' deriding members of the secular clergy became an antifraternality commonplace.

William continues his diatribe against fraternal preachers by alleging that friars preach only for temporal profit. The eleventh sign, says William,

est, quod Veri Apostoli propter Deum, & salutem animarum tantum praedicant; non propter temporale lucrum; 2. Cor. 4. Non praedicamus nos metipsos. Gloss. Praedicatio nostra non ad gloriam nostram tendit, vel lucrum nostrum sed ad gloriam Christi. Sed praedicatio Pseudo ad contrarium tendit Illi ergo praedicatores, qui propter lucrum temporale, aut propter honorem mundanum, aut propter laudem humanam

praedicant, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo(*De periculis* 60-61).

(is, that True Apostles preach only for the sake of God and the salvation of souls, not for temporal profit. [2 Cor. 4:5] 'We preach not for ourselves.' Gloss: 'We do not preach for our own glory, or for personal gain, but for the glory of Christ.' But the preaching of the Pseudo aims at the contrary Those Preachers, therefore, who preach for temporal profit, or for worldly honours, or for the praise of men, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo) (Miller 247).

William's accusation here that friars preach to attain personal glory rather than for the glory of Christ serves to reinforce his later assertion in sign thirty-eight (*De periculis* 67) that Pseudo-Apostles are both proud and boastful while his comment that they preach for worldly honours anticipates similar complaints later articulated in signs thirty and thirty-one (*De periculis* 64-65). Of particular significance, however, is his claim that friars preach for personal gain because, of his many complaints against fraternal preaching, this one becomes a particularly popular antifraternal commonplace.

This charge that friars preach for personal gain bestows the sin of avarice upon them as well as strengthening the parallel drawn between the friars and the "covetous" men who will arrive in the Last Times (2 Tim. 3:2). Indeed, William again presents avarice as the motivation for friars' preaching in sign twenty:

vigesimum signum est, quod Veri Apostoli non capiunt temporalia bona illorum, quibus praedicant; per quod discernuntur a Lupis, id est a Pseudo. Unde Actor. 20. Argentum, & aurum nullius concupiui. Glos. In hoc cognoscuntur Lupi, quod hoc concupiscunt (*De periculis* 64).
(the twentieth sign is, that True Apostles do not receive the temporal goods of those to whom they preach, by which they are distinguished from wolves, that is, the Pseudo. Thus Acts XX:33: 'I have not coveted any man's

silver, gold, or apparel'; Gloss: 'By this the Wolves can be recognized, because they covet things.' (Miller 248).

William's characterization of friars as greedy is embraced by later antifraternals as is his typing of friars as wolves. Unlike true apostles who, according to Matthew 10:16, a passage William cites in sign twenty-one, are sent "as sheep in the midst of wolves," friars are ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing. This image, which is both biblical and proverbial, inevitably supports William's contention that friars are hypocritical.

William's accusation in sign twenty that friars ravenously desire temporal goods also indicates that friars are primarily interested in the material world rather than in the spiritual realm. Many of his signs reinforce and develop this accusation. He claims, for example, that friars seek self-glory in the temporal world:

decimum signum est, quod Pseudo Apostoli potius se gaudent commendari, quam Dei doctrinam; Veri autem Apostoli e contrario. 1. Thess. 2. Neque quaerentes ab hominibus gloriam (De periculis 60).

(the tenth sign is that Pseudo Apostles rejoice in commendations of themselves rather than in God's doctrine; True Apostles do the opposite. I. Thess. 2:6 "Nor sought we glory of men").

William further suggests that friars publicly exalt and wrongly covet both divine and human deeds:

trigesimum signum est, quod Veri Apostoli non gaudent de miraculis, vel aliis factis elegantioribus, quae facit Dominus per eos, ut de illis cupiant honorari; sed potius gaudent de salute, quam a Domino expectant (De periculis 68).

(the thirtieth sign is that True Apostles do not rejoice in miracles, nor other eloquent deeds, that God did for them, or love the honour of men but, rather, rejoice as they wait for the Lord).

In this sign's concluding statement William specifies that Pseudo-Apostles are those "*qui gloriantur de miraculis suas*" (*De periculis* 68)(who glory in their own miracles). And, even though both desiring honour and boasting of eloquent deeds become antifraternnal commonplaces, these criticisms are not as popular as the complaint that friars glory in their own miracles. Indeed, many French and British antifraternnalists playfully portray friars as boasting of miracles they have supposedly performed, only to reveal that the miracle never materialized.

In sign thirty-one William reworks the antifraternnal sentiments expressed in the preceding sign, shifting the focus from fraudulent divine glory to temporal glory. According to this sign, true Apostles "*numquam gloriam suam quaerunt in hac vita, sed gloriam Christi*" (*De periculis* 68) (do not seek glory in this life, but glory in Christ). He develops this allegation by stressing the friars' affiliations with worldly friends, their mutable friendships which wrongly receive greater attention than their spiritual relationship with God:

quadragesimum primum signum est, quod Veri Apostoli non procurant sibi amicitias huius saeculi. Jacob. 4. Qui vult amicus huius saeculi fieri, inimicus Dei constituitur. Illi ergo Praedicatores, qui sibi procurant amicitias huius mundi, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (*De periculis* 71-72).

(the forty-first sign is that True Apostles do not acquire for themselves friends of this world. [James 4:4] 'Whoever desires the friendship of this world is the enemy of God.' Those Preachers, therefore, who acquire for themselves friends of this world, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo) (Miller 249).

From William's censuring of the friars' temporal socializing stems the antifraternnal commonplace that friars seek only the friendship of

those who can grant them worldly comforts: the wealthy and the powerful, a group which certainly excludes the impoverished whom the friars originally intended to reach.

According to William, the friars' alleged desire for temporal glory plainly manifests itself in their active search for temporal comforts. True Apostles, asserts William in sign twenty-five,

non quaerunt favorem mundi, nec placere hominibus Illi ergo Praedicatores, qui quaerunt favorem mundi, & ad hoc laborant, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 66).
(do not seek favour in this world, nor a place among men Therefore, Preachers, who seek favour in the world and toward this favour labour, are not true Apostles but Pseudo).

He later elaborates on the form these favours take and the locations of "place:"

trigesimum secundum signum est, quod Veri Apostoli fugiunt solemnitates hominum, & salutationes, & convivia Illi ergo qui quaerunt, & amant confortia, & convivia, & officia potentum secularium & divitum; non videntur esse veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 68).
(the thirty-second sign is that True Apostles flee the solemnities, salutations, and feasts of man Therefore, those who desire and love comforts and feasts and both secular and divine power of office do not appear to be true Apostles but Pseudo).

Later antifraternalsists adapt William's criticism that friars seek worldly comforts and pleasures, frequently humorously portraying friars as arrogant braggadocios boasting of their secular and divine powers, as social gadflies invading the houses of the wealthy and the powerful, and as dinner guests indulging in rich and tasty feasts.

Indeed, William himself occasionally expounds the ways in

which friars overindulge. According to sign twenty-six, true Apostles, unlike the false,

oblatis sibi cibo & potu sunt contenti, nec quaerunt cibaria lautiora Illi ergo Praedicatores, qui licet non sint potestatem habentes, tamen offenduntur, quando non ministrantur eis cibaria lautiora, non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 66).
(are content with the food and drink offered them, and do not ask for more elegant dishes Those Preachers, therefore, who, even though they preach without authority, are offended when they are not served more elegant meals, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo) (Miller 248-49).

Thematically related to sign twenty-six is twenty-eight which posits

quod Veri Apostoli non quaerunt hospitia opulentiora, siue ubi melius procurentur Illi ergo Praedicatores, qui quaerunt hospitia, ubi melius pascantur; & recipiunt munera malorum divitum, ut eorum mala tegant; vel illorum munera recipiunt, qui magis dant propter importunitatem tollendam, vel praesentem verecundiam, quam propter Deum; non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 67).
(that True Apostles do not seek more opulent lodgings, even where better may be obtained Therefore, Preachers, who seek lodging where there is better fare, and receive money from rich, evil men, and hide their evil, or who take money from those who give more because of pressing solicitation than because of present shame or because of God, are not True Apostles, but Pseudo).

Undercutting the friars' claim that their religious life is one of evangelical poverty and temperance here is William's representation of them as ill-mannered pursuers of fancy foods, luxurious lodgings, and "dirty" donations from unrepentant sinners. From this representation as well as from William's other signs alleging that friars are unduly preoccupied with the material world and its pleasures stems the antifraternel commonplace that friars only simulate temperance.

Yet, while maintaining such a pretence, friars actually obtain vast amounts of money and food, feeding and endeavouring to satiate their avaricious and gluttonous nature. Such alleged behaviour provides later antifraternalsists with a flexible, rich image that they readily rework and amplify, and they portray friars as 'full-figured,' as mock-temperate eaters who certainly do not suffer from holy anorexia.

The friars' alleged pre-occupation with temporal glory and sensual pleasures, of course, would leave them little time for devotion to Christian tenets, and William not surprisingly accuses them of lacking knowledge of Christian faith. In sign nineteen, for instance, he says,

Apostoli Christi non solum habent cognitionem de ys, quae fecit Deus; sed etiam de ys, quae facturus est in fine mundi Illi ergo, qui dicunt se ignorare pericula finalis Ecclesie, quae praedicta sunt; aut non curant de illis, ac si ignorarent; non habent oculos, ante, & retro; unde non sunt veri Apostoli; ergo cum dicunt se esse Apostoli, Pseudo sunt (De periculis 64).

(Christ's Apostles have awareness not only of those things God has done, but also of those things that will be done at the end of the world.... Those, therefore, who say they do not know the peril of the final Church, which things have been predicted, or say they do not care about them and ignore them, these people do not have eyes in front and behind: whence it is that they are not true Apostles.... Therefore, since they call themselves Apostles, they are Pseudo-Apostles).

By castigating the friars for short-sightedness and lack of knowledge of Salvation History, William indicates that they lack true wisdom. Unconcerned with the state of the soul and with the Final Judgement, they manifest interest only in temporal history. Related to this charge is sign number forty:

quadragesimum est, quod Veri Apostoli non amant carnalia, sed odio habent quicquid eis obsistit in servitio Dei. Luc. 14. Qui non odit patrem suum, & matrem, & fratrem, & sorores; ad huc autem & animam suam propter me; non potest meus esse discipulus. Id est. Qui non odit, quidquid ei obsistit in servitio Dei, non est dignus meo disciplinatu, nec potest in eo permanere (71).

(The fortieth sign is that True Apostles do not love carnally, but detest possessions that obstruct the service of God. Luke 14:26. 'Who comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and brother and sister and his own life cannot be my disciple.' That is, Whosoever who does not hate whatever stands in the way of the service of God, is not worthy of my discipleship, nor can he remain my disciple.

William here specifically criticizes the friars for practising the wrong type of love: instead of placing the love of God above the love of the world, they love objects and people first. This criticism demonstrates the friars' ignorance of true Christian faith since they do not uphold the first commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength" (Mark 12: 30).

Similarly, William's criticism in sign thirty-four of the friars' hostility serves to reveal their lack of Christian charity. True Apostles, points out William in this sign,

non odiunt homines, etiam inimicos, & odientes eos; juxta doctrinam Domini Matth. 5. Diligite inimicos vestros, & benefacite ys, qui oderunt vos (De periculis 69)
(do not hate men, not even their enemies or those hateful to them; according to the Lord's doctrine. Matt. 5:44. 'Contain your hostility and do good to those who hate you).

The Pseudo-Apostles, concludes William, are distrustful and have a reputation for hostility, a hostility which, according to signs three and

twenty-one, manifests itself in their failure to demonstrate Christian patience and fortitude. In the twenty-first sign, William says that true Apostles

in tribulationibus patientes sunt; nec reddunt malum pro malo Qui ergo malum non tolerant, sed potius inferunt; non sunt veri Apostoli, sed Pseudo (De periculis 65).
 (are patient in tribulation, and do not render evil for evil Those, therefore, who do not patiently suffer evils, but rather incite them, are not true Apostles but Pseudo) (Miller 248).

Similarly, in sign three, William points out that true Apostles, "*si arguantur, patienter sustinent*" (*De periculis* 58) (if they are rebuked, bear themselves patiently)(Miller 246), unlike the Pseudo who will not tolerate correction. The friars' collective irascibility and intolerance, as established in this sign and sign twenty-one, assuredly separate them from the ideal Christian: they fail to turn the other cheek. Impatience, anger, and desiring revenge all become anti-fraternal conventions, ones used by French and British antifraternals to emphasize the friars' departure from ideal Christian conduct. Lacking charity, they incite evil; lacking patience, they reject correction; lacking patience and charity, they angrily plot revenge.

Such a characterization is undeniably unattractive and uncharitable. Yet throughout all of Chapter Fourteen of *De periculis* William fervently and relentlessly draws a consistently unpleasant picture of the Pseudo-Apostles: the friars. Avaricious, envious, angry, and proud, they simulate religiosity. Impatient, self-indulgent, rash, and unjust, they incite evil. Boastful, eloquent, hypocritical, and duplicitous, they seduce the righteous. As flat-

terers, as hypocrites, as seducers, William's friars are certainly the antithesis of the True Apostles and the harbingers of the "Last Days;" their actions and characteristics parallel those who "shall come [in] dangerous times" (2 Tim. 3:1). Yet as flatterers, hypocrites, and seducers, his friars are not simply the precursors of Antichrist but the epitome -- the image -- of Christian vices and sins. It is this image that many later antifraternalsists, particularly the British ones, develop. Even though William's charges against friars are expressed in terms of their apostolic pretensions and of their symbolically apocalyptic significance, the complaints that stem from his *De periculis* and enter the mainstream of antifraternalsism are not always directly linked to the friars' deviation from the apostolic ideal nor to their apocalyptic significance. Rather, they are frequently related to the friars' abuse of religious observances and privileges.

Section II: FitzRalph and British Antifraternalsism

The emphasis on the friars' abuse of religious observances and privileges is particularly strong in British antifraternalsism. Unlike France, Britain did not have a powerful antifraternals movement in the thirteenth century; rather, the British antifraternals movement gathered momentum in the mid-fourteenth century. This movement was primarily instigated and fuelled by Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland. From 1349 until his death in 1360, FitzRalph vehemently defended the English secular

clergy against the friars, sometimes in the pulpits of London but usually in the Papal Court at Avignon.

Though an ardent and hostile spokesperson against the friars in fourteenth-century England, FitzRalph actually began his campaign against the friars using a conciliatory yet urgent tone. His sermon, based on the text, *Michi mundus crucifixus est et ego mundo* and delivered 4 October 1349 at the feast of Saint Francis in the church of the Franciscans at Avignon, clearly reveals FitzRalph's desire not to agitate his audience; in this sermon devoted to the issue of poverty and almsgiving, he immediately refers to the *auctoritas* and *stabilitas* of the Franciscan order as well as establishing his own brotherly affection for it.³² In fact, FitzRalph relates

that from childhood he had been closely connected with the Franciscan order, the Franciscans being the only religious community in his native city of Dundalk and that several members of his family had been members of it.³³

Nevertheless, as L.L. Hammerich notes in his brief study of FitzRalph's sermon diary, FitzRalph reprimands those

friars who live in obvious opposition to the sayings and the intentions of St. Francis himself, by trying to acquire ecclesiastical honours, by disregarding the injunctions concerning poverty and obedience, and by roving the

³² L.L. Hammerich, *The Beginning of the Strife Between Richard FitzRalph and the Mendicants*, (Copenhagen: Levin and Munksgaard, 1938), p. 41.

³³ Katherine Walsh, *A Fourteenth-Century Scholar and Primate: Richard FitzRalph in Oxford, Avignon and Armagh* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 211.

country far away from their convents and for long periods.³⁴

According to FitzRalph, both the Order and the Curia should intervene and demand that these *vagabundi* return to their convents. These two official bodies, continues FitzRalph, should also order the fraternal vagabonds to depart from the papal court where they seek "the favour of the Pope by means of royal mandates."³⁵ Thus, even though FitzRalph devotes the main body of the sermon to the issue of poverty and the duty of almsgiving, he nonetheless manifests a tacit disapproval of voluntary poverty and its devotees.

FitzRalph's disapproval of the activities performed by the friars becomes readily apparent in his *Proposicio* delivered before Clement VI *in publico consistorio* on 5 July 1350. This proposition, based on the Pauline text, *Unusquisque in quo vocatus est frater, in hoc maneat apud deum* (Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God)(1 Cor. 7:24), is considered the sermon in which FitzRalph formally launches his campaign against the friars' activities and privileges.³⁶ At the beginning of this sermon, FitzRalph claims that he speaks "*ex parte prelatorum et omnium curatorum totius ecclesie*"³⁷ (on behalf

³⁴ Hammerich, pp. 41-42.

³⁵ Hammerich, p. 42.

³⁶ See Hammerich, p. 30 and Walsh, p. 350.

³⁷ Richard FitzRalph, "The Proposition *Unusquisque*" in *The Beginning of the Strife Between Richard FitzRalph and the Mendicants with an Edition of His Autobiographical Prayer and His Proposition Unusquisque*, edited by L.L. Hammerich (Copenhagen: Levin and Munksgaard, 1938), p. 53. All further quotations from this text will be identified by *Unusquisque* and page number.

of the prelates and all of the curates of the universal church); he also comments that he has been asked to address the criticisms made against the friars for more than a century. As Janet Coleman explains in her analysis of the legal and political aspects of FitzRalph's proposition, it appears FitzRalph entered a debate re-opened by Clement VI in 1343 and continued by the friars who presented, sometime in 1349, a proposition to the Pope in which they requested a re-investigation of the constraints placed on their pastoral privileges.³⁸ Some clauses of *Super cathedram*, it seems the friars argued, were ambiguous and required clarification; some clauses were superfluous and, therefore, should be revoked; and some clauses were too harsh and should be altered to favour the friars.³⁹ It is unclear, however, by whom FitzRalph was asked to investigate the issues raised,⁴⁰ and there is no extant copy of the friars' proposition to reconsider clauses of *Super cathedram*. Knowledge of its existence, in fact, derives only from FitzRalph's references to it in his own *proposicio*.

Nevertheless, the content of FitzRalph's proposition certainly indicates his opinion of the privileges granted to the friars in *Super cathedram*, the papal bull of 1300 which provided a workable

³⁸ Janet Coleman, "FitzRalph's Antimendicant '*proposicio*' (1350) and the Politics of the Papal Court at Avignon," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 35 (1984), 381.

³⁹ Walsh, p. 358.

⁴⁰ Coleman, 381 and Walsh, pp. 358-59.

solution to the problems posed by the friars' acquisition of the pastoral privileges of preaching, sepulture, and hearing confession. FitzRalph methodically argues, as he later would vehemently in the *Defensio curatorum*, the advantages experienced by parish clergy, parishioners, and friars when parish clergy, not friars, perform the three pastoral ministrations granted to the friars. Basing his argument upon the traditional organization of the Catholic Church, FitzRalph points out that the Church has successfully existed for centuries without the friars:

doctores seculares, curatos, et religiosos possessionatos, ... sunt ab ecclesia instituti et incorporati ecclesiastice hierarchie ante adventum fratrum per mille cc annos (Unusquisque 60-61)
(secular doctors, curates, and religious possessioners ... were of the Church institution and the incorporated Church hierarchy for twelve hundred years before the advent of the friars).

Thus, if anyone should assist the parish priests, propounds FitzRalph, they should be members of the Orders older than the friars (*Unusquisque 58-60*).

Yet FitzRalph does not merely emphasize the rights of the long-established secular and regular orders but focuses upon the need to revoke the friars' pastoral privileges. To FitzRalph, the friars' right to hear confession only creates problems: friars suffer from avarice when they perform this office while parishioners who confess to friars experience easy confession -- a level of confession not conducive to a healthy soul (*Unusquisque 64-66*). Similarly, the friars' possession of the privilege of sepulture leads to dire consequences, ones which friars, parish priests, and parishioners suffer. For instance, by undertaking this office, friars gather riches which

lead to the sin of avarice; parish priests encounter opposition when they attempt to collect the money the friars should give them; and parishioners do not receive full benefits from the trentals said and offerings made for their souls because these actions are beneficial to the decedent only when they are performed in the place chosen by God -- the parish church (*Unusquisque* 66-69). Finally, the friars' privilege of preaching, argues FitzRalph applying a Franciscan tenet to all orders of friars, negates their vow of poverty (*Unusquisque* 70-72). And, should these reasons be insufficient ones for demonstrating the urgent need to revoke the friars' pastoral privileges, FitzRalph provides one final, general reason: the friars greatly abuse their privileges. Indeed, declares FitzRalph, they should be deprived of them, just as God deprived Adam of Paradise when he abused his privileges (*Unusquisque* 72).

Pope Clement VI, however, did not deprive the friars of their pastoral ministrations after hearing FitzRalph's *Proposicio*, and FitzRalph's campaign against the friars continued. In 1356-57, he delivered several sermons in which he again addresses the subjects of the mendicant beggary, the poverty of Christ, and the need to confess to the parish priest in his church.⁴¹ These sermons were delivered in London and Deddington rather than in Avignon, and they all came to the attention of the friars, provoking their displeasure. In fact, on 7 March 1357, representatives of the Franciscan, Dominican, Carmelite, and Austin orders gathered at the chapter-house of the

⁴¹ For a thorough discussion of FitzRalph's antifraternel activities and sermons, see Walsh, pp. 409-422.

London Greyfriars where they compiled a list of twenty-one errors that they had discovered in FitzRalph's sermons. As Walsh concisely explains, these alleged errors deal

with the poverty of Christ, the mendicancy professed and practised by the friars in the pastoral sphere, and their own particular performance in that area in the preamble they defended their confessional practice, maintaining that they only heard the confessions of those who came freely to them in accordance with the papal mandate, and stressing that they always imposed '*penitencias salutare pro modo culparum*.'⁴²

Even though the twenty-one 'errors' were incorporated into a legal *Appellacio* that Richard Upton delivered to FitzRalph, they nevertheless did not persuade him to cease his antimendicant sermonizing. On 12 March 1357 he again preached an antifraternial speech, attacking, for instance, their wealth and their ornate churches, both of which belie their vow of poverty.

Both FitzRalph and the friars took their cases to Avignon, and on 8 November 1357 FitzRalph presented a *Defensio curatorum*, a long sermon, before the Papal Court. FitzRalph's *Defensio curatorum* is of major importance not only because it "became a central document in the intensified attacks against the fraternal orders during the 1380s in England,"⁴³ but also because it represents the peculiarly British treatment of the theological tradition of antifraternialism. Despite FitzRalph's echoing of many of the complaints first definitively expressed by William of Saint Amour, FitzRalph's complaints possess a distinctly British voice. The

⁴² Walsh, p. 417.

⁴³ Miller, p. 237.

manner, too, in which he approaches the issues, as well as the alleged fraternal abuses that he chooses to emphasize, shed light upon the nature of the English antifraternality movement and reveal the British secular perception of fraternal abuses. Undoubtedly, the French and British secular theologians shared similar complaints against the friars; nevertheless, the British antifraternality theologians perceived fraternal abuses in a somewhat different light.

Unlike William of St. Amour who, as we have seen, in *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, established an apocalyptic framework into which he cast the friars as pseudoapostles, as harbingers of the Last Days, FitzRalph immediately establishes the contemporary, temporal issue he will address: he will "make evidence, & consaile þat þese ordres schulde be brouzt to þe clenness of her first ordenaunce."⁴⁴ He also accounts for his actions which led to the present proceedings at Avignon: he went to London

for certeyn nedes of [his] chirche of Armachan, & fonde þere wise doctors stryue vpon þe beggerie, & beggyng of þe Lord oure Saueoure. & ofte [he] was preyed to preche to þe peple, and [he] preched seuen sermons oþer eizte to þe peple in her owne tonge, wiþ þe protestacioun þat [he] haue seide & tolde, þere nyne conclusiouns (*Defensio* 39).

The friars, continues FitzRalph, have turned his nine conclusions to a "jape" and have appealed to the Papal Court. It is this appeal to which FitzRalph responds in the *Defensio curatorum*, a response which re-asserts his nine conclusions as well as offering 'evidence' of

⁴⁴ Richard FitzRalph, *Defensio curatorum*, trans. John Trevisa, ed. Aaron Jenkins Perry (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 39. All further references to this defense will be identified by *Defensio* and page number.

the friars' abuse of church offices in temporal history rather than Salvation History.

FitzRalph's defense of the curates lacks neither passion nor intensity, despite its lack of apocalyptic symbolism and imagery. Even though FitzRalph protests that it is not his "entent to counsaile, noþer axe destruccioun & undoyng of the ordres of beggers, that bep apprevd by holy chirche, & confermed of popes" (*Defensio* 39), he nevertheless does acknowledge that he intends to "make evidence, & consaile that þese ordres schulde be brouzt to the clenness of her first ordenaunce" (*Defensio* 39). Offering papal bulls, biblical passages, and the Franciscan rule as evidence, and applying Aristotelian logic, FitzRalph fervently argues the need to disarm the friars, particularly the Franciscans, of their present powers and position in the religious community. If applied, his proposed stripping of these privileges and position would effectively return the Franciscans to the 'cleanness' of the original Franciscan rule -- a return desired only by the Spiritual wing of the Franciscan order -- yet it would destroy, undo, the Dominicans, Carmelites, and Augustinians as these three orders were originally established because, unlike the Franciscan order, these orders did not adopt Saint Francis' rule. In fact, FitzRalph's seemingly rational and justifiable plea for the restoration of the orders 'to the clenness of her first ordenaunce' is actually an impassioned plea for the destruction of all the orders excluding the Spiritual Wing of the Franciscans.

Indeed, as FitzRalph provides evidence of the need to disarm the friars of their lucrative ministrations, he endeavours to destroy their *raison d'être*. Like William of Saint Amour, he attempts to

destroy their credibility as revivers of the apostolic tradition. Yet he does not question their credibility by stressing, as does William, their pseudo-apostolic activities; instead, he emphasizes their failure to labour like the apostles as well as criticizing their practice of mendicancy. According to FitzRalph, Christ never begged wilfully, never taught to beg wilfully, and, in fact, taught that no man should wilfully beg. No man, then, concludes FitzRalph, may be holy and accept what he begs wilfully (*Defensio* 40). Such a mode of existence reveals an ignorance of Christ's sentence: "Remove not from house to house" (Luke 10:7) as well as a failure to practice mendicancy as Saint Francis taught:

now vnneþe may any grete men oper smaal, lewed or lered, take a morsel of mete, but sicke beggers come vnbede, & begge nouzt as pore men schuld atte zate oper atte dore, axing almes mekelich as Fraunces tauzt and hotep in his testament, but þei comeþ into houses & courtes & bep y-harberwide & etip & drynkep what þei per fyndeþ vnbede and vnprayed. & nopeles þei bereþ wiþ hem corn, oper mele, brede, flesche oper chese, pouz þere be but tweyne in þe hous þei bereþ wiþ hem þat oon (*Defensio* 60).

And even if friars desire to implement a rule of mendicancy, they must realize the conflict created when they base their livelihood on beggary yet possess pastoral privileges; after all, points out FitzRalph,

hit semeþ þat hauyng rizt to preche and to cristen men may nouzt stonde wiþ sich a foundment of beggerie, zif power of axing & of chalenging of liflode longeþ to þis priuylege, as hit dop to riztful lawe, so þat freres myzt chalange her liflode of hem þat þei prechiþ to þe gospel; as Cristes disciples hadde whanne Crist hem sent to preche þe gospel & seide: 'In what hous ze goo yn þere abideþ, þe werkman is worpi his mede' Luc 10 c (*Defensio* 62).

Thus, according to FitzRalph, friars, unlike Christ's Apostles, do not uphold the apostolic injunctions concerning missionary work and are not followers of the apostolic tradition.

The friars' mendicancy is not FitzRalph's only evidence of their failure to uphold the apostolic tradition; their acceptance of the title of 'master' further reveals their pseudo-apostolic character. The friars, posits FitzRalph, "dop azenus Cristes lore þat seip: 'Ze schal haue no wille to be cleped maister; oon is zour maister, þat is Crist.' Mathi 20 c" (*Defensio* 63). This charge, of course, represents a reiteration of the antifraternel complaint first voiced by William of Saint Amour in *De Pharisaeo et Publicano* and cites the same text as he did. Similarly, FitzRalph echoes a sentiment William expressed in *De periculis novissimorum temporum* when he claims that friars preach without being sent. Indeed, FitzRalph again cites the identical biblical passage as William:

Thei falleþ into þe synne of vnbuxomnesse azenus obedience, for þei vseþ þat office azenus þe lore of þe apostle, ad Romanos 10 c, þere þe apostle seip: 'How schul þei preche but þei be sent?' (*Defensio* 63)

But, despite the repetition of some complaints from William of Saint Amour's antifraternel treatises -- complaints which were antifraternel commonplaces by the mid-fourteenth century and would remain so until the Reformation -- FitzRalph certainly removes the apocalyptic trappings used by William. In a sense, he may be seen to subject many of William's charges to a process of English naturalization.

In the process of naturalizing many of the traditional complaints against the friars, FitzRalph grounds his dispute with the

friars in contemporary events and reveals an awareness of the economic, political, and academic repercussions of the friars' strong, perhaps overwhelming presence in the British religious community. FitzRalph complains, for instance, that friars neglect to give the alms they receive to repair "parische chirches, noþer of heyȝ weyes, noþer of broken brigges" (*Defensio* 48). His criticism here of the friars' failure to uphold the *trinada necessitas* (Triple Obligation) -- a medieval law which demanded all landed proprietors to repair highways, bridges, and churches -- not only subtly undermines the friars as it implicitly states that friars own extensive property but also reveals his tendency to locate his dispute with the friars in tangible, contemporary situations. Unlike William, FitzRalph displays a concern for the effects the friars have upon the immediate temporal Christian world rather than the significance of friars in Salvation History.

The approach he takes to the secular clergy's problems with the friars reinforces his concern with the position of the friars in the temporal Christian community. Unlike William of Saint Amour who approaches exegetically the controversy, using and explicating traditional apocalyptic texts, FitzRalph approaches it unencumbered by Salvation History, weighted only with the "plain facts," using, at times, 'statistical' evidence. Both William and FitzRalph accuse friars of wanting temporal goods, yet, whereas William both accuses friars of seeking opulent hosts and money, and implies, by glossing biblical texts, that friars are avaricious, FitzRalph bluntly states that friars are greedy. To him, friars procure the lucrative ministrations only in order to gain wealth:

for hit semep þat he vsip þe leue þat is y-procured for
þe same cause, for þe whiche cause hit was y-procured,
þat is for riches (79).

In unequivocal language he also plainly states that friars are thieves, stealing tithings from the parish churches: "þei payep neuere tepinge of siche biquystes & ziftes, as it is comynliche seide" (*Defensio* 44). And not content with usurping parish priests' tithings, friars also, according to FitzRalph, buy all the books: "alle bookes bep y-bouzt of freres" (*Defensio* 59). The effect of FitzRalph's technique is cumulative: because he sets out the 'facts,' describing precise actions and situations where the friars' avarice manifests itself, he leaves little room for interpretation. Indeed, he emphatically and clearly demonstrates, rather than alludes to, the friars' alleged avaricious nature.

Similarly, whereas William establishes that friars are proud by presenting them as pseudo-apostles who boast, for instance, of the superiority of their orders, FitzRalph bluntly states that the friars suffer from the sin of pride. Because they undertake lucrative ministrations, argues FitzRalph,

þese priuyleges infectep hem with many maner synnes:
wiþ þe synne of iniurie & of wrong, wiþ þe synne of
vnbuxomnesse, wiþ þe synne of couetise, & wiþ þe synne
of pride (*Defensio* 61).

FitzRalph's friars are not harbingers of the Last Times, forerunners of Antichrist as are William's: they are men, not signs, sinners infected with greed, pride, and disobedience, not symbols of the End.

FitzRalph's treatment and perception of friars as base sinners, rather than as signs, is perhaps most evident in his discourse on their

relations with women. He contends that friars keep suspect company, proving that friars should not do so by citing a rule of Saint Francis:

Ich hote heizlich alle freres þat þei haue noon suspect company as counseil of wymmen; also þat þei come nouzt in Abbayes of monchons ... be nouzt gossippes to men noþer to wymmen, lest sclaundre arise (*Defensio* 73).

Contrary to this rule, friars, continues FitzRalph,

here þe priuyeste counseile of wymmen, of queenes, & of alle opere, And so now by sich company þei disputeþ wip ladyes in chambre; þerfore in al þe worlde wide sclaunder springeþ of freres (*Defensio* 73).

FitzRalph refuses to repeat this slander he claims to have heard -- a calculated refusal that serves to make him appear upstanding -- yet this refusal still suggests there is gossip to report. Moreover, his assertion that friars visit women in chambers provides ample ground for the imagination. His allegation certainly has sexual connotations and differs from William's biblical and abstract charge in sign one of *De periculis*. William himself, however, links spiritual with physical seduction in his *Collectiones* when he discusses again *penetrantes domos* and *mulierculas*:

And certainly those whom they seduce are more and more burdened with sin because of them; in the beginning perhaps they may seem through hypocrisy to have only a spiritual intimacy with them, but in the end, they are joined with them for the most part sexually.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, unlike William, FitzRalph draws attention to friars' lewd encounters with women by mentioning suspect company, slander, gossip, and he thus uses a strategy that invites his audience

59. ⁴⁵ *Collectiones*, 196, quoted in and translated by Szittyá, p.

to speculate and imagine -- perhaps vividly and widely. It is a strategy, too, that provokes and encourages lewd speculation on physical seduction rather than spiritual seduction.

As FitzRalph strips commonplace, antifraternial sentiments of apocalyptic trappings, he adds a few charges. First, when friars hear confession, claims FitzRalph, they beguile children with gifts and make them enter their orders:

for in þe fader hous bep homliche & priuy wiþ freres: for in þe fader hous freres bep priuy by cause of heryng of schriftes, & children bep y-schryue to freres, & freres behileþ hem wiþ smale ziftes & gileful, & makeþ hem come in-to her ordre, for freres mowe nouzt so bygyle olde men. And as þe comyn fame telliþ after þat children ben bigiled in-to her ordre, þe children haueþ no fredome for to wende out, but bep holden wiþ hem azenus her owne wille forto þei be professed in þe ordre. & zett more me seiþ, þat in þe mene tyme, þe children bep nouzt suffred to speke wiþ fader noþer wiþ modir, but vnder keping and drede of freres (*Defensio* 55-56).

Even though FitzRalph's accusation is reminiscent of William of Saint Amour's suggestion in sign two of Chapter fourteen of *De periculis novissimorum temporum* that friars "seduce the hearts of simple folk" (*De periculis* 57) and make them enter their orders, it nevertheless is both more specific and more localized than William's. Unlike William who generalizes about the pseudo-apostles' universal proselyzing, FitzRalph plants his accusation in British soil, relating, for instance, that a good man visited him in order to receive help because friars at Oxford recently would not allow him to speak alone with his nine-year-old son (*Defensio* 56). FitzRalph even contends that friars' theft of children has had an undesirable impact on enrollment at

þe Vniuersitees of þe rewme of Englonde, for children

bep so y-stole from her fadres & modres, lewed men in euereche place wiþ-holdep her children & sendep hem nouzt to þe Vniuersite, for hem is leuer make hem eerþe tilyers & haue hem sende hem to þe Vniuersite & lese hem. So þat zet in my tyme in þe Vniuersite of Oxenford were þritti þousand scolers at ones, & now ben vnneþe sixe þousand (*Defensio* 58).

His 'statistical evidence' here is notoriously unreliable; nevertheless, from FitzRalph's claim develops the British antifraternial commonplace that friars steal children.

FitzRalph's claim certainly embodies an attack on the friars' academic activities, and he expands this attack by insinuating that friars monopolize the universities and purchase all the valuable books. Many men, reports FitzRalph,

tellip þat in general studies vnneþe is y-founde to sillyng a profitable book of þe faculte of art or of dyuynyte, of lawe canoun, of phisik, oper of lawe ciuil, but alle bookes bep y-bouzt of freres. So þat in euerech couent of freres is a noble libraries and a grete; and so þat euerech frere þat hap state in scole sicke as þei bep now, hap an huge librarye (*Defensio* 59).

He further asserts that no learning remains in the church: "No clergie schulde leue in holy chirche, but oonlich in freres" (*Defensio* 59).

These assertions perhaps develop from the friars' noteworthy contributions to academic learning and lead to the charge that friars claim superiority in learning over the parish clergy. As complaints about the friars' role at the universities, they echo William's criticisms of the friars' prominent role at the University of Paris, yet they notably differ from William's because they do not involve academic policy. Rather, they comment upon the friars' immense learning and huge libraries and, as such, suggest friars deprive the clergy of the opportunity to learn. They also suggest friars ravenously

purchase books and monopolize the universities, and an insatiable desire for learning and worship of books become a British antifraternel commonplace.

In his diatribe against the friars' monopoly of learning, FitzRalph reveals his concern for the uneducated clergy, and throughout *Defensio curatorum* he exhibits a sensitivity to their needs and alleged plight. Of major importance is this emphasis FitzRalph places upon the rights of the parish priests in his *Defensio curatorum*. Even though he gives some attention to mendicancy and academic standing, his main assault is upon the friars' usurpation of the privileges of parish priests: burial of the dead, preaching, and, in particular, confession. He regularly juxtaposes the parish priests' proper practice of these ministrations with the friars' abuse of them and then contrasts the benefits that parishioners receive when they patronize their parish priests with the harm parishioners suffer when they support the friars. For instance, concerning sepulture, FitzRalph reports that "comynliche it is seide þat freres counselip ... men" both to be buried at their churches and to alter their wills to benefit the friars (*Defensio* 42). This advice, continues FitzRalph, is illegal according to the decretal, "*de sepulturis in 6 c 'animarum periculis'*," that forbids all religious men

vppon peyne of entredityng of her chirche, & chirche heye, þat þei schul nouzt counseil no man to swere noþer to make avowe; noþer to plizt his trupe, noþer to behote in oþer manere wise to chese buriyng place at her chirche (*Defensio* 42).

Parishioners should suspect that the friars' churches are interdicted,

however, not only because of this decretal but also because these churches are not parish churches -- the one and only proper place to perform the sacraments. Unlike "þe place of freres [which is] forbade by Goddes lawe," the parish church is "y-chose & y-hote of God" (*Defensio* 42) and is, thus argues FitzRalph, a "more profitable place" than friaries for parishioners to be buried. Indeed, burial at the parish church is an act of obedience of God's command (*Defensio* 43).

FitzRalph does not limit his attack on the friars' possession of the privilege of sepulture to their methods of procuring 'bodies.' He also attacks their discriminating taste in these bodies. It is, alleges FitzRalph,

an open token þat þei rauyschþ no pore dede mennes
bodyes for to burie ... but þei smelleþ her mete & witeþ
where hit is & feccheþ hit fyve hundrid myle ouer þe see
as vulturs doþ (*Defensio* 72).

To FitzRalph, friars do not perform "medeful dedes of mercy" (*Defensio* 72). Rather, they hover only around the dying who may bequeath them money; like vultures anticipating a death and its subsequent feed of carrion, friars, alleges FitzRalph, eagerly await the death of the wealthy in order to gain worldly profit.

When they do receive a bequest, these friars, alleges FitzRalph, "payeþ neuere tepinge of siche biquystes & ziftes" to the parish churches (*Defensio* 44). To FitzRalph, this failure to share a portion of the endowment demonstrates not only the friars' disdain for *Super cathedram* but also their accursed nature. Similarly, the friars' abuse of the office of preaching reveals both their disobedience of laws and their cursed nature. According to FitzRalph,

friars disobey divine, canon, and Franciscan rules when they preach. They are "nouzt sende of Crist [&] þei steleþ þe words of curatours & of her souereynes" (*Defensio* 75) and, thus, disobey divine law as it is established in Romans 10:15. Even though friars "may nouzt wiþ-out leue of þe bischop preche in his bischopriche" (*Defensio* 66), they nevertheless ignore this canon law. And, despite Saint Francis' rule ordering "pat no frere schuld be hardy in eny maner wise to preche to þe peple, but he be examyned & appreued of þe mynistr general, & haue leue of hym, & graunt to vse þe office of prechyng" (*Defensio* 67), friars disobey this Franciscan rule.

Such blatant cases of disobedience certainly reinforce FitzRalph's claim that friars are "accursed," a moral state that, according to Clement's *per cupientes de penis*, denotes any person's suffering from the sin of "unbuxomness." Yet FitzRalph chooses to use as his specific example of the friars' accursed nature their preaching against the paying of gifts and fees to curates. All men of religion, points out FitzRalph, are accursed

þat spekip in sermons þer elles-where azenus paiyng of tepinges, þat is dewe to holy chirche. & so doþ, as one seiþ, comynliche, confessours of freres, & telleþ openlich, þat zeuers of almes in tepinge, of wynnyng of chaffare, beþ nouzt y-holde to paye tepingis of brede, of wyn, & of oþer smal þingis (*Defensio* 45).

His example here is suitable because it allows him to draw upon canon law, a tactic especially appropriate at a papal court. Nevertheless, this example is also apt because it serves to focus upon friars as avaricious counsellors who encourage parishioners to ignore their obligations to their own curates. This focussing matches, indeed

reinforces, FitzRalph's emphasis throughout *Defensio curatorum* on the friars' avarice and mistreatment of the curates.

This emphasis is particularly noticeable in FitzRalph's discussion of confession, a discussion that dominates most of *Defensio curatorum*. Friars, suspects FitzRalph, only desire to hear confession because they wish to be relieved of their beggary. He advises parishioners to "suppose, & wene, þat [freres] for to haue socour & help of her liflode ... bycause of getyng somme releue of her beggerie, þei beþ so busy to here schriftes" (*Defensio* 47). Parishioners should also be aware that confessing to friars endangers their souls. Every parishioner, argues FitzRalph,

þat is y-schryue to freres & leueþ ordenaries by þe power þat þei haueþ, after sich a schrifte, lyueþ in dedliche synne & of no dedliche synne is assoyled (*Defensio* 48).

To support this argument, he mainly draws upon both *Omnis utriusque sexus*, the canon law ordering all parishioners to confess once a year to their own parish priest, and Benedict XI's edict commanding friars who confess parishioners to encourage these parishioners "to schryue hem efte of þe same synnes to her prest & her ordinarie" (*Defensio* 50), finally concluding that

euerech parischon þat leueþ al þe zere his ordynarie, þat is his parisch curatour, & schryueþ hym to a frere, trespaseþ azenes þe heeste of holy chirche & þanne it folewiþ þat þei comeþ from þe frere wiþ dedlich synne, & God forzeueþ nouzt oon dedlich synne but he forzeue alle dedlich synnes. Thanne folewiþ a more meschef þat he þat is so y-schryue to a frere, comeþ from þe frere wiþ alle þe dedlich synnes þat he had wiþ hym whanne he wente to þe frere (*Defensio* 51).

Even though FitzRalph's conclusion rests mainly on the premise that

a sinful confessant does not receive absolution from a friar because he must confess yearly to his curate and, without doing so, thereby compounds his sins, it is nevertheless rather specious, while his logic is rather circuitous.

Given FitzRalph's belief that fraternal confessors incite rather than discourage sinning, given his professional aversion to fraternal confessors, it is not surprising that, as he undercuts fraternal confessors, he presents, indeed promotes, curates as ideal confessors. These curates, says FitzRalph, are

more worpi to be chose for schrifte þan eny frere
Also by þe comyn cours, þe parischon douteþ nouzt
noþer schal doute of his ordinarie, weþer his power to
assoile his sugetis be y-bounde oþer no; but of freres he
may have verreliche suspecioun, and trowe þat her
power is y-bounde for diuerse cursyngis (*Defensio* 43-44).

Chosen by God and the Church, "þe ordinarie is more y-bounde to his parischons þan is a frere" (*Defensio* 44) because he is not a "straunge persooone." Familiarity with confessors is particularly important in times of sickness, argues FitzRalph, because the curate knows the parishioner's early life and can "enioyne hym þe more conuenable penaunce" than can a "straunge" friar (*Defensio* 52-53). Similarly, familiarity with his confessor results in a sinner's shame, a necessary condition for contrition, because "a man is more schamfast to schewe his synnes to hym þat he seep al day þan to hym þat he seep but ones a zere" (*Defensio* 53). Familiarity, it seems, breeds feelings of indebtedness.

As FitzRalph argues the benefits parishioners receive when they confess to curates rather than to friars, he frequently sets forth

as supporting evidence the intrinsic value of performing this office in the parish church instead of fraternal oratories. To FitzRalph, the edifice at which parishioners should confess is the parish church as "þe parische chirche is for schrifte of þe parischons þat is schryuen, more siker, more profitable, & vodeþ mo damages" (*Defensio* 41). Benefits stemming from confessing at the curate's church include obedience to God's will; in fact

þe parischon, þat is lawfullich y-schryue in his parische chirche, hap mede of double obedience. For he hap mede, in þat he is obedient to Goddes heest, & schryueþ him. Also he hap, in þat he is obedient to Goddes heest, & schryueþ in þe place þat God hap y-chose þerto. He, þat þe freres schryueþ, leesip his secunde mede (*Defensio* 43).

Implicit in FitzRalph's contention is an objection to the friars' untraditional organization, their position outside the Church hierarchy. Such an objection is, of course, commonly raised among both French and British antifraternalists.

Yet FitzRalph's objection to fraternal oratories as places for confession extends beyond their 'unfixedness' to their presence as instances of avarice and excessive wealth -- wealth friars usurped. According to FitzRalph, the parishioner should come to his parish church and offer there, as he explains,

zowre offryngis, and sacrificis; zoure tepingis & þe firste fruyt of zoure hondes; zoure avowes and ziftes; þe first birþe of ruperen & of foules (*Defensio* 41).

These tithings and gifts are "ordeyned to [curates] for her liflode" (*Defensio* 54), yet, by having procured the lucrative ministrations, the friars appropriate such offerings "to her owne use" (*Defensio* 54). Similarly, they appropriate the curates' income by refusing to

uphold *Super cathedram (Dudum)*. Curates, reports FitzRalph, relate

þat freres haueþ touchyng þe þre quarters of alle profites, þat fallip to hem oper wise of biquyst oper of zifte, distinctliche, oper indistinctliche, & al maner mysyse þat þei vseþ of þat, is conteyned in þe chaptire *dudum*; and touchyng þe ferþe part þat is I-graunted to curatours & y-taxed þere, þe whiche ferþe part of many biquystes, offryngis, & ziftes, freres payeþ nouzt to curatours, but freres appropreþ hit to hem-silf wiþ many cautels and wyles (*Defensio* 55).

This fraternal misappropriation of funds, comments FitzRalph, has led to "ple & strif" between curates and friars; it is, in fact, an "vnkynde damage" to curates.

Yet this misappropriation -- and the possession of lucrative pastoral ministrations -- does not simply create strife and diminish the parish priests' income. It enables friars to build what FitzRalph calls "fayre mynstres & rial palyces pouz hit were for kings" (*Defensio* 47-48) while poor parish priests cannot afford to undertake "amendment of parische churches" (*Defensio* 48). It enables friars to become "so made riche & y-worschiped þat children assenteþ liztlich for to do her wille" (*Defensio* 65). It enables them to "takeþ maisterfullich grete summes of money" to placate their avarice (*Defensio* 61). And it enables them to possess "an huge librarye," resulting in "grete damage in þe clergie" and uneducated prelates (*Defensio* 59). In effect, the pastoral privileges and their misuse allow friars to amass great treasures and construct elaborate buildings while unskilled, impoverished parish priests struggle to live.

Throughout the fabric of his influential sermon FitzRalph

weaves a picture of the economic and religious differences between friars and curates: he pits the wealth and greed of friars against the poverty and piety of curates, the "fayre" buildings of friars against the parish churches that so desperately require repair, and the spiritual corruption of friars against the Christian purity of curates. He also repeatedly contends that the friars procured the privileges of sepulture, preaching, and particularly confession in order to amass worldly riches, and his repetition of this sentiment, his emphasis on this issue, indicate that the thrust of his argument is not mendicancy but pastoral privileges, particularly confession. Similarly, the solution he proposes to resolve the problems stemming from the friars' possession of pastoral privileges demonstrates his central concern: friars, proposes FitzRalph, must make restitution to the curates. In fact, they should restore "priuyleges & profites þat comeþ þerof" (*Defensio* 76).

It is against FitzRalph's influential *Defensio curatorum* and William of Saint Amour's *De periculis novissimorum temporum* that vernacular antifraternality literature must be viewed. Because the *De periculis* became a standard reference for later antifraternality writings, because the *Defensio* became a central document during the outbreak of the attacks against the friars in Britain, both treatises served as sources for the literary tradition of antifraternality. They also strongly influenced this tradition.

Part Three:
Literary Antifraternalism

Chapter Three: Rutebeuf, de Meun, and French Antifraternalism

Literary treatments of antifraternal sentiments became popular shortly after the occurrence of the historical and theological attacks against the friars. In Paris, between 1254 and 1275, Rutebeuf composed several antifraternal poems as well as defending William of Saint Amour in several other *dits*. Also in France de Lorris' and de Meun's *The Romance of the Rose* appeared approximately twenty years after William of Saint Amour launched his intensive campaign against the friars at the University of Paris. These French works denounce the friar by incorporating traditional antifraternal materials into their text. Like many medieval authors for whom creativity was the ability to rework and renew pre-existing structures and ideas, writers of vernacular antifraternal texts drew upon already existing antifraternal materials; they reworked material from, for instance, William of Saint Amour's sermons -- the main source for antifraternal complaints.

The content of Rutebeuf's antifraternal poems clearly reflects his reworking of antifraternal elements from William of Saint Amour's sermons and the secular masters' complaints, and such reworking perhaps signifies the first imprinting of the vernacular antifraternal tradition. Most of Rutebeuf's antifraternal poems are highly polemical and propagandistic. He makes clear his persona's

loyalty to William of Saint Amour in several of the poems he composed in which the speaker either inveighs against the mendicant orders or portrays the Parisien dispute between the friars and the secular masters.¹ In "*Le Dit De Guillaume de Saint-Amour*," for instance, the speaker manifests his indignation at the news that William of Saint Amour was banished from Paris. After calling upon "*prelat et prince et roi*"² (prelate and prince and king) to hear of the injustice the exiled William of Saint Amour suffered, the speaker presents William as a *preudome*, as the true champion of the University of Paris during difficult times. He also demonstrates the illegality of William's condemnation, adducing the improper procedures employed by the Pope and king (ll. 16-36). To correct the

¹ Despite the claims of critics such as Edward B. Ham and Brian J. Levy who identify Rutebeuf with the speaker of his antifraternal works, Rutebeuf's presentation of antifraternal sentiments does not necessarily serve as an indicator of his own political convictions. In *Poetic Patterns in Rutebeuf* Nancy Regalado argues that "although no documents remain proving payment to Rutebeuf by anyone, the whole group of poems about the University quarrel were surely written to please or were commissioned by the faction of secular masters; it seems Rutebeuf obtained political ammunition for his polemical writings from the masters themselves. Guillaume de Saint-Amour himself, leader of the masters of Theology, could not have been Rutebeuf's sole patron, although he is the central figure in the polemic, since the poet continued to write works favouring the University cause long after Guillaume had been exiled from Paris" (pp. 9-10). Regalado's argument is speculative, yet it does allow for Rutebeuf's creation of a persona, a technique frequently employed by many medieval writers including Chaucer, Boccaccio, and Dante.

² Rutebeuf, "*Le Dit De Guillaume de Saint-Amour*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 243, ll. 1-2. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

injustice of William's being exiled without a hearing, the speaker proposes a solution: the king should accept William's offer to explain himself and his actions before "*roi et conte / Et prince et prelat tout ensamble*" (king and court / And prince and prelate all assembled together) (ll. 96-97).

This brief summary of "*Le Dit De Guillaume de Saint-Amour*" suggests Rutebeuf's persona puts forth, step by step, the political machinations -- and manipulations -- that William encountered. The persona certainly does proceed so. As Brian J. Levy concisely explains, this *dit*

takes the form of a carefully-constructed *plaidoirie* divided into three logical parts: the accusation of injustice (vv. 1-46); the presentation of the 'facts of the case' (vv. 47-92); and the proposition of justice, with appropriate cautionary conclusion (vv. 93-120).³

Such a form is an effective tool of rhetoric in polemical and propagandistic writing as it presents a series of 'logical' arguments that cumulatively convince the audience of the unfairness of William's banishment. Its presence, too, serves to identify this *dit*, a generic label traditionally assigned to works "expounding theological truths through allegorical interpretations,"⁴ as an instrument of polemics, used particularly both to persuade its audience of the injustice William suffered and to support the secular masters' cause.

Rutebeuf's "*Complainte de Guillaume*" again addresses the

³ Brian J. Levy, "Rutebeuf's Change of Address," *French Studies Bulletin* 11 (Summer 1984) 2.

⁴ Nancy Regalado, *Poetic Patterns in Rutebeuf: A Study in Noncourtly Poetic Modes of the Thirteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 222.

issue of the injustices William suffered. In this traditional complaint of 1259, the speaker, Saint Church, not only grieves over the tyranny exercised by the Dominicans but also reproaches the University of Paris for its inertia, ingratitude, and forgetfulness: it has failed to protest against the exile of William of Saint Amour. Because protests are unheard, argues the speaker,

*Morte est Pitiez
Et Charitez et Amistiez;
Fors du regne les ont getiez Ypocrisie
Et Vaine Gloire et Tricherie
Et Faus Samblant et dame Envie
Qui tout enflame.⁵*
(Dead is pity
And Charity and Friendship
Now there are those reigning who are Hypocrisy
And Vain Glory and Treachery
And False Seeming and Dame Envy
Who inflames all.)

Nevertheless, despite the triumph of Hypocrisy and William's suffering an unjust exile, Saint Church concludes that he perhaps will have revenge and, in all circumstances, will have his celestial reward of sainthood more surely than those '*faux candidats*,' those supporters of the reign of Hypocrisy -- the friars.

Rutebeuf's criticism here of the feeble resistance of the secular clergy, as well as his decrying of the injustice of the banishment of William of Saint Amour -- themes prevalent in several of his *dits* including "*Du Pharisien*," "*Des Règles*," and "*La Bataille des Vices Contre les Vertus*" -- is a localized charge bound to specific

⁵ Rutebeuf, "*Complainte de Guillaume*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 261, ll. 73-79. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

French events, applying only to particular, historical ones that took place between 1256 and 1259. Similarly, Rutebeuf's poetic interpretation of the academic issue of Dominican chairs at the University of Paris in "*La Discorde de l'Université et des Jacobins*" is situated at a specific time and place. As Faral and Bastin succinctly explain, this poem

est l'écho direct du manifeste publié le 4 février 1254 par les maîtres de l'Université de Paris. Il évoque les mêmes événements: bataille pour une école (v. 15), recours des Jacobins aux moyens d'autorité (v. 16), asservissement de l'Université frappée par le pape (v. 37-38), appels en cour de Rome (v. 59-60).⁶

(is a direct echo of the manifesto published 4 February 1254 involving the masters of the University of Paris. It relates the same events: the struggle for a school, the recourse of the Jacobins to the means of authority, the subjugation of the stricken university by the Pope, the following appeals to the court of Rome).

Despite the reappearance of complaints about the friars' possession of academic chairs, the secular clergy's feeble support of William, and his "unfair" exile in contemporaneous French literature such as de Meun's continuation of *The Romance of the Rose*, these complaints vanish when the historical tension dissipates and are usually unvoiced in, unassimilated into, British antifraternal writings.

Of greater significance than Rutebeuf's incorporation of localized, antifraternal charges is his use of antifraternal ideas expressed by William of Saint Amour as it serves to reveal the propagation of what quickly became antifraternal conventions. As Faral and Bastin

⁶ Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 238.

convincingly demonstrate in their extensive and exhaustive lists of Rutebeuf's echoing of William of Saint Amour's antifraternal treatises, Rutebeuf frequently rewords the language and images used in William's polemical writing.⁷ In "*Des Jacobins*," for instance, the speaker decries both the disappearance of Charity, Largesse, and Humility and the domination of "*Orgueil et Couvoitise, Avarisce et Envie*"⁸ (Pride and Covetise, Avarice and Envy) -- qualities William conferred upon the friars in signs three, four, eleven, twenty, twenty-one, and thirty-four of chapter fourteen of *De periculis*. According to the speaker, the Dominicans have initiated this "up-so-down" state of religious affairs by acquiring riches, in spite of their original humility. Among the tangible riches they have acquired are "*granz palais*" (large palaces) that they have made from "*basses mesons*" (simple houses)(l. 27). This particularized allegation reappears in *The Romance of the Rose*, and its re-appearance suggests that the Dominican construction of schools and buildings that could hold large audiences and lodge many friars, incited opposition. It also reappears in British antifraternal tracts one hundred years later, but, whereas "*granz palais*" signify the friars' hypocrisy to Rutebeuf and de Meun, palatial lodgings are signs of both idolatry and the unjust usurpation of lucrative pastoral privileges, particularly confession, to British antifraternalists.

⁷ See footnotes to Faral and Bastin's edition, I, 227- 407.

⁸ Rutebeuf, "*Des Jacobins*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 314, l.5. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

This theme of fraternal hypocrisy -- prevalent in William of Saint Amour's *Du Pharisien et Publicano* and *De periculis novissimorum temporum* -- actually surfaces again in, indeed is central to, several of Rutebeuf's University poems. In "*La Discorde de l'Université et des Jacobins*," for example, the speaker contends that the Dominicans speak sweet words of "*foi, de pais et de concorde*"⁹ (faith, of peace and of concord) while they actually incite quarreling and discord. As the Dominicans fight for a school where they can teach, they, the speaker purports, simulate "*Humilité*," thereby successfully disguising their "*Orgeux*."

Such hypocrisy is, of course, morally reprehensible, yet equally reprehensible is the Dominicans' treatment of their secular benefactors. According to the speaker of "*La Discorde de l'Université et Des Jacobins*," the secular masters graciously welcomed the friars, bearing gifts of "*Livres, deniers, pains et demis*" (l. 29) (pounds, small change, bread and wine). The Dominicans, however, repay this generosity by ingratitude to their benefactors and by creating strife. The issue of the friars' alleged rudeness toward their secular benefactors is addressed again in "*Des Règles*" in which the speaker likens friars to "*userier mal*"¹⁰ (bad usurer). These usurious friars

⁹ Rutebeuf, "*La Discorde de l'Université et des Jacobins*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 239, l. 5. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

¹⁰ Rutebeuf, "*Des Règles*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 270, l. 25. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

do not lend money but sell paradise, promising it to those who pay.

To supplement this income, they usurp "*testament*" and "*requeut*" (ll. 119, 124)(testament and will), bequests which curates, according to Rutebeuf, should receive. In fact, because of this usurpation,

*li curez n'en puet avoir,
S'a paine non, du pain por vivre
Ne achater un petit livre. (ll. 126-28)*
(the curate can't have for his effort
Neither bread for to live
Nor to buy a small book).

Though dispossession of the curates is an idea only occasionally expressed in French antifraternal tracts, it becomes a particularly popular antifraternal sentiment in British writings; in fact, this idea will receive an emphasis and treatment quite unlike that found in French antifraternal writings.

Not content with simply usurping the curates' income from sepulture, hypocritical friars demand from these "povre" curates a good table ("*Des Règles*" ll. 139-48). This demand clearly echoes William's sign twenty-six of chapter fourteen of *De periculis* in which he accuses friars of being discontented with the food offered to them. Related to this demand is the friars' acquisition of riches. Perhaps drawing upon William of Saint Amour's sign twenty-eight asserting that Pseudo-Apostles seek both opulent lodgings and good fare and receive money from rich, evil men, the speaker remarks that friars favour

un riche homme ...
.....
Ou userier ou clerc trop riche
(Qu'il aiment miex grant pain que miche),
("Des Règles" ll. 107-10)
(a rich man ... / ... / or usurer or very
rich clerk / (They prefer big bread rather than

the usual loaf)

Knowing only their own pleasure, the friars are, according to the speaker, actually concerned only with satiating their greed and gluttony when they pretend to befriend the Church -- a pretence that better allows them to suppress it.

In "*Le Dit de Sainte Église*" the speaker specifies that her church is menaced. Pretending love for the Church, friars fallaciously promise paradise, unimpeded by members of the Church. Perhaps alluding to William of Saint Amour's accusation in sign two of chapter fourteen of *De periculis* that friars' powerful speech beguiles the simple, Saint Church laments the friars' leading astray "*povre gent*."¹¹ These "*povre gent*," however, are not responsible for their own actions; rather, inactive prelates are guilty of moral irresponsibility because they, as well as decretalists, negligently do not defend the "*verité*" but allow friars to circulate "*le cinqueime esvengelitre*" (*St. Eglise* l. 40)-- a reference, as Faral and Bastin point out, not to the *Eternal Evangel* but to "*des nouveautés doctrinales introduites par les Frères quant au pouvoir qu'ils s'arrogeaient de confesser, de vivre de l'autel*"¹² (new doctrines introduced by the Friars that are related to the powers they had taken to confess, to live from the altar.) This charge, like that in

¹¹ Rutebeuf, "*Le Dit de Sainte Église*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 283, l. 92. All further references to this poem will be identified by "*St. Église*" and line number.

¹² Faral and Bastin, I, 280.

"*Complainte de Guillaume*" of the University of Paris' inertia, condemns the secular community's reaction, or lack of reaction, to the increasing power of the friars, and its presence significantly suggests "*Le Dit de Sainte Église*" is not only antifraternal but also antisecular. Faral and Bastin explain the historical circumstances underlying this reprimanding of the Parisian masters:

*Dès 1255, les maîtres parisiens affirmaient fortement que les fidèles égarés par les Frères et se confiant à eux pour la direction de leurs âmes devaient être avertis 'per exhortationem praelatorum et doctorum Ecclesiae eos [les Frères] non habere potestatem regendi animas.'*¹³
 (As early as 1255, the Parisian masters strongly affirmed that the faithful led astray by the friars and trusting in them for the direction of their souls should be warned "by exhortation of the prelates and the doctors of the Church that the Friars do not have the power to regulate souls").

In chapters nine, ten, and eleven of *De periculis* William insists that moral duties are especially appropriate for prelates -- duties the secular masters at the University of Paris, according to "*Le Dit de Sainte Église*," fail to defend. Rutebeuf's poem perhaps re-affirms William's political position as well as representing a literary continuation of an issue -- pastoral privileges -- that receives extensive attention in both France and Britain during the medieval period. Every successive pope attempted to settle it by edicts.

Inactive prelates are a target again in "*Des Règles*" when the speaker draws attention to the prelates' lack of interest in moral duties and truth (ll. 67-76). Because prelates are passive and

¹³ Faral and Bastin, I, 277.

inactive, they allow the friars' influence to increase in Paris, a city largely populated at the time by merchants, tradesmen, church officials, students, professors, and royal administrators. Criticism of the friars' overwhelming presence in Paris is made explicit in "*Les Ordres de Paris*," a poem denouncing not only Dominicans but also Crossed Friars, Beguins, Cordeliers, Sachets (Friars of the Penitence of Jesus Christ), Three Hundred *Aveugles*, Trinitarians, Daughters of God and Daughters of the King, *Val-des-Ecoliers*, Carthusians, and Guilliellmites. According to the speaker who promises to speak only "*la vérité*," Mendicant friars have occupied Paris; indeed, their developing powers parallel a military invasion of the University city.¹⁴ Yet the friars not only dominate Paris but also, along with the other religious sects mentioned in "*Les Ordres*," usher in the beginning of the Last Days. Drawing upon Matthew 24:12 as did William of Saint Amour in *De periculis*, the speaker purports "*refroidier voi charité*" ("*Les Ordres*" l. 9)(our charity grows cold). Such a statement serves to label the friars as harbingers of the Last Days, and it thus bestows upon them the theological role of *antichristi* in a literary context -- a role that both French and British vernacular antifraternalists continue to assign for many years, and a biblical type Szittyá considers central to medieval antifraternal tracts.

In Rutebeuf's "*Du Pharisien*," the friars are identified as

¹⁴ Rutebeuf, "*Les Ordres de Paris*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. I (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 323, ll. 20-24. All further references to this poem will be identified by "*Les Ordres*" and line number.

Pharisees, another biblical type William of Saint Amour initially used in *De Pharisaeo et Publicano*, and one that many subsequent antifraternalists continued to utilize. Like the biblical Pharisees, the friars are allegedly heretical, tyrannical, and duplicitous; the audience should, warns the speaker, "*Prenez i garde! / Ypocrisie la renarde*" (Be careful! / [of] the hypocrisy of Renard).¹⁵ This enumeration of duplicitous friars suggests that they are rapidly multiplying, and such rapid multiplication allows them to dominate. This domination, in turn, both unsettles and weakens "*l'Evangile Jesucrist*" primarily because the "*ypocrites*" neither oppose "*l'avenement / A Antecrist*" (the advent of Antichrist) ("*Du Pharisien*" 102-03) nor believe in the writings of Jesus. Rapid multiplication, however, also indicates that friars are actually *antichristi*. As Penn Szittyá points out, William of Saint Amour

places a great deal of emphasis on the quality of multiplicity as a characteristic of those who will come at the end of time The eschatological multiplicity of the followers of Antichrist is symbolic in the same way as the theological multiplicity of those in the church who do not conform to the divine principles of 'measure, number, and weight.' Both kinds of multiplicity are in the root sense opposite principles to unity, which is the principle of the godhead itself, the creative principle that informs all the world.¹⁶

Following in the steps of William of Saint Amour who sug-

¹⁵ Rutebeuf, "*Du Pharisien*" in *Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf*, eds. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin, Vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1959), 253-54, ll. 79-80. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

¹⁶ Penn Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 227.

gested in both *Responsiones* and *Collectiones*¹⁷ that the friars, specifically the Dominicans, had suspect relations with women, particularly the Beguines, Rutebeuf associates friars with licentious behaviour in some of his poems. In "*Des Règles*," for instance, the speaker suggests the Dominicans have suspect relations with the Beguines (ll. 155-74) while in "*Les Ordres de Paris*" the speaker suggestively places the Jacobins next to the Beguines when he describes the topography of Paris (Str. IV-V). In Rutebeuf's *Frère Denise*, a work traditionally classified as a fabliau,¹⁸ the tale-teller, however, does not merely suggest friars are licentious but actually dramatizes fraternal lechery: Denise, a young girl of good station and a devotee of the Virgin, naively and foolishly accepts Friar Simon's suggestion that, if she would consider entering the Franciscan order, she then would more than likely achieve sainthood. Not recognizing his offer of false paradise but believing he has genuinely arranged for her to be admitted into his order and saved, Denise dons a habit, cuts her hair so that she displays a tonsure, joins him, and submits to his sexual whims. Only when Friar Simon and Friar Denise come to a knight's home while they are walking one day does she discover his deceit. The knight, after revealing the deception of Friar Simon, imposes upon him a penalty of one hundred sous that are to be used as a dowry for Denise who eventually marries a different knight and becomes *madame* Denise.

¹⁷ Faral and Bastin, I, 319.

¹⁸ Roy Percy, "The Source of Rutebeuf's *Frère Denise*," 83 *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 2 (1982) 118.

This tale, as this brief summary shows, overtly condemns fraternal hypocrisy and friars' offering of false paradise, commonplaces of antifraternal literature. It also comments upon fraternal funds: Friar Simon has no difficulty obtaining the one hundred sous the knight taxes him. Yet *Frère Denise* also ridicules the fraternal vow of abstinence. It is the Franciscans' very pretension of extreme austerity, explains Regalado,

which brings the Franciscans under fire in the sexually-oriented fabliau. As Bédier says, the professionally virtuous are more comic, when they sin, than the ordinary mortal. When Franciscans appear in fabliau stories, therefore, they are generally cast, as in Rutebeuf's *Frère Denise*, as hypocritical lechers, whose enforced asceticism is unnatural, therefore dangerous, since it only makes their inner flames the hotter.¹⁹

Nevertheless, antifraternalists generally accuse not only the Franciscans but also members of other fraternal orders of enjoying the sin of lechery; indeed, they frequently portray friars as literal penetrators -- a literal reading of William of Saint Amour's sign one.

Unlike the portrayal of friars in polemical and satirical works which functions to propel the fraternal orders to self-correction or to urge the audience to protest their shortcomings, Rutebeuf's portrayal of friars in *Frère Denise*, as well as other authors' portraits in later fabliaux, primarily serves to evoke laughter. Simon and Denise are humorous representations of unordered and unrestrained behaviour: from the time of the friar's initial seduction of Denise until the knight's exposure of Friar Simon's deceit, both of them share an

¹⁹ Regalado, p. 180

active, indeed excessive, sexual life according to medieval notions of acceptable sexual activity (v. 120-71). The intent of this antifraternal fabliau -- one which is achieved by the portrayal of sexual indulgence -- then differs noticeably from that of Rutebeuf's polemical and propagandistic poems. In these latter works he creates a speaker who criticizes the friars for actions and ideologies which should, from the secular masters' point of view, inflame his audience. His use of antifraternal commonplaces -- hypocrisy, academic pretensions, avarice, covetousness, lack of charity, ingratitude to benefactors, the offering of cheap paradise, suspect relations with women, unmeasured multiplication, pride, and the obtaining of riches -- reveals his exploitation of a volatile and topical, hence popular, subject, yet it also significantly points to the nature of his works. Rutebeuf's university poems are products of a specific situation and time. They spring from particular political factions; they evoke specific political events; they are bound to historical moments. But, as they recapture the conflict between the secular masters and the friars, they entrench pre-existing antifraternal ideas and sentiments, thereby reinforcing, renewing, and refreshing William of Saint Amour's antifraternal signs.

Jean de Meun's social satire against the friars similarly reinforces, renews, and refreshes William of Saint Amour's antifraternal ideas. In order to denounce the friars in *The Romance of the Rose*, begun, yet left uncompleted around 1235 by Guillaume de Lorris and finished by Jean de Meun around 1275, Jean introduces the figure of False Seeming (Fals-Semblant) whose appropriate and transparent name bestows upon him the qualities of hypocrisy and

falseness -- qualities that characterize his nature and define his actions, as well as ones William of Saint Amour generally assigned to friars in *De periculis novissimorum temporum* and *De pharisaeo et publicano*. False Seeming's parentage underscores his possession of these qualities. At the God of Love's parliament, False Seeming arrives, appearing, as the Lover reports, "With his face of pretence."²⁰ He continues:

Fraud engendered False Seeming, who goes around stealing men's hearts. His mother's name is Hypocrisy, the dishonored thief who suckled and nursed the filthy hypocrite with a rotten heart who has betrayed many a region with his religious habit (*RR* 10467-74).

Although False Seeming possesses "various mansions" (*RR* 10952) and can be found in "the world or in the cloister" (*RR* 11008), he nevertheless usually lodges, as he himself admits, "where I think that I am better hidden. The safest hiding place is under the most humble garment" (*RR* 11013-15).

As a figure whose humble garb cloaks falsehood and hypocrisy, False Seeming represents all loveless hypocrites, regardless of the estate they occupy or the robes they wear: "clerical or lay, man or woman, lord, sergeant, servant, or lady" (*RR* 11080-81). Jean de Meun establishes a dialogue between False Seeming and the God of Love, and at the beginning of their conversation, False Seeming exposes the hypocrisy of all secular and religious types, although he certainly focusses upon the 'changeable tunes' of religious

²⁰ Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *The Romance of the Rose*, trans. Charles Dahlberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), l. 10465. All further references to this work will be identified by *RR* and line number.

hypocrites. In this discourse on religious hypocrites False Seeming makes a few pointed references to friars. He states, for instance,

I dwell with the proud, the crafty, the guileful, who covet worldly honors ... who go around tracking down large handouts and cultivating the acquaintance of powerful men.... They pretend to be poor, and they live on good, delicious morsels of food and drink costly wines (11037-47).

This part of False Seeming's confession recalls several of William's signs. False Seeming's dwelling with those who desire worldly honours is similar to William's assertion in sign eleven that pseudo-apostles preach "for worldly honours" (*De periculis* 61). The search for substantial handouts and the cultivation of the acquaintance of influential men are reminiscent of William's twenty-eighth sign identifying pseudo-apostles as those who "seek lodging where there is better fare, and receive money from rich, evil men" (*De periculis* 67). The diet recalls William's twenty-sixth sign stating pseudo-apostles "ask for more elegant dishes" (*De periculis* 66). In effect, False Seeming's acquaintances are similar to William's pseudo-apostles; indeed, they represent William's charges.

False Seeming's second pointed reference to friars in his general discourse on religious hypocrites appears after he demonstrates that a wolf in sheep's clothing easily deceives sheep. He remarks, "if there are even a few such wolves among your new apostles, O Church, you are in a bad situation" (*RR* 11133-35). This allusion to the new apostles evokes the image of friars because they claimed they were reviving the true apostolic tradition, a claim both William of Saint Amour and Jean de Meun quite evidently reject. But the allusion to wolves also recalls William's twentieth sign stating

"true Apostles do not receive the temporal goods of those to whom they preach, by which they are distinguished from wolves, that is, the Pseudo" (*De periculis* 64), thereby suggesting that de Meun both incorporates antifraternal sentiments specifically expressed by William of Saint Amour and generally comments upon the friars' claim to be new apostles.

Even though at the beginning of the dialogue between the God of Love and False Seeming Jean uses this latter figure as the spokesman of a satire directed against all hypocrites, he nevertheless quickly narrows his focus and uses him as the spokesman of a satire primarily directed against the fraternal orders. After Love commands False Seeming, "tell us more especially in what ways you serve disloyally" (*RR* 11226-27), False Seeming provides a lengthy response to this command, confessing and boasting of many deceitful actions and thoughts. This confession includes an extensive number of William's accusations against the friars. In fact, Jean largely relies upon William's antifraternal ideas and images, transforming his homiletic lists of complaints into a confession, and he retells the historical controversy at the University of Paris, using False Seeming as a spokesman of a strident satire that exposes fraternal flaws.

False Seeming's lengthy confession reads like an encyclopedic literary adaptation of William's theological treatise.²¹ But as Jean assimilates William's charges into False Seeming's confession, he

²¹ de Meun's indebtedness to William of Saint Amour has been pointed out by many critics. See, for instance, John Fleming, *The Roman de la Rose: A Study in Allegory and Iconography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 164-65.

does not merely catalogue their actions and thoughts but dramatizes them. Whereas William solemnly states in his twenty-sixth sign that "true Apostles are content with the food and drink offered them, and do not ask for more elegant dishes (*De periculis* 66), False Seeming boasts, "I fill my paunch with very good morsels and with wines such as are suitable for theologians" (*RR* 11234-36). One consequence of Jean's lively description is the incorporation of several antifraternal complaints into a short passage. False Seeming, for instance, admits that, even though he preaches poverty

however much I pretend to be poor, I pay no attention to any poor person. I would a hundred thousand times prefer the acquaintance of the King of France to that of a poor man.... If they were carried to the Hotel Dieu, they wouldn't get any comfort from me But a visit to a rich usurer who is sick is a good and pleasant thing. I go to comfort him, for I expect to bring away money from him. And if wicked death stifles him, I will carry him right up to his grave (*RR* 11238-62).

This confessional passage compresses ideas from a number of William's signs: False Seeming's preference for visiting rich usurers is similar to William's twenty-eighth sign stating pseudo-apostles "seek lodging where there is better fare, and receive money from rich, evil men" (*De periculis* 67); his hypocritical comforting of a sick person is similar to William's fourteenth sign alleging pseudo-apostles "flatter men in order to acquire property and collect alms" (*De periculis* 62); False Seeming's greed is antithetical to William's statements in both sign eleven, "true Apostles preach only for the sake of God and the salvation of souls, not for temporal profit" (*De periculis* 60), and sign twenty, true apostles do not covet "any man's silver, gold, or apparel" (*De periculis* 64).

Even though Jean largely draws upon William's signs in chapter fourteen of *De periculis*, he nevertheless devotes most detail to the allegation that friars abuse mendicancy and do not follow a life of evangelical poverty. False Seeming argues that the two extremities, wealth and beggary, are harmful to the soul, pointing out, "Jesus Christ or his apostles, while they went about on earth, were ever seen seeking their bread, for they did not wish to beg" (*RR* 11298-301). He also states that the apostles maintained themselves by manual labour. Both of these assertions parallel William's ninth sign that claims,

the Pseudo by their area of authority do not live like the Evangelists or dispense all the Sacraments for they do not willfully do manual labour According to Paul's Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, Third Chapter, 'neither eat free bread or other things but in labour and servility work night and day' (*De periculis* 60).

False Seeming does acknowledge there are special circumstances that allow men to beg. He points out, for instance, "if [a man] cannot work because of a sickness that he has, or because of old age or dotage, he may turn to begging" (*RR* 11445-48) and also:

if by chance he has been accustomed by his upbringing to live very delicately, good men commonly should then have pity on him and, through friendship, allow him to beg for his bread rather than let him perish of hunger (*RR* 11449-55).

As Dahlberg has shown, Jean de Meun here "follows Guillaume's listing of the cases in which a man may beg,"²² and this list significantly does not include any case justifying fraternal begging.

²² Charles Dahlberg, trans. *The Romance of the Rose* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 396

In False Seeming's long discussion on mendicancy Jean clearly reveals his admiration for William of Saint Amour. To present False Seeming praising William is strikingly peculiar, yet, as we will shortly see, this strategy is actually a clever stroke. False Seeming says,

he was accustomed to argue and lecture and preach on this subject with the theologians at Paris. May bread and wine never help me if in his truth he did not have the support of the University and the generality of the people who heard his preaching (*RR* 11489-96).

According to False Seeming, William was "wrongfully banished" (*RR* 11504): Hypocrisy "plotted against him so much, on account of the truth that he supported, that she chased him into exile" (*RR* 11509-12). By having False Seeming confess that William spoke the truth and was wrongfully exiled, Jean, as does Rutebeuf's persona in some of the University poems, shows his secular partisanship as well as capturing and containing the contemporary vitality of the controversy between friars and seculars at the University of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century.

Jean also alludes indignantly to another contemporary incident associated with the development of the fraternal orders at Paris. False Seeming says -- and he promises Love that he is speaking "without guile" (*RR* 11818) -- "in the year of the Incarnation in 1255, there was released, through evil intent ... a book from the devil, *The Eternal Gospel*.... It is indeed worthy to be burned" (*RR* 11796-805). Here, False Seeming specifically refers to Gerard of Borgo San Donnino's interpretation of Joachim of Fiore's prophecies, *Introduction to the Everlasting Gospel*. This fanatical work, condemned by the Bishop of Paris in 1255, seemed to identify Saint Francis as an

Angel of the Apocalypse and to establish the Franciscans as the ideal clergy.²³

False Seeming describes the University of Paris' reaction to *The Eternal Gospel*. The University, he says,

which at the time was asleep, raised up its face it awoke and hardly ever slept afterward, but instead armed itself to go out ... and hand the book over to the judges But those who had issued the book rose up and withdrew it and made haste to conceal it, for they did not know how to reply ... to what the opposers wanted to say against the accursed things that are written in that book (*RR* 11825-41).

From the appearance of this book False Seeming subsequently concludes:

thus we are awaiting Antichrist, and we are headed toward him all together. Those who don't want to join him will have to lose their lives. We will incite people against them by the frauds that we hide (*RR* 11845-51).

Recalling William's title, *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, False Seeming's admission that he will incite men against those who do not want to join Antichrist closely parallels William's twenty-first sign, "those, therefore, who do not patiently suffer evils, but rather incite them, are not true Apostles, but Pseudo" (*De periculis* 65). False Seeming's waiting for Antichrist is reminiscent of William's claim that friars are precursors of Antichrist as is his confession that

I am one of Antichrist's boys, one of the thieves of whom it is written that they have the garment of saintliness and live in pretense; we seem pitiful sheep without, but within we are ravaging wolves (*RR* 11713-18).

As an *antichristus*, False Seeming fulfils the biblical role William

²³ See pp. 61-64 of chapter 2 for a discussion of the significance of this work.

assigns to friars in *De periculis*, a role Szittyá considers central to the medieval antifraternal tradition.²⁴ Yet False Seeming undertakes a variation of this role later on when the Lover reports that, following his entry into the Castle of Jealousy, Love and his host were present to aid him. Among Love's vassals (see figure 3) was

the traitor False Seeming, son of Fraud and false minister of Hypocrisy, his mother, who is bitter toward the virtues; there too was lady Constrained Abstinence, pregnant by False Seeming and ready to give birth to Antichrist (*RR* 14741-47).

As the progenitor of antichrist, False Seeming has a pivotal role in the impending Apocalypse. Not simply a forerunner of the Last Days but the father of its leader, he -- and friars, for he represents them -- is responsible for the ultimate destruction.

Jean also assigns the biblical role of Pharisees to the friars. He associates them with the scribes and Pharisees who, according to False Seeming, are "the accursed false people that the letter calls hypocrites" (*RR* 11608-09). He admits these religious people are guilty of sloth and

if they do jobs that may be good, it is because people see them. They enlarge their phylacteries and increase their fringes; since they are haughty, proud, and overbearing, they like the highest and most honorable seats at tables and the first in the synagogues ... and they want to be called master (*RR* 11627-33).

This critique of pharisaic behaviour echoes Matthew 23:5-7:

and all their works they do for to be seen of men. For they make their phylacteries broad, and enlarge their fringes. And they love the first places at feasts, and the

²⁴ See Penn Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 54-61 and pp. 212-221.

first chairs in the synagogues. And salutations in the market place, and to be called by men, Rabbi.

It also, of course, echoes William's in *De phariseo et publicano*.

The next part of False Seeming's confession recalls a number of William's signs. False Seeming admits, "we have another custom toward those that we know are against us. We want to hate them very strongly and attack them all by agreement among ourselves" (*RR* 11637-41). This behaviour is antithetical to true apostolic behaviour:

the third sign is that True Apostles, if they are rebuked, bear themselves patiently (*De periculis* 58).

the twenty-first sign is that True Apostles are patient in tribulation, and do not render evil for evil (*De periculis* 58).

the thirty-fourth sign is, that True Apostles do not hate men, nor are hostile and hateful (*De periculis* 69).

Loveless or uncharitable behaviour, according to William of Saint Amour, identifies pseudo-apostolic behaviour. It also, however, signifies False Seeming's metaphorical function within the entire *Romance of the Rose* rather than just his role as spokesman against the friars, as one who, for instance, reveals that friars are pseudo-apostles. When False Seeming first appears in the *Romance of the Rose* at the God of Love's Parliament, significantly held at neither fitting time nor fitting place, the God of Love exclaims, "What is this? ... Am I dreaming? Tell me, False Seeming, by whose leave have you come into my presence" (*RR* 10477-79)? Forced Abstinence, of course, answers that she has brought False Seeming, explaining

if it weren't for him I would be dead from hunger.
Therefore you should blame me the less. Although he
does not want to love people, still it is important for me

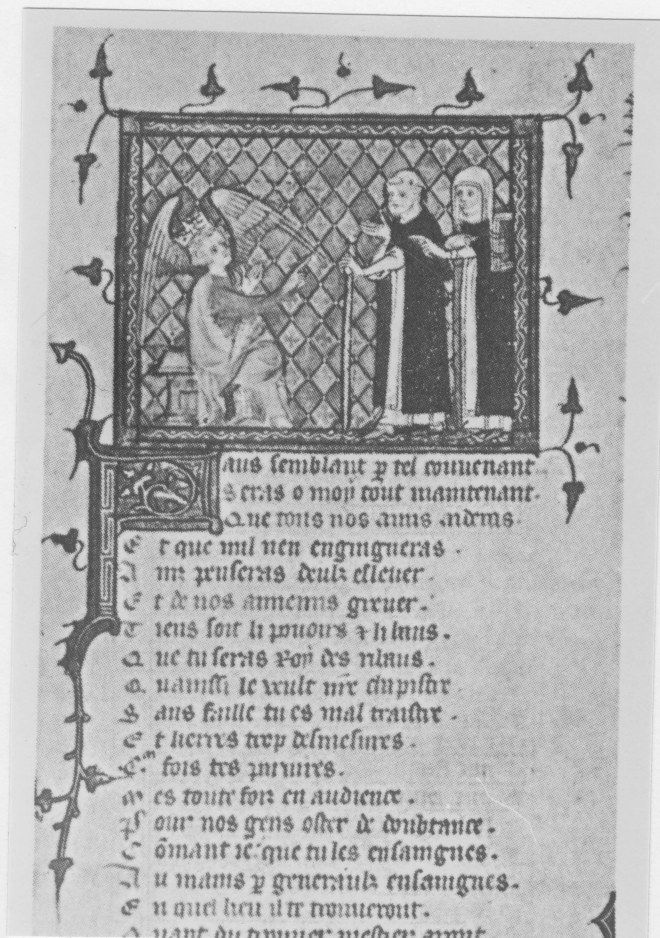


Figure 3

that he be loved and called a good man and a saint (RR 10487-90).

Her answer contains two, important ideas. First, it indicates that False Seeming has not accepted a vow of sexual abstinence but, instead, pursues active, sexual love (*eros*) -- an indication that his fathering of Antichrist confirms. Secondly, it draws attention to False Seeming's hatred of men, his thorough lovelessness, his denial of the theological virtue of divine, selfless love (*caritas*) -- the type of love that unites men with godliness. *Caritas* or charity, as Saint Augustine explains in *On Christian Doctrine*, is

the motion of the soul toward the enjoyment of God for His own sake, and the enjoyment of one's self and of one's neighbour for the sake of God; but 'cupidity' is a motion of the soul toward the enjoyment of one's self, one's neighbour, or any corporal thing for the sake of something other than God.²⁵

As a hater of man, False Seeming denies *caritas* while, as a lover of Forced Abstinence, he embraces cupidity. He, therefore, represents the lowest, least desirable type of love. To be identified only with the lowest type is certainly unfavourable, but, for a member of a religious order that professes adherence to Christ's apostolic injunctions, to be identified with *eros* or cupidity is definitely derogatory and disgraceful. Forced Abstinence and various signs in the confession identify False Seeming with *eros*, and this identification underscores the friars' fraudulence and hypocrisy. As Tuve explains,

Jean's introduction of the falsity and hypocrisy of contemporary mendicant orders shows indubitably that we are to think of how special a travesty their conceptions of

²⁵ Saint Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D.W. Robertson, Jr. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1981), p. 88.

Love and their thoroughly loveless behaviour were in the advocates of a religion whose God is defined as Love and which exalts caritas (agape) above all virtues whatsoever.²⁶

Because False Seeming does not embrace the virtue of charity, he does not possess generosity, disinterested affection and kindness, or good will. He uncharitably prefers to indulge only in activities that will gratify his own self-interests and self-love. He seeks, for instance, worldly praise, confessing "to win people's praises we tell lies to rich men and get them to give us letters bearing witness to our goodness" (*RR* 11669-71). This item of confession recalls William's fifth and tenth signs:

the fifth sign is that True Apostles do not need letters of commendation nor are they recommended from men to men by letters (*De periculis* 58). The tenth sign is that Pseudo-Apostles rejoice in commendations of themselves rather than in God's doctrine (*De periculis* 60).

He also immerses himself in worldly affairs, describing to the God of Love the types of businesses in which he frequently engages:

I also undertake brokerage commissions, I draw up agreements, I arrange marriages, I take on executor's duties, and I go around doing procurations. I am a messenger and I make investigations, dishonest ones, moreover (*RR* 11679-84).

Although he believes that occupying himself with worldly affairs is a "very pleasant occupation" (*RR* 11686), he warns the God of Love that he abhors reproof:

I neither love nor value the man by whom I am reproofed for anything. I want to reprove all the others, but I don't

²⁶ Rosemond Tuve, *Allegorical Imagery: Some Medieval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 250.

want to hear their reproof, for I, who correct others,
have no need of another's correction (*RR* 11696-701).

This list recalls William's twenty-fifth sign that asserts, "true Apostles do not seek favour in this world, nor a place among men" (*De periculis* 66) while False Seeming's dislike of reproof recalls William's third sign, "those Preachers ... who will not bear correction, seem to be not True Apostles, but Pseudo" (*De periculis* 58).

After False Seeming finishes conversing with the God of Love, he and Forced Abstinence attack the gate of the castle guarded by Foul Mouth. False Seeming, who is now clothed as "brother Seier" (*RR* 12085), convinces Foul Mouth to repent of his sins. In a long but important passage False Seeming says:

without anything more, you will tell this sin and repent of it. For I am from an order and thus am a priest, the highest master of confessing that may be, as long as the world lasts. The whole world is my charge; no priest-curé, sworn entirely to his church, ever had any such right. By the high lady, I have a hundred times more pity on your soul than your parish priest, no matter how much he were your special one. Moreover I have one very great advantage. There are no prelates so wise or learned as I. I have a license in divinity, and in fact, by God, I have lectured for a long time. The best people that one may know have chosen me as confessor on account of my sense and my knowledge (*RR* 12337-56).

Foul Mouth responds to this speech by confessing and then is strangled by False Seeming. This final confession of False Seeming succinctly illustrates many of the charges made against the friars by Jean de Meun: he abuses the office of confession, boasts of superiority over the parish clergy, associates with the 'best' people, accepts the title of 'master', and boasts of his learning. Furthermore, Jean effectively concludes the antifraternal section of *The Romance*

of the *Rose* by giving us a striking, final image of the harm done to parishioners who confess to friars: False Seeming strangles his confessant and then removes Foul Mouth's tongue with a razor.

Although Jean de Meun presents False Seeming as a henchman in Love's army in the scene in which he encounters Foul Mouth, he nonetheless primarily uses False Seeming as a mouthpiece through which fraternal corruption is voiced. He does not so much create a story that subtly expresses antifraternal sentiments, as plant the theological charges first definitively expressed by William of Saint Amour in the framework of a long confession so that the figure of False Seeming actually embodies the arguments supporting William of Saint Amour. Such a strategy is both effective and apt. As Tuve summarily remarks,

It is a cunning stroke, not an anomaly, that Faux Semblant is the mouthpiece for an open acknowledgment of the valid stand of Guillaume d'Amour, whose damning criticisms of the mendicant orders were supported with vigor by Jean de Meun. A less skillful allegorist would have made this rascally abstraction an enemy. But why should the declared hypocrite 'friar,' Faux Semblant, mind the accusations? Their truth is not disagreeable to *him*; his conscience gives him no trouble; rather, he is pleased with himself at having brought off these little victories.²⁷

Indeed, what Jean de Meun's antifraternal figure lacks in subtlety is compensated for by False Seeming's total falseness. Because False Seeming's falseness and hypocrisy are so unmitigated, because his falseness and hypocrisy are what are essentially true about him, both these qualities envelope him. And, because this epitome of the false,

²⁷ Tuve, p. 256.

hypocritical friar truthfully catalogues his acts of corruption and manipulation, he undercuts himself. In fact, his own confession, one which bears no sign of remorse or contrition, condemns him.

Jean de Meun's antifraternal figure renews and refreshes, rather than simply repeats and reinforces antifraternal charges. By giving False Seeming a voice, Jean creates a friar who is the ideal spokesman for the antifraternalists because this 'insider' can accurately report fraternal abuses as well as inform his report with precise and insightful details supposedly known only to the friars themselves. False Seeming is not simply a corrupt friar: he is fraudulence; he is hypocrisy. He is also *all* friars, and his boasting reveals the universal decay of all friars, the self-love cloaked under friars' robes, and all friars' acceptance of worldly vice and temptations.

Given False Seeming's astounding falseness and hypocrisy, given his lengthy confession itemizing fraternal corruption in the *Romance of the Rose*, his literary role as a rascally figure embodying French antifraternal sentiments in the literary antifraternal tradition is both memorable and prominent. Jean de Meun's creation certainly ensured that one-sided knowledge of the University quarrel and of friars became common and widespread. As Regalado points out,

Jean de Meun's prestige guaranteed immortality to the polemic, since it is his text which reappears in later works, while Rutebeuf's poems, although preserved in manuscripts, are never referred to by either contemporary or later poets. Durante, in his sonnet sequence *Il Fiore*, of the late thirteenth century, transposed long sections of the *Roman de la Rose* into Italian, including two sonnets on the University polemic from the section about *Faus Semblant*. The author of the second part of the *Roman de Fauvel* (1314) des-

cribes *Ypocrisie* as 'une dame merveilleuse,' who often appears as 'Cordelier, puis Cordeliere, / Puis Jacobin, puis Jacobine.' The author refers to the *Roman de la Rose*, 'qui en vult savoir la glose,' for a more profound description of *Faus Semblant* and his followers. Jehan le Fevre (ca. 1370) translated and abbreviated the long Latin tirade against the Mendicants which Matheolus, the 'bigamous' antifeminist, derived from Jean de Meun and included in his *Lamentations*.²⁸

In *Testament* Francois Villon, too, recalls Jean de Meun while in *De l'Ipocresie des Jacobins* Jean de Condé re-iterates traditional charges against the friars such as hypocrisy and greed. Jean's creation, however, influenced not only subsequent French literature but also British literature. In fact, his entire *Romance of the Rose* is an important source for both Chaucer's and Gower's works. The images and ideas put forth by William of Saint Amour and developed by Jean de Meun and Rutebeuf assuredly remained stable, but what the British antifraternalists such as Langland, Gower, and Chaucer developed and adapted did not. These British adaptations and developments form the subject of the next chapter.

²⁸ Regalado, p. 175.

Chapter Four: Chaucer, Gower and Langland

"Once a friar, always a liar."

Middle English Proverb

Section I: Gower's Labyrinthine Antifraternalism

John Gower, as Janet Coleman so aptly remarks, "was a cultivator of complaint."¹ His *Vox clamantis* or *The Voice of One Crying*, composed c. 1378-80, for instance, is an encyclopedic manual of complaints cultivated and levelled against all three estates of medieval society: spiritual rulers, temporal rulers, and providers. To Gower, members of all these estates are both guilty of corruption and responsible for the adversities that have fallen upon the world. But, as Eric Stockton points out,

on the basis of proportional treatment alone, the clergy would seem to be most at fault, and this view is borne out in the discussion. Their sins not only take longest to enumerate but are also more grievous than those of other men, because they are the guardians of men's souls, and because they have taken vows requiring duties much stricter than those in their charge.²

Included in Gower's discussion of the corrupt ranks of clergy are the

¹ Janet Coleman, *Medieval Readers and Writers 1350-1400* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), p. 129.

² Eric Stockton, *The Major Latin Works of John Gower* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), p. 19.

friars; chapters sixteen to twenty-four of Book IV are a critique of the fraternal orders, "of those in the order of mendicant friars who go astray."³

In order to criticize the friars, Gower cultivates the role of "a messenger to those whom sin influences" (VC 182).⁴ Cautiously claiming he does "not wish to scatter reproach against all [friars] because of a few" (VC 182), this divinely inspired messenger initially specifies which friars are his target: those who fail to renounce the world, adopt voluntary poverty, and undertake pious works as dictated by the orders' founders. This messenger is also a reporter because he promises, as he himself acknowledges, to

report the necessary matters of conversation which general talk has brought to me I shall write what the purport of this general talk contains, especially for those whom their religious order brands as most guilty of transgression.
(VC 182)

The roles of messenger and reporter are not dichotomous. Despite the apparent differences between a moral messenger scattering reproach and a reporter relating general talk, both occupations actually complement one another, united as they are by the voice of the people, a voice which simultaneously connotes the voice of God. Indeed, the pretense of mere reporting is not, as Stockton explains,

³ John Gower, *Vox clamantis* in *The Major Latin Works of John Gower*, ed. Eric Stockton (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), p. 182. All further quotations from *Vox clamantis* will be identified by VC and page number.

⁴ Here, I focus only on the narrator or persona created as the spokesperson against fraternal corruption in Book IV, chapters sixteen to twenty-four.

because Gower democratically holds the views of the populace at large in high esteem; it is because all men are children of God and are equal in God's sight In addition, the formula *vox populi, vox dei* had some political currency in the fourteenth century.⁵

Thus, the voice of the people, like that of the messenger, reports moral truths; their general talk is not hearsay or rumour but divine knowledge.

Gower's focussing upon *vox populi, vox dei* and reporting of moral truths explain his lack of interest in accurately and precisely reporting historical events. The messenger, for instance, reports, "the throng of friars overflows the mendicant order; the original rule is dead, inundated by them" (VC 182). Even though the Conventual Franciscans certainly modified the original rule of Saint Francis soon after his death, the charge that friars proliferate was patently untrue during Gower's time. In fact, the population of the friars declined significantly because of the mid-fourteenth century plague; friaries never restored their losses.⁶ Yet the charge of proliferation was as true to Gower as it was to Richard FitzRalph and William of Saint Amour because all of these antifraternalists perceived friars as operating outside the ecclesiastical pyramid. "As supernumerary ecclesiastics," explains Szittya,

the friars violate the ecclesiastical order and indeed the divine order in which God made all things 'in measoure, noumbre, & weizt' (Wisd. 11:21, '*Deus omnia in mensura, numero, et pondere disposuit*') This

⁵ Stockton, p. 19.

⁶ David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1953), pp. 182-208.

verse was one of the touchstones of medieval metaphysics, and with the interpretation St. Augustine gave to it, became 'the keyword of the medieval world view.' It showed that all created things exist within divinely ordained limits and proportions, controlled by an overriding idea of harmony in the universe, including the church and its functionaries. But the friars were, in the vocabulary of FitzRalph and St. Amour, *non missi, non vocati, alieni, extraordinarii, infinitae et incertae personae*. They were outside the church hierarchy, outside the apostolic succession, and therefore not 'numbered.'⁷

It is according to medieval metaphysics that Gower's unnumbered friars "overflow" and "inundate" their orders; it is in the context of medieval metaphysics that Gower's complaint, one which is an antifraternal commonplace in both British and French writings, is accurate.

Similarly, Gower's representation of friars as agents of disorder stems from his unquestioning acceptance of the orthodox Church's hierarchal structure as a system mirroring divinely ordained limits and proportions. "It is said," reports the moral messenger,

that before there was an order of friars, whatever ranks existed within the Church were well suited for it. The Pope was sovereign; he appointed others as deputies so that all the laws he made would exercise control over the people. The bishop has his own duty, and the curate under him directs the great masses of the people, in accepting the cure of souls. The bishop is the proprietary who confers a special property upon the curate, whereby he may perform his duties. The curate thereupon swears that in place of the bishop he will carry out in due time the duties which the bishop has set forth. Does there seem, then, any reason or cause for a friar's appropriating the special role of another for himself (VC 186-87)?

⁷ Szittyá, pp. 224-25.

The messenger's question here is, of course, rhetorical; the answer lies within his explanation and affirmation of the divinely 'measured, numbered, and weighted' structure and its functionaries. Because the friars unjustly usurp the role of the clergy, because they are outside the Church pyramid, they are also outside the constraints of traditional, medieval society. "Neither knighthood nor tilling the soil," complains the messenger,

distinguishes them; rather, each estate leaves them wandering about in the world. And friars are not of the clergy, however much they may try to usurp that rank They do not take care of the people's souls and they do not succor their bodies, so of what further use can they be for the common weal? you cannot reckon the number of friars. (VC 188)

As unnumbered agents operating both outside the traditional Church pyramid and outside the traditional estates of medieval society, friars are unlimited, unordered. Lacking constraints, they physically wander, unfixed to a specified locale. Such a state, according to the messenger, aligns the friars with the Jewish people:

The dispersion of the friars, whom a devious wanderlust now drives throughout the world, resembles [that of] the dispersed Jews. Neither the one nor the other remains fixed in one spot In such fashion does the irreverent [friar] stray about now in his compassing of the earth. (VC 192)

During medieval times, indeed during most of Christian history, the Jew was perceived as the eternal outsider, the eternal stranger. Separated from the Christian world by their decision not to recognize Christ as the Son of God and not to embrace His teachings, the Jews became the object of popular animosity and the subject of extensive abuse and harsh discrimination. Their dispersion was commonly

regarded as their punishment for unbelief, while their religious members were commonly believed to possess and exhibit immense malevolence against all Christians. By aligning the wandering friars with dispersed Jews, the eternal outsiders, the moral Christian messenger not only condemns the friars' unfixedness but also fixes friars as objects as worthy of hostility and exclusion as the Jews. Indeed, this aligning points to the extent of the messenger's contempt for the proliferating friars.

Gower's charge of proliferation, as well as his emphasis on the friars' lack of measure, number, and weight, reveals that he, at times, perceives friars in biblical terms or in a symbolic mode as did William of Saint Amour.⁸ Various other antifraternal sentiments in *Vox clamantis* demonstrate Gower's affinity for William's approach, ideas, and techniques. Gower's moral messenger, for instance, considers friars the fulfilment of Hosea's prophecy which warned that "a certain tribe will arise on earth which will eat up the sin of my people and know much evil" (*VC* 184; Hos. 4:8). Even though Gower's choice of biblical prophecy differs from William's of 2 Timothy 3, their use of scriptural prophecy achieves the same result: both antifraternalists establish the friars' symbolic significance in biblical history rather than temporal history. And, even though Gower does not construct an elaborate series of signs demonstrating that friars are quintessential 'evil' men as did William of Saint Amour, he

⁸ This thought parallels Penn Szittya's premise in his study, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

nevertheless accepts and reinforces the stereotype of friars as pseudo-apostles, remarking that

the friars maintain that they are disciples of Christ and that they are pursuing all their duties after His example. Their false faith claims this, but this is sufficient unto them.
(VC 183)

Indeed, despite Gower's lack of citation of 2 Timothy 3, he reiterates characteristics that condemn friars as pseudo-apostles according to William's elaborate system. For instance, like William of Saint Amour's pseudo-apostles as described in signs one, two, thirteen, twenty, and thirty-eight, Gower's hypocritical friars wear "sheep's clothing [that] conceals a hostile wolf" (VC 184), "wander[] about outside and explore[] inside" (VC 185), "puff[] about everywhere" (VC 185), are thieving confessors "since [they] plunder[] our prerogative over woman" (VC 186), "utter aureate speeches" (VC 191), and "sway the minds of the naive by speaking sweetly" (VC 191). And, like William's pernicious pseudo-apostles in various signs, Gower's friar

relies upon deceit, he makes cunning speeches, he increases and heaps up and multiplies his trickeries. He promotes strife, he inflames quarrels into anger. He nourishes ill will and fosters envy. He breaks the bonds of peace, he disrupts the ties of nuptial love, and sets faith at variance In falsely assuming faith, he counterfeits an honest faith in order to conceal his deceit more carefully As his tongue puts words in his venomous mouth, he makes poison into honey and honey into poison. (VC 190)

Gower's use of antifraternal conventions first articulated by William of Saint Amour is self-evidently extensive; he clearly reworks pre-existing French antifraternal sentiments which shaped and informed

antifraternalism in Britain.

Yet, as Gower reworks and renews pre-existing antifraternal structures and ideas, he strips away the apocalyptic trappings found in Rutebeuf's, de Meun's, and especially William of Saint Amour's antifraternal writings. Instead of stressing the friars' role as precursors of Antichrist ushering in the Last Days of Salvation History, Gower emphasizes their role as servants of Satan. "There are in truth three masters," explains the moral messenger,

of which each man serves the one by whom he wishes to be ruled. There is God, there is the world, and there is the Devil Apostate, in whose ranks the friar bears a burden of sin he submits to the Devil's own yoke.
(VC 190)

As a servant of Satan, the friar actively encourages vice and thereby sins; although "he thunders out fearful sermons as he publicly damns the practice of sin" (VC 183), "like a servant of Satan, he furnishes glosses for them when he comes to sit down for a while in private chambers" (VC 184).

As a servant of Satan, the friar certainly is a figure of evil. Yet the typing of friars as cohorts of Satan is neither as threatening nor as damaging as that of them as harbingers of the Last Days, as *antichristi*. Unlike Antichrist who represents the most powerful perpetrator of evil in Christian Salvation History, Satan represents a ubiquitous tempter who strives to lead man from good into damnation. Assuredly, he is a dangerous figure, notorious for his cunning, for his opposition to God, yet he does not offer the threat to humankind and the Church that Antichrist does. Similarly, precursors of Antichrist are relatively more terrifying than servants of

Lucifer and demons. Unlike these precursors who deceive men and usher in the apocalyptic Last Days, demons work on a relatively small scale, leading individuals astray, individually seducing Christians. The image of friars as servants of Satan is, thus, a theologically adverse one yet one neither as terrifying nor as hostile as that of them as precursors of Antichrist.

This image of demonic friars seems to be quite prevalent in British medieval antifraternal work. Despite Langland's use of the antifraternal image of friars as harbingers of the Last Days in *passus* XX in *The Vision of Piers Plowman*,⁹ various British authors present friars as demons and devils, not as precursors of Antichrist. For instance, in the anonymous, probably Wycliffite "Friars, *Ministri Malorum*" the narrator exposes friars as the first supporters of Satan:

whan seyntes ffelle ffryst ffrom heuen,
quo prius habitabant,
 In erthe leyfft þo synnus vij
 & *fratres communicabant*.¹⁰

In a brief antifraternal squib, entitled "Quod The Devill To The Frier," the demonic narrator establishes his neighbourly affection for friars:

O my good brother
 You ar no nother
 At you I have no spitte

⁹ See the figure of Sire Penetrans-domos in *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (B-text).

¹⁰ "Friars, *Ministri Malorum*" in *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. R.H. Robbins (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), ll. 5-8. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

Stonde still *and* praye
 All' nyht *and* daye
 Even like an yppocrite.¹¹

And, in the anonymous, again probably Wycliffite "The Layman's Complaint" the layman/narrator describes friars

As mydday deuelis goynge abowte,
 for money lowle ze lowte,
 flatteringe boybe more & lesse.¹²

Gower, too, specifies that friars are devilish flatterers. According to the moral messenger, the friar "is a confessor not of the Lord, but of the ladies, and is blander than Titivillus to them" (VC 186). As confessors who are more sycophantic than Titivus, a devil who reportedly collects "fragments of words, dropped, skipped, or mumbled in the recitation of divine service, and ... carr[ies] them to hell to be registered against the offender,"¹³ the friars are certainly destructive reprobates. They are not, however, terrifying *antichristi*.

Even though Gower does not perpetuate William's and his French followers' typing of friars as *antichristi*, he nevertheless adapts and reworks the conventional image of friars as Pharisees, an image first applied to them by William of Saint Amour in *De Pharisaeo et Publicano* and later in *De periculis novis-*

¹¹ "Quod The Devill To the Frier," printed by Robert R. Raymo, *English Language Notes* 4 (1966-67), 180.

¹² "The Layman's Complaint" in *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. R.H. Robbins (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), ll. 16-18. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

¹³ Paul Harvey, ed. *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, fourth edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 822.

simorum.¹⁴ Like the Pharisees who desire to be called *magister*, despite the biblical injunction against this title (Matt. 23:10), Gower's friar "longs to bear the name of master in a school" (VC 185). Similar to the Pharisees who endeavour to subvert Christ, Gower's friars subvert Christian works by only appearing to be converts to the devout Christian life. They are, posits the messenger, compressing images of plants and Pharisees, metaphorically a "pharisaical branch [that] has cut itself off from its source of life" (VC 183). This thorny plant, continues the messenger, wounds the Church so "every good plowman will uproot these thorns lest this pharisaical plant defile a holy place" (VC 187). One way in which friars wound the Church is their successful proselytizing. Citing Jesus' words to the Pharisees, "Woe unto you who compass land and sea to make one proselyte for yourself" (VC 189; Matt. 23:15), the messenger claims he can "say those words to the friars with new justice" (VC 189) because friars, like their Pharisaic forerunners, seduce converts. In fact, according to the moral messenger, friars use bribery and entreaty to entice "thoughtless boys, who do not possess mature judgement, into taking the vows of their order" (VC 189).

Gower's complaint that friars are pharisaical seducers reinforces the antifraternal, conventional typing of friars as Pharisees. It also supports the conventional typing of them as pseudo-apostles. In sign two of Chapter Fourteen of *De periculis novissimorum*

¹⁴ See *De pharisaeo et publicano* and p. 57 of *De periculis novissimorum temporum*.

temporum William of Saint Amour cites Matthew 23:15 and contends that pseudo-apostles

deceive the hearts of simple folks with studied speech with which they praise their own teachings Those men seduce the hearts of simple folk so well that they make them enter their order, a way of life which they call Religion; and then they who lived before in simple honesty, after entering, become crafty, hypocrites, pseudo, and creepers into houses, just like those men, and sometimes they become even worse. (*De periculis* 57; Miller 246)

Echoing William's sentiments is the moral messenger's description of the way in which friars deceive the simple:

the sound from a friar's lips entice[s] young children. Just as the bird is trapped, ignorant of the treacherousness of snares, so does a boy fall to the friar And when he can trap a boy in this way, the older friar is bound as a result to acquire the name of father. Begotten of deceit, his offspring accordingly imitates the father and adds his own deeds of deceit to those of his father. (*VC* 189)

As seducers of young children, Gower's friars certainly deceive "the hearts of simple folk." Yet, despite the strong and obvious parallels between William's and Gower's charge, subtle yet significant differences exist. "Simple folk" designates not only children, a group conventionally regarded as malleable, highly impressionable, and unaware of corruption, but also any person susceptible to flattery, indiscriminate, easily deluded, and lacking "knowing hearts" (Romans 16:18). Gower's specification of "young children" and "thoughtless boys" as the targets of friars' seductive speech indicates he is concerned about particular members of the group possessing "hearts of simple folk." Richard FitzRalph shared this particular concern. According to FitzRalph, during confession in private homes,

children bep y-schryue to freres & freres behileþ hem
wip smale ziftes & gileful, & makeþ hem come in-to her
ordre, for freres nowe nouzt so bygyle olde men. (DC
55)

He also alleges that friars beguile children at Oxford University; in
Defensio curatorum FitzRalph relates a story of a man who
attempted to visit

at Oxenford, freres by-name hym his sone þat was nouzt
xiii zere olde, & he came þider to speke wip his sone &
moste nouzt speke wip his sone, but vnder worde and
keping of freres. (DC 56)

One consequence of parents' losing their children, continues
FitzRalph, is low enrollment at universities:

lewed men in euereche place wipholdeþ her children &
sendeþ hem nouzt to þe Vniuersite, So þat in zet in
my tyme in þe Vniuersite of Oxenford were þritty
þousand scolers at ones, & now ben vnnethe sixe
þousand. (DC 58)

In spite of FitzRalph's questionable statistics, his allegation that
friars seduce defenceless, vulnerable children was perhaps well-
founded. As A.G. Rigg has discovered, "in 1358 in Oxford a Statute
was passed forbidding the admission to mendicant orders of boys
under 18 (the friars' principal source for recruitment)."¹⁵ This
Statute, however, was repealed in 1366, several years after Fitz-
Ralph's death in 1360 and approximately twenty years before Gower's
composition of *Vox clamantis*. Its removal suggests the problem
was resolved or discounted, whether or not it was alleviated by friars'

¹⁵ A.G. Rigg, "Two Latin Poems Against the Friars," *MS 30*
(1968), 109.

lobbying, by actual changes in the practices of recruitment, or by a fading away of the urgency and emotionalism of the issue.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of the complaint that guileful friars entice young children in Gower's *Vox clamantis* demonstrates the perpetuation of adverse, antifraternal sentiments when an actual situation, perhaps exaggerated, perhaps accurate, becomes dated. It also demonstrates Gower's reworking of an antifraternal convention, of an antifraternal type, so it will describe a contemporary situation, a particularly British issue. Gower's voicing of this British charge -- he specifies friars seduce young boys rather than the simple -- identifies his antifraternal politics as British. Yet, as a variation on an antifraternal convention, as a complaint expressed in terms of traditional, pharisaical imagery, the charge suggests Gower is concerned not so much with the friars' political and societal significance in British society but with their biblical and symbolic significance in Britain. In fact, his antifraternal interests lie not in solely reporting historical, British issues but in interpreting the moral significance of the friars' alleged acts of corruption.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of Gower's moral approach to fraternal corruption is his emphasis on friars as idolaters. Idolatry, of course, is a grave sin according to Christian tenets as it indicates disobedience of the commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (KJV Matt. 22:37), one of the two commandments Christians should foremostly obey. Throughout the antifraternal section in *Vox clamantis* Gower repeatedly establishes friars as idolaters, and many of his criticisms, whether they be French or specifically British,

support his contention. Gower's presentation of friars as idolators is not systematic: he does not discuss individually and concisely the friars' various idols in individual chapters. Rather, he intersperses ideas and images related to these idols throughout chapters sixteen to twenty-four of Book IV, leaving the audience to identify and follow various patterns of images and themes through his labyrinthine organization. According to Gower's labyrinthine system, the friars' idols are five in number: Falseness, gold, the friars themselves, Venus, and buildings.

The first four idols listed above all develop from the reworking of conventional, French antifraternal complaints. Like William of Saint Amour's friars who are falsehood personified, the moral messenger's friars are disciples not of Christ but of "Falseness [who] is their prophet" (VC 184). Because they revere Falseness, only "their cloak's appearance is poor, but their money box is rich" (VC 184). Just as their appearance is misleading so are their words: "they hide their shameful deeds under sanctimonious words" (VC 184). Similarly, their "assiduous hypocrisy sows [their] words in order that [their] harvest of profit in the world may thrive through them" (VC 183).

Hypocrisy or Falseness, according to this last allegation, enables the friars to satisfy their desire for wealth. Indeed, even though they hypocritically "call upon God with their lips, yet they venerate gold in their hearts, and on every side they seek to learn the way to it" (VC 184). Like William's pseudo-apostles who, according to sign twenty of chapter fourteen of *De periculis*, strive to attain temporal wealth and wolfishly covet gold, the moral messenger's

friars "inwardly yearn[] for riches" (VC 183), only acting "like people who have no property" (VC 183) in order to receive wealth "under a pauper's guise" (VC 183). The friars also, according to the moral messenger, only perform the lucrative pastoral ministrations in order to gain wealth; drawing upon a conventional argument against the friars' reception of privileges, the messenger points out that "they refuse to baptize mere faith, since a matter of business with no money in it will not be esteemed or performed at their hands" (VC 183). And the friars will only perform the lucrative ministrations if their 'victim' is wealthy:

a friar demands that he himself bury the dead bodies of those to whom he attached himself as confessor, if they were dignitaries. But if it should be a poor [man's] body, he makes no claim at all, since his piety takes no cognizance of anything unless there is money in it. (VC 183)

Because "both life and death bring money to them" (VC 183), the moral messenger concludes that "these men are not disciples but rather gods" (VC 183).

As gods, the friars demand -- and receive -- power, wealth, and adoration. They hold, claims the messenger,

the Pope in their hands; he mitigates the hardships of their order and decrees that more and more things are now permissible. And if the papal authority rejects their suits, their perverse order will secretly make them lawful. There is no king nor prince nor great man in the world who should not confess his secrets to them. (VC 183)

Not content with merely possessing papal favour and the secrets of the traditionally powerful -- possessions that surely confer power -- the friar

aspires to have his place of honour. He longs to bear the

name of master in a school, but no rule binds him after he is exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. He has a room to himself, he gets hold of some property, and then he thinks no monk is his equal. (VC 185)

Referring here to the professional rivalry between monk and friar, the messenger mocks the friars' claim to superiority, while his charge that friars desire the academic title of master and a place of honour mirrors William's in *De phariseo et publicano*.

The friars' desire for the academic title of *magister* not only reveals their pharisaic kinship but also conceals their "pomp and arrogance [that] hide beneath theology" (VC 185). Because they receive exemption 'from episcopal jurisdiction' and are thus released from vows such as mendicancy that could interfere with their studies and teaching, they can devote uninterrupted time to theology, a field of study that, avers the messenger, gains them "access to the highest chambers; there is no house whose door is closed in the man's face" (VC 185). Their ability to be chameleons abets accessibility; by observing people's whims, the friar readily conforms to them, and, thus,

the friar wanders about outside and explores inside, and no place or affair is a mystery to him. Now he is a physician, now a father confessor, now a mediator, and he gives orders at every hand, both high and low. (VC 185)

Such free movement and protean shapes inflate the friars' perception of themselves and convince them that they are gods themselves. In fact, as the messenger notes, "the friar puffs about everywhere as if he were the spirit of the Lord, yet he comes to the bed when the husband is away" (VC 185).

Gower's rapid shift here from alleging that friars boastfully

perceive themselves as divine creatures to alleging that friars commit adultery perhaps seems jarring and incongruous. Yet the two allegations are actually united by the friars' irreligious and idolatrous behaviour. Though they venerate themselves, they also venerate Venus, showing allegiance to her by chanting her praises with another man's wife. This chanting, remarks the messenger, "fulfills [the friar's] duty to the goddess with highest honor" (VC 186). Yet the friars' obeisance to Venus also fills "paternal halls" (VC 185). While the husband is away, explains the moral messenger,

the audacious, adulterous friar enters and takes over the role of another for himself. Thus does he approach the master bedroom with its smooth bed -- a bedroom he has enjoyed again and again; yet quite often it will be for the very first pickings The friar's devotion makes up for the husband's failures, and his growing progeny fill the paternal halls The married man believes and rejoices that he has fathered a child, yet not one fingernail of the child belongs to him. (VC 185-86)

Even though William insinuates in his *Collectiones* that friars have illicit liaisons with nuns, particularly the Beguines, even though both Rutebeuf and de Meun similarly purport that friars are licentious and lusty, none of them describes fraternal, sexual wanderings as being as extensive and as consequential as do British antifraternalists, particularly Gower. Indeed, Gower does not simply plant the suggestion that friars have suspicious relations with women but describes a specific scenario that would especially disturb a medieval audience.

Gower alleges, for instance, that the friar "is a confessor just like a thief whom the gallows display, since he plunders our prerogative over women" (VC 186). Despite the ostensible similarity to William of Saint Amour's theological charge in sign one of *De*

periculis novissimorum temporum that pseudo-apostles penetrate the consciences of confessants with weak rationality, Gower's allegation is actually more legalistic than theological. Women were, of course, considered property during the Middle Ages. Disfranchised by feudalism, a woman living under this system which continued into the late Middle Ages

spent most of her life under the guardianship of a man -- of her father until she married, of her father's lord if her father died, and of her husband until she was widowed.¹⁶

Guardians, particularly wealthy ones, arranged marriages for reasons of achieving political and economic ends, while the Catholic Church permitted marriages for only two official reasons: the avoidance of unsanctified sex and procreation. The tight connections between marriage and property and between property and the procreation of a legal heir determined the value of an unadulterated woman: she usefully produced a legitimate heir, a commodity, who would inherit the property, thereby keeping it in the family's name and bloodline and increasing the political power of family. By seducing married women, the friar thus steals property and "plunders [men's] prerogative over women" (VC 186). By usurping a husband's role and filling the "paternal halls" with "growing progeny," the friar thus disrupts and destroys the family's bloodline.

To the moral messenger, these consequences are severe: in fact, "many great dangers are now lurking" (VC 186). To eliminate these dangers he proposes that friars should observe and learn from

¹⁶ Frances and Joseph Gies, *Women in the Middle Ages* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 27.

bees who sting, only to lose their stinger and retreat to "hidden recesses" (VC 186). The adulterous friar, too, continues the narrator, should

lose his swollen pricker in the same way when he has stung, so that he would not pluck women's flowers nor go wandering about in the world away from his home. (VC 186)

Such a punishment would certainly stop the friars from committing what the voice of morality earlier calls a "lowly deed [that] builds a lofty structure" (VC 186). This image which Gower uses to describe one of the "great dangers" stemming from the friars' adulterous acts is significant not only because it cleverly conveys the unordered, illegitimate, genealogical line that ruptures the social fabric but also because it is one of the many that create a pattern relating to friars' buildings -- an imagistic pattern that reveals the friars' false foundations and false religion.

According to the moral messenger, "if you took away crime from the friars' foundations, their house which was lofty for so long would fall without a struggle" (VC 184). Referring here not to the "lofty structure" built by deeds of adultery but metaphorically to the organization or house of friars constructed of many hypocritical members, the messenger derisively implies that friars could not sustain their popularity and attractiveness, indeed, would not be friars, if they could not encourage vice and receive profits. After all, "a friar knows well that when sin dies, then his revenue dies for all time" (VC 184). Not "faithful to the love of Christ's Church" (VC 191) but driven to attain empty honours, the friars use "smooth talk," sweet speech, and gilded language in their teachings, and only "the tainted synagogue,

which plainly does not teach the truth, will heed their instruction" (VC 191). By placing the friars in the unclean synagogue which represents, according to medieval iconography, Antichrist, the moral messenger presents friars not as citizens of the Church but as injurious, pernicious disciples of evil.

The synagogue is not the only tainted building that friars occupy. Motivated by greed and desirous of sensuous pleasures, fraternal confessors seek opulent lodgings when they wander in the world. Reworking both William of Saint Amour's sign twenty-eight from *De periculis novissimorum temporum* and the proverbial saying, "pigeons and Dominicans make foul houses,"¹⁷ Gower remarks,

Notice that doves come to spotless quarters, and that an unclean tower does not harbor such birds. Similarly, no house except those of tycoons provides friars of today with guest accommodations where they wish to stay on. (VC 184)

And, when the friars cease wandering and return to their friaries, they still submerge themselves in comfortable, even luxurious surroundings. In fact, "every cell in which a worthless friar dwells is beautiful, decked with many kinds of rich carving" (VC 193).

The allegation that friars abuse their religious calling, particularly their pastoral privileges, in order to finance the construction of elaborate holy houses is British more so than French. Similar to Langland and Chaucer who, as we will see, intersperse this allegation into their antifraternal stories, Gower introduces this antifraternal

¹⁷ Eric Stockton, *The Major Latin Works of John Gower* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), p. 423.

convention into his discourse on unfixedness and the friars' idle seeking of sumptuous pleasures. He, however, treats their buildings not just as unduly splendid, physical edifices but as signs, in the Augustinian sense of the term, of inner corruption and religious idolatry.

The moral messenger begins his attack on the friars' excessively luxurious buildings by remarking, "their devotion aims at ornamentation of a church, just as if such things possess the marks of salvation" (*VC* 192). Though attentive to the physical beauty of the Church, the friars are nonetheless "unfeeling toward its spirit" (*VC* 193), and "so the friars' pious devotion is outwardly plain to see, but the vainglorious spirit of their heart lies within them" (*VC* 193). The friars' devotion to ornate churches, then, provides a cue to or a sign of their inner state: their zeal for building masks avarice and desire for temporal pleasures.

The friars' noble houses also signify "evil thoughts" and, of course, immense wealth. Whereas the friar, as the messenger explains, "should be a dwelling place of the Lord, which [he] should ornament with holy conduct" (*VC* 193), he is actually an empty vessel of impiety and disgrace. This impiety is particularly evident in both the friaries' external and internal decor:

A church built for them towers above all others; they set up stones and are highly fond of carved wood Their house is to be an extensive structure, a house supported by a thousand marble columns, with decorations high on the walls. It is resplendent with various pictures and every elegance. (*VC* 192-93)

The friars' fondness for carved wood carries a suggestion of worship of images and idolatry, a practice Gower maligns in chapter ten of

Book Two of *Vox clamantis*. Here, he derides the "cursed people, traitorous to God ... [who] worship creations of wood" (VC 109), because "this insanity of worshipping mute gods while they themselves know nothing is worse than all vices" (VC 110). Despite his attack on worshippers of wood, Gower suggests they can use certain graven images without weakening their Christian obligation to worship God. For instance,

the sign of the Cross should everywhere be worshipped in honor of the crucified Jesus The Cross is wood worthy of reverence It purifies the feelings, cleanses the mind of its blight, brightens the heart, and chastens the body. (VC 110)

Nevertheless, "when a man erects statues for the sake of money," qualifies Gower,

and decorates them so that he may expect to get hold of offerings from the people ... this sort of art has no value whatever. (VC 110)

The friars are this type of man: even though they fashion a figure of Christ, "they long for the world and secretly follow it" (VC 193), and when "on the doorposts they carve figures which are to endure for a long age" (VC 193), they do so only "to bind the hearts of the people" (VC 193).

According to other British antifraternalists, too, friars worship graven images, whether they be statuary figures, etchings in stained glass windows, or resplendent tapestries. In *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, for instance, Langland castigates the friars' promotion of "gravynge" which God actually forbids because it signifies pride and worldliness (III 64-68). More interested in constructing beautiful, stained glass windows in the church than in assigning appropriate

penances, the friars of *Piers Plowman* follow the world rather than Christ. They revere temporal rather than spiritual beauty.

Particularly interesting are two antifraternal poems, "On the Minorites" and "*De Astantibus Crucifixo*," because both of these anonymous poems, like *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and *Vox clamantis*, denounce the friars' veneration of graven images. Yet unlike *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and *Vox clamantis*, they criticize the friars' worshipping of graven images of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis. Indeed, so hostile to friars are these two poets that they dare to present Dominic and Francis as idols rather than saints. During both the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, Dominic, canonized in 1234, was renowned for his purity and spreading of the Gospel while Francis of Assisi, canonized in 1228, was revered for his chastity, humility, obedience, absolute poverty, and stigmata -- a sign of his spiritual identity with the crucified Christ. To ridicule these Catholic saints was surely blasphemous and unacceptable to the Catholic Church, yet the poets of "*De Astantibus Crucifixo*" and "On the Minorites" mock the friars' veneration for the founders of the Dominican and Franciscan orders.

In "*De Astantibus Crucifixo*," an undated poem which Cotton's librarian, Richard James, fully transcribed in the seventeenth century, a man is unsure of the identity of two figures resting beside the Crucifix in a friar's church. After a friar explains, "*Fili, si nescis, magnus hic est vir, / Nomine Dominicus hinc stans, Franciscus et illinc*,"¹⁸ the man exclaims,

¹⁸ "*De Astantibus Crucifixo*," ed. A. G. Rigg in "Two Latin Poems Against the Friars" *MS 30* (1968), ll. 10-11. All further quotations from this poem will be identified by title and line number.

Aha! ... nunc misterium scio verbi;
Nunc quod nesciui me plenius edocuisti.
Nam satis audiui quod cum Domino crucifixo
Famosi fuerant duo latrones crucifixo,
Sed nunquam sciui latronum nomina certa.
Nunc scio, nunc claret via cognitionis aperta!
(ll. 12-17)
(Now I understand -- for I have often heard that two
thieves were crucified with Christ, but before I did not
know their names!)¹⁹

By turning "up-so-down" the traditional significance of statues of Dominic and Francis, the poet satirizes the reverence accorded to the founders of the Dominican and Franciscan orders. To him, the friars erect not statues that are, to use Gower's words, "worthy of reverence" but, rather, set up and worship images that actually possess no value. In fact, the statues of Francis and Dominic signify thieves, and this signification thus serves both to lead astray observers and to corrupt viewers' hearts and minds.

In "On the Minorites" the poet ridicules not images of Dominic and Francis but a series of wall paintings depicting scenes from the life of Saint Francis. According to the poet, the Franciscans erroneously "praysen not seynt poule"²⁰ but "lyen on seyn ffraunceys" (l. 6). Because Saint Paul was "the most widely known of the first-century followers of Jesus, owing to St. Luke's Acts of The Apostles

¹⁹ Rigg, 107.

²⁰ "On the Minorites" in *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. R.H. Robbins (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), l. 5. All further references to this poem will be identified by title and line number.

and the many of Epistles of St. Paul in the New Testament,"²¹ because he carried the message of Christianity to Asia Minor and Greece, and because he, along with Saint Peter, was considered the founder of the Christian Church, he and his teachings were particularly revered during both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Not to praise him was thus a sin by omission; to replace him with a lesser object of worship and praise it was thus to be morally remiss.

Francis, of course, was a venerable saint, worthy of imitation, yet the poet of "On the Minorites" undercuts the Minorites' devotion to their founder. The first 'evidence' he puts forth of their misplaced devotion is a wall painting Franciscans frequently used to decorate their churches:

First pai gabben on god þat all men may se,
When þai hangen him on hegh on a grene tre,
With leues & with blossemes þat bright are of ble,
Þat was neuer goddes son by my leute. (ll. 7-10)

Even though this description initially appears to be one of Christ hanging on a blossoming tree -- an image which developed from the medieval belief that "the cross was a 'second tree' provided by God to repair the damage done through the forbidden tree in the Garden"²² -- it may actually represent a visualization of the Christ-like Francis. In her discussion "Franciscan Scenes in a Fourteenth-Century Satire" Beverly Brian suggests that the image of the blossoming tree derives from a Franciscan source, perhaps Saint Bonaventure's *Lignum*

²¹ George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 137.

²² Beverly Brian, "Franciscan Scenes in a Fourteenth-Century Satire," *MAE* 41 (1972), 28.

Vitae. The Tree of Life in Bonaventure's meditation on the life, passion, and glorification of Christ, points out Brian,

is formed by Scriptural passages: 'Because imagination assists understanding, I have arranged in the form of an imaginary tree the few passages selected from many, and have disposed then in such a way that, in the first of the lower branches, the Saviour's origin and life are described; in the middle branches, His passion; and in the top branches, His glorification.' The branches of the tree are adorned with leaves, flowers, and fruit. 'Let the leaves be a most efficacious medicine for preventing or curing any disease: for indeed the word of the cross is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.'²³

To Brian, "Bonaventure's description of the tree is so pictorial that it must surely have furnished a subject for early Franciscan artists."²⁴ Yet Brian need not have focussed upon Bonaventure's tree for an explanation of the relationship between the description of the tree in "On the Minorites" and Franciscan legend: the poem itself, as well as Franciscan legend, provides an accessible and acceptable interpretation. After all, the poet remarks that the Minorites "gabben on god ... / When þai hangen him on hegh ... / ... / þat was neuer goddes son" (ll. 7-10) -- a remark that clearly indicates they revere a "deity" who is not Christ, indeed, that they 'hang up' a false god who replaces Christ. Who this replacement is becomes readily apparent in subsequent stanzas. Mocking Saint Francis' stigmata, which, according to legend, he received from the crucified Christ during a vision he had while fasting for forty days in his mountain retreat, the poet says he saw

²³ Brian, 28.

²⁴ Brian, 28.

a frere bled in myddes of his syde,
 Boþe in hondes & in fete had he woundes wyde,
 To serue to þat same frer, þe pope mot abyde.
 With an O & an I, I wonder of þes dedes,
 To se a pope holde a dische whyl þe frer bledes.
 (ll. 26-30)

This scene may derive from a legend about Saint Francis' appearing to Pope Gregory in a dream -- a legend which bears striking resemblances to the scriptural story and saints' legends of Doubting

Thomas. Brian succinctly relates that

according to [Franciscan] legend, Gregory had doubts about the authenticity of the stigmata and hesitated to canonize Francis. The saint appeared after his death, displayed the wound in his side, and ordered Gregory to receive the blood in a phial.²⁵

This legend, as translated in the poem's passage, compresses the images of Francis' stigmata and the Crucifixion -- the Pope acts like Joseph of Arimathea since he collects the blood in a dish -- and the verse thus thematically relates to the earlier scene of the hanging god (who was not God's Son) upon which the Minorites "gabben."

Both of the scenes at which the poet expresses indignation suggest that the Franciscans elevate their founder to the status of Christ and idolize him in their wall paintings. It is this visual hagiography that so disturbs and incites the poet. He sarcastically remarks that the Minorites "haue mo goddes þen we, I say by Mahoun" (l. 21). This remark suggests contextually that, to the poet, individual moments in the saint's life have been seized upon and glorified in Franciscan art; wall paintings, for instance, portray Francis' appearing "out of þe skye in a grey gown" (l. 19) and in the

²⁵ Brian, 29.

middle of "a cart ... made al of fyre" (l. 31). Yet while the friars "lyen on seyn ffraunceys," they "maken mochel blonder" (l. 3), "loue þai noght" poverty (l. 37), and grant easy absolution "ffor sixe pens" (l. 41). The wall paintings depicting Francis' glorious life thus do not encourage their viewers to imitate Francis; they do not 'chasten the body' nor do they 'cleanse' the mind of its blight.

The anonymous poet's indictment of Franciscan art in "On the Minorites" is assuredly more specific and more strident than Gower's disapproval of fraternal decor, of friars' fondness for carved wood, and of their "decorations high on the walls" (*VC* 192). Gower's description of this decor and these decorations lacks specific detail as does his description of the friars' buildings. Nevertheless, just as his description of fraternal fondness for carved wood carries overtones of misplaced devotion so too does his description of fraternal fondness for elaborate buildings. The towering churches friars build, claims the moral messenger, have

folding doors with elaborate porticoes, halls and bed chambers so numerous and various you would think it a labyrinth. Indeed, there are many entrance ways, a thousand different windows. Their house is to be an extensive structure, a house supported by a thousand marble columns. (*VC* 192)

Gower's description is, of course, unrealistic and ahistorical. He condemns fraternal buildings, not by putting forth historical 'facts' nor by imbedding allusions to contemporary structures, but by introducing signs indicative of the building's unordained origins. The friars' church has a thousand windows, a thousand columns, and, because the number, one thousand, traditionally signifies eternity, Gower's use of it here suggests the windows and columns are

unnumbered. Churches were, of course, to use FitzRalph's words, "y-chosen of God," and to be unnumbered was to be lawless, unsanctified, unchosen. Similarly, the friars' church has so many diverse halls and chambers that it is labyrinthine. Because the labyrinth, according to classical mythology, denotes a structure composed of numberless paths that perplex and delude those who enter it, and because both classical and medieval authors used the word 'labyrinth' metaphorically, Gower's use of it presumably suggests metaphorically that friaries are unordered. Their labyrinthine structure perhaps signifies a place in which visitors and occupants are deluded, led into error and lost. Since its paths are not straight and narrow but meandering and unsystematized, the friary offers no definite approach to Salvation and God. Indeed, it encourages physical wandering, a state signifying spiritual wandering, and conceals a monster in its labyrinth of deception. Unlike church pavement labyrinths that were sometimes known as "Chemins de Jerusalem," their centres sometimes called "ciel" or "Jerusalem" and that variously signified

the perplexities and intricacies which beset the
Christian's path ... the entangling nature of sin or of any
deviation from the rectilinear path of Christian duty,²⁶

friaries' labyrinths, according to the moral messenger's description, signify the friars' deviation from evangelical poverty and the straight path of Christian duty, and their entanglement with sin.

Even though Gower's charges against the friars tend to be

²⁶ W.H. Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths: Their History and Development* (New York: Dover, 1970), p. 67.

placed in unrealistic and ahistorical settings and time, many of them nonetheless parallel or are similar to particularly British antifraternal allegations. Gower's friars entice young boys, are cohorts of Satan, and erect elaborate, towering churches with the funds received from duplicitous acts of "devotion." Gower's approach to antifraternalism assuredly has an affinity to William of Saint Amour's; in fact, Gower, as it will be seen, uses William's exegetical approach more than do Langland and Chaucer. Yet, as Gower recycles and reinforces William's theological perception of friars in his portrayal of a decaying world besieged by extensive social, political, and religious corruption, he identifies and incorporates fraternal flaws that receive special emphasis in British antifraternal writings. This identification and incorporation serve to align Gower's antifraternal tract with other British tracts such as the B-text of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*.

Section II: Langland's Antifraternal *Visio*

In *The Vision of Piers Plowman* Langland uses the device of dream visions as does Gower in *Vox clamantis*. Both writers portray visions of a decaying world, assailed and besieged by extensive social and religious corruption. In Langland's vision, however, the friars play a pivotal role in the decay of the Christian world. Unlike Gower's friars who represent one of the many harmful and dangerous forces in contemporary society, Langland's friars are the central destructive force in the Christian state. In fact,

derogatory references to or censorious portraits of friars arise in almost every passus; when such references and portraits are lacking, their absence is significant. Moreover, Langland presents the friars as dangerous forces in two distinct but interdependent time frames: the Last Days of Salvation History and contemporary times. When he inveighs against friars in contemporary society, he significantly incorporates particularly British and not only continental antifraternal commonplaces.

Langland's two distinct but interdependent time frames are clearly established at the conclusion of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. Here, Conscience, frustrated and overwhelmed by the powerful figures of Pride and Sloth in Unity, the Holy Church, decides to "bicombe a pilgrym, / And walken as wide as the world lasteth, / To seken Piers the Plowman."²⁷ Conscience hopes that Piers Plowman will not only "Pryde ... destruye" (XX 383) but also ensure "that freres hadde a fyndyng, that for nede flateren / And countrepledeh [him], Conscience" (XX 384-85). Conscience's final wish reveals his perception of the two forces most dangerous to Unity: both Pride, chief of the seven deadly sins, and the papal order of friars corrupt Christians who then neglect to uphold the cardinal virtues and destroy the foundation of Unity.

As forces of destruction and agents of chaos, Pride and the friars act both independently and synergistically in Passus XX. Pride,

²⁷ William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman: A Complete Edition of the B-Text*, ed. A.V.C. Schmidt (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1978), XX, 381-83. All further references to this text will be identified by passus and line number.

from which all other sins proceed,²⁸ not only seduces the backsliding Christian but also serves as Antichrist's chief officer: he bears his chief's banner "bare boldely aboute" (XX 70). In this capacity Pride poses the ultimate threat to Unity and humankind: the Last Days of Salvation History are imminent, and corrupt Christians who succumb to Pride and support Antichrist will soon find themselves forsaken and condemned at the Day of Judgement.

Chronologically related to the appearance of Antichrist, Pride, and the Last Times are the friars. Although generally all "religiose revered [Antichrist] ... / And al the covent cam to welcome that tyraunt, / And alle hise as wel as hym -- save oonly fooles" (XX 59-61), it is specifically friars "who folwede that fend, for he gaf hem copes" (XX 58). This specific identification of friars as supporters of Antichrist implies that friars, more than monks, nuns, canons, and other types of religious disciples who come under the general category of "religiose," play a particularly important role in the Last Days. Such an implication is made explicit as the events of the Last Days unfold. When Conscience, besieged by "sevene grete geaunts" (XX 215), cries, "Help, Clergie, or ellis I falle / Thorugh imparfite preestes and prelates of Holy Chirche!" (XX 228-29), he refuses the friars' offer of help because "thei kouthe noght wel hir craft" (XX 231). Need supports Conscience's decision. The friars, Need points out, only offered assistance "for coveitise to have cure of soules" (XX

²⁸ See Passus V, 15, 63 for Langland's ordering of the deadly sins as well as Passus XX for the order of the appearance of these sins in *Piers Plowman*.

233). As a covetous, spiritually ill-prepared, and corrupt order of the Papacy, the friars, like Pride, pose a serious threat to the Church and all Christians: they lead astray Christians and fail to prepare them for the Day of Doom as well as corrupt the Church and its teachings with their own greed.

The extreme danger the friars pose is made apparent when Frere Flaterere, a pseudo-physician and pseudo-surgeon, receives permission to act as a parish priest and perform the ministration of confession in the Holy Church. Frere Flatterer identifies himself as "Sire Penetrans-domos," a figure stemming from 2 Timothy 3:6 and one developed by William of Saint Amour in sign one of Chapter Fourteen of *De periculis novissimorum temporum*. In this role of Sir Penetrator of Houses, the friar serves a scriptural role. He signifies a pseudo-apostle, one of the many hypocritical men who come in "dangerous times" (2 Tim. 3:1) and lead astray persons of weak rationality by invading and misguiding the conscience of confessants.²⁹ Friar Flatterer certainly fulfils this role well. Distressed by the lengthy and harsh medical treatment Contrition suffers, the friar immediately eases Contrition's type and period of penance "for a litel silver" (XX 368). Once Contrition lacks sorrow for his sins, Pride and Sloth fiercely assail the Church, and, thus, Sir Penetrator of Houses -- Friar Flatterer -- has served instrumentally in the

²⁹ For a thorough study of Friar Flatterer as a sign of the pseudo-apostle and as an *antichristus*, see Penn Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 3-10 and pp. 247-87, especially pp. 276-87.

weakening of the Church's structure and in the impending Apocalypse.

Yet the events in which the friars participate are not solely grounded in a vision of the Last Days. They are also set in contemporary times. After all, Conscience's wish at the end of Passus XX for Piers Plowman to establish an endowment for friars so that they will no longer "for nede flateren" clearly offers a practical solution to the antifraternalists' complaint that friars fail to uphold their commitment to a religious life of mendicancy and poverty. As a papal order existing outside the confines of the traditional, hierarchical structure of the medieval Catholic Church, the friars lacked the monetary endowments allotted to members of the Church hierarchy. This absence of what Conscience calls a "fyndyng" meant that the friars were not guaranteed the basic necessities of existence: food, shelter, and clothing. The lack of these necessities promotes corruption. As Frank points out,

Need puts man outside the law of property and morality, outside the guidance of conscience and cardinal virtues. It makes man lawless. As Need himself says, "Nede ne hath no lawe."³⁰

The issue of need is central to the ending of Passus XX. "Conscience's final speech," explains Szittyá,

is a condemnation of the institutionalized need of the friars The friars have corrupted the church because of their 'nede.'³¹

³⁰ Robert Frank, *Piers Plowman and The Scheme of Salvation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 114.

³¹ Penn Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 277.

Indeed, Conscience reveals one of the consequences of the friars' being motivated by need: flattery, a traditional antifraternal criticism. Need, earlier in Passus XX, also points out the same consequence: friars, says Need, "wol flatere, to fare wel, folk that ben riche" (XX 235). Need, however, sets forth another consequence of the friars' lacking the necessities of life, another corruption stemming from need: they are "coveitise to have cure of soules" (XX 233).

Need's words here succinctly describe the friars' corrupt behaviour as it is portrayed throughout most of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. They also recall Will's first description of the friars. In his first dream in which he envisions a "fair feeld ful of folk" (Prol. 17) are friars of all four orders who

Prechyng the peple for profit of [the wombe]:
 Glosed the gospel as hem good liked;
 For coveitise of copes construed it as thei
 wolde.
 Manye of thise maistres mowe clothen hem at
 likyng
 For hire moneie and hire marchaundise marchen
 togideres.
 Sith charite hath ben chapmen and chief to
 shryve lordes
 Manye ferlies han fallen in a fewe yeres.
 But Holy Chirche and hii holde bettre togidres
 The mooste meschief on molde is mountynge up
 faste. (Prol. 58-67)

The charges levelled against the friars in this passage are conventional. Like William of Saint Amour's pseudo-apostles, Will's friars abuse the ministrations of preaching and confession, gloss the Gospel, are motivated by greed, wrongly use the title of master, and corrupt the theological teaching of charity. Furthermore, the charges

the King orders the fettering of Falseness, Falseness, informed of this order by Dread, "for fere thanne fleigh to the freres" (II 211).

Similarly, when the King orders the pillory for Liar, Liar, also forewarned by Dread, is welcomed by "Freres with fair speche" (II 230) after being harboured by pardoners and other disreputable professionals. And to prevent Liar's being recognized, the friars

coped hym as a frere;
Ac he hath leve to lepen out as ofte as hym liketh,
And is welcome whan he wile; and woneth with hem
ofte. (II 231-33)

The friars, thus, are closely associated with deception, lying, and hypocrisy; in fact, they themselves are figures of falseness and lying.

Mede immediately accepts the friar's/confessor's offer, tells him a tale, and gives him a coin. Without assigning any form of penance, he then absolves her. With his duties as a pseudo-confessor now completed, the friar, however, does not depart. Rather, he remains with Mede, explaining that he and his confrères

have a wyndow in werchyng, wole stonden us
ful hye;
Woldestow glaze that gable and grave therinne
thy name,
Sykir sholde thi soule be hevene to have.
(III 48-50)

The friar's offer of false paradise here certainly condemns him. This selling of false paradise is, of course, an antifraternal convention, one used, for instance, in several of Rutebeuf's *dits* and one used again in *The Vision of Piers Plowman*.³² But the friar significantly asks Mede to engrave her name in a costly window, a

³² See Passus VII, 193-94 and Passus XI, 54-59.

request which recalls, for example, the action of Edward III who repaired the great middle window of a Minorite Church in London to ensure the "repose" of Queen Isabella's soul. In fact, the friar's request suggests friars desire elaborate holy houses, a criticism emphasized mainly in British antifraternal works.

Mede's response to the friar's offer serves to emphasize the friars' interest in the construction of elaborate holy houses. She initially replies that she will do as he bids if

ye love lordes that lecherie haunten
And lakketh noght ladies that loven wel the
same. (III 53-54)

The friar's previous offer clearly demonstrates that he will comply with this request. After all, he offered to absolve her for a horseload of wheat even if "lewed men and lered men hadde leyen by" her (III 38). Mede also posits another condition that again involves easy absolution of the sin of lechery. If the friar has mercy upon those who engage in lechery, she says,

I shal covere youre kirk, youre cloistre do maken,
Woves do whiten and wyndowes glazen,
Do peynten and portraye [who paid] for the makynge,
That every segge shall see I am suster of
your house. (III 60-63)

Mede's second offer here establishes a direct association between the fraternal abuse of the ministration of confession and their desire to possess elaborate holy houses. This connection mirrors the British antifraternalists' allegation that friars abuse their ministrations in order to gain money to construct friaries and, thus, reflects the contemporary conflict between the British secular clergy and the friars.

The narrator of *Passus* III explains the error in Mede's desire

to be painted and depicted in the window. God, expounds the narrator,

to alle good folk swich gravynge defendeth --
 To writen in wyndowes of hir wel dedes --
 An aventure pride be peynted there, and pomp of
 the world;
 For God knoweth thi conscience and thi kynde
 wille,
 And thi cost and thi coveitise and who the catel
 oughte. (III 64-68)

According to this explanation, Mede's offer is actually an act of pride, an act that condemns rather than purifies her. Yet surely the friar's offer is as damnable as, if not more so than, Mede's wish to be painted and depicted. It is the friar who first mentions the construction of a costly window; it is the friar who counsels her to engrave her name; it is the friar who sells false paradise. As a spiritual guide, as a protector of the human soul, the friar should counsel Mede to perform acts of penance and charity. But the friar of *Passus* III teaches false charity and insincere repentance -- teachings which undermine the very foundation of Christianity. Indeed, Patience initially explicates the errors in the friar's teaching in *Passus* XIV when she describes both the rewards of "pure pacience and parfit bileve" (XIV 192) and those who are "poore of herte" (XIV 194). Unlike those who exhibit pride and "pompe" (XIV 193), those who confess, seek Christ's mercy, and experience sincere repentance, points out Patience, will be rewarded. "Ellis is al on ydel," continues Patience,

al that evere we wr[ogh]ten --
Paternostres and penaunce and pilgrimage to Rome,
 But oure spences and spendynge sprynge of a
 trewe welle;
 Ellis is al oure labour lost -- lo, how men writeth
 In fenestres at the freres! -- if fals be the
 foundement.

Forthi Cristene sholde be in commune riche, noon
coveitous for hymsele. (XIV 195-200)

Patience's exasperated exclamation here about the engravings in friars' windows recalls Mede's desire to be "peynte[d] and portraie[d]" and emphasizes the futility of such an act: engraved windows are only inscriptions of pride. Furthermore, the thematic connection between Patience's exclamation, situated as it is in between two parts, and her assertion that all labour is in vain if the foundation is false draws attention to the physical buildings of the Church: the physical labour involved in engraving windows is wasted should the "foundement" or pavement of the building be false. After all, mansions built on sand crumble.

Patience's assertion and interjection also perhaps carry a metaphorical message: the foundation of the friars is false, and, thus, the Church's work is lost because its own foundation, partly comprised of the falsely religious friars, is weak and corrupt. This message is in keeping with many of the significantly British sentiments concerning the uneasy relations existing between the inter-dependant Church and friars as expressed throughout *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. In the Prologue, for instance, when Will describes the friars in the "fair feeld ful of folk" (Prol. 17), he mentions that "Manye ferlies han fallen in a fewe yeres" (Prol. 65) since friars have commercialized charity and confession. One of these "ferlies" is certainly the calamitous plague, one consequence of which is complaints from parsons and parish priests "That hire parisshe weren povere sith the pestilence tyme" (Prol. 84). The friars, then, are indirectly responsible here for the plight of the poor parish priests.

Will, however, also suggests that the friars will be responsible for even greater misfortune when he portentously remarks, "But Holy Chirche and hii holde bettre togidres / The mooste meschief on molde is mountynge up faste" (Prol. 66-67). Will's foreboding of great misfortune on earth ultimately becomes reality: Antichrist arrives.

Of greater interest here, however, is the emphasis placed upon the need for co-operation between the Church and the fraternal orders. That the necessary co-operation never materialized is evident from the arrival of Holy Church's arch-foe, Antichrist, whom friars follow and support (XX 58). Moreover, the absence of this co-operation is apparent in numerous episodes preceding the climactic one -- episodes that portray undesirable relations both between friars and parishioners and between friars and representatives of the Church. For instance, in *Passus V* during the procession of the deadly sins, the figure of Sloth, "with two slymy eighen" (V 386), indirectly reveals one reason for contention between the friars and parish priests. "Vigilies and fastyng dayes," confesses Sloth,

-- alle thise late I passe,
And ligge abedde in Lenten and my lemman in myne
armes
Til matyns and masse be do, and thanne moste to
the Freres;
Come I to *Ite, missa est* I holde me yserved.
(V 410-13)

Friars, it seems, offer easy means for lazy parishioners to fulfil their religious obligations; they provide a convenient but too lax opportunity for completion of religious duties. As a result, friars are less observant and less strict religious guides than members of the secular clergy.

Similarly, again in *Passus* V, the figure of Wrath reveals the lack of co-operation in relations between friars and parish priests. "With two white eighen, / And nevelynge with the nose" (V 133-34), Wrath confesses,

I was som tyme a frere,
And the coventes gardyner for to graffen impes.
On lymytours and listres lesynges I ymped,
Til thei beere leves of lowe speche, lordes to plese,
And sithen thei blosmede abroad in boure to
 here shriftes.
And now is fallen therof a fruyt -- that folk
 han wel levere
Shewen hire shriftes to hem than shryve hem to
 hir persons.
And now persons han parceyved that freres
 parte with hem,
Thise possessioners preche and deprave freres;
And freres fyndeth hem in defaute, as folk
 bereth wittenesse,
That whan thei preche the peple in many places aboute,
I, Wrathe, walke with hem and wisse hem of my
 bokes. (V 135-46)

Explicit in Wrath's confession are the antifraternal conventions that friars lie, corrupt the divine gift of speech, and commit the deadly sin of wrath. Explicit in Wrath's confession also is an antifraternal sentiment particularly stressed in British antifraternal writings such as FitzRalph's *Defensio curatorum*: parishioners confess to friars rather than their parish priests who, consequently, do not receive the full benefice upon which their livelihood depends.³³ Even though

³³ It is interesting to note that Wrath's confession criticizes not only friars but also parish priests 'who deprave friars.' Langland shows both friars and possessioners slandering each other, something, I think, that is both unusual and refreshing in heavily antifraternal works which *The Vision* certainly is. Nevertheless, this criticism of parish priests is compatible with the thrust of other anticlerical criticisms in the work.

Wrath remarks that beneficed parsons "deprave friars" -- a certainly unChristian action -- he, nevertheless, focuses upon the friars' method of enticing parishioners away from their local curates, and, as a result, the friars appear more unscrupulous than the curates.

The image of gardening provides insight into the friars' abuse of the ministration of confession. Wrath grafts shoots of lies on friars from which grow leaves of low speech that then blossom in bedrooms. Using lies and low speech, the friars/confessors attract the elite, the wealthy, and now they hear confession in "bedrooms," a setting suggesting lechery committed by both friars and the wealthy.³⁴ Clearly evident in Wrath's garden is a crop, a tree, a plant of falsehood, dissension, and corruption. This crop contrasts sharply with Piers the Ploughman's crop of corn which serves to feed the impoverished labourer (*Passus* VI). Wrath's plant also contrasts sharply with "the plante of pees, moost precious of vertues" (I 152), which is Christ, the Saviour. And Wrath's tree contrasts sharply with the tree of charity:

Mercy is the more therof; the myddul stok is ruthe;
The leves ben lele wordes, the lawe of Holy Chirche;
The blosmes beth buxom speche and benigne lokynge;
Pacience hatte the pure tree, and pore symple of herte,
And so thorough God and thorough goode men
groweth the fryt Charite. (XIV 5-9)

All of these juxtapositions serve to emphasize the friars' departure from the ideal Christian life of faith and charity: plants of friars generate anger, not peace and patience, cling to the wealthy, not the poor and simple of heart, produce lies and low speech, not the law of

³⁴ See also Friar Flatterer's performance in "boures" in *Passus* XX and Mede's comments in *Passus* III.

the Holy Church and "buxom speche," and, finally, propagate "defaute" or faults in their rivals, the parish priests, rather than bear the fruits of mercy, pity, and charity.

Despite the friars' corruption of Christian tenets, they nevertheless attract parishioners, particularly wealthy ones. In *Passus* V friars please lords while in *Passus* III the friar/confessor establishes a 'rewarding' relationship with Mede. In *Passus* XI, too, a friar/confessor establishes a financially rewarding friendship with a wealthy parishioner -- Will. Foolishly rejecting his earlier interest in locating Dowel and Dobet, and imprudently disregarding Dame Study's astute advice, Will allows himself to be comforted by Coveitise of Eighes who counsels him to

Have no conscience how thou come to goode.
Go confesse thee to som frere and shewe hym thi synnes.
For whiles Fortune is thi frend freres wol thee lovyne,
And fe[stn]e thee in his fraternitee and for thee biseke
To hir Priour Provincial a pardon for to have,
And preien for thee pol by pol if thou be
pecuniosus. (XI 53-58)

Coveitise's counsel points out the motivation behind the friars' desire to perform the office of confession: greed. Will's later experience, when he "yarn into elde" and Fortune forsook him, reveals the extent of this greed. "Putte ... lowe" by poverty (XI 62), Will now finds

the frere afered and flittyng bothe
Ayeins oure firste forward, for I seide I nolde
Be buried at hire hous but at my parisshe chirche
(For I herde ones how Conscience it tolde
That there a man were cristned, by kynde he
sholde be buryed).
And for I seide thus to freres, a fool thei me
helden,
And loved me the lasse for my lele speche.
(XI 63-69)

Will's decision to be buried at his parish church rather than the friary indicates he is beginning anew his quest for personal salvation. He now recalls and heeds Conscience's, and not Covetise's, advice. But his decision also introduces an issue about which British antifraternalists, more than continental ones, were particularly sensitive. This volatile issue concerned the proper place of burial of parishioners, and antifraternalists such as FitzRalph considered the parish church the proper burial ground, the "God-chosen place." Langland certainly shows his secular partisanship. Will, after all, supports his "parisshe chirche," not the friary -- a show of support which, as we will see, parallels Thomas' in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*.

Not silenced or shaken by the friars' loss of love and opinion of him, Will continues to berate his friar/confessor, angrily accusing him of behaving

lik thise woweris
 That wedde none widwes but for to welden hir goodes.
 Right so, by the roode, roughete ye nevere
 Where my body were buryed, by so ye hadde my silver!
 Ich have muche merveille of yow, and so hath
 many another,
 Whi youre covent coveiteth to confesse and to burye
 Rather than to baptize barnes that ben
 catecumelynges. (XI 71-77)

Will's questioning here of the friars' failure to seek the privilege of baptism is similar to British antifraternalists' such as FitzRalph's; they wonder why friars only perform the lucrative ministrations of sepulture, confession, and preaching. They also provide an answer: friars purposely neglect to obtain the financially unrewarding ministrations such as baptism because these privileges do not feed fraternal greed.

Will ultimately recognizes the extent of this fraternal greed. While walking "in manere of a mendynaunt" (XIII 3), a state which stresses Will's fall from wealth, he contemplates his experience with the friar/confessor, focussing on

how that freres folwede folk that was riche,
And [peple] that was povere at litel pris thei sette,
And no corp in hir kirkyerd ne in hir kirk was buried
But quik he biquethe hem aught or sholde helpe
quyte hir dettes. (XIII 7-10)

But, even though Will comes to understand that greed motivates friars, he nevertheless does not show an intimate understanding of what friars' greed provides. Both Repentance and Anima possess this knowledge. In *Passus* V Repentance debates the issue of restitution with Covetise, during which debate Repentance posits:

were I a frere of that hous ther good feith and
charite is,
I nolde cope us with thi catel, ne oure kirk amende,
Ne have a peny to my pitaunce, so God [pyne] my
soule in helle,
For the beste book in oure hous, theigh brent
gold were the leves. (V 264-67)

Located within Repentance's claim of what he would not do if he was a friar of the house of "good feith and charite" are details describing what corrupt friars actually do with Covetous' "catel." Avaricious friars purchase copes, improve the church buildings, and buy the best books containing leaves of "brent gold." Anima's diatribe against the friars adds support to these accusations. In *Passus* XV she alleges that

As wel freres as oother folk, foliliche spenden
In housynge, in haterynge, in to heigh clergie shewynge
Moore for pompe than for pure charite.
(XV 77-79)

Later, when she discourses against mendicancy, Anima comments on on those things upon which the friars spend their monetary gains: "For that thei beggen aboute, in buyldynge thei spende, / And on himself som, and swiche as ben hir labourers" (XV 328-29). According to both Anima and Repentance, then, the friars desire what Repentance calls Covetous' "catel" in order to possess clothing, buildings, and books.

Anima, however, does not merely accuse the friars of uncharitably spending money on clothing and buildings for themselves. She also finds fault with their preaching, a favourite target of both French and British antifraternalists and a target already used in the Prologue when Will alleges that friars preach for profit of the womb (Prol. 59). "Freres and fele othere maistres," alleges Anima,

that to lewed men prechen,
Ye moeven materes unmesurable to tellen of the Trinite,
That oftetyms the lewed peple of hir beleve doute.
(XV 70-72)

Anima then offers constructive criticism meant to undo the damage done to uneducated men:

Bettre it were by many doctours to bileven
swich techyng
And tellen men of the ten comaundements, and
touchen the sevene synnes,
And of the braunches that burjoneth of hem and
bryngen men to helle,
And how that folk in folies mysspenden hir fyve
wittes. (XV 73-76)

Anima's criticism here, in effect, asks the friars to return to the preaching of the simple yet all-important basic tenets of Christianity: obey the ten commandments and do not commit mortal sins.

Dame Study's criticism of friars' preaching parallels Anima's. According to Dame Study,

Freres and faitours han founde [up] swiche questions
To plesse with proude men syn the pestilence tyme,
And prechen at Seint Poules, for pure envye of clerkes,
That folk is noght fermed in the feith, ne free
 of hire goodes,
Ne sory for hire synnes; so is pride waxen
In religion and in al the reme amonges riche and povere
That preieres have no power thise pestilences
 to lette. (X 71-77)

Her indirect association here of corrupt fraternal preaching and the pestilence serves to recall Reason's demonstration that the pestilence occurred because man sinned -- a recollection that situates *Piers Plowman's* antifraternal sentiments in contemporary times.

In *Passus V* Reason

 gan araye hym al the reaume to preche,
And with a cros afore the Kyng comsede thus to techen.
He preved that thise pestilences were for pure synne,
And the south-westrene wynd on Saterdag at even
Was pertliche for pride and for no point ellis.
 (V 11-15)

To Reason, the plague, which initially infected England in 1348 and again was highly widespread in 1361-62 and 1375-76, signifies divine punishment for unadulterated sin, while the tempest on Saint Maur's day, 1362³⁵ both symbolizes God's censuring of man's pride and ominously portends the Last Judgement. In his preaching Reason generally urges repentance; he, for instance, "preide Pernele hir purfil to lete" (V 26) and bade "Wastour go werche what he best kouthe" (V 24). Reason's preachings -- and his teachings -- certainly differ from those of the friars as described by Dame Study and

³⁵ A.V.C. Schmidt, ed. *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1982), p. 315.

Anima. Unlike Reason, friars do not counsel repentance but, rather, incite pride, doubt, and avarice.

The fraternal abuse of the privilege of preaching is mentioned in the Prologue. In the field of folk Will sees friars who preach for "profit of the wombe." But this fraternal abuse of the office of preaching, a corollary of which is teaching, is also illustrated, particularly vividly, in two episodes, one in *Passus* VIII and the other in *Passus* XIII. In both episodes Will is at a psychologically significant point in his quest for salvation, and in both episodes the friars are masters, a label both French and British antifraternalists use to condemn friars as pseudo-apostles for it conveys disobedience of the evangelical precept, "*Nec vocemini magistri*" (Be not called masters) (Matt. 23:10).³⁶ As "maistres," the friars fail to counsel repentance. In *Passus* VIII Will "yrobed in russet," like a pilgrim, "romed aboute" (VIII 1). Even though he wanders, a physical action signifying undesirable spiritual wandering, Will nevertheless now has a goal. He is actively seeking Dowel, the first step toward obtaining personal salvation and one which, of course, religious teachers should encourage. His encounter with two masters of the Franciscan order does not help him reach his goal. Despite the friars' boasting that Dowel and Do-yeve dwell with them, a claim which certainly reinforces the antifraternal convention that friars are proud, Will does not believe them but, instead, scholastically disputes their

³⁶ See Chapter Two, pp. 54 ff. for a discussion of William's use of this biblical injunction as a tool of antifraternal polemic. See also Chapter Two, p. 101 for a discussion of FitzRalph's use of it.

premise. And despite the friars' subsequent parable which teaches the importance of charity, "the champion, chief help ayein synne" (VIII 46), yet neglects to stress the need to avoid mortal sins such as "sleuthe" (VIII 52),³⁷ Will does not gather any understanding of the nature of Dowel. In fact, he has "no kynde knowynge ... to conceyve alle [the friar's] wordes, / Ac if I may lyve and loke, I shal go lerne better" (VIII 58-59).

As teachers, the friars fail miserably. Their parable does not encourage Will to be "fermed in the feith ... free of hire goodes, / Ne sory for hire synnes" (X 74-75). Their parable does not elucidate the way to reach Dowel. Instead, it only reflects their talent for sophism, their ability to prove what Dowel is rather than understand and explain what it is. Indeed, Will's encounter with the pair of Franciscan masters of *Passus* VIII serves as a demonstration of, an *exemplum* of, what Imaginative considers bookish meddling that is ultimately futile because it does not enhance true Christian knowledge which is found only in the Scriptures. After silently following Will for "fyve and fourty wynter" -- spiritually barren winters during which Will encounters Covetous Eyes of *Passus* XI and the avaricious friar -- Imaginative finally breaks his silence by initially warning Will to mend his ways and by chastising his dabbling in verse-making:

And thow medlest thee with makynge -- and

³⁷ The friar's parable contains orthodox teachings; he stresses, for instance, that charity is the chief agent against sin as it strengthens man's soul. But the Minorite does not condemn spiritual laxity as he should. In fact, he says God "wole suffre wel thi sleuthe" (VIII 52).

myghtest go seye thi Sauter,
 And bidde for hem that yyveth thee breed; for
 ther are bokes ynowe
 To telle men what Dowel is, Dobet and Dobest
 bothe,
 And prechours to preve what it is, of many a
 peire freres. (XII 16-19)

Imaginative's reference to many pairs of friars perhaps is an allusion to the pair of Franciscans in *Passus* VIII. This pair certainly "prove" what Dowel is, yet their parable is only a successful vehicle for preaching, not teaching. Of particular significance, however, is Imaginative's emphasis on the need to practice simple but mandatory acts of Christian devotion. According to Imaginative, Will's saying both the Psalter and prayers for those who give him bread is more spiritually beneficial to him than verse-making. Implicit in Imaginative's instructions here is advice that teaches Will to forsake the pursuit of academic knowledge.

Imaginative's subsequent teachings further reveal the "right" type of knowledge Will should pursue. Drawing extensively upon the New Testament, Imaginative argues the necessity of following a life of faith, hope, and charity. In fact, he defines Dowel as these theological virtues, and such a definition, when compared with the friars' of *Passus* VIII, suggests a serious flaw in their teaching (XII 29-34). He also warns his pupil of the troubles arising from "catel and kynde wit" (XII 55), yet, despite his warning that "knowledge puffeth up" (I Cor. 8:1; cf. XII 57A), Imaginative acknowledges that "clergie for Cristes love" (XII 70) is highly commendable. After all, the source of this learning, of this "right" knowledge, is the Scriptures as Imaginative points out: "Although men made bokes, God was the

maister, / And Seint Spirit the samplarie, and seide what men sholde write" (XII 101-02). Furthermore, Imaginative uses the wise men as one *exemplum* of the ideal Christian clerk. In his brief recounting of the events of the Nativity, based on the Synoptic Gospels, he points out that the Holy Ghost

speketh there of riche men right noght, ne of
right witty,
Ne of lordes that were lewed men, but of the
hyeste lettred oute: *Ibant magi ab oriente*
[there came wise men from the east (Matt. 2:1)]
(If any frere were founde there, I yyve thee
five shillynges!)
Ne in none beggers cote was that barn born,
But in a burgeises place, of Bethlem the beste:
Set non erat ei locus in diversorio -- et pauper
non habet diversorium.
[But there was no room for them in the inn
(Luke 2:7);
and a beggar does not use an inn!] (XII 143-49)

To Imaginative, then, the Magi represent clerks who possess true knowledge and act upon it: they journeyed from the East and offered gifts to Christ.

Imaginative's parenthetical comment about friars in the middle of his sober narrative concerning true Christian "clergie" is perhaps a short yet pointed attack on the friars' claim that Christ and his apostles practised mendicancy. As A.V.C. Schmidt postulates,

Ymag. means that the statement 'there was no room in the inn' implies that Joseph and Mary were seeking a room at an inn and therefore cannot have been beggars. He wishes to deny the claim that mendicancy can be traced back to Christ himself.³⁸

Similar antimendicant sentiments expressed throughout *The Vision*

³⁸ A.V.C. Schmidt, ed., *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1982), p. 338.

of *Piers Plowman* lend support to this interpretation. In *Passus* VI, for instance, Piers specifies that wandering preachers -- friars -- who lack a church living shall not receive his alms:

Ne postles, but thei preche konne and have
power of the bisshop:
Thei shul have payn and potage and [put] himself
at ese --
For it is an unresonable Religion that hath
nought of certein. (VI 149-51)

And, later, after Piers receives his pardon, it is specified that

Beggeres and bidderes beth nought in the bulle
But if the suggestion be sooth that shapeth hem
to begge:
For he that beggeth or bit, but if he have nede,
He is fals with the feend and defraudeth the nedy,
And also gileth the gyvere ageynes his wille.
(VII 64-68)³⁹

Yet Imaginative's parenthetical comment, positioned as it is in a discussion of Christian knowledge, certainly is also an attack on the friars' professed clerical wisdom. The friars, suggests Imaginative's exclamation, did not exist at the time of the early Church, were not present at the cataclysmic events that would lead to the formation of the Church, and were not and thus are not wise men.

The friar whom Will encounters at Conscience's court is certainly not wise. Like the two Franciscan masters of *Passus* VIII, this "maister" does not possess true knowledge of Dowel and his confrères, Dobet and Dobest. At this court, Conscience holds a dinner

³⁹ Langland here re-affirms the standard, medieval view of begging. Begging was only permissible if its practitioners were not able-bodied workers. The friars, of course, did not fit this stipulation. For a literary discussion of mendicancy, see de Meun's *The Romance of the Rose*, ll. 11269-488.

attended by Clergy, Conscience, Patience, and Will who is now eager to acquire learning after Imaginative's instruction and, thus, is suitably malleable. Attending this dinner also is a master who "was maad sitte as for the mooste worthi" (XIII 33), a position William of Saint Amour's pharisaic friars coveted because they were among those who could be said "*amare primas recubitus in coenis*" (to love the first place at dinner) (*De Pharisaeo* 10). Unlike the other guests who dine, for instance, on meats "Of Austyn, of Ambrose, of alle the foure Evaungelistes" (XIII 39), this master

on the heighe dees drank wyn [] faste:

.....
He eet manye sondry metes, mortrews and
puddynges,
Wombe cloutes and wilde brawen and egges yfryed
with grece. (XIII 60-63)

Such gluttonous behaviour recalls William of Saint Amour's allegation that Pharisaic friars overindulge in banquets of delicacies (*De periculis* 66); it also provokes Will to complain to Patience:

It is noght foure dayes that this freke, bfore
the deen of Poules,
Preched of penaunces that Paul the Apostle
suffrede --
'*In fame et frigore*' and flappes of scourges:
.....
Ac o word thei overhuppen at ech a tyme that
thei preche
That Poul in his Pistle to al the peple tolde --
Periculum est in falsis fratribus! (XIII 64-69)

Will's display of righteous indignation is understandable. After all, the friar does not practise what he has so recently preached. He neither suffers hunger or thirst nor endures beatings from rods but is, as Will later aptly says, "Goddess gloton ... with hise grete chekes" (XIII 77). He does not teach by example. Moreover, the friar selec-

tively and carefully avoids using 2 Cor. 11:26 as a theme in preaching, a text that would urge parishioners to protect themselves from false brothers or friars. In his eagerness to acquire clerical learning, Will is both appalled and disappointed by the hypocritical behaviour of the friar, a man of supposedly immense learning -- so disappointed, in fact, that he foolishly threatens to "jangle to this jurdan with his juste wombe / To telle me what penaunce is, of which he preched rather!" (XIII 83-84).

Aware of the friar's talent for rationalizing overindulgence and lying, Patience counsels Will to be patient, pointing out that the best time to oppose the master is after his "lesyng" (XIII 95). Will follows this advice -- an acceptance which demonstrates his affinity for the cardinal virtue of patience as well as his turning toward a suitable guide, an action he earlier failed to do when he disregarded Dame Study's teachings and followed Covetous Eyes'. He does, nevertheless, calmly challenge the friar to define Dowel, and, even though the friar eventually proffers an acceptable definition of it -- dowel is to do as clerks teach, dobet is one who teaches and labours to teach, and dobest is to do himself as he says and preaches (XIII 115-117) -- he fails to practise his own teachings. This failure is clearly evident in the friar's response to Patience's discourse on Love. According to Patience, Love taught her that to learn is to do well, to teach is to do better, while to love one's enemies is to do best (XIII 136-38). Moreover, Love also advocated words and works of love as an antidote to fear and misery. To the friar, Patience's teaching

is but a dido ... a disours tale!
Al the wit of this world and wight mennes strengthe
Kan noght [par]formen a pees between the Pope

and hise enemys,
Ne bitwene two Christene kynges kan no wight
pees make
Profitable to either peple. (XIII 172-76)

Abruptly pushing the table away from himself, he subsequently "took Clergie and Conscience to conseil, as it were, / That Pacience tho most passe -- 'for pilgrymes konnes wel lye'" (XIII 177-78).

The friar's irate words, as well as his abrupt and insolent stopping of the after-dinner conversation, show that he is easily angered, a characteristic diametrically opposed to patience and one traditionally assigned to friars.⁴⁰ His response to Patience's discourse also serves to evoke Dame Study's earlier critique of friars' conversations concerning Christian tenets at the houses of the wealthy. "Swiche motyves they meve," says Dame Study, "thise maistres in hir glorie, / And maken men in mysbileve that muse muche on hire wordes" (X 115- 116). Indeed, the friar attending Conscience's dinner does put forth the ridiculous notion that Patience should go away, a notion which absurdly advocates the vanquishing of one of the virtues central to the Christian faith. If mused upon, this notion, too, could lead men into disbelief, away from the established code of ideal Christian conduct. Consequently, both the friar's 'words and works' -- his verbal response and physical action -- indicate he is not truly qualified to teach the doctrine of dowel, dobet, and dobest.

Conscience does not lend support to the gluttonous master's

⁴⁰ See Chapter Two, p. 90 for a discussion of this traditional antifraternal complaint.

motion but decides to travel with Patience, a decision that signifies both the severing of relations between the friar and Conscience and the developing bond between Conscience and Patience. That this bond becomes strong is evident when Conscience steadfastly accompanies Patience on her journey (*Passus* XIV). That this bond remains strong is evident when Conscience later repeats Patience's teaching about love. In *Passus* XX, despite the ominous presence of Antichrist and despite the relatively small number of defenders of Unity, Conscience continues to uphold Patience's teaching: he tells the friars to "lerneth for to lovye" (XX 250). In fact, Conscience promises to welcome the friars to Holy Church only if they

Holdeth [] in unitee, and haveth noon envye
To lered ne to lewed, but lyveth after youre reule.
And I wol be youre borugh, ye shal have breed
and clothes
And othere necessities ynowe -- yow shal no
thyng lakke,
With that ye leve logik and lerneth for to lovye.
(XX 246-50)

Yet Conscience never welcomes the friars nor do the friars forsake logic and learn to love. Just as the angry master of *Passus* VIII rejects the teachings of Patience, the friars of *Passus* XX eschew Conscience's guidance.

Indeed, the friars of *Passus* XX, the final *Passus* of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, possess characteristics and conduct themselves in ways which parallel or, at the very least, are similar to those attributes and actions so vividly described in many of the preceding *passus*. Some of these characteristics are antifraternal conventions expressed in both French and British antifraternal tracts. For instance, envy is associated with friars in both *Passus* V and XX.

In the former *passus* Envy, attending the procession of the deadly sins, is dressed in a kirtel and courtepy, "of a freres frokke were the foresleves" (V 80), while in the latter *passus* Envy

heet freres go to scole
And lerne logyk and lawe--and ek contemplacion--
And preche men of Plato, and preve it by Seneca
That alle thynges under hevene oughte to ben in
commune. (XX 273-76)

But some of these characteristics are antifraternal conventions emphasized mainly in British antifraternal writings. Conscience, for example, refers to the competition existing between the friars and parish priests. If friars "coveite cure," points out Conscience, "Kynde wol yow telle / That in mesure God made alle manere thynges" (XX 253-54). Similarly, Will comments upon the lack of co-operation between parish priests and friars, a sentiment earlier expressed in *Passus* V:

And yvele is this yholde in parissches of Engelande;
For persons and parissch preestes, that sholde
the peple shryve,
Ben curatours called to knowe and to hele,
Alle that ben hir parisschens penaunces enjoigne,
And ben ashamed in hir shrift; ac shame maketh
hem wende
And fleen to the freres. (XX 280-85)

And, finally, Frere Flatterer personifies the friar who usurps the curate's revenue, an accusation particularly rife in British antifraternal writings, when he fetches a letter from a lord to act as parish priest and goes to the bishop with it (XX 325-29). Even though Frere Flatterer is also known as Sir Penetrans-domos, an alias that serves to situate his appearance in the Last Days of Salvation History, he nevertheless usurps the role of parish priest as confessor. This

usurpation certainly places him in the fourteenth-century "parisshes of Engelande." It also, along with the other particularly British antifraternal sentiments expressed throughout *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, identifies Langland's *visio* as a British antifraternal work.

Section III: 'Odious Meschief': Chaucer and the Antifraternal Tradition

Like the many friars in Langland's *visio* who remain unassociated with any specific district of England, Chaucer's Friar Huberd is not affiliated with a particular territory. Despite the narrator's identification of Huberd as a "lymytour,"⁴¹ this role of limitour serves only to label Huberd as a friar licensed to beg in a specific district. Similarly, Huberd is not affiliated with any one of the four orders of friars: "in alle the ordres foure," remarks the narrator, "is noon that kan / So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage" (*GP* 210-11). Huberd's lack of specific affiliation here with any one order serves to situate him as a representative of any or all orders. He is not specifically a Franciscan, Dominican, Carmelite, or Austin but, like the many friars in *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, a member of all the fraternal orders. Huberd embodies fraternal cor-

⁴¹ Larry Benson, ed., *General Prologue in The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), I (A) 209. All further references to the *General Prologue* will be identified by *GP* and line number.

ruption -- corruption that, according to antifraternalists, manifests itself in all "ordres fourre," not just one. He is, in fact, the epitome of antifraternal charges, a fraternal figure possessing antifraternal characteristics attributed to friars ever since the time of William of Saint Amour.

Indeed, the portrait of Friar Huberd reads like a register in which entries are composed of antifraternal conventions. It is a catalogue of some of the antifraternal complaints voiced against friars since the 1250s at the University of Paris -- a catalogue structured so as to follow the medieval rhetorical tradition and traditional descriptions of the virtues and vices,⁴² yet one constructed so as to create the lively character of Huberd to whom, as Jill Mann perceptively comments, we "respond ... as [an] individual[]." ⁴³ Included in this catalogue are many charges corresponding to those of William of Saint Amour. Like William of Saint Amour's pseudo-apostles who, for instance, are highly eloquent and give pleasing speeches (signs two and thirteen), Huberd possesses the gift of seductive speech. He not only knows much about "fair langage" (*GP* 211) but also puts this knowledge into practice:

thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,
So plesaunt was his '*In principio*,'
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng, er he wente.
(*GP* 253-55)

In fact, Huberd does not simply manipulate the divine gift of speech

⁴² See, for instance, Howard R. Patch, "Characters in Medieval Literature," 40 *MLN* (1925) 1-14.

⁴³ Jill Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 189.

to attract monetary gifts but misuses it to entice money from the impoverished, a group to whom he should give aid rather than one from whom he should receive financial gains.

Thematically related to Huberd's talent for "fair langage" is his propensity for "daliaunce" (*GP* 211). Like William's pseudo-apostles who socially yet idly while away their time (sign thirty-three), Huberd dallies away the hours, frequently with singing, a corollary of speech. He, as the narrator explains,

hadde a murye note:
Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote;
Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.
(*GP* 235-37)

Although the type of songs Huberd sings well with his "murye note" remains unspecified, the type is probably not sacred hymns. His recitation of "yeddynges" or ballads, as well as his knowing

the tavernes wel in every toun
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere,
(*GP* 240-42)

suggest that Huberd pursues, performs, and prefers secular forms of entertainment, a form of social activity which promotes "daliaunce" but one that certainly does not include, by definition, the singing of sacred hymns and visitations to the sick and poor.

Huberd, nevertheless, does play the harp, an instrument traditionally played by those in heaven and one better suited to a life of devotion to and praise of God than Huberd's "murye note" which earns him worldly recognition when he recites "yeddynges" (*GP* 235-37). Friar Huberd seems to gain great personal pleasure from his playing because

in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,
His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght
As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.
(GP 266-68)

Yet Huberd perhaps is unlike other 'heavenly' harpers. As Bernard F. Huppé remarks,

the song and the twinkling eyes suggest his full joy of life, but behind the surface is a possible reminder of a contrasting imagery, of the harping of David in praise of God, imitative of the heavenly music of the spheres, also celebrating the Creator.⁴⁴

Huberd also seems to derive pleasure from rather suspect relations with women, particularly young ones. Huberd, for instance, "hadde maad ful many a mariage / Of yonge wommen at his owene cost" (GP 212-13). Even though his arranging of marriages is ostensibly an act of generosity, this arranging is nonetheless suspicious. Finding husbands and providing dowries perhaps derive from Huberd's desire to perform an act of charity, yet both his corruption of his position of religious counsellor as evidenced by his failure to be acquainted with "sike lazars" (GP 245) and his inclination "to deelen with no swich poraille, / But al with riche and selleres of vitaille" (GP 247-48) indicate he usually socializes and associates with people only if he gains something 'profitable' or gratifying -- money, food, respect. From "yonge wommen" he can, of course, gain sexual gratification, a charge actually levelled against all friars by the "gat-tothed" Wife of Bath (GP 468) at the beginning of her tale. Elves, contends the Wife of Bath, are no longer seen because numberless "lymytours

⁴⁴ Bernard F. Huppé, *A Reading of the Canterbury Tales* (Albany: State University of New York, 1967), p. 37.

and othere hooly freres" haunt every land and stream.⁴⁵ Indeed, continues the Wife of Bath,

ther as wont to walken was an elf
 Ther walketh now the lymytour hymself
 In undermeles and in morwenynges,
 And seyth his matyns and his hooly thynges
 As he gooth in his lymytacioun.
 Wommen may go saufly up and down.
 In every bussh or under every tree
 Ther is noon oother incubus but he,
 And he ne wol doon hem but dishonour.
 (WBT 873-81)

Friars, then, at least according to the Wife of Bath who possesses extensive and practical knowledge of "that art the olde daunce" (GP 476), dishonour women; like incubi that appear only to "don lecherye with folc,"⁴⁶ friars seduce women.

Huberd is clearly one of these fraternal seducers. He possesses "fair langage" (GP 211), which beguiles people, and his neck is as white as "the flour-de-lys" (GP 238), a sign of lechery, according to medieval physiognomists.⁴⁷ Moreover, "rage he koude, as it were right a whelp" (GP 257). Huberd's romping or flirting like a playful pup here certainly conveys unrestrained, perhaps even licentious, behaviour while his gifts to "faire wyves" of "knyves / And pynnes" of

⁴⁵ Larry Benson, ed., *The Wife of Bath's Tale* in *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987, 866). All further references to the Wife's tale will be identified by WBT and line number.

⁴⁶ Priscilla Barnum, ed., *Dives and Pauper*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 118.

⁴⁷ Janette Richardson, "Explanatory Notes to The Friar" in Larry Benson, ed. *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), p. 808.

which the dangling tip of his hood is full (*GP* 233-34) suggest he attempts to purchase the favours of attractive married women.

The accusation here that friars carry knives and pins to barter for sex is not found only in Chaucer's antifraternal portrait of Huberd. John Wyclif similarly alleges, as Richardson has noted, that

friars have become peddlers and that they carry knives,
pins, and other small goods 'for women ... to gete love of
hem, and to have many giftis for little good or nought.'⁴⁸

Richardson also draws attention to a scrap of medieval verse, undated and anonymous, that reads "fratres cum knyvis goth about and swivytt mennis wyvis"⁴⁹ while the vehemently antifraternal Wyclifite poem, "The Orders of Cain" (1382), includes a rather lengthy yet illuminating passage on friars as buyers of sexual wares. According to the narrator who claims to be an ex-friar,⁵⁰ friars behave as peddlers:

Pai dele with purses, pynnes, & knyues,
With gyrdles, gloues for wenches & wyues --
Bot euer backward þe husband thryues
þer pai are haunted till.
For when þe gode man is fro hame,
And þe frere comes to oure dame,
He spares nauþer for synne ne shame
þat he ne dos his will.
(*"Cain"* ll. 37-44)

Friars, continues the narrator, are exceptional pedlars; in fact, they

⁴⁸ Richardson, p. 808.

⁴⁹ Richardson, p. 808.

⁵⁰ R.H. Robbins, ed., "The Orders of Cain" in *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), l. 169. All further references to this poem will be identified by "Cain" and line number.

are the epitome of 'master' vendors, always successfully trading small wares for sex:

Per is no pedler þat pak can bere
 þat half so dere can sell his gere
 þen a frer can do.
 For if he gife a wyfe a knyfe
 þat cost bot penys two,
 Worþe ten knyues, so mot I thryfe,
 he wyl haue er he go.
 ("Cain" ll. 66-72)

The narrator of "The Orders of Cain," however, does not simply posit that friars receive sexual favours when they, like pernicious pedlars, seduce women with small material goods. This ex-friar also contends that friars peddle penance when they hear confessions from married women. Because the friars seduce women when they minister confession, the ex-friar/narrator advises the

man þat here shal lede his life,
 þat has a faire doghter or a wyfe,
 Be war þat no frer ham shryfe,
 nauther loude ne still.
 ("Cain" ll. 73-76)

Despite their appearance of stability, women's hearts, continues the narrator, are changeable, and, therefore, women cannot be confidently left alone with the fraternal confessor. In fact, the mutable nature of women's affections and the seductive powers of friars lead the narrator to admit

Were I am a man þat hous helde,
 If any woman with me dwelde,
 þer is no frer bot he were gelde
 shuld com with-In my wones.
 For may he til a woman wyne
 In priueyte, he wyl not blynne
 Er he a childe put hir with-Inne --
 & perchaunce two at ones!
 ("Cain" ll. 85-92)

Like the friars in Gower's *Vox clamantis* who enjoy both the master's bedroom and its occupant, the wife, and whose "growing progeny fill the paternal halls" (VC 186), these friars seduce and impregnate women. And, like the friars in Gower's *Vox clamantis* whose behaviour is reminiscent of William of Saint Amour's pseudo-apostles as they are delineated in sign one of *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, the ex-friar's/narrator's confessors 'creep' into houses and 'penetrate' women 'laden with sin.'

By corrupting women when he arrives to hear confession, the friar in "The Orders of Cain" clearly abuses the lucrative ministration of confession. Instead of assigning acts of penance designed to cleanse the soul, the friar only further burdens the women with the sin of lechery. But the friars' corruption of the office of confession extends beyond sexual victimization of potential confessants. As the narrator points out, friars

say þat þai distroye synne,
 & þai mayntene men moste þer-Inne;
 For had a man slayn al his kynne,
 go shryue him at a frere,
 & for lesse þen a payre of shone
 He wyl assoil him, clene & sone,
 And say þe synne þat he has done
 his saule shal neuer dere.
 ("Cain" ll. 97-104)

Easy absolution is a conventional complaint against the friars as is the allegation that friars commercialize the office of confession. Both antifraternal conventions appear, for instance, in *The Romance of the Rose* when False Seeming boasts to Foul Mouth that he has "a hundred times more pity on your soul than your parish priest" (RR 12336-60) and in *The Vision of Piers Plowman* when

Lady Mede's confessor agrees to ignore the lecherous activities of her associates if she will refurbish his friary (III 59-63). They also appear in Chaucer's portrait of Friar Huberd.

Armed with the license to hear confession, Huberd becomes acquainted both with women who, according to their portrayal in the antifraternal tradition, service friars' sexual desires, and with wealthy landowners who, unlike the impoverished, provide commensurable financial funds. Indeed, he was well-loved and familiar

With frankeleyns over al in his contree,
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun;
For he hadde power of confessioun,
As seyde hymself, moore than a curat,
For of his ordre he was licenciat.
(GP 216-20)

Huberd's boasting of superiority over the parish priest, an act which both reflects the corruption of the divine gift of speech and is an antifraternal convention, elucidates one area of contention between friars and parish priests: professional rivalry for confessants. His "ful swete" hearing of confession (GP 221) and "plesaunt ... absolucioun" (GP 222) suggest another. Similar to False Seeming who is a hundred times more pitiful toward sinners than a local curate (RR 12336-60), Huberd "was an esy man to yeve penaunce, / Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce" (GP 223-24). Unlike the 'poor' parish priests who, according to antifraternalists such as FitzRalph, assign appropriately soul-healing acts of penance, Huberd neglects to encourage parishioners to perform such acts. To Huberd and his confrères, weeping and praying -- softening the hard heart with feelings of contrition -- are unnecessary vehicles of penance, ones easily replaced by giving money. To them, giving money "unto a povre ordre

... / Is signe that a man is wel yshryve" (*GP* 225-26). To them, too, giving money is a justifiable and reasonable substitute for acts of contrition because, as the narrator ingenuously explains,

For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt;
For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat wepe, although hym soore smerte.
Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyer
Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.
(*GP* 227-32)

The replacement of acts expressing contrition with silver is, of course, illogical and unreasonable. The friars' display of sophism may cleverly and successfully deceive the naive, a group which perhaps includes the narrator and those unschooled in rhetoric, yet it neither justifies nor excuses the friars' assignation of easy penance, their greed for silver, and their commercialization and corruption of the office of confession.

Huberd's corruption of this office clearly occupies a central position in the portrait. He is, of course, guilty of other morally reprehensible actions. For instance, he behaves hypocritically when "ther as profit sholde arise, / Curteis he was and lowely of servyse" (*GP* 249-50). He abuses his vow of poverty by possessing a "purchas ... wel bettre than his rente" (*GP* 256), as well as by wearing a cloak "Of double worstede" (*GP* 262). Indeed, on love-days he dresses

nat lyk a cloysterer
With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
(*GP* 259-61)

Yet, despite Huberd's corruption of the virtue of humility, the ideal of poverty, and the apostolic life, this abusive behaviour does not draw as much attention from the narrator as does his corruption of

the office of confession. And, even though Huberd's sexual proclivities and licentious passion for young and fair, sometimes married, women receive a lot of attention, even though his artful manipulation of sound and speech is repeatedly commented upon by the narrator, these morally reprehensible characteristics nevertheless do not receive as much attention as his abuse of his confessional powers. On the basis of proportional treatment alone, Huberd's abuse of these powers, in fact, suggests this particular antifraternal sentiment is the focal point of Chaucer's portrait of the friar; as the focal point, it further suggests that, like British antifraternalists such as FitzRalph who stress both the unhealthy impact of friars upon parishioners and friars' abuse of pastoral privileges, Chaucer imbues his portrait of the friar not only with conventional, international antifraternalistic traits, but also with more topical British antifraternal characteristics.

Chaucer's portrait of Friar Huberd is actually the longest portrait in the *General Prologue*. This length suggests Huberd's moral and spiritual imperfections take longer to enumerate and describe than, for example, those of the courteous prioress wearing "a brooch of gold ful sheene" (*GP* 160) or those of the "balled" monk wearing "of gold ywroght a ful curious pyn" (*GP* 196), both of whom are the only other members of the regular clergy appearing in the *General Prologue*.⁵¹ Yet Chaucer does not confine his lengthy critique of Huberd to the narrator's description of the friar's "con-

⁵¹ Canons, also members of the regular clergy, appear in the *Canon's Yeoman's Tale*, but not in the *General Prologue*.

dicioun," "degree," and "array" (*GP* 38-41). He also presents Huberd quarrelling with the diseased and debauched Summoner.

This dramatic quarrel, which further exposes fraternal flaws, first arises when Huberd ridicules the Wife of Bath's rather long-winded preamble to her tale (*WBP* 829-31). Upon hearing the Friar's "gale" (*WBP* 832),

'Lo,' quod the Somonour, 'Goddess armes two!
A frere wol entremette hym everemo.
Lo, goode men, a flye and eek a frere
Wol falle in every dyssh and eek mateere.
What spekestow of preambulacioun?
What! amble, or trotte, or pees, or go sit down!
Thou lettest oure disport in this manere.'
(*WBP* 833-39)

Evident in the Summoner's criticism that friars and flies eagerly swarm around food is a comic allusion to fraternal gluttony, an antifraternal commonplace. Like flies always attracted to food, friars, as False Seeming, for instance, previously said, always seek "delicious morsels of food" (*RR* 11046). Yet the pairing of friar and fly also has a different, iconographic significance. The fly, succinctly explains George Ferguson in *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*,

has long been considered a bearer of evil or pestilence. In Christian symbolism the fly is a symbol of sin. It sometimes appears in pictures of the Virgin and Child to convey the idea of sin and redemption.⁵²

According to this iconographic tradition, if friars swarm with flies and like flies, they are linked iconographically with flies -- purveyors of sin and evil. This meaning is supported by the attributes of flies as

⁵² George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 18.

presented in the *Speculum perfectionis*, *Legenda aurea*, and *The South English Legendary*. As Laurel Braswell convincingly demonstrates in "Chaucer and The Legendaries," Chaucer's identification of friars with flies possibly derives both from the *Speculum perfectionis*, a medieval life of Saint Francis, and from the versions of the legend of Saint Michael in the *Legenda aurea* and *The South English Legendary*.⁵³ In the *Speculum perfectionis* Friar Fly personifies "the idle man who never works but manages nevertheless to sit down to dinner before his brothers."⁵⁴ In the *Legenda aurea*, Voragine compares Lucifer's cohorts to flies that swarm in large numbers and fall down to plague men.⁵⁵ Imbedded in the Summoner's irate retort to the Friar's interruption, then, is the antifraternal sentiment that friars incessantly and greedily swarm everywhere. Contrary to the divine law of order as it is established in Wisdom 11:21, begging friars lack "number, measure, or weight;" they idly yet perniciously swarm about, numberless, measureless, unfixed to a specific place. Indeed, they haunt, as the Wife of Bath so pertly remarks after the Friar's insolent interruption, "every lond and every streem, / As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem" (*WBT* 867-68).

Imbedded also in the Summoner's irate retort is the image of fraternal flies as cohorts of Lucifer. The affiliation between friars and Satan is, as we have seen, not unusual in British antifraternal

⁵³ Laurel Braswell, "Chaucer and the Legendaries," *English Studies in Canada* II (1976) 4: 373-80.

⁵⁴ Braswell, 376.

⁵⁵ Braswell, 376.

works. In Gower's *Vox clamantis* the moral messenger bluntly states, "The Devil has placed everything under their foot" (VC 184), and various, other antifraternal works indicate a symbiotic relationship between friars and the Devil. Chaucer, however, portrays this relationship imagistically. Indeed, Chaucer's friars are also identifiable as cohorts of Lucifer not only as implied in the Summoner's retort to the Friar's interruption of the Wife of Bath but also as suggested in the *Wife of Bath's Tale* and the *Summoner's Prologue*. At the beginning of her tale, the Wife of Bath insinuates that friars have supplanted elves or incubi; she also remarks that ubiquitously elfish friars are "As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem" (WBT 868). The antifraternal allegation -- one reflecting the British movement -- that friars are demonic is clearly evident in the Wife's theory explaining the disappearance of elves; it is not as explicitly evident in her description of their density. Nevertheless, it is implicit because the analogy used by the Wife of Bath, as Braswell points out, carries echoes of Voragine's *Legenda aurea*. The air, purports Voragine in his legend of Saint Michael, is full of demons and evil spirits as dust particles in the sunbeam.⁵⁶ Like innumerable demons and evil spirits, numberless friars thus haunt England.

The Wife of Bath's ridicule of friars, one probably prompted by Huberd's criticism of her rather lengthy prologue to her tale, is certainly unkind. After all, she does equate friars with elves, demons, evil spirits, and incubi. Yet her ridicule is neither as caustic nor as

⁵⁶ Braswell, 377.

vitriolic as the Summoner's in his prologue. In this prologue, the Summoner, like the Wife of Bath, focusses upon friars as devilish fiends, but he does so by relating a scurrilous anecdote that supports his contention that "Freres and feendes been but lyte asonder" (*SP* 1674). A friar, narrates the Summoner, saw hell in a vision. "In al the place saugh he nat a frere" (*SP* 1680); only when an angel takes him to Satan whose tail is "Brodder than of a carryk is the sayl" (*SP* 1688) and commands Satan to raise his tail does the friar see a nest of friars:

And er that half a furlong wey of space,
 Right so as bees out swarmen from an hyve,
 Out of the develes ers ther gonne dryve
 Twenty thousand freres on a route,
 And thurghout helle swarmed al aboute,
 And comen agayn as faste as they may gon,
 And in his ers they crepten everychon.
 (*SP* 1692-1698)

The Summoner's conception of the devil's arse as the final resting place of friars assuredly is coarse, and it anticipates the bawdy humour he uses in his tale. Yet it is also, as John Fleming convincingly demonstrates in "*The Summoner's Prologue: An Iconographic Adjustment*," a literary parody of a popular, religious anecdote that had strong fraternal overtones in the late fourteenth century. In this article, Fleming traces the iconographic relation between a vision reported by the thirteenth-century Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach in his *Dialogus Miraculorum* and Chaucer's parody of it in the *Summoner's Prologue*. This vision is the oldest recorded literary basis for a common iconographic theme in Marian preaching and

reports that a certain White Monk was ravished up to

heaven, where he saw the glorious Virgin surrounded by a vast multitude of the blessed, members of all the religious orders save his own. Weeping, he expressed to her his disappointment at seeing none of his brethren there. She opened wide her mantle, revealing 'an innumerable multitude of monks ...' and said: 'Those of the Cistercian Order are so dear to me, and so beloved, that I cherish them in my bosom.'⁵⁷

Fleming notes that fraternal orders, in particular the Dominicans, appropriated this anecdote, while confraternities or small groups of "lay supporters who took some but not all the [fraternal] vows and who provided support and carried on teaching activity,"⁵⁸ popularized the icon of Maria Misericordia (Virgin of Mercy). According to Fleming, Chaucer satirizes friars both by parodying in the *Summoner's Prologue* an anecdote that carried strong fraternal overtones and by presenting Thomas and John as brothers of a penitential confraternity that Friar John perverts by his abuse of penance. What thematically draws the prologue and tale together, continues Fleming, is not simply the perversion of the anecdote and its appropriators, both friars and members of the confraternity, but the theme of wrath.⁵⁹

The Summoner is certainly angry when he relates the anecdote of friars in hell. Prior to this brief anecdote, the friar, true to his promise to "Telle of a somonour swich a tale or two / That alle the

⁵⁷ John Fleming, "The Summoner's Prologue: An Iconographic Adjustment," 2 *ChauR* (1967-68), 95-96.

⁵⁸ John Hutchison, *Paths of Faith*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), p. 437.

⁵⁹ Fleming, 101-06.

folk shal laughen in this place" (*WBP* 842-43)-- a promise made earlier when the Summoner reproached him for laughing at the Wife of Bath's preamble -- narrates a story that demonstrates, as Huberd himself says, "of a somonour may no good be sayd" (*FP* 1281). Instead of practising Christian patience and 'turning the other cheek' when the Summoner insults friars, Huberd, in fact, angrily seeks revenge by telling his tale. He is successful. Indeed, he is only just beginning his tale of a Summoner's "harlotrye" (*FT* 1328) when he manages to provoke the Summoner. Friars, boasts Huberd,

been out of [a Summoner's] correccioun.
 They han of us no jurisdiccioun,
 Ne nevere shullen, terme of all hir lyves.
 (*FT* 1329-31)

This boasting of friars' accountability only to the superior generals of their orders is so irritating to the Summoner that he interjects, "Peter! so been wommen of the styves, / ... yput out of oure cure!" (*FT* 1332-33). Harry Bailly manages to restore peace, and, without further interruption, Huberd continues and concludes his tale of a summoner whom the devil outwits. But, despite his silence during Huberd's tale, the Summoner remains angry, so much so that by the end of it "Upon this Frere his herte was so wood / That lyk an aspen leef he quook for ire" (*SP* 1666-67). He, in turn, retaliates, angrily seeking revenge upon the Friar, both by relating his scurrilous anecdote of friars harboured in the devil's arse and by telling an exuberantly bawdy tale of a limitor, John, who visits Holdernes, Yorkshire.

The Summoner's tale of Friar John incorporates a com-

prehensive number of traditional complaints against the fraternal orders. As D.W. Robertson, Jr. has pointed out,

the description of the friar in the *Summoner's Tale* is little more than a compendium of charges which had been leveled at friars ever since the first protests of William of St. Amour, skillfully adapted to the purposes of a narrative.⁶⁰

Included in this 'compendium' of antifraternal commonplaces are: preaching for personal gain (1716-18), boasting of the superiority of fraternal orders over the secular clergy and monastic orders (1720-22, 1727), hearing confession in the houses of the wealthy (2163-65), acceptance of the title of "maister" in Thomas' house (1781, 1834) yet a hypocritical rejection of this title in the lord's house (2185), a discriminating taste for fine food (1839-41), glossing of scriptural texts that do not actually support John's argument (1791-94; 1919-20), boasting of the immense humility of friars (1906-10), pretending temperance (1844), flattery (1808-09), claiming a divine vision not actually experienced (1854-58), and begging, contrary to apostolic instruction, "with scrippe and tipped staf" (1737). Yet Chaucer actually embeds into the *Summoner's Tale* more than conventional complaints first articulated at the University of Paris: he also skillfully incorporates charges that are to be found mainly in the British and not the continental tradition of antifraternalism. And, as he amuses his audience with an antifraternal tale both particularized for an English audience and enlivened by religious parody, rich ironies,

⁶⁰ D.W. Robertson, Jr., *A Preface to Chaucer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 249.

word-play, and scatological humour, he persuades this audience that it is more blessed to give than to receive.⁶¹

The Summoner begins his entertaining tale of ribaldry in a deceptively decent way: a fraternal limitour, John, travels about Holderness, Yorkshire in order, as the raconteur remarks, "to preche, and eek to begge" (ST 1712). And preach he does at a local parish church where

Excited he the peple in his prechyng
To trentals, and to yeve, for Goddes sake,
Wherwith men myghte hooly houses make,
Ther as divine servyce is honoured,
Nat ther as it is wasted and devoured,
Ne ther it nedeth nat for to be yive,
As to possessioners, that mowen lyve.
(ST 1716-22)

Like the renowned fraternal preachers such as Robert Holcot, John Ridevall, and Thomas Woleys,⁶² John is a powerful and persuasive preacher; he evokes an emotional response from his audience, per-

⁶¹ Chaucer here follows the medieval literary theory purporting that poetry is composed both to please and to teach. Richard Green explains, "throughout the Middle Ages, poetry was made to please and to teach, or, more precisely, to please *in order* to teach." See Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. Richard Green (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962), p. xxi. See also Bernard F. Huppé's *A Reading of the Canterbury Tales* (Albany: State University of New York, 1967), particularly its introduction, and D.W. Robertson, Jr., *A Preface to Chaucer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962) for discussions on Chaucer's adherence to the traditional literary theory put forth in Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*.

⁶² For discussions of the friars' significant contributions to the art of sermons, see Beryl Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960) and G.R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, 2nd. rev'd ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966).

suading them to give generously. Yet implicit in the description of the effects of John's preaching is the sentiment that, according to John, parishioners would waste their offerings on "possessioners," the regular monastic orders as well as the beneficed secular clergy. Such an implication alludes to the issue concerning to whom a parishioner should give a donation -- an issue which received attention from, for instance, Richard FitzRalph who advises parishioners in his *Defensio curatorum* to give offerings to their parish priests: "teþingis beþ dewe to him in token of his lordschip & schal be payed to parysche chirches" (DC 54). This issue was particularly sensitive and prominent in British antifraternal politics, indeed more so than in the French antifraternal movement.

John is like a character drawn to mirror those practices FitzRalph found objectionable, and the excerpt from his sermon exemplifies an argument countering those who defend the parish priests' right to parishioners and tithings. To John, parishioners waste their offerings on possessioners because friars perform trentals, the office of thirty masses for souls dwelling in purgatory, in a better way than do possessioners. It is beneficial, argues John in his sermon, "whan that [trentals] been hastily ysonge" (ST 1726); after all, trentals repeated in one day deliver souls tormented "with flesshhook or with oules" (ST 1730) more quickly than those said on thirty successive days. Unlike "a preest joly and gay" who "syngeth nat but o masse in a day" (ST 1727, 1728), the friar, concludes John, quickly eases the tortured soul in purgatory.

John's boasting of the friars' superior use of trentals, a boasting which reflects the antifraternal commonplace that friars

claim they are superior to the secular clergy, indicates he uses his privilege of preaching to draw parishioners away from the parish priests. He also uses this privilege to incite people "to yeve ... / Wherwith men myghte hooly houses make" (*ST* 1717-18). Preaching for money, for donations, is in itself a traditional complaint against the friars. In sign eleven of chapter fourteen of *De periculis novissimorum temporum* William of Saint Amour identifies friars as pseudo-apostles "*qui propter lucrum temporale ... praedicant*" (*De periculis* 61) (who preach for personal gain), and this identification later surfaces in both British and French antifraternal tracts. In *The Romance of the Rose* False Seeming confesses, "my whole attention is on getting" (*RR* 11559); in *Vox clamantis* Gower contends, "a friar's assiduous hypocrisy sows his words in order that his harvest of profit in the world may thrive through them" (*VC* 183); and in *The Vision of Piers Plowman* the dreamer points out that friars preach to "peple for profit of the wombe" (Prol. 59). Chaucer, however, specifies in the *Summoner's Tale* that John preaches in order to finance the building of a holy house, and it is this specification, this adaptation of a traditional continental antifraternal convention, which reflects the particularly British antifraternal movement.

This specification has gone unnoticed; neither Szittyá nor Fleming, for instance, discusses the specific nature of this particularly British antifraternal sentiment. Yet the British complaint that friars construct elaborate holy houses -- one which is voiced, for instance, in *The Vision of Piers Plowman* when Mede's fraternal confessor acknowledges, "We have a wyndow in werchyng, wole

stonden us ful hye" (III 48) and in *Vox clamantis* when Gower describes fraternal churches as constructs of labyrinthine porticoes, halls, and bed chambers (VC 192) -- is structurally important in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*. This charge first appears at the beginning of the tale when John preaches at the local parish church: the first setting in which John seeks monetary gifts for the friars' building fund. John's preaching for money, as well as begging for food, at the beginning of the tale sets the stage for his visit to Thomas' house, the second setting in the tale, and anticipates his demand for money to build an oratory. But these actions also anticipate the choice Thomas makes between supporting the curate or the friar, a choice which British antifraternalists such as FitzRalph argue should favour the parish clergy.

John's initial words to Thomas are a clear indicator of one of his reasons for visiting him. Instead of inquiring about Thomas' sickness, John remarks,

ful ofte
Have I upon this bench faren ful weel;
Heere have I eten many a myrie meel.
(ST 1772-74)

Further emphasizing John's expectation of a meal at Thomas' house is his response to the invitation to dinner from Thomas' wife. "Have I nat of a capon but the lyvere," replies John,

And of youre softe breed nat but a shyvere,
And after that a rosted pigges heed --
.....
Thanne hadde I with yow hoonly suffisaunce.
I am a man of litel sustenaunce.
(ST 1839-44)

John's carefully pre-planned menu of rich food certainly belies his

claim of temperance. It also, according to William of Saint Amour's theory, means he is a pseudo-apostle. "True apostles," states William in sign twenty-six of *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, "are content with the food and drink offered them, and do not ask for more elegant dishes" (*De periculis* 66).

John's overriding interest in a refreshing meal, as well as his initial failure to inquire about Thomas' sickness, implies that he is not concerned with his welfare, and, despite John's claim that he has said "many a precious orison" (*ST* 1786) for Thomas' salvation, his topic of conversation -- the sermon he earlier gave -- shows that his own interests are foremost in his mind. After explaining that this sermon was "nat al after the text of hooly writ" (*ST* 1790), John says of his visit to the local church: "There have I taught hem to be charitable, / And spende hir good ther it is resonable" (*ST* 1795-96). Yet John taught his audience charity so they would provide money for the friars' building fund; thus, Chaucer's allusion here to the monetary motive behind John's visit re-introduces the British charge that friars preach in order to build expensive oratories.

The entrance of Thomas' wife momentarily interrupts John's description of his sermon, and his greeting suggests he prefers her company to that of her sick husband. Indeed, John

ariseth up ful curteisly,
And hire embraceth in his armes narwe,
And kiste hire sweete, and chirketh as a sparwe
With his lypes.
(*ST* 1802-05)

Even though John's kiss is the usual custom of salutation, this "kiss of peace" is nevertheless rather suspicious, accompanied as it is by both

an embrace and chirping like a sparrow, a bird with a proverbial reputation for lechery.⁶³ The subject of John's 'chirping' is similarly unsettling:

'Dame,' quod he, 'right weel,
As he that is youre servant every deel,
Thanked be God, that yow yaf soule and lyf!
Yet saugh I nat this day so fair a wyf
In al the chirche, God so save me!'
(ST 1805-09)

John's compliment certainly demonstrates his talent for flattery, a common accusation in both French and British antifraternal tracts. It also reveals the focal point of his attention during his sermon: he scrutinizes the physical appearance of women parishioners instead of focussing wholly upon the spiritual welfare of parishioners.

John's greeting, both physical and verbal, contains cues that he is a seductive womanizer; his advice to Thomas' wife reinforces the idea that he is morally lax, particularly about the sin of lechery. After greeting her, John explains he intends to speak with Thomas

a litel throwe.
Thise curatz been ful necligent and slowe
To grope tendrely a conscience
In shrift. (ST 1815-18)

To make sure that Thomas' wife realizes he is the best man of the cloth to confess Thomas, an act which reflects the particularly British emphasis on friars' unscrupulous interfering with the curate's rela-

⁶³ See both F.N. Robinson's explanatory note in *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), pp. 707- 795 and Richardson's in *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), p. 877.

tionship with parishioners, John boasts of his devotion to the apostolic life. Preaching, posits John,

is my diligence,
And studie in Petres wordes and in Poules.
I walke and fissue Cristen mennes soules
To yelden Jhesu Crist his propre rente;
To sprede his word is set al myn entente.
(*ST* 1818-22)

Despite his claim to the apostolic life and despite his paraphrasing of Luke 5:10 and Matthew 4:19, John's boasting, hypocrisy, and flattery all indicate he is actually a pseudo-apostle;⁶⁴ he walks only to accumulate goods and fishes only for money. Thomas' wife, however, is oblivious to John's hypocrisy. Unduly impressed by his self-congratulatory speech, she proceeds to confide in him, encouraging him to chastise her husband. Thomas, she reports, is "angry as a pis-semyre" (*ST* 1825) and groans like a boar, even though she keeps him warm at night. From him, she receives no "desport" (*ST* 1830). Indeed, she can no longer please him. This confidence astonishes Thomas, and he denounces ire as a product of the fiend. But, even though John correctly points out, "Ire is a thyng that hye God defended" (*ST* 1834), he nevertheless both neglects to reprimand Thomas' wife for desiring sexual intercourse simply to experience pleasure and fails to chastise Thomas for not rendering his wife the marital debt of his body. According to the medieval view of physical love as it was codified in the sacrament of marriage, a man and woman may have sexual intercourse for three reasons. In a passage

⁶⁴ For a thorough discussion of John as pseudo-apostle, see Penn Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 231-46.

which "succinctly epitomizes the [biblical] attitude towards carnal concupiscence",⁶⁵ Chaucer's Parson explains these reasons:

The firste is in entente of engendrure of children to the service of God Another cause is to yelden everich of hem to oother the dette of hire bodies The thridde is for to eschewe leccherye and vileynye. The fourthe manere is for ... to accompyce thilke brennyng delit Soothly it is deedly synne.⁶⁶

By neglecting to warn Thomas that his lack of response encourages "leccherye," John therefore does not fulfil his duty as moral advisor. And by ignoring the wife's desire for "desport" or "brennyng delit," John actually encourages lechery. In fact, like Mede's fraternal confessor in *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, Friar John willingly discounts lechery as a dangerous sin.

Thomas' wife is not disturbed by John's response to her confidence. She is also remarkably undisturbed by the death of her child two weeks ago. Indeed, she only mentions his death as an afterthought. Her lack of emotion is as unsettling as John's reaction to this news; like other friars who, according to antifraternalists, maintain they experience miracles, he attributes to himself and his confreres a vision from God:

'His deeth saugh I by revelacioun,
Seide this frere, 'at hoom in oure dortour.
I dar wel seyn that, er that half an hour
After his deeth, I saugh hym born to blisse
In myn avision, so God me wisse!
So dide oure sexteyn and oure fermerer.'

⁶⁵ Robert Miller, *Chaucer: Sources and Backgrounds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 365.

⁶⁶ Larry Benson, ed. *The Parson's Tale in The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), X (I), 938-42.

(ST 1854-59)

John's failure to offer consolation to Thomas and his wife at the beginning of his visit clearly demonstrates he was unaware of their son's death or, at the very least, unconcerned about their grief. His subsequent, lavishly sentimental description of the friars' orisons emphasizes this lack of compassion because, while describing the *Te deum*, he manages to denigrate members of both the lay and secular clergy, one of his favourite targets:

Oure orisons been moore effectueel,
 And moore we seen of Cristes secree thynges,
 Than burel folk, although they weren kynges.
 (ST 1870-72)

Not content with simply attacking "burel folk," John proceeds to boast of the friars' superior life. Friars, brags John, live "in poverté and in abstinence" (ST 1873), despise "this worldes lust" (ST 1876), follow the example of the apostles (ST 1881-82), and cleanse themselves with fasting (ST 1883-84). He finally concludes his lengthy digression on friars as followers of Christ's Gospel (ST 1881-1941) by telling Thomas,

In our chapitre praye we day and nyght
 To Crist, that he thee sende heele and myght
 Thy body for to weelden hastily.
 (ST 1945-47)

So absorbed is John in his digression on friars as "Werkeris of Goddes word" (ST 1937) that he never actually consoles Thomas and his wife for the loss of their son.

Thomas, however, challenges the validity of John's claims, arguing that he has wasted his money on friars since he does not feel any benefits from their prayers for his health. John meets this chal-

lenge by protesting that Thomas should not give such small donations; he should be more charitable. After all, Friar John points out,

Thomas, noght of youre tresor I desire
As for myself, but that al oure covent
To preye for yow is ay so diligent,
And for to buylden Cristes owene chirche.
Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche,
Of buyldyng up of chirches may ye fynde
If it be good in Thomas lyf of Inde.

(ST 1974-80)

Chaucer's reference here to Saint Thomas of India serves to emphasize how much the friars have moved away from their role models, the apostles. As Szittyá points out after examining the

Legenda aurea:

while Thomas the Apostle was given a reputation as a mason by the Lord, and while he was given great treasure by King Gundofernus of India to build a marvelous palace, he is nowhere reported to have built any structures at all, much less any churches. In fact, Thomas gave to the poor the construction fund with which King Gundofernus entrusted him, and was subsequently imprisoned.⁶⁷

Szittyá further explains that the reference to Thomas in John's speech belies his claim to the austere apostolic life of poverty. Yet Chaucer probably also intended his audience to associate sick Thomas with Saint Thomas. Such an association would imply that sick Thomas, like his namesake, Thomas of India, should not give his "tresor" to John's construction fund but, rather, to poor people -- a group which certainly included parish curates. Such an association,

⁶⁷ Penn Szittyá, "The Friar as False Apostle: Antifraternal Exegesis and the *Summoner's Tale*," *Studies in Philology* 71 (1974) 34.

too, implies that sick Thomas, like his namesake, is a 'doubting Thomas.' As Clark explains,

the Middle Ages knew St. Thomas primarily under two names: 'doubting Thomas' and 'Thomas of India.' The first name derives from St. John's Gospel account of the incredulity of Thomas ... at the Resurrection and his subsequent fidelity after probing the wounds of the risen Christ.⁶⁸

Sick Thomas, of course, doubts John's fidelity, and he tests it, though not before John lectures him on the deadly sin of wrath.

This lecture, however, does not lead to a contribution to the friars' building fund because Thomas supports the secular clergy. In fact, before John even arrives, Thomas was "shryven ... at [his] curat" (*ST* 2095). John reacts to this confession by openly demanding money, and his immediate demand to Thomas to give "thanne of [his] gold" (*ST* 2099) reveals John to be one of those friars who solicit revenue to which they are not entitled -- a revelation that parallels FitzRalph's complaint that friars take tithings from parish priests. John's motivation also parallels British antifraternalists' claim that friars desire elaborate buildings; John confesses he needs Thomas' gold in order

'to make oure cloystre,'
Quod he, 'for many a muscle and many an oystre,
Whan othere men han ben ful wel at eyse,
Hath been oure foode, our cloystre for to reyse.
And yet, God woot, unnethe the fundement
Parfourned is, ne of oure pavement
Nys nat a tyle yet withinne oure wones.
By God, we owen fourty pound for stones.'
(*ST* 2099-2106)

⁶⁸ Roy Clark, "Doubting Thomas in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*", *ChauR.* 11 (1976), 165.

The debt of "fourty pound for stones" (*ST* 2106) held by John's convent is staggering, particularly when, as John says, "unnethe the fundement / Parfourned is, ne of our pavement / Nys nat a tyle yet withinne oure wones" (*ST* 2103-05). Yet John is not upset here simply because his convent owes forty pounds; he is also upset because, if Thomas does not help his convent financially, he and his confreres will then have to sell their "bookes" (*ST* 2108). These books are evidently quite valuable since they could cover such a debt. Nevertheless, John and his confreres are willing to forego learning for a large building -- a willingness which perhaps suggests a list of priorities that is "up-so-down."

Friar John, of course, does not receive the gift he desires; instead, he receives from Thomas a gift of "odious meschief" (*ST* 2190). He responds by angrily seeking revenge and goes to the manor of a wealthy lord of the village -- the third and final setting in the tale. Here, in this final setting is the last allusion to fraternal oratories. Responding to John's concern that he will not be able to divide Thomas' amorphous gift, Jankin devises an elaborate solution to this problem. When the weather is fair, explains Jankin,

Withouten wynd or perturbynge of air,
Lat brynge a cartwheel heere into this halle;
But looke that it have his spokes alle --
Twelve spokes hath a cartwheel comunly.
And bryng me thanne twelve freres.
(*ST* 2254-58)

Thomas, continues Jankin, shall complete the number of his convent, and, while his confreres each kneel down and place their noses at the spokes' ends, he

Shal holde his nose upright under the nave.

Thanne shal this cherl, with bely stif and toght
 As any tabour, hyder been ybrought;
 And sette hym on the wheel right of this cart
 Upon the nave, and make hym lete a fart.
 (ST 2266-70)

Jankin's solution has generated considerable critical comment.

Robert A. Pratt considers it as evidence that Chaucer draws from medieval science as opposed to classical science. According to Pratt, Jankin's "views on sound and odor appear to coincide precisely with those of medieval science as presented by Albertus Magnus"⁶⁹ who declared in his *Liber de sensu et sensato* that

the air carried from [the speaker] and the motion [in the air] causing a voice are carried from place to place in circles unto the hearer ... and in the same way are produced smelling, hearing, and seeing the sensible essence ... is separated and divided in the medium in the aforesaid manner But while all these things are thus separated, they are the same perceptible thing in kind, and in this way many people see and hear and smell the same thing at the same time.⁷⁰

To John Fleming, Jankin's system provides evidence that Chaucer used the friars' own writings as weapons against them. This system, explains Fleming, "very carefully follows the principles for the division of communal property outlined in the fourth clause of the brief Carmelite Rule written by Albert of Vercelli."⁷¹ And to Bernard S. Levy, Alan Levitan, and Penn Szittya, Jankin's system is a parody of iconographic representations of the descent of the Holy

⁶⁹ Robert Pratt, "Albertus Magnus and the Problem of Sound and Odor in the Summoner's Tale," *PQ* 57 (1978), 268.

⁷⁰ Pratt, 268.

⁷¹ John Fleming, "The Antifraternalism of the Summoner's Tale," *JEGP* 65 (1966), 699.

Spirit, appearing as a violent wind, to Christ's Apostles.⁷² For instance, Levitan convincingly argues that the windy gift and the positioning of the friars on the cartwheel parody iconographic representations of the Holy Ghost's descent to the Apostles at Pentecost, described in Acts 2:1-13. Moreover, to Levitan,

from the point at which Thomas bestows his gift upon Friar John, to the proposed solution of its division by Jankyn, what appears as a merely ribald anecdote is, in fact, a brilliant and satirical reversal of the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.⁷³

Of particular interest here, however, is the relation between Pentecost and the foundation of Christ's church. Pentecost, as Levy explains, is a scriptural event of immense importance not simply because it is the time when the Holy Ghost descends upon the Apostles but because it is

at this time that Christ's Church is established on earth, for it is by this event that the Apostles were specially inspired by the Holy Ghost so that they could go out into the world to spread the word of Christ and establish His Church on earth.⁷⁴

Friar John, of course, considers himself and his confreres to be the new apostles, fishers of "mennes soules," a claim which is an antifraternal convention and one challenged by William of Saint

⁷² See Bernard S. Levy, "Biblical Parody in the *Summoner's Tale*" in *Tennessee Studies in Literature* XI (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1966), pp. 45-60; Alan Levitan, "The Parody of Pentecost in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*" *UTQ* 40 (1970-71), 236-46; and Penn Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 232-38.

⁷³ Levitan, 236.

⁷⁴ Levy, p. 52.

Amour in *De periculis novissimorum temporum* as well as one ridiculed in Chaucer's parody of Pentecost. He also significantly considers himself and his brothers to be, like Thomas the Apostle, builders of "Cristes owene chirche" (*ST* 1977), yet Chaucer's parody of Pentecost, along with his earlier reference to Thomas of India, serves to emphasize the falseness of John's claims. John and his confreres may endeavour to construct an elaborate building, but their founding of a true Christian church is as false as their present building project is incomplete. Indeed, they spread the word of Christ only to amass treasure which, in turn, can be used, as John says, "to make oure cloystre", not Christ's (*ST* 2099).

Friar John assuredly occupies a particularly important position in Chaucer's elaborate parody of the descent of the Holy Spirit -- his nose will be under the nave. Such a position is apt. As Jankin points out, John should "have the firste fruyt, as resoun is" (*ST* 2277) because

The noble usage of freres yet is this,
 The worthy men of hem shul first be served;
 And certainly he hath it weel disserved.
 He hath to-day taught us so muche good
 With prechyng in the pulpit ther he stood,
 That I may vouche sauf, I sey for me,
 He hadde the firste smel of fartes thre.
 (*ST* 2278-84)

This comment takes us back to the beginning of the tale where John preached in order to excite his audience to give to trentals. Such a gift is an act of charity for it serves to deliver souls from purgatory. Yet John actually corrupts the idea of charity in both the parish church and Thomas' house for he teaches false charity in order to gain money for his building fund. His receipt of the bad odour of the

"fartes thre" -- a trinitarian number relating to the three settings and the trentals' symbolic number of three times ten -- is justly antithetical to the "sweet smell" of sanctity (Ecclus. 49: 1-2).⁷⁵ In fact, John manipulates the concept of "sweet" charity so he will receive rather than give money -- receive money, that is, for the friars' construction fund.

In the *Summoner's Tale* Friar John epitomizes many of the traditional complaints directed against friars ever since the time of William of Saint Amour. Yet John also embodies a significant number of charges made against the friars during the British antifraternal movement. He attempts to usurp the curates' revenue, owns numerous books, and preaches and hears confession solely to gain money to build holy houses. Chaucer's emphasis on John's performing lucrative ministrations in order to raise money for elaborate buildings comprises one of the thematically important patterns in the tale because it structurally unifies it. But his incorporation of this antifraternal sentiment also correlates with antifraternal ideas expressed in other British works such as John Gower's *Vox clamantis* and William Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. This correlation strongly suggests that Chaucer's tale is a contemporary social satire on friars. Thus, the *Summoner's Tale* does not simply contain general, European antifraternal commonplaces but, rather, conveys the contemporary vitality of the con-

⁷⁵ See B.G. Koonce, *Chaucer and the Tradition of Fame: Symbolism in The House of Fame* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 18-23 for a discussion of the symbolism of the good odour and bad odour in the Bible.

troversy between the secular clergy and the fraternal orders in England during the late fourteenth century.

Chapter Five: Post-Chaucerian Literary Antifraternalism: Two Streams

Like Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*, Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, and Gower's *Vox clamantis* of the late fourteenth century, the anonymous *Mum and the Sothsegger* (c. 1403-06), the anonymous *Upland's Rejoinder* (c. 1450), and John Skelton's "Collyn Clout" (c. 1521-23) contain clearly British antifraternal trappings. These works assuredly imbed antifraternal ideas first articulated by William of Saint Amour, yet they include antifraternal ideas central to the British literary tradition of antifraternalism as well as incorporating historical allusions to British antifraternal politics. Accordingly, they keep alive British antifraternalism in fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century literature, demonstrating the continuation of British antifraternal sentiments in writings of this period. But, although *Mum and the Sothsegger*, *Upland's Rejoinder*, and "Collyn Clout" perpetuate British antifraternal sentiments, they are not necessarily representative of the body of extant post-Chaucerian antifraternal literature. Works such as the anonymous "The Friar and the Nun" often focus upon one or a few antifraternal characteristics assigned to friars ever since the time of William of Saint Amour and are not always readily identifiable as uniquely British antifraternal works. They also significantly have an affinity with antifraternal works composed during the later sixteenth century, generally presenting as they do the literary friar not so much as a destructive, demonic force but as a comic figure,

sometimes even as a stock buffoon. This chapter essentially examines two discernible streams of antifraternal literature. Section one focusses on *Mum and the Sothsegger*, *Upland's Rejoinder* (with a look at the late fourteenth-century *Jack Upland* since it prompted *Friar Daw's Reply* that, in turn, prompted *Upland's Rejoinder*), and "Collyn Clout" -- works that arguably look back to British antifraternalism of the fourteenth century. Section two focusses on "The Friar and The Nun," *Jak & his Stepdame & of the Frere*, "A mery jest how a sergeante would learne to playe the frere," *Utopia*, and *The Pardoner and the Friar* -- distinctively 'mery' works that draw upon standard antifraternal ideas yet, in a sense, look forward to antifraternalism as it manifests itself in the late sixteenth century.

Section I: 'Curyous' Continuations of the British Antifraternal Tradition

The anonymous *Jack Upland* was probably not composed in the fifteenth-century but in the late fourteenth century, sometime later than 1390. Nevertheless, it usefully serves as a transitional work to early fifteenth-century literature because it provoked a literary response, *Friar Daw's Reply* (late 1419 or early 1420) which, in its turn, generated another response, *Upland's Rejoinder* (c. 1450).¹

¹ I follow here P. Heyworth's dating of the three poems. Both Skeat and Wright contend that the latest probable date of composition is 1402, but Heyworth carefully refutes their argument. See his introduction in P.L. Heyworth, ed. *Jack Upland, Friar Daw's Reply, and Upland's Rejoinder* (London: Oxford University Press,

These three texts are thematically and structurally related, and both *Jack Upland* and *Upland's Rejoinder* clearly are antifraternal texts, composed as they are of both French and British antifraternal commonplaces. Indeed, despite the incorporation of several British commonplaces, both works actually are primarily representative of the continuation of William of Saint Amour's labelling of friars as pseudo-apostles, antichrists, pharisees, and unmeasured hordes.

Jack Upland is a Wycliffite prose tract, its introduction setting forth an "up-so-doun" state of affairs that demonstrates "Anticrist and hise disciplis bi coloure of holynes wasten & disceiuen Cristis chirche bi many fals signes."² Antichrist, contends the narrator, Jack Upland or Jack the countryman, has corrupted priests, lords, common man, and monks. But, he makes clear,

þe fellist folk þat euer Antecrist foond ben last brouzte
into þe chirche & in a wondir wise, & for þei ben of
diuers settis of Antecristis sowinge, of dyuers cuntreis &
kynredis, and alle men þei knowun. Þei ben not
obediente to bisshopis ne lege men to kyngis, neþer þei
tilien ne sowen & þes men han al maner power of
God, as þei seien, in heuen and in erþe, a mannes lijf to
saue -- zhe, to sille heuene or helle to whom þat hem
likip

Thei be confessouris & confundouris of lordis & ladies,
of prelatiis and persouns, & pilers of þe chirche; & also
þei ben parteneris of alle sacramentis þat schulen be
soold as Simonundis eiris, for þei preien for no mo þan
paien wele perfore. (*JU* 69-82)

1968), pp. 9-19.

² P. Heyworth, ed., *Jack Upland in Jack Upland, Friar Daw's Reply, and Upland's Rejoinder* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 2-3. All further references to this work will be identified by *JU* and line number.

Although Jack subsequently identifies these "fellist folk" as "flateringe freris" (*JU* 83), his initial description provides ample evidence that he speaks of friars. Indeed, he reiterates several antifraternal commonplaces frequently voiced in both French and British theological and vernacular antifraternal literature: fraternal unbuxomness, the selling of heaven, confession of the wealthy, derogation of the secular clergy, and commercialization of the lucrative pastoral privileges.

Similarly, throughout the rest of his tract, Jack largely draws upon well-established and well-used antifraternal ideas. After asserting that friars must belong to Antichrist's order because they love not their neighbours, loving instead their material goods -- an assertion that parallels William's criticism of friars in sign four of *De periculis* (71) -- Jack requests,

frere if þin ordre and þi rulis ben
groundid in Goddis lawe, telle þou now
lacke Vponlond þat I axe þee, and if
þou be or þenkist to be on Cristis side,
keep þi pacience. (*JU* 97-100)

He then puts forward a series of questions, most of which are based on antifraternal sentiments William of Saint Amour first expressed and later French and British writers renewed. For instance, Jack attacks the friars' practice of mendicancy, arguing as did Jean de Meun in *The Romance of the Rose* (11298-455), the lack of scriptural authority for such a practice:

Frere, whi sclandre ze falsli Crist lord of alle creaturis,
þat he beggid his owene good as ze don oþer mennes
good, siþ he had no nede þerto on þat wise?
Frere, siþ in Goddis lawe suche clamorous beggeynge
is vttrli forfendid, on what lawe groundist þou þee þus

for to begge, & nameli of porer þan þou art þi silf? (*JU* 272-77)

Jack also questions why the friars perform only the lucrative pastoral privileges, a question, as we have seen, antifraternalists frequently raised in both France and England:

Frere, whi coueite ze schrift & biringe of oþer mennes
parischens, & not to do opere sacramentis þat fallen to
cristen folkis? & whi coueite ze not schrift of pore men,
siþ lordis & riche men mai haue prestis more plente
þanne pore men? & siþen pore men, as ze seien, ben
moost hooli, whi coueite ze not to birie hem at zoure
housis as ze doen riche men? (*JU* 220-25)

Like False Seeming who acknowledges that he rejects the poor and dwells only with the rich (*RR* 11239-62), the friar, according to Jack Upland, ignores the impoverished, preferring to confess and bury the wealthy.

Many other questions parallel or at least echo charges found in French theological and vernacular antifraternal literature, but of particular significance here is Jack's articulation of specifically British charges against the friars because it aligns *Jack Upland* with other vernacular antifraternal tracts of the late fourteenth century. The British antifraternal charges he mentions are three: friars steal children, erect costly houses, and consider themselves gods. Of these three particularly British charges Jack emphasizes least the latter one. Only once does he suggest, as does Gower in *Vox clamantis*, that friars venerate themselves. Attacking the friars' use of letters of commendation, Jack asks,

Frere, may ze make ony man more perfizte bi zoure
feyned lettris eþer zoure soold preiers þanne God haþ bi
bileue of baptem & his owne grante? If ze seie zhe,
þanne be ze goddis aboue oure God. (*JU* 195-98)

To Jack, the friars "presume þat [they] haue most holinesse aboue al oþer lyuers, & þat [they] moste stonde in moste perfizt loue" (*JU* 191-92). This presumption means that the friars' granting of letters and prayers is powerful, so much so that friars claim they can confer spiritual perfection upon the recipient -- a claim that strongly suggests that friars set themselves up as gods.

Jack does not merely suggest friars steal children, another particularly British charge, but bluntly accuses them of so doing. In his twenty-fifth question he asks,

Frere, whi stele ze mennes children to make hem of
zoure settis siþ þefte is azens Goddis heeste, & for lesse
prise men ben hangid on galowis? And zoure ordre is
vnperfizte, & ze wite not where þat maner of lyuyng is
worst for þat child & may be cause of his dampnacioun.
(*JU* 209-13)

Like the moral messenger in Gower's *Vox clamantis* who maintains that a boy trapped by a friar "accordingly imitates the father and adds his own deeds of deceit" (189), Jack alleges that friars propel children into 'dampnacioun;' he also accuses the friars of beguiling children as does the moral messenger who alleges, "the sound from a friar's lips entice[s] young children" (*VC* 189). In one of a series of questions berating the friars' lack of charity -- a traditional charge against the friars -- Jack wonders,

Frere what charite is it to bigile ynnocent children or
þei kunne discrescioun, & bynde hem to zoure ordres þat
ben not groundid in Goddis lawe, azens her frendis wille
& from helpynge of fadris & modris, whereas Goddis
lawe biddiþ þe contrarie? For bi þis foli ben many
apostataas in herte & wille al her lijf, þat wolden go out
in dede but for drede of deep if þei weren taken azen.
(*JU* 347-53)

This question recalls FitzRalph's vivid passage in *Defensio*

curatorum: Jack's charge that friars beguile children who lack discretion parallels FitzRalph's assertion that friars steal "children wipinne þe zeres of discrecioun while þei bep vnder fader & moder keping" (*DC* 56) while Jack's alleging that friars hold children against friends' and parents' will evokes FitzRalph's memorable anecdote regarding the man whom friars refused to allow to visit his nine-year-old son alone at Oxford (*DC* 56), an anecdote FitzRalph relates to prove his general claim that "children bep nouzt suffred to speke wip fader noþer wip modir, but vnder keping and drede of freres" (*DC* 56). But not content with only alleging that friars steal children, Jack Upland suggests that the fraternal orders officially approve of their members performing such a deed. Jack questions why

paien summe of zoure ordris eche zeere a certeyne to
þer prouinciale or to summe opere souereyne, til þat he
hap stoole a certeine summe of children to make hem
freres? & þus ze ben constrynd bi zoure ordre to breke
Goddis comaundementis in doynge of þeeft passynge
þeeft of hors & maris. (*JU* 330-34)

By claiming that fraternal authorities condone the theft of children, indeed that stealing children is one of the fraternal orders' economic enterprises, Jack adds a new twist both to the particularly British charge that friars steal children as well as to the conventional charge that desire for money rests behind most of the friars' deeds and actions.

Indeed, Jack repeatedly asserts that a desire to gather riches motivates friars. They take, for instance, "profetis fals" (*JU* 86-87); they make large profits from "golden trentale, soolde for a certeyne summe of money -- as fyue schylingis or more" (*JU* 199-200); they

"proferist to so manye men a masse for a peny" (*JU* 263); and they "taken salaries -- zhe, sum double & treble" (*JU* 312). With their accumulated wealth, friars enjoy worldly comforts; in fact, as Jack points out drawing upon an antifraternal convention, although friars "seye þat [they] folowe þe apostlis in pouerte more þanne opere men don" (*JU* 366-67), they nevertheless "passen lordis & opere riche worldli men" (*JU* 370). Various possessions serve as clear indicators of the friars' worldly and wealthy style of life: according to Jack, friars possess "curious & costlew housis, & fyne & precious cloþinge, delicious & lusti fedyng, in tresorie & iewels & riche ournementis" (*JU* 368-70). As we have seen, British antifraternalists often focus their attention on fraternal oratories; in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* Friar John's entire attention is directed toward receiving contributions to the friars' building fund while to Gower's moral messenger, these buildings are elaborate structures that belie the friars' poverty and humility. Jack, too, attacks friars' buildings. He claims that friars are "so ryche þat [they] peynten [their] wallis wip golde & fyne cloþis, & han many iewilis & myche tresoure" (*JU* 182-83) -- a description that recalls the elegant decorations, various pictures, and rich coverings of oratories in Gower's *Vox clamantis*. To Jack, friars' "curious & costlew housis" indicate they are actually "Caymes castel-makers" (*JU* 86), a Wycliffite label that serves to identify friars as the ultimate false brother. This epithet for friars' convents, as Heyworth points out, is a commonplace of Lollard polemic;³ it also

³ Heyworth, p. 119.

appears, as we will see, in *Upland's Rejoinder* and *Mum and the Sothsegger*.

Jack Upland's attack on the friars raises a large number of questions that he perhaps thought could not be satisfactorily answered without friars acknowledging their vices and corrupt practices. Perhaps, too, he did not expect a response, but he nevertheless received one. In the early fifteenth century, probably 1419 or 1420, a poet whom P.L. Heyworth convincingly argues was probably a member of the London Blackfriars⁴ composed a response, *Friar Daw's Reply*. Approximately thirty years later this work attracted the attention of a Lollard sympathizer who refuted Daw's explanations in *Upland's Rejoinder*. This sympathizer offers counterpoints to many of Daw's points, and as he undercuts Daw's justification of fraternal practices and ideals, he reiterates antifraternal ideas expressed in both French and particularly British works. Given that *Upland's Rejoinder* is a response to *Friar Daw's Reply*, itself a response to *Jack Upland*, it is not unexpected that the speaker renews some of the ideas expressed in *Jack Upland*. Indeed, although the author of *Upland's Rejoinder* probably did not read *Jack Upland*, he nonetheless expresses similar antifraternal sentiments, not because he knew of the text, but because he probably possessed a common knowledge of antifraternal conventions as did the author of *Jack Upland*.

The poet does not immediately begin his attack on Friar Daw's

⁴ Heyworth, pp. 6-19.

reply but first makes a personal attack on Daw's name. A jackdaw is a kind of small crow, as is a chough, and the poet points out the suitability of Daw's name because Daw, as Jack explains, "hast condiciones of a tame chowze: / He chiterip & he bribip alle þat he may gete."⁵ Jack, however, not only compares Daw to tame choughs or crows but also claims foxes are the "figur of freres" (*UR* 23). Perhaps attacking the friars' use of tales from bestiaries in their sermons, Jack posits,

Daw, þou fablest of foxes & appliest hem to a puple
Of whom neþer þou knowyst kunnyng, ne her
 conuersacion,
Bot iche man þat witte hap, & happe of discrecion,
May knowe þee & þin ordre, as Crist saiþ, bi þe werkes.
Take propirte of tweye foxes & werkes of tweye freres,
And þan þou fyndest hem in eche acorde, bot
 freres be þe werse. (*UR* 14-19)

To identify friars as foxes certainly bestows upon friars the qualities of cunning and guile, the traditional attributes of foxes. Yet this identification also aligns friars with the forces of Antichrist. As D.W. Robertson, Jr. explains,

in the earlier Middle Ages the fox was a frequent symbol for the heretical *seductor* of the faithful. Although the fox is sometimes shown in late medieval art as a bishop to symbolize the false prelate, in many instances the foxy fourteenth-century *seductor* is a friar. Charles V of France had an ebony fox dressed as a Franciscan, and the fox-friar is a common figure on English misericords.⁶

⁵ P. Heyworth, ed., *Upland's Rejoinder in Jack Upland, Friar Daw's Reply, and Upland's Rejoinder* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 7-8. All further references to this work will be identified by *UR* and line number.

⁶ D.W. Robertson, Jr., *A Preface to Chaucer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 251-52.

To be a *seductor* of the faithful was to be an *antichristi*, according to William of Saint Amour's elaborate system of signs, particularly sign one of chapter fourteen of *De periculis novissimorum temporum*. That Jack of Upland's *Rejoinder* borrows this traditional iconographic significance becomes readily apparent in the body of his work. He points out, for instance, that friars "folowen more Anticrist þan Iesu Crist our lorde" (UR 135), are "of þe ranes þat ran fro Anticristis nose" (UR 158), and always "likynest zou to Crist whan ze ben verrei Anticrist" (UR 282). He also frequently imbeds accusations reflecting the friars' central role in destroying Christian society. Jack contends, for instance, that the "multitude of zou han allemost destried [the church]. / For þe gospel saip, / *Surgent multi pseudoprophete*" (UR 80-82). By citing here Matthew 24:10 as did William in sign six of chapter eight of *De periculis*, Jack directly attributes the biblical role of pseudo-apostle to friars. He also aligns friars, as did William, with Pharisees. According to Jack,

alle trwe sentences þat we taken here,
 Pou turnest in to falsenes, þat woo shal þe bitide.
 For to our secte þat is Cristis we drawen
 bot fewe puple,
 For þou & oper pseudo han marrid hem in þe way,
 Pat bot if God of his grace sende his honde of help,
 þe chirche þat shuld folowe Crist is lykly to synke.
 (UR 96-101)

By turning truth to falsehood, friars become, to use Luke 12:1, the scriptural passaged cited by Jack, "*Phariseorum, quod est ypocrisis*" (UR 103) (Pharisees, who are hypocrites).

As pseudo-apostles, pharisees, and antichrists, Jack Upland's friars bear the biblical roles William initially assigned to them.

Given Jack's large debt in *Upland's Rejoinder* to these biblical types, it is not surprising that this work is closely aligned to the antifraternal tradition established by William. *Upland's Rejoinder* does contain, as does *Jack Upland*, some particularly British antifraternal sentiments. Jack does accuse friars of stealing and corrupting children, arguing

þus to stele a childe is a gretter theft
 þan to stele an oxe, for þe theft is more.
 Dawe, for þou saist ze robbe hym fro þe worlde,
 Ze maken hym more worldly þan euer his fadir --
 Zee, þowz he were a plowman lyuyng trwe lyf,
 Ze robbe hym fro þe trwe reule & maken hym apostata,
 A beggar & a sodomit þai ben many. (*UR* 257-63)

Later rejecting Daw's argument in *Friar Daw's Reply* that calling children to Christ is not theft,⁷ Jack upbraids him for saying "for shame þat Crist stale þus childre" (*UR* 278) and denounces him as a seller of "lesynges & poyson" (*UR* 280).

Jack also accuses friars of erecting costly houses, another particularly popular British complaint. In *Friar Daw's Reply* Daw had responded to Jack's charge that friars build Cain's castles by both pointing out that friars inhabit God's house as servants and adducing Solomon's temple as a "figure of oure newe chirche -- / Þat ech holi hous þat Crist him silf indwellip" (*FDR* 110-11). In *Upland's Rejoinder* Jack rejects this argument, contending that "olde holy doctoures," particularly Jerome, say "Who wil allege þe temple for glorie of our chirche, / Forsake he to be cristen & be he newe a Iewe"

⁷ P. Heyworth, ed., *Friar Daw's Reply* in *Jack Upland, Friar Daw's Reply, and Upland's Rejoinder* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) 537-53. All further references to this work will be identified by *FDR* and line number.

(UR 66-67). To Jack, God hallowed not sumptuous churches but "his pore chirche" (UR 69). And yet friars, continues Jack, "bigile symple hertes, / With þi gildyn glose & with þi costly houses" (UR 72) -- costly houses that are "Caymes castelles" (UR 223).

Jack's claim that friars beguile simple hearts with costly houses significantly points to his lack of interest in emphasizing British charges. This claim looks back to William's charge in sign two of chapter fourteen of *De periculis* that friars seduce the simple (DP 57), so in a way Jack immerses his British complaint in French antifraternalism. Indeed, although Jack does incorporate into his text a few particularly British charges, these charges neither are structurally or thematically central to his work nor receive as much attention as they do in, for instance, Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* and Gower's *Vox clamantis*. They are, in fact, secondary to Jack's attack on friars' hypocrisy, simony, avarice, pride, glossing, and falseness, all of which are qualities and deeds William initially attributed to friars. The reason for this dependence on William's brand of antifraternalism perhaps lies within the author's Wycliffite sympathies and sensibilities -- an author who eulogizes Wyclif as "a gret clerke," "a vertuouse man," and a "seint" (UR 85, 86, 91). A strident antifraternalist, Wyclif himself, as Penn Szittyá concisely explains,

stands recognizably within the tradition of antifraternalism descended from William of St. Amour. In the *De ordinatione fratrum* he himself names William as a predecessor. The fundamental elements of his antifraternal polemic are Biblical exegesis and eschatology, and though he follows William slavishly in

neither, nevertheless he is closer to William than to any other English writer.⁸

Probably indebted to Wyclif's brand of antifraternalism such as that found in *Fifty Heresies and Errors of Friars* and *De Blasphemia Contra Fratres*, the anonymous poet of *Upland's Rejoinder* looked more to Wycliffite literary antifraternalism, channelled from William of Saint Amour, than to general British antifraternal writings such as FitzRalph's *Defensio curatorum* that adopt and adapt French antifraternal ideas.

As Wycliffite works, *Jack Upland* and *Upland's Rejoinder* represent a special branch of antifraternal literature -- one which has been admirably analyzed by, for instance, Penn Szittya, Anne Hudson, and Ritchie Kendall.⁹ Yet produced as they were in Britain and containing as they do some particularly British antifraternal sentiments -- stealing young boys and building elaborate oratories -- they can be broadly categorized as works of the British tradition of literary antifraternalism. So, too, can the anonymous *Mum and the Sothsegger*.

Mum and the Sothsegger ostensibly is a poem of advice to Henry IV. The anonymous poet certainly does offer advice to a king,

⁸ Penn Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 154.

⁹ For a thorough discussion of Wycliffite antifraternalism, see Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 152-82, Anne Hudson, "A Lollard Compilation and the Dissemination of Wycliffite Thought," *JTS*, n.s. 23 (1972), 65-81, and Ritchie Kendall, *The Drama of Dissent* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

counselling him, for instance, to use discretion when levying taxes and to exercise both moderation and judgement when conferring "signes" or badges. The speaker also stresses that a king should have a truth-teller: the sothsegger "of alle þe burnes þe beste is behinde / Forto serue a souurayn in somer and in wintre."¹⁰ Realizing that truth is unacceptable to those in power because "falseness" profitably uses flattery and prospers at court, but believing nonetheless that truth cannot perish, the speaker emphatically posits that Henry's household requires a soth-seggger. Mum, however, appears, reminding the speaker that truth-telling is a thankless occupation, pointing out that he should have kept quiet. Although Mum and the speaker dispute this issue, the speaker is dissatisfied with Mum's stance and seeks a resolution from various authorities including classical books, the universities, monks, secular clergy, and friars. As the speaker seeks a resolution, he exposes the flaws and inadequacies of the authorities he meets, and the poem moves from being a treatise on statecraft to being a social commentary on all classes as is Gower's *Vox clamantis* and Skelton's "Collyn Clout." Most harshly maligned of all the spiritual rulers mentioned are the friars; in fact, the speaker does not simply reveal a few shortcomings of friars as he does the flaws of, for instance, monks and beneficed clergy, but provides a lengthy digression on friars, one which puts forth numerous fraternal flaws. In this lengthy digression the poet uses antifraternal conven-

¹⁰ Mabel Day and Robert Steele, eds. *Mum and the Sothsegger* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), Fragment M, 31-32. All further references to this work will be identified by *M* and line number.

tions voiced ever since the time of William of Saint Amour, as well as adding a particularly British flavour to this use.

Following his failure to receive a satisfactory answer to his question from the Seven Sciences, the speaker encounters a man "ful of philosophie and vertues bothe" (*M* 362) who advises him to seek an answer from those who, when they finish studying the sciences,

walken fourth in þe worlde and wonen with lordes,
And with a couetous croke Saynt Nicholas pay throwen,
And trauaillen nomore on þe texte, but tournen to
 þe glose,
And putten þaym to practike and plaisance of wordes.
(*M* 386-89)

Although the man of philosophy and virtue does not identify this group as friars, both the speaker's subsequent visit to "freres, alle þe foure ordres" (*M* 392) and the man's description confirm it is friars to whom he refers. Indeed, this description contains well-established antifraternal conventions used in so much medieval literature. Like False Seeming who prefers the company of aristocrats, these friars enjoy dwelling with lords; like Friar John who delivers a sermon "Nat al after the text of hooly writ" (*ST* 1790) but teaches instead "the glose" since "Glosynge is a glorious thyng" (*ST* 1793), these friars neglect the text, turning to the gloss and willingly offering pleasing words; and like the friars in Gower's *Vox clamantis* who do not desire true knowledge for knowledge's sake (*VC* 185), these friars "with a covetous croke" or a trick taught by avarice overthrow Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of scholars, and thereby reject study, turning to glossing and flattery.

Given the friars' reliance on "plaisance of wordes" (*M* 389), it is not surprising that, after the speaker sets out his case before every

pair of friars, they "were so accorded / To yeue Mvm þe maistrie withoute mo wordes" (M 399-400). Drawing again upon the conventional charge that friars are flatterers, the speaker relates that "Mvm be a more frende to making of þaire houses / Thenne þe sothesigger" (M 402-03). Disgruntled by the friars' response to his question and their allegiance to Mum, the speaker subsequently offers four reasons outlining why he "wolde loue as litel þaire life and þaire deedes / As man vppon molde" (M 406-07). Almost all of these reasons incorporate antifraternal commonplaces, yet they include details that parallel British antifraternalism and make the speaker's attack on the friars a particularly British antifraternal one.

The first reason the speaker puts forth concerns the usurpation of the pastoral privilege of preaching. "Forto wynne heuene," says the speaker, "þay stirid a statute in strengthe of bilieue / That no preste shuld preche saue seely poure freres" (M 408-10). As we have seen, preaching for money is in itself a conventional charge against the friars. In sign eleven of chapter fourteen of *De periculis* William of Saint Amour identifies friars as pseudo-apostles "qui propter lucrum temporale ... praedicant" (DP 61)(who preach for personal gain), and the speaker of *Mum and the Sothsegger* renews this charge when he facetiously remarks that friars "stirid a statute" not to gain "maniere mede" (M 412) but to "hele [men-is] soules" (M 414). The speaker's comment here, however, specifically locates his attack on early fifteenth-century friars in Britain. As Mabel Day and Robert Steele point out in their edition of *Mum and the Sothsegger*, after the rise of Lollardism, the license to preach granted by bishops would be obtained more easily by the friar than by the

secular, who might be suspect of heresy. Hence the Wyclifite tract, 'Of Prelates,' complains that friars have leave to preach where true priests cannot obtain it In 1401 the Statute *De Heretico Comburendo* again forbade unlicensed preaching, and in 1409 the *Constitutions* of Archbishop Arundel, which had already been promulgated at the Synod of Oxford in 1408, legislated still more strictly in the same direction. On March 10, 1410, Archbishop Arundel issued an order that the four orders of friars should be free to preach in the province of Canterbury.¹¹

The speaker's comment perhaps alludes to friars' attempts to receive exemption from the statute of 1401, and even though this historical allusion is difficult to pinpoint precisely, it nonetheless establishes *Mum and the Sothsegger* as a work containing references to British antifraternal politics in much the same way historical allusions in many of Rutebeuf's poems situate them as French antifraternal works.

The second reason the poet gives for little loving friars' deeds and words similarly imbeds a historical reference to British friars and again situates *Mum and the Sothsegger* as a British polemic against friars. According to the speaker, friars

cunne not reede redelles a-right, as me þenketh;
 For furst folowid freres Lollardz [names],
 And sith hath be shewed þe same on paym-self,
 That þaire lesingz haue lad paym to lolle by þe necke;
 At Tibourne for traison y-twyght vp þay were
 (M 416-20).

While attacking the friars' inability to interpret riddles correctly, the poet himself creates a puzzling passage. Day and Steele suggest that the speaker posits, "friars first gave Lollards their names, and now

¹¹ Day and Steele, p. 112.

they must have the same name given them."¹² This suggestion is problematic, primarily because the history of the term is yet to be clearly delineated. The term, Lollard, as John Fleming points out,

a Netherlandish word, first appears around 1300 and then weaves its mysterious way through the religious lexicon of the fourteenth-century vernaculars. It has a wide application as a satirical term, especially in antimendicant texts, but it generally means one who makes a hypocritical show of religious observance. By Chaucer's day, however, the range of its connotations had narrowed, and it generally meant a member of a more or less formally identifiable dissenting sect, a follower of John Wycliffe. But this specificity is only comparative, and it is probably most useful to think of 'Lollardy' as incorporating a number of common dissenting attitudes rather than any kind of corporate entity.¹³

Perhaps the poet of *Mum* uses *Lollardz* as a term that identifies friars as followers of hypocrisy, though his accusation that friars first followed Lollards remains ambiguous. The reference to 'Tibourne' is less puzzling than that to 'Lollardz.' Even though Richard II was publicly buried at Langley in February of 1400, rumours circulated in 1402 saying he was alive in Scotland. At the same time, popular sentiment turned against Henry IV, and several friars conspired to return Richard to power. This conspiracy

was discovered through a Franciscan friar from Aylesbury who denounced one of his fellows to the king for rejoicing in the news of Richard's survival. This latter was hanged at Tyburn, together with a secular priest who was involved in the conspiracy. A Franciscan from Leicester then denounced ten friars and a Master of

¹² Day and Steele, p. 112.

¹³ John Fleming, "Chaucer and Erasmus on the Pilgrimage" in *The Popular Literature of Medieval England*, ed. Thomas J. Heffernan (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1985), p. 152.

Theology from his convent. Nine of these were taken, together with the Prior of Laund and Sir Roger Clarendon, an illegitimate son of the Black Prince, and hanged at Tyburn.¹⁴

The speaker's description of friars' 'lolling by the neck at Tyburn' certainly refers to these events of 1402 and serves to ground his antifraternal sentiments in contemporary British politics.

The speaker's third reason is less historically allusive than his first and second ones and specifically criticizes Franciscans rather than "alle þe foure ordres" (*M* 392). Franciscans, points out the speaker, "goon al bare abouue þe foote and by-nethe double / With smale semyd sockes and of softe wolle" (*M* 429), a form of dress that reveals disobedience of Francis' rule stating friars should go barefoot. They also refuse to touch money with their hands, instead "stiren hit with a sticke and staren on hit ofte" (*M* 430) -- an action that successfully sidesteps the Franciscan rule ordering Minorites to receive no money directly. By juxtaposing the friars' practices with the Franciscan rule, the speaker reveals how far away the Minorites have wandered from the Franciscan ideal -- a strategy FitzRalph used in *Defensio curatorum* as well as one used by antifraternalists both in England and on the Continent. This attack is highly conventional, echoing ones found in both thirteenth and fourteenth-century anti-fraternal treatises.

After specifically attacking the Franciscans, the speaker returns to denouncing "alle þe foure ordres" (*M* 392), giving as his

¹⁴ Day and Steele, p. xx.

fourth reason for disrespecting them their creation of limitations.

When friars go to the Provincial Chapter, explains the narrator,

Thay casten þere þe cuntrey and coostz aboute,
And parten þe prouynce in parcelle-mele,
And maken limitacions in lengthe and in breede,
Til eche hovs haue his owen as hym aughte
(*M* 436-39).

Once a district is assigned, the limitor has leave "to lerne where he cometh / To lye and to licke or elles lose his office" (*M* 440-41). Yet limitors not only lie and make profits -- two acts which are antifraternal conventions -- but also, as the speaker sarcastically remarks,

been so courtoys and kinde of þaire deedes
That with þaire charite pay chaungen a knyfe
for a peyre,
But he wol pille ere he passe a parcelle of whete
And choise of þe chese þe chief and þe beste.
(*M* 442-45)

Like Chaucer's Friar Huberd whose hood is full of "knyves / And pynnes" (*GP* 233-34), and like the friars who, according to the speaker of "The Order of Cain," "dele with purses, pynne, & knyues" (l. 37), the friars the speaker discusses are talented peddlers; by giving a small trifle, they receive large returns, in this case, a substantial amount of wheat and good cheese. This emphasis on friars as pedlars is certainly British, even though the speaker's concluding that friars thus accumulate temporal goods is not a particularly British antifraternal commonplace but a general one.

Similarly, several other charges made against the friars by the speaker after he finishes giving his four reasons for loving friars little are commonplace. Like False Seeming who ignores the impoverished (*RR* 11239), friars in *Mum and the Sothsegger*

pough ... fatt and haue a ful coffre
 Of gold and of good, þou getys but a lite
 Forto bete þy bale, þough þou begge euer
 (M 451-53).

Like the pseudo-apostles in William's sign one of chapter fourteen of *De periculis* who penetrate the consciences of confessants and lead astray people, *Mum's* friars

tende who-so wil,
 Thorough crafte of confession to knowe men intentz, --
 Of lordz and ladies that lustes desiren,
 And with þaire wyly wittz wirchen on euer . . .
 And mulden vp þe matiere to make þaym fatte,
 And gouuernen þe grete and guilen þe poure
 (M 460-65).

Like William of Saint Amour's pharisees and de Meun's False Seeming, *Mum and the Sothsegger's* friars are hypocritical since "thay prechen alle of penanche as þough [pay] parfite were, / But þay proue hit [in no] poynt þere þaire peril shuld arise" (M 491-92). And like False Seeming who has a sexual liason with Forced Abstinence and Gower's friars who plunder men's prerogative over women, *Mum's* friars "been not weddid ... þough þay wifes haue" (M 512).

Even though the speaker harshly castigates friars, he, like Gower's moral messenger, cautiously acknowledges that he only complains about "þaym þat suche been and cesse agaynes oper" (M 505). He also claims that he does not wish to destroy the friars but wants them to be corrected, advising readers to give friars what they want with "sauce þere-with of þe sothe-sigger" (M 473). Yet the speaker's tempering of his hostility toward friars is only a facade. Following his advice to readers to correct friars, he offers perhaps the most relentless part of his attack on them, saying

Thaire cloþing is of conscience and of Caym

paire werkes,
 That fadre was and fundre of alle þe foure ordres,
 Of deedes þay doon deceipuyng þe people,
 As Armacanes argumentz, þat þaire actes knewe,
 Provyn hit apertly in a poysie-wise;
 For of Caym alle came, as þis clerc tolde.
 For who writeth wel þis worde and withoute titil,
 Shal finde of þe figures but euene foure lettres:
 C. for hit is crokid [for] þees Carmes þou mos take,
 A. for þees Augustines þat amoureux been euer,
 I. for þees Iacobyne þat been of Iudus kynne,
 M. for þees Menours þat monsyd been paire werkes.
 (M 493-504)

This genealogy is also given in other antifraternal works such as "The Orders of Cain" (1382) in which the ex-friar/narrator demonstrates that "cursed cayme" founded the friars:

þat frer carmes come of a k,
 þe frer austynes came of a,
 frer Iacobyne of i,
 Of M comen þe frer menours.
 Þus grounded caym thes four ordours.
 ("Cain" ll. 110-13)

An infamous biblical wanderer, Cain, according to Genesis 4:12,14, is both a fugitive and a vagabond -- the first false *frater* or brother. Associating him with friars -- an association FitzRalph does not make contrary to what the poet of *Mum and the Sothsegger* says -- serves to stress their treachery, their unkindness, their hostility. This association also reveals, according to Szittyá, that friars are spiritual wanderers:

the friars are the sons of Cain because he is the archetype of all those who wander without place or number, within a divine order governed by the principles laid down in Wisd. 11:21 the friars, wanderers and supernumeraries, have no place in the created world.¹⁵

¹⁵ Szittyá, p. 230.

To suggest that friars are sons of "cursed cayme" as does the speaker of *Mum and the Sothsegger* reveals the extent of his hostility, the superficiality of his claim that he wishes to amend them. His concluding words reinforce this revelation. Realizing he must continue to seek a judge for the dispute between Mum and the Sothsegger, the speaker leaves the "fikelle freres," challenging them all to "eschewe chiding" (M 532) and criticizing their "curtesie ... crokid" (M 534).

The speaker of *Mum and the Sothsegger* is a solitary figure in a society corrupted and controlled by *Mum*, by its aristocrats' desire for economic and political advancement, by its citizens' fear of truth-telling. As a lone figure who dares to be honest, the soth-segger is a lineal descendant of Gower's moral messenger who, as we have seen, sheds light on social ills and 'accurately' reports what he sees. Another lineal descendant of Gower's messenger is Collyn Clout of Skelton's "Collyn Clout"; he, too, is a reporter who offers a social commentary. Indeed, the purpose of his ragged rhyme, as he himself acknowledges, is

to shake oute
All my connyng bagge,
Lyke a clerkely hagge.
For though my ryme be ragged,
Tattered and jagged,
Rudely rayne-beaten,
Rusty and mothe-eaten,
Yf ye take well therwith
It hath in it some pyth.
For, as farre as I can se,
It is wronge with eche degre.¹⁶

¹⁶ John Scattergood, ed. "Collyn Clout" in *John Skelton: The Complete English Poems* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), ll. 50-60. All further references to this poem will be identified by CC and line number.

Among the objects shaken out of his 'bagge' is a series of traditional charges against the friars, including those of hypocrisy (CC 919-21, 924-27), flattery (CC 838-39, 860-63), smooth speech (CC 850-53), gluttony (CC 840-47, 918), preaching for money (CC 837), and covetousness (CC 901). But particularly noticeable in Collyn's critique of the "foure ordres of freres" (CC 832) are two antifraternal ideas: elaborate fraternal oratories and enticing parishioners away from parish priests.

Collyn devotes a comparatively great amount of space to the friars' enticement of parishioners. According to Collyn, friars sometimes

provoke
Bothe Gyll and Jacke at Noke
Theyr dewtyes to withdrawe,
That they ought by the lawe
Theyr curates to content
In open tyde and in lent.
(CC 854-59)

Preoccupied with the friars' disdain for the 'lawe,' Collyn later addresses what he considers weaknesses in the papal edicts issued to resolve the conflict between the secular clergy and the friars. By *Dudum*, says Collyn,

theyr Clementyne,
Agaynst curates, they repyne,
And say properly thei are sacerdotes
To shryve, assoyle, and to reles
Dame Margeres soule out of hell.
(CC 872-76)

Deriding the friars' claim that they are priests, Collyn acidly remarks that "whan the frere fell in the well / He coude nat synge hymselfe

therout / But by the helpe of Christen Clout" (CC 877-79). This antifraternal remark works in two ways. First, as an allusion to the ballad, "The Friar in the Well" -- a ballad that was printed on broadsides in the seventeenth century¹⁷ -- Collyn's ragged remark draws attention to the friar as *seductor*, the central image of the ballad as well as an antifraternal commonplace. Secondly, as an unadorned statement, the remark points to the friar's lack of true religion; only with the aid of a Christian can he get out of the well. This lack of true religiosity means that friars are not *sacerdotes*; despite their travelling "through all the worlde ... / With *Diryge* and *Placebo*" (CC 885-86), despite *Dudum*, friars are not priests.

Collyn's attack on *Dudum*, on the friars' 'usurpation' of the lucrative pastoral privileges, strongly indicates that he believes, as do FitzRalph and Chaucer, that parishioners should support the parish clergy, not the friars. This belief is, as we have seen, a focal point of British antifraternalism. So, too, is criticism of fraternal oratories, a criticism Collyn also levels. According to Collyn, friars are

Buyldynge royally
 Theyr mancyons curiously,
 With turrettes and with toures,
 With halles and with boures,
 Stretchynge to the sterres,
 With glasse wyndowes and barres;
 Hangynge about the walles
 Clothes of golde and paules,
 Arayse of ryche aray,
 Fresshe as flours in May.
 (CC 934-43)

¹⁷ See Claude Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and Its Music* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1966), pp. 240-42 for a list of the editions of this tune.

Collyn then goes on to describe the classical scenes depicted on these tapestries, ones which, according to John Scattergood, "clearly refer to the sumptuous tapestries with which Wolsey adorned his palaces, notably Hampton Court."¹⁸ Nevertheless, Collyn's description of the 'curious mansions' of friars recalls earlier British antifraternalists' images. Like Gower's labyrinthine oratories, Collyn's possess many halls and bowers. Like Jack Upland's fraternal oratories, Collyn's are "curious." And Collyn's description of elaborate wall hangings recalls those mentioned by Jack Upland and John Gower. The images of "lusty Venus" quaking (CC 945) and "Naked boyes strydyng" (CC 967) may refer to those on Wolsey's tapestries, but the idea of friars' having sumptuous lodgings and elaborate decorations is neither unique nor novel. As we have seen, this idea, as well as Collyn's emphasis on friars' usurping the position of parish curates, is more than one hundred years old. And it is this idea, as well as Collyn's emphasis on friars' usurping the position of parish curates, that places "Collyn Clout" in the British literary tradition of antifraternalism -- a tradition that includes *Jack Upland*, *Upland's Rejoinder*, and *Mum and the Sothsegger*.

¹⁸ John Scattergood, ed., *John Skelton: The Complete English Poems* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p.477.

Section II: 'Short and Swete' Satires of Friars

The anonymous lyric, "The Friar and The Nun," offers an example of the strategy literary antifraternalists of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance frequently take: focussing upon only one conventional charge levelled against friars ever since the time of William of Saint Amour, they create "short and swete"¹⁹ satires of them. The conventional charge upon which "The Friar and the Nun" is based is the friar as *seductor*; specifically, the lyricist adapts a theme briefly entertained by William of Saint Amour, Rutebeuf, Jean de Meun, and FitzRalph: friars seducing nuns. But unlike William and Rutebeuf who, as we have seen, suggestively remark that Dominicans have suspect relations with Beguines (*Collectiones* 196; "*Des Règles*" ll. 115-74; "*Les Ordres de Paris*, str. IV-V), unlike de Meun who presents Forced Abstinence, clothed in a Beguin's habit, as False Seeming's lover, and unlike FitzRalph who refuses to repeat gossip yet suggestively mentions that friars should not enter convents of nuns (*DC* 73), the anonymous lyricist of "The Friar and the Nun" explicitly traces, step by step, a friar's skillful seduction of a nun.

Using a musical metaphor, the lyricist rapidly yet artfully portrays a "lusty, proper, and yong"²⁰ Minorite's instructing a nun to

¹⁹ P.J. Croft, ed., "a frier of ordre gray" in "The 'Friar of Order Gray' and The Nun," *Review of English Studies* n.s. 32 (1981), 16, l. 35.

²⁰ Douglas Gray, ed., "The Friar and the Nun" in *The Oxford Book of Late Medieval Verse and Prose* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), l. 7. All further references to this lyric will be identified by "Nun" and line number.

sing in Latin -- a lesson that actually teaches her what the Wife of Bath calls "the olde Daunce." After teaching her to sing, for instance,

Othe re me fa...
Inducas.
Sol la, this nunne he kyst full oft
In temptacionibus.

By proper-chaunt and Bequory,
Inducas.
This nunne he groped with flattery
In temptacionibus. ("Nun" ll. 11-18)

By slighting altering and repeating a line from the Paternoster, the lyricist creates an appropriate creed for the lusty friar, a creed that draws attention to his perversion of religion while structurally unifying the lyric. Indeed, the friar in "The Friar and the Nun" corrupts his religious calling by pursuing sexual love rather than divine love, a pursuit that elevates *cupiditas* above *caritas*. This perversion, one which, as we have seen, de Meun addresses in *The Romance of the Rose*, is perhaps most readily apparent in the friar's "first lesson." Distorting Christ's charitable words in Matthew 11:28, the friar tells the nun to

...*'veni ad me'*
Inducas.
'Et ponam tollum meum ad te'
In temptacionibus. ("Nun" ll. 19-22)

The friar's 'first lesson' is evidently quite successful because he

... sang all by *bemoll*,
Inducas,
Of the nunne he begate a cristenyd sowle
In temptacionibus.

The nunne was taught to syng '*Sepe*',
Inducas,

*'Lapides expunghaverunt me'
In temptacionibus.*

Thus the fryer lyke a prety man,
Inducas,
Ofte rokkyd the nunnys quoniam
In temptacionibus. ("Nun" ll. 23-34)

The lyricist's dependence on sexual puns -- *lapides* (stones), *tollum* (weapon), and *bemoll* (be soft or B flat) -- adds bawdy humour to the lyric as does his final image of the friar's frequent rocking of 'the nunnys quoniam,' an image that recalls 'hende' Nicholas' approach to women and one that bears some significant similarities to the icon found in the Taymouth Hours (see figure 4).

As a bawdy rendering of the theme of friar as *seductor*, "The Friar and the Nun" satirizes friars' lack of sexual abstinence; as a composite of irreverent allusions, it is a witty attack on fraternal impiety. In fact, as P.J. Croft astutely points out, this lyrical tale "becomes a parody of the sung liturgy, wherein the friar's lesson is answered by the nun's canticle."²¹ To Croft, this tale may actually be a satire specifically directed against the Franciscan James Ryman. Basing his argument upon the position of "The Friar and The Nun" in a paper bifolium containing four carols, two of which are by Ryman, Croft contends this lyric represents "a sophisticated human reaction to the unremitting piety of Ryman and his kind."²² But, if this was a satire specifically against Ryman, later audiences and writers did not always recognize or treat it as such. Rather, they considered the tale

²¹ P.J. Croft, "The 'Friar of Order Gray' and The Nun," *Review of English Studies* n.s. 32 (1981), 2.

²² Croft, 2.

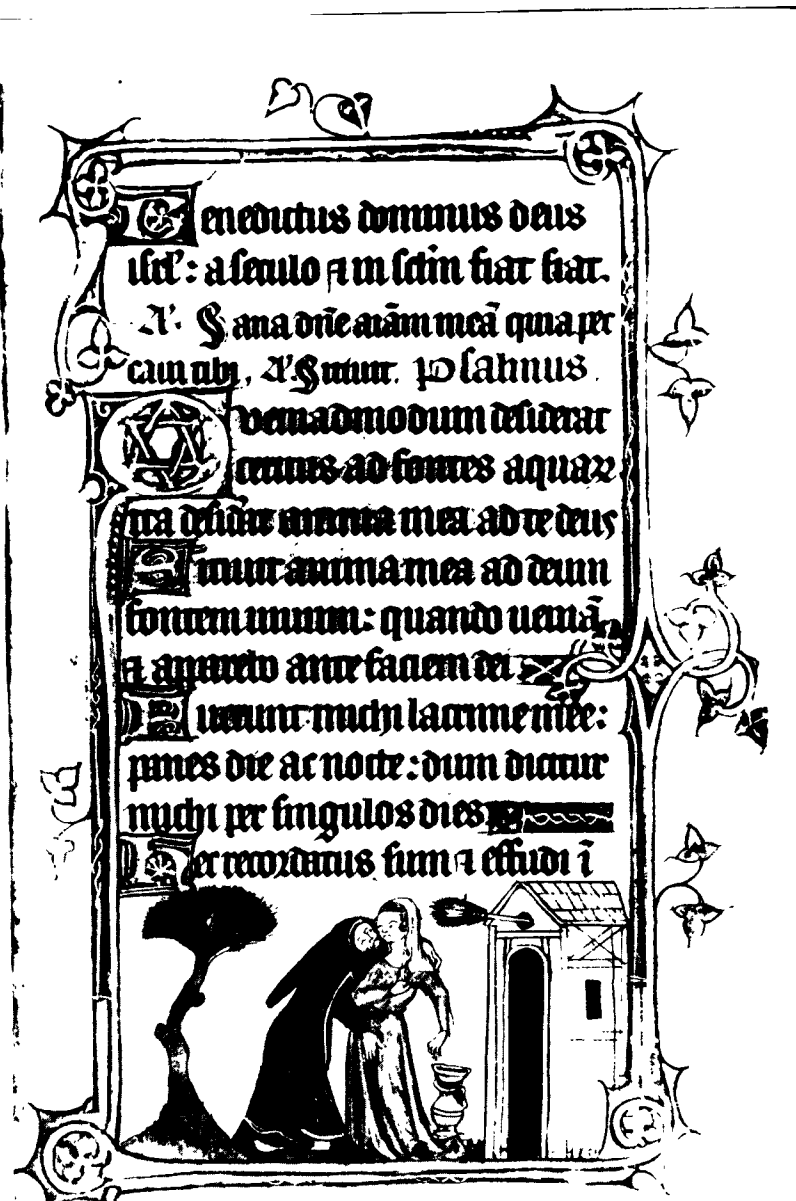


Figure 4

of the friar and the nun a ribald carol, one having a 'merie' theme suitable to light-hearted works and festivities.

The 'friar and nun' lyric was probably composed at Cambridge during the late fifteenth century.²³ As a work both amplifying the commonplace idea that friars seduce nuns and attacking their impiety, it looks back to its thirteenth-century precedent; as a bawdy work that spawned imitations such as the "Kele Carol" (1545?), that appeared in broadside ballads and commonplace books, and that provided a humourously indecent theme to which playwrights would allude, it looks forward to non-polemical uses of this antifraternal theme in sixteenth-century literature. Croft points out some of these uses beginning with

Nicholas Udall's famous reference in his *Apophthegmes* (1542) to the singing of merry songs and laughter-making rhymes 'even like as is now used to syng songes of the Frere and the Nunne, with other seemable merie iestes, at weddynges, and other feastynges' (fol. 245). A wealth of passing allusions in popular literature shows that 'the friar and the nun' had for long a scandalous reputation The very casualness of Shakespeare's one explicit allusion to the theme reveals how hackneyed it had by then become: in *All's Well that Ends Well*, II, ii, the Clown reels off a string of commonplace comparisons which run in part 'As fit as ten groats is for the hand of an attorney ... as the nun's lip to the friar's mouth, nay as the pudding to his skin.'²⁴

Croft also sheds light on the appropriateness of Petruchio's recitation of the lines, "It was the friar of orders grey, / As he forth walked

²³ Croft, 15.

²⁴ Croft, 6.

on his way"²⁵ in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* -- a brief snatch he sings after he arrives newly wedded at his home determined to curb Kate as a falconer trains a falcon. The original 'friar and nun' lyric, contends Croft,

enables us to recognize ... that any ballad about a 'friar of order grey' would evoke the 'friar and nun theme' and its bawdy tale of male domination and female submission. The dramatic relevance of the song immediately becomes apparent, and Petruchio's recalling of it can be seen as an integral part of his 'politickely' scandalous behaviour.²⁶

What is so readily apparent in the instances Croft cites of later uses of the theme of the friar and nun is sixteenth-century audiences' and writers' familiarity with it, their awareness of it. Yet the theme's very familiarity diminishes the political, polemical currency it originally had. As a 'merie' theme that focusses on friar's seductive behaviour, it draws attention primarily to friars' licentious actions, not to their impiety, their misguiding the consciences of people of weak rationality, their symbolic creeping into houses. Stripped of its theological and legalistic significance, the common theme of the friar and the nun in late sixteenth-century literature merely serves as a light-hearted jest guaranteeing merry laughter at weddings, festivals, and plays.

A similar process happens to *Jak & his Stepdame, & of the Frere*, a folktale Wynkyn de Worde printed at the end of the fifteenth century. Unlike "The Friar and the Nun," this tale does not

²⁵ William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, ed. Brian Morris. (London: Methuen, 1981) IV, i, 129-30.

²⁶ Croft, 8.

contain one theme that can be definitively traced back to earlier antifraternal literature, though it does contain an antifraternal characterization several medieval antifraternalists draw. Perhaps drawing upon the conventional idea that friars are vengeful -- an idea used, as we have seen, in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* -- the tale-teller introduces a friar who willingly attempts to fulfil the nasty step-mother's vengeful wish to "be-lasshe well þat boy."²⁷ The tale also perhaps offers an inversion of the commonplace idea that friars entice and seduce young boys. Promising the friar the gift of "yonder birde" (*Jak* 215), Jack persuades the friar to go "in to þe hegge" (*Jak* 223) to fetch it, only to play his magical pipe, and

whan the frere þe pip harde,
Lyke as a made man he ferde,
& be-gan to lepe a-bowght.
(*Jak* 229-31)

But tempting as it is to interpret the friar's desire for the bird as greed and to see Jack's abuse of the friar as a turning "up-so-down" of the conventional antifraternal image of friars corrupting young boys, connections between early antifraternal ideas and those in *Jak & his Stepdame, & of the Frere* are tenuous. This simple, unadorned tale does not possess enough dialogue, characterization, actions, and images to substantiate such an interpretation.

Connections, however, between this folktale and its treatment of the friar as buffoon and later renditions of the theme of the friar

²⁷ "Jak & his Stepdame, & of the Frere" in Roman Dyboski, ed., *Songs, Carols, and Other Miscellaneous Poems* (London: Oxford University Press, 1908), l. 191. All further references to this work will be identified by *Jak* and line number.

and the boy are not tenuous. That the tale presents the friar not so much as an object of derision, a figure to be harshly ridiculed, but as an object of ribaldry, a figure designed to provoke merry laughter, is clear from its description of the friar's antics. Indeed, a large part of the tale's humour depends upon the friar's painful dance in the hedge and his subsequent fear of the pipe -- a fear that later impels him to ask the good man and stepmother to "Bynd [him] faste to a poste" (*Jak* l. 327) after he learns Jack will again play his pipe. This foolish request leads to further physical battering; as Jack again plays the magical pipe, all the people chaotically leap and wind about while

The frere was almoste loste,
 He bete his hed a-agayn the poste,
 He had no better grace.
 Ropes rubbed of the skyn,
 That þe blode ran down by hym
 In many a dyueris place.
 (*Jak* 367-72)

Though battered and bloodied, the friar is a victim who does not elicit pity. Like characters in slapstick comedies whose physical misadventures provoke laughter, the friar is a source of laughter because he suffers pain, because his clothes are torn, his body bleeding, his face cracked. He is also unworthy of pity because he rejects the merriment of the dance. Unlike Jack's father who considers the dance the "merieste fitte" (*JaK* l. 401) and the townspeople who consider it "mirth" (*Jak* l. 407) and who were "good of chere" (*Jak* l. 409), the friar and the stepmother "were all dysmayd" (*Jak* l. 411), so much so that the friar shortly "went a-way / Som dele with hevy chere" (*Jak* l. 419).

This folktale, like the lyrical "Friar and the Nun", was a staple

of popular sixteenth-century literature. It was printed again in 1557-58, 1568-69, and c. 1585 and appeared in commonplace chapbooks.²⁸ It spawned a second episode in which the Friar summons Jack before an official and accuses him of witchcraft. This summoning strongly suggests that the friar is still seeking revenge, a common motif in medieval literature. His search is futile. Following Jack's playing of the pipe, one which incites frenetic dancing, the official promises to forgive Jack, if he stops playing. Jack does so. The original folktale also provided a merry theme for broadside ballads. One ballad sung to the tune of "Peg a Ramsey," as Claude Simpson points out, was

'An excellent merye songe of the freier and the boye,'
beginning 'In reading merry memoryes, / it was my
chaunce to finde' (SB p. 153), which is probably taken
from a late sixteenth-century broadside, since the ballad
was licensed in 1586, about the time the compiler of the
Shirburn MS is thought to have begun his transcrip-
tions.²⁹

What all of these renditions, printings, and uses of the theme of the friar and the boy indicate is the popularity of the theme, the sixteenth-century taste for merry jests, and the common use of a fraternal figure in them.

Thomas More's jest about the sergeant who disguises himself as a friar (1509) is another example of a tale that received popular attention in the late sixteenth century, appearing as it does in

²⁸ See F.J. Furnivall, ed., *Robert Laneham's Letter* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1890), pp. lxxiii-iv for a list of the early printed editions of *The Fryar and the Boy*.

²⁹ Claude Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and Its Music* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1966), p. 571.

Captain Cox's list, a useful and informative register of "matters of stories" accessible in 1548-49.³⁰ William Rastell printed this ballad in his 1557 edition of *The Workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght* and titled it "A mery jest how a sergeant would learne to playe the frere." This ballad is neither strictly nor obviously antifraternal. It humorously and light-heartedly mocks an overly confident sergeant who disguises himself as an Austin friar; the sergeant, more than the role of friar he usurps, is derided because he unwisely pursues the task of another, acting against the wisdom of wise men who always

Affyrme and say,
That best is for a man:
Diligently,
For to apply,
The busines that he can,
And in no wyse,
To enterpryse,
An other faculte,
For he that wyll,
And can no skylle,
Is never lyke to the.³¹

Inherent in the ballad's introduction here is the moral that the ballad's plot teaches and affirms, and it is a moral that aptly applies to the audience for whom More possibly composed and cited the jest. According to Sister Mary Willow in *An Analysis of the English Poems of St. Thomas More*, More's jest was probably associated

³⁰ F.J. Furnivall, ed., *Captain Cox's List* in *Robert Laneham's Letter* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1890), pp. xii-xiii

³¹ W.E Campbell, ed., "A mery jest how a sergeant would learne to playe the frere" in *The English Works of Sir Thomas More*, vol. 1, I, 2-12. All further references to this jest will identified by part number and line number.

"with the feast of the Lord Mayor's Pageant or with the feasts of the twelve livery companies of London."³² This ballad, she continues, "was an introduction to a feast. It was also addressed to a large group composed of masters of various crafts whom More exhorts to pursue one business venture only."³³

As a ballad exhorting craftsmen to pursue only one 'business venture,' More's "mery jest" contains an obviously social message: contribute to and ensure an ordered and stable society. Willow suggests this jest contains another socially relevant message aimed at craftsmen. More, she postulates,

may have used it as a means of diverting the people's concentration from the foibles of the contemporary friars and thus, instead of facetiously satirizing them, in reality he adroitly defends them. 'Play not the frere,' he pleads, 'do not meddle into their affairs, and they, in turn, will keep out of yours.'³⁴

Yet More, it is arguable, does not urge his audience to refrain from mocking fraternal foibles but, rather, adroitly ridicules them in his "mery jest" as he later does in *Utopia*.

His mockery of friars develops from the sergeant's disguise as an Austin friar. Assuredly, the sergeant is satirized because he meddles in another's profession and because he pretends to be what he is not, yet the disguise the sergeant selects is highly significant. Because of the disguise, a visible friar, rather than a visible sergeant,

³² Sister Mary Willow, *An Analysis of the English Poems of St. Thomas More* (Nieuwkoop: B. DeGraaf, 1974), p. 21.

³³ Willow, p. 22.

³⁴ Willow, p. 59.

is subjected to physical misadventures of the type already seen in *Jak & his Stepdame & of the Frere*; because of the disguise, a visible friar is the buffoon. It is the "fayned frere" (X 2) who receives from the merchant

such a blow,
That backward downe,
Almost in sowne,
The frere is overthrown.
(XIII 9-12)

It is the friar-figure whom the merchant revives "with good rappes, / And hevvy clappes" (XIII 16-17). And it is the friar-figure whom the wife

holpe to kepe him downe,
And with her rocke,
Many a knocke,
She gave hym on the crowne.
(XIII 57-60)

More's repeated identifying of the battered man as "frere" (XIII 12, 15, 19, 44, XIV 1, 12) stresses that it is a friar who is physically abused, that it is a friar-figure who is a buffoon, the source of the ballad's ribald humour. Thus, even though the sergeant wrongly assumes a disguise, the disguise distances him so that a friar is beaten rather than a sergeant.

The sergeant ultimately realizes his error. "Ill more he the," he remarks, "That caused men, / To make my selfe a frere" (XIV 10-12). To unify the tale both structurally and thematically and to clarify the ballad's moral, the tale-teller re-iterates this moral:

Now masters all,
Here now I shall,
Ende there as I began,
In any wyse,
I would avyse,
And counsayle every man,

His owne craft use,
All newe refuse,
And lyghtly let them gone:
Play not the frere,
Now make good chere,
And welcome every chone.
(XV 1-12)

Given the ballad's emphasis on disguises, its criticism of assuming a profession ill-prepared, the work actually advises its audience to reject hypocrisy. Notably, the moral tag, "Play not the frere," is the one used to encapsulate this message, a tag that is found both in the title and at the ballad's beginning when the balladeer says, "a sergeuant late" decided to "See how he could, / In goddes name play the frere" (II 8-9). This tag has a proverb-like quality as does the description of the sergeant after he dons the friar's weeds, "dopped and dooked" (VII 10), and peers in a 'glasse':

His harte for pryde,
Lepte in his syde,
To see how well he freered.
(VII 16-18)

A curious word, 'freered' warrants attention. According to the *OED*, it denotes either to act as a friar or to play the friar. But this definition is surely vague for the word's very existence, as well as More's coining of it, strongly suggests that fraternal behaviour was readily identifiable and distinguishable in the early sixteenth century. What freered specifically means is at least partially defined in More's jest: it means to duck, curtsy, speak and look religiously -- actions that are all external and visible, actions that do not necessarily reflect inner virtues, actions that conceal the sergeant's true character. To friar then probably connotes hypocrisy; "to play the frere" means to play the hypocrite. This connection between friars and hypocrisy, as

we have seen, is a strong one, dating back to the 1250s in Paris. It is a connection that More's coining of 'freered' strengthens.

To say that More does not poke fun at the friars in his "mery jest" is to deny the relevance of the sergeant's disguise, the peculiarity of freering and playing the friar. To say, as does Sister Willow, that More urges his audience to cease undermining "the religious prestige of the friars"³⁵ is to disregard his humorous depiction of a pseudo-Austin imitating fraternal mannerisms, of a habit-clad friar being battered and beaten. It also denies the ballad's slapstick humour, certainly a central feature of it. More may not maliciously satirize friars in "A mery jest how a sergeant would learne to playe the frere," but he does provoke merriment at their expense and he does use them as objects of mirth.

More's affection for friars as figures of merriment and mirth is also readily apparent in *Utopia* (1516). In Book One, Raphael relates a story about his visit to Cardinal Morton. After Raphael reviews the topics of conversation including enclosure and the punishment of thieves, he relates a tale about what ensued after the Cardinal finished giving his opinion on vagabonds. This story involves an educated friar and a man whom Raphael describes as

a hanger-on, who wanted to give the impression of imitating a jester but whose imitation was too close to the real thing. His ill-timed witticisms were meant to raise a laugh, but he himself was more often the object of laughter than his jests. The fellow, however, sometimes let fall observations which were to the point, thus

³⁵ Willow, p. 65.

proving the proverb true, that if a man throws the dice often he will sooner or later make a lucky throw.³⁶

Raphael does not clearly specify what perceptive 'pointed observations' this fool makes, but he does explain that the fool offers a solution to an issue raised by one of the guests, the issue concerning caring for "persons whom sickness or old age has brought to want and made unable to work for their living" (*Utopia* 81). According to the callous and uncharitable fool, these persons

have often harassed me with their pitiful whinings in begging for money -- though they never could pitch a tune which would get a coin out of my pocket. For one of two things always happens: either I do not want to give or I cannot, since I have nothing to give They no longer expect anything from me -- no more, by heaven, than if I were a secular priest! As for me, I should have a law passed that all those beggars be distributed and divided among the Benedictine monasteries and that the men be made so-called lay brothers. (*Utopia* 83)

This proposal evokes three different responses: Cardinal Morton smiles, considering it a jest; the guests take it seriously; and

a certain theologian who was a friar was so delighted by this jest at the expense of secular priests and of monks that he also began to make merry, though generally he was serious almost to the point of being dour. (*Utopia* 83)

This response clearly indicates antifraternal conventions inform More's characterization of the friar in *Utopia*; like William of Saint Amour's pseudo-apostles in sign twenty- three of chapter fourteen of *De periculis* who berate the secular clergy, like Friar John in

³⁶ Thomas More, *Utopia* in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, v. 4, eds. E. Surtz and J.H. Hexter (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 81. All further references to this work will be identified by *Utopia* and page number.

Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* who insults 'possessioners,' More's friar enjoys hearing secular priests and monks criticized. The rest of Raphael's anecdote further reveals More's use of antifraternal ideas first expressed almost three centuries before the composition of *Utopia*. Humorously allowing the friar's own words and reactions to condemn him, More establishes a brief dialogue between the friar and the fool that tantalizingly suggests that the friar is a fool, indeed, more a figure of folly than the so-called fool.

The friar initiates this dialogue when he says to the fool, "Nay ... not even so will you be rid of mendicants unless you make provision for us friars too" (*Utopia* 83). This upraisal of the proposal -- one which draws attention to fraternal mendicancy -- provokes the fool to retort:

But this has been taken care of already His Eminence made excellent provision for you when he determined that tramps should be confined and made to work, for you are the worst tramps of all. (*Utopia* 83)

Implicit in the fool's labelling of mendicants as tramps is the idea that friars aimlessly wander, uncontrolled and unmeasured. This idea is, as we have seen, a commonplace used by French and British antifraternalists. To the fictionalized Cardinal Morton, this label of tramp is acceptable; he does not intervene because "he did not think this jest any more amiss than the other [so the guests] all proceeded to take it up with vigor -- but not the friar" (*Utopia* 83). Only capable of making merry at the expense of priests and monks, the friar, Raphael remarks,

began to be so furious and enraged that he could not hold back even from abusing the joker. He called him a rascal, a slanderer, and a 'son of perdition,' quoting the

while terrible denunciations out of Holy Scripture.
(*Utopia* 83)

Enraged and ill-tempered, the friar, however, does not intimidate the fool, who, Raphael observes, "began to scoff in earnest and was quite in his element" (*Utopia* 83).

The ensuing verbal exchange among the fool, the friar, and the Cardinal strongly suggests that the friar misuses the Bible. Aptly citing Luke 21:19, the fool advises the friar to be not angry because "in your patience shall you possess your souls" (*Utopia* 83).

Unsurprisingly, the friar irately retorts, "I am not angry, you gallows bird, or at least I do not sin, for the psalmist says: 'Be angry, and sin not'" (*Utopia* 83). Like William's pseudo-apostles in sign three of chapter fourteen of *De periculis* (58), the friar does not patiently bear reprimanding; he also conveniently denies the cardinal virtue of patience, justifying, as he does with a scriptural passage, the deadly sin of ire. But this justification is questionable. After all, in Psalm 4 the psalmist implicitly counsels patience in times of distress, advising, for instance, communing with the heart and being still (KJV Psalm 4:4). Though Cardinal Morton does not point out the friar's manipulation of the text, he nevertheless "gently admonished the friar to calm his emotions" (*Utopia* 85), to be still. The friar does not. True to his nature not to bear correction, he instead indignantly maintains,

No, my lord, I speak motivated only by a good zeal -- as I should. For holy men have had a good zeal; wherefore Scripture says, 'The zeal of Thy house has eaten me up,' and churches resound with the hymn: 'The mockers of Eliseus as he went up to the house of God felt the zeal of the baldhead'-- just as this mocking, scorning, ribald fellow will perhaps feel it. (*Utopia* 85)

The friar's citation here of Psalm 69:9 (KJV) and reference to II Kings 2:23 (KJV) assuredly do support his argument, yet his failure to bear the fool's rebuke patiently calls into question his perception of himself as one of these good, zealously holy men: unlike the psalmist who bears reproach for God's sake (Psalm 69:7), the friar does not accept reproval.

There is similarly a disjunction in the friar's implicit comparison between his curse and Elisha's. To say the fool may be cursed as were the forty-two children (2 Kings 2:24) suggests the friar possesses the power of Elisha -- a suggestion that surely is arrogant and boastful. Yet the friar does mean to compare friars to Elisha, as he later makes clear. Again rejecting the Cardinal's advice when he says, "maybe ... you behave with proper feeling, but I think that you would act, if not more holily, at any rate more wisely, if you would not set your wits against those of a silly fellow and provoke a foolish duel with a fool" (*Utopia* 85), the friar audaciously proclaims,

I should not do more wisely. Solomon himself, the wisest of men, says: 'Answer a fool according to his folly' -- as I do now. I am showing him the pit into which he will fall if he does not take good heed, for, if many scorers of Eliseus, who numbered only one baldhead, felt the zeal of the baldhead, how much more will one scorner of many friars, among whom are numbered many baldheads! And, besides, we have a papal bull by which all who scoff at us are excommunicated! (*Utopia* 85)

The friar's belief that he possesses the wisdom of Solomon is fatuous. By not placing the biblical citation in its proper context -- a manipulation of scripture he previously performed with Psalm 69 and Psalm 4 -- and, indeed, by not fully citing the applicable passages of Proverbs 26, the friar actually undercuts his own credibility as an

authority on divinity. Solomon, after all, says, "Answer not a fool, according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. / Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" (KJV Proverbs 26:4-5). Cardinal Morton perhaps takes Proverbs 26:4 to heart. "When the Cardinal realized there was no making an end, he sent away the hanger-on by a motion of his head and tactfully turned the conversation to another subject" (*Utopia* 85).

Raphael's anecdote of the friar is a skillful and, at times, subtle adaptation of several antifraternal conventions used in both French and British writings: lack of patience, berating the secular clergy and monks, anger, misuse of the Scriptures, abuse of mendicancy, lack of measure, figuring the antichrist, and boasting. Even though the comparison the friar draws between Elisha and friars invites an identification of his order as Carmelite, the White Friars who were, in a sense, "sons of Elijah" as was Elisha because they claimed to derive from this prophet, it does not indubitably identify More's friar as a solely anti-Carmelite portrait, just as Friar John's reference to Elijah in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale* (1886) does not serve to label him a Carmelite. Instead, the friar's comparison serves to emphasize how unlike prophets friars are, how pseudo-prophetic they are.

Similarly, the friar's comparison of himself to wise Solomon serves to stress how unwise and foolish he is. That the friar is a fool is clear from his words and actions. Impatient and easily angered, unheeding of Cardinal Morton's advice and unable to remain still, the friar initiates and maintains a foolish argument -- deeds that are acts of folly as is his boasting. That More's friar is a complete fool while the professional jester is not is perhaps less clear, yet the jester's

clever citation of Luke 21:19 and his subsequent silence and stillness both suggest that he is not completely idiotic. After all, he does know his limits as a professional fool while the friar, the educated theologian, knows no limits. He, not the fool, is, as he says, "a rascal, a slanderer, and a son of perdition [a] mocking, scorning, ribald fellow" (*Utopia* 85).

The friar's affiliation with the stock figure of folly conveniently bestows upon him the label of buffoon, a generic label that indubitably suits the friar in John Heywood's *The Pardoner and The Friar* (1533). This "mery play betwene the pardoner and the frere / the curate and neybour Pratte"³⁷ begins with a friar's sermon to "dere bretherne," a sermon in which he puts forth the ideal that all preaching friars should uphold. He initially professes that he preaches to them neither "for monye nor for rente / ... [neither] for meate nor for mede" (*PF* ll. 7-8) but addresses them, rather, "for [their] soules heale" (*PF* l. 9). His sermon continues in this vein, the friar emphasizing the reasons why he doesn't and why he does "com hyther." Yet as his lengthy sermon unfolds, it becomes readily apparent that his claims are suspect; even though he says that he comes neither "to begge nor to craue" (*PF* l. 11), "to babble nor to clatter" (*PF* l. 13), and "to fable nor to lye" (*PF* l. 14), the substance of the rest of his sermon actually demonstrates that he lies and tells fables in order to receive temporal goods. Corrupting the office of

³⁷ John Heywood, *The Pardoner and The Friar*, prepared by G.R. Proudfoot (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), l. 1. All further references to this interlude will be identified by *PF* and line number.

preaching and the divine gift of speech, the friar delivers a sermon that flatters friars, boasts of their religiosity, and aims to elicit parishioners' goods.

This corruption of the privilege of preaching and the divine gift of speech is a commonplace of antifraternal literature as are the charges of flattering, glossing, and desiring temporal goods. Heywood quite evidently informs his character of the friar with antifraternal conventions; indeed, his friar is readily recognizable as a composite of numerous charges levelled against the friars ever since the days of William of Saint Amour. Yet Heywood does not simply expect his audience to assume the friar is corrupt; instead, he uses three strategies to ensure that his audience becomes aware of the extent to which the friar is corrupt. First, Heywood gives the friar a sermon that provides a synopsis of ideal fraternal behaviour, only to show the friar's deviation from this ideal. He secondly introduces a scurrilous pardoner with whom the friar vies for parishioners' attention and money and who acidly remarks upon friars and their activities. Thirdly, he introduces a parson, a generous soul who has permitted the friar to preach at his church, and dramatizes the friar's reprehensible yet humorous treatment of a member of the secular clergy. All of these strategies work both to control the audience's evaluation of the friar and to evoke its laughter.

Providing the friar with a sermon that establishes the ideal fraternal behaviour effectively gives the audience a yardstick by which it can evaluate the friar. The friar, for instance, maintains that friars are bound both to teach Christ's gospel "As dyd the appostels" (*PF* l. 18) and "to serche mennes conscyens" (*PF* l. 22). He also reminds the

audience that friars "haue professed wyfull pouerte" (*PF* l. 24), care not "for grotes nor for pens" (*PF* l. 23), and carry neither "Knyfe nor staffe" (*PF* l. 26). Friars, too, he posits, "not care to day for our meate to morowe" (*PF* l. 29) but free their thoughts from all temporal concerns. To add authority to this way of life, the friar paraphrases Matt. 10: 5-14, a scriptural passage frequently cited to describe ideal apostolic life.

The friar, however, also shrewdly cites this passage to elicit a warm reception from parishioners. Ostensibly cautioning them "to this text take [] hede / Beware how ye despyse the pore freres" (*PF* 55-56), he actually threatens them with God's 'vengeaunce,' only to conceal this threat quickly with flattery. Another friar, he relates, told him "ryght good folke dyd dwell" in this town (*PF* 65) -- good people who support his mission. The friar's shrewd use of scripture, subtle threats, and well-timed flattery underscores his craftiness as does his sermon on covetousness, an appropriate topic designed to make the audience act charitably. In this sermon the friar advises the parishioners to "departe your goodes the poorefolke amonge" (*PF* 206) because God will then give to them; covetise, he further explains, is "that synne with god [] most abhomynable" (*PF* l. 216). Only after he retells the tale of Lazarus and Epulus and stresses the benefits of giving to the poor does the friar get to his point: "Who be those pore folk of whome I speke a name, /... / Certes we pore freres are the same" (*PF* 338-40).

The friar's admission here finally reveals the motivation behind his sermon-giving: he, like Chaucer's Friar John, preaches to the people only to gather and amass their donations. The pardoner

clarifies this admission: attempting to draw the audience away from the friar, he points out that the friar

Prate[s] here all day with a foule euyll
And all thy sermon goth on couetyce
And byddest men beware of auaryce
And yet in thy sermon dost thou none other thyng
But for almes stande all the day beggyng.
(*PF* 431-35)

The pardoner's intrusion only serves to strengthen the friar's resolve to win the parishioners' undivided attention and donations. Ignoring the pardoner's remarks that friars are "flaterynge lyers" (*PF* 447), "do nought dayly but bable and lye" (*PF* 451), and tell "fables" (*PF* 453), the friar continues urging his audience to "parte with [their] charitie" only to friars (*PF* 500). The friar's argument here, one that actually runs through the entire play, unquestionably indicates that he corrupts the teaching of charity in order to receive alms for his convent, one which houses "fryers thre score and thre" (*PF* 390). This figure is unusual: according to conventual rules, convents were to hold only twelve friars. The friar's figure thus calls attention to his convent's disobedience of fraternal rules, as well as perhaps elucidating one of the reasons he so diligently seeks alms: the overcrowded convent requires alms to sustain itself, to sustain its blatant disregard for conventual rule.

Motivated by greed and determined to receive the audience's alms, the friar intermittently challenges the pardoner who competes with him for the audience's attention -- and donations. This competition inevitably leads to boasting, insult-slinging, and threats. The friar, for instance, scornfully calls pardoners "bolde beggars" (*PF* 448) who should "hardely labour for theyr lyuyunge" (*PF* 450), unlike

friars who "Of alle temporall service are ... forbade" (*PF* 470). He also threatens to "lug the [pardoner] by the swete eares" (*PF* 525) and rap him "on the costarde" (*PF* 531) if he doesn't stop disrupting his lecture. This threat vividly underscores the friar's lack of patience, a traditional antifraternal attribute. Other traditional antifraternal traits are present in the pardoner's criticism of friars, most notably lechery. Drawing upon an antifraternal trope used by, for instance, Gower and Chaucer, Heywood's pardoner claims that friars seduce wives; indeed, to promote a draught from a holy well, he says,

Let a man with this water make his potage
And neuermore shall he his wyfe mystryst
Thoughe he in sothe the faut by her wylt
Or had she be take with freres two or thre.
(*PF* 130-33)

Later, the pardoner levels another charge against the friar which involves women, calling him

An homycyde thou art I know well inoughe
For my selfe knew where thou sloughe
A wenche with thy dagger in a couche.
(*PF* 579-80)

This charge is unusual. If read metaphorically, it indicates that the friar has seduced a wench, yet the pardoner calls the friar "an homycyde," a murderer -- a naming that points us to a literal reading of the passage. As a charge levelled against friars in literature, it is rare, but that the pardoner in Heywood's play would say such a thing is not at all surprising. Prior to this slandering both the friar and the pardoner have a brawl, only to be interrupted by the curate. The parson's reprimanding of their daring "To polute [his] chyrche" (*PF* 559), as well as his demanding repentance, serves no purpose: the two

only continue 'wranglyng' and intensify their slinging of insults, one of which is the pardoner's 'homycide.'

The brawl between the friar and the pardoner introduces elements of buffoonery into the play as does the pardoner's physical abuse of Neighbour Prat and the friar's of the parson. The friar's beatings humorously exaggerate his inability to bear correction, an antifraternal convention; the fight is quite evidently a dramatic device used not simply to entertain the audience but also to ridicule friars. This fight, along with the friar's own sermon, and the dramatic debate between the friar and the pardoner (perhaps better called an insult-slinging match) are the devices Heywood uses to denigrate friars. While the sermon serves to reveal the friar's hypocrisy, the debate provides an answer to the question raised in Heywood's "mery play": which character, the pardoner or the friar, is more despicable? Given the play's symmetry -- the friar's long sermon receives the same amount of time as the pardoner's; their rapid, staccato-like dialogue is stoichiometric -- *The Pardoner and the Friar* is certainly not a solely antifraternal text but is both anti-friars and anti-pardoners. The ending, too, lends support to this conclusion. Both the friar and the pardoner beat the parson and Neighbour Prat until they agree to let them "in peace departe" (PF 651). Pleased with the submission of Prat and the parson, the friar and the pardoner bid "adew to the deuyll tyll [they] come agayn" (PF 653). Despite their physical submission, the parson and Prat have the last word: "And a myschefe go with you bothe twayne" (PF 654).

These final words concisely and aptly elucidate the type of trouble the friar and pardoner create. They are responsible for

‘myschefe,’ devilish deeds that disrupt highly sought-after peace and order but ones that do not threaten the state of human affairs and the universal church as do those performed by *antichristi*. As corrupt, avaricious men of religion, they ‘pollute’ the church and abuse the curate’s generous invitation to preach at his church. Pardoners and friars, the play seems to say, should not preach to parishioners; parishioners, the play tells the audience, should not support religious vagabonds. This message is in keeping with the one present in other antifraternal literature, particularly Chaucer’s *Summoner’s Tale*. Indeed, Heywood’s pardoner and friar are direct descendants of Chaucer’s Pardoner and Friar. Appropriating Chaucer’s language, his structural device of a long sermon, and his emphasis on corrupting the concept of charity,³⁸ Heywood creates a friar who strives to receive alms to which, antifraternalists would say, only parish priests are entitled. Heywood’s *The Pardoner and The Friar*, like Skelton’s “Collyn Clout,” then, repeats a message earlier antifraternal writers gave, a message that shows the transmission and continuation of an antifraternal trope from medieval literature to that of the early sixteenth century. Yet Heywood’s play largely relays this message by buffoonery, a device found in most merry jests and one that adds frivolity and facetiousness while curbing derision and harshness. Stripped of his theological roles, no longer a frightening

³⁸ George Kittredge points out in “John Heywood and Chaucer,” *American Journal of Philology* ix (1888), 473-74 that Heywood’s *The Pardoner and the Friar* is indebted to Chaucer’s Pardoner and Friar, specifically *The Pardoner’s Prologue* and part of the portrait of Huberd in *The General Prologue*. Heywood’s debt is certainly much greater than this.

antichristus, the friar is largely a rascal, a fool, a non-threatening 'son of perdition' in early sixteenth-century antifraternal literature.

Epilogue

The dissolution of the friaries effectively dismantled 'the ordres foure' in England to an extent that even ardent antifraternalists such as John Gower and William Langland would probably not have condoned. Begun in 1534 and completed in 1538, the suppression of the friars was generally unmarked by violence, outcry, and protest. Once considered, to borrow the Wife of Bath's words, "As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem" (*WBT* 868), friars silently vanished almost overnight.

The silent dispersal of the friars in 1538 was not remarkable. As David Knowles succinctly points out,

in the previous twenty years the friars had lost almost all their notable men at the extremes of the right wing or of the left. Many of their most active minds had followed the call of Germany to new things, with Bale and Barnes and Coverdale, whether the way led to the stake or to a mitre. At the other pole the staunchest had been swept away to death or exile with the Observants. Of those who remained, some of the ablest had left friar's habit and friar's heart to take the office under Henry and Cromwell.¹

Weakened internally by the abdication of 'their most active minds,' perhaps demoralised by the imprisonment, flight, and death of members of the seven houses of Franciscan Observants in 1534, the

¹ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England* (Cambridge: University Press, 1959), III, 365.

English friars of 1538, notably excluding only the Austin Lawrence Stone, readily submitted to Cromwell's agents.

Not simply brought back to what FitzRalph called the 'clennesse of their first ordinance' but entirely dissolved, most of the friars of 1538 either accepted the pension the government granted to all the dispossessed religious who expressed regret for former 'faults' or sought supplementary and alternative sources of income such as parochial livings. Except for an unspecified number of Franciscan Observants and other friars, especially Dominicans, who escaped from England in approximately 1534 to pursue their religion in exile, the friars of England removed their distinguishing fraternal weeds and silently melted, dissolved, into the British religious landscape.

Even the Marian restoration of Catholicism as the country's legal religion did little to draw Henrician ex-friars out of the parishes and places into which they had settled themselves almost twenty years earlier. Certainly Mary's ascension was responsible for the re-establishment of two fraternal houses in 1555. "The first to return," explains Knowles,

were the Observants The Greenwich house, Crown property, was revived on 7 April 1555 At about the same time the Dominicans were established in St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield.²

Yet most of the friars inhabiting the two fraternal houses in London were confrères of the "Dominicans and Franciscan Observants [who] had escaped twenty years before and settled in convents of the Low Countries, where they had been joined by a few English recruits."³

² Knowles, III, 439.

³ Knowles, III, 439.

No local ex-friars, it seems, restored their weeds. Thus, when the Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy of 1558 and the act dissolving the resurrected religious houses passed, only a few Observants and Dominicans faced exile or acquiescence to the oath.⁴

The disappearance of friars, as well as the dismantling of their friaries in 1538, did not translate into the immediate decline of adverse criticism of friars. Literary attacks on friars still appeared in various forms, in various genres, in various gradations. Some of them, like the already mentioned 'Kele Carol' (1545?) and tale of Jack and his stepdame, collectively represent a reiteration of established antifraternel motifs that seem to have appealed to their audience's taste for 'merie' and bawdy anecdotes. Some of them, like Arthur Brooke's brief notice to the reader in his translation of Bandell's *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562), are as unyielding and as pointed as any antifraternel sentiment expressed during the late Middle Ages. To show his "good Reader" examples of "evill mans mischefe" that ideally will "warneth men not to be evyll,"⁵ Brooke describes unfortunate lovers who confer, along with other characters, with "superstitious friers (the naturally fitte instruments of unchastitie)" (Brooke 240).

Emphasizing the friars' incontinence is assuredly not unusual; as we have seen, this charge is quite common. More interesting

⁴ See Knowles, III, 441-442, for a discussion of the safe departure of most of the Dominicans and Observants.

⁵ Arthur Brooke, "To the Reader," *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* printed in *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. Brian Gibbons (London: Methuen, 1980), p. 239. All further quotations from this text will be identified by Brooke and page number.

perhaps is Brooke's labelling of friars as superstitious -- a label that Milton also uses in a passage, already cited in the Prologue, from Book III of *Paradise Lost*. To describe friars as superstitious effectively denigrates their system of Catholic beliefs and rituals; given the derogatory connotations associated with the label -- unjustified, irrational, misguided -- Brooke's and Milton's application of it automatically invalidates or removes credibility from friars and their religious observances. This strategy for undercutting Catholic beliefs and rites ably served the needs of the emerging Protestant church (and its emerging factions). Early Protestantism, explains Keith Thomas in *Religion and the Decline of Magic*,

denied the magic of the *opus operatum*, the claim that the Church had instrumental power and had been endowed by Christ with an active share in his work and office. For a human authority to claim the power to work miracles was blasphemy -- a challenge to God's omnipotence.⁶

Denial of any benefits stemming from actively partaking of Catholic rituals such as consecration and exorcism, from worshipping Catholic signs of the cross and relics of the saints, and from belief in the Catholic doctrine of the Mass was central to the Protestant causes. And denial of popular Catholic beliefs of less magnitude than those listed above not surprisingly also served the Protestant cause. Thus, the neo-Protestant Hugh Latimer rejected the efficacy of wearing fraternal weeds. As Thomas relates, during the reign of the Catholic Church,

a scapular, or friar's coat, ... was a coveted object to be worn as a preservative against pestilence or the ague,

⁶ Keith Thomas, *Religion and The Decline of Magic* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978), p. 59.

and even to be buried in as a short cut to salvation: Bishop Hugh Latimer confessed that he used to think that if he became a friar it would be impossible for him to be damned.⁷

Milton, too, decries the wearing of fraternal weeds as "painful superstition" in a passage (already cited in the Prologue) from Book III of *Paradise Lost*. He quite evidently is writing a century later than Latimer, yet his biting attack on that particular 'superstition' is not entirely unexpected given his anti-Catholic bias and his interest in church history. His attack on friars, however, is significantly brief, and even though it is certainly antifraternial, it is contextually imbedded, as we saw earlier, in an attack on foolish "Pilgrims" (*PL* III 476) and "Eremites" (*PL* III 474) -- indeed, on any Catholic who wears "Cowls, Hoods and Habits" (*PL* III 490) or who bears "Reliques, Beads,/ Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls" (*PL* III 491-92).

This castigating of friars as other non-desirable religious are simultaneously castigated, whether they be Papists or members of an unpopular sect, points to one of the directions antifraternial literature (and remarks) takes as the Middle Ages recede into the distance. Authors such as Roger Ascham and Robert Burton occasionally imbed an antifraternial insult as they introduce criticism of systems of belief they themselves vehemently reject. In the section, "*Imitatio*" in *The Scholemaster* (1568) Ascham points out that in the Greek and Latin tongue

all writers, either in religion or any sect of philosophy, whosoever be found fond in judgment of matter, be commonly found as rude in uttering their minds. For

⁷ Thomas, p. 35.

Stoics, Anabaptists, and friars, with epicures, libertines, and monks, being most like in learning and life, are no fonder and pernicious in their opinions, than they be rude and barbarous in their writings.⁸

As an attack on friars, this passage is relatively mild, though it does interestingly show that Ascham does not view the friars alone as pernicious creatures but as part of a corpus of foolish agents.

Similarly, Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1651) views friars, not as an isolated group of pernicious religious agents, but as an integral part of a corpus of superstitious fools. In the Frontispiece of the first edition (1621) a picture of a kneeling friar serves, not as a visual sign of specifically fraternal corruption, but as a sign of superstition or religious madness (see figure 5). The accompanying "Argument" explains this signification. "Kneeling on his knee, / A Superstitious man," we are told,

fasts, prays, on his idol fixt,
Tormented hope and fear betwixt:
For hell perhaps he takes more pain,
Then thou dost heaven itself to gain.
Alas poor soul, I pity thee,
What stars incline thee so to be?⁹

Both this "argument" and the picture elucidate one of the Renaissance's prevalent perceptions of friars: friars represent superstition.

The text of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* sheds light on this perception of friars, further demonstrating that Burton attacked them not because they were friars but because they represent a group

⁸ Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, ed. R.J. Schoeck (Don Mills: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1966), p. 101.

⁹ Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Holbrook Jackson (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1948), I, 8. All further references to this work will be identified by *AM*, volume number, and page number.

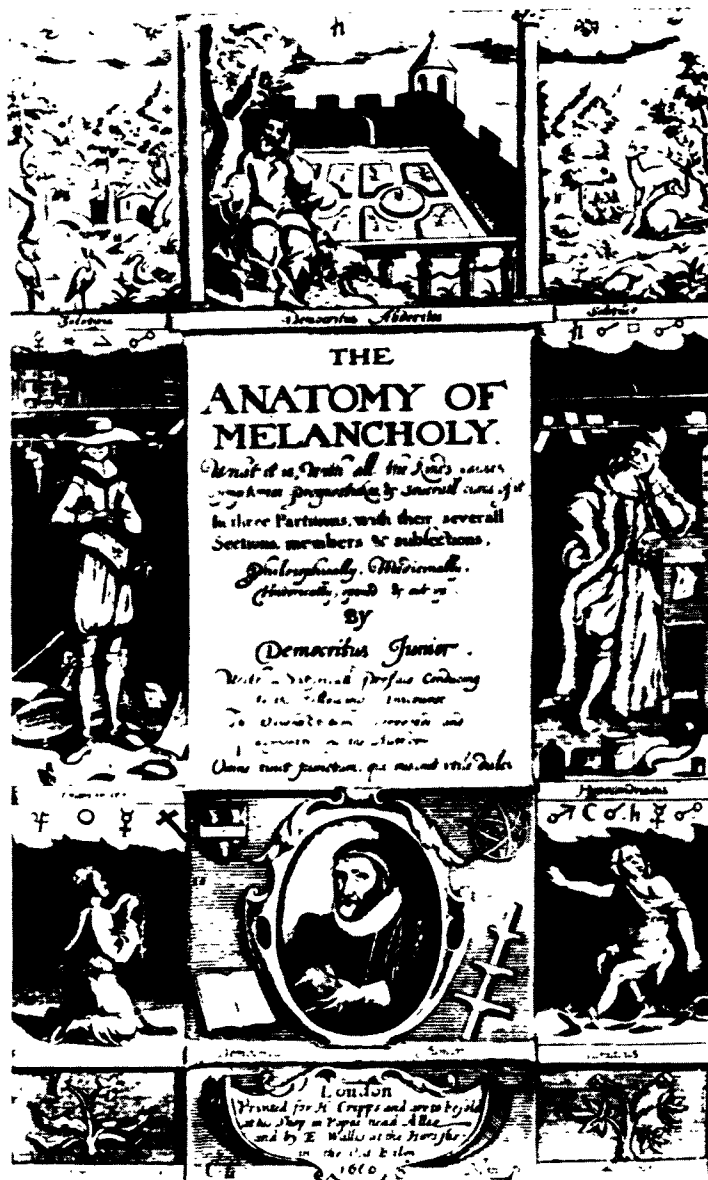


Figure 5

of superstitious agents. Initially wondering how Democritus would be affected if he could but see "the superstition of our age, our religious madness ... such absurd and ridiculous traditions and ceremonies" (AM I 54), Burton continues wondering in his loquacious and discursive manner what Democritus would think

if he should meet a Capuchin, a Franciscan, a pharisaical Jesuit, a man-serpent, a shave-crowned monk in his robes, a begging friar, or see their three-crowned Sovereign Lord the Pope, poor Peter's successor (AM I 54).

That Burton's attack is primarily centered on *all* recusant Catholics is clear from the subsequent questioning and listing of numerous Catholic rituals including pilgrimages to what Burton calls

those counterfeit and maggot-eaten relics kissing of paxes, crucifixes, cringes, duckings, their several attires and ceremonies, pictures of saints, indulgences, pardons, vigils, fasting, feasts, crossing, knocking, kneeling at Ave Maries, bells ..., praying in gibberish, and mumbling of beads sprinkling of holy water, and going a procession,... breviaries, bulls, hallowed beans, exorcisms, pictures, curious crosses, fables, and bables (AM I 54).

Yet into his digression on *religiosam insaniam* Burton significantly introduces a striking and pointed attack on Jesuits. Had Democritus studiously examined "a Jesuit's life amongst the rest," says Burton,

he should have seen an hypocrite profess poverty, and yet possess more goods and lands than many princes, to have infinite treasures and revenues; teach others to fast, and play the gluttons themselves; like watermen, that row one way and look another. Vow virginity, talk of holiness, and yet indeed a notorious bawd, and famous fornicator, *lascivum pecus* [a wanton creature], a very goat. Monks by profession, such as give over the world and the vanities of it, and yet a Machiavellian rout interested in all manner of state: holy men, peace-makers, and yet composed of envy, lust, ambition, hatred and malice; fire-brands, *adulta patriae pestis* [a full-grown scourge of their country], traitors, assassins, *hac itur ad astra* [in this way heaven is won], and this is

to supererogate and merit heaven for themselves and others! (*AM* I 55)

The Jesuits, here, according to Burton's emphasis, have replaced friars as the figure embodying numerous corrupt religious acts. Given the disappearance of friars in Renaissance England and the emergence of Jesuits as the neo-Catholics in late sixteenth-century England, Burton's emphasis is clearly understandable. What is perhaps most striking is this list of charges against what he earlier called the "pharisaical Jesuit": for the most part, the list includes traditional complaints directed against friars from the time of William of Saint Amour.

The emergence of numerous, new religious 'schismatics,' to use Burton's term, as well as the disappearance of the friars as 'the' well-defined external and readily identifiable enemy of 'true Christianity,' points to one of the reasons for the decline of traditional antifraternel literature during post-Reformation years. Once the easy target for all who vociferously reacted against any religious anomaly, which the fraternal orders certainly were as papal orders and "New Apostles," the friars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries no longer directly posed a visible threat to the religious establishment and, hence, no longer needed to be, in the eyes of writers of polemical religious works, the main focus of their discontent. Mainly useful as a well-established type of immoral, perverted religiosity -- as a figure of blind superstition -- the friars at times become a suitable parallel, an analogy, in writers' attacks against the sect(s) of their choice. This new literary function is clearly seen in Martin Marprelate's excoriation of Anglican bishops. Addressing advocates of episcopacy, Martin says:

You strive in vain; you are laid open already. Friars and monks were not so bad; they lived in the dark, you shut your eyes, lest you should see the light.¹⁰

In *The Drama of Dissent* Richie Kendall insightfully speculates upon shifting 'victims' of satiric, religious dialogues and treatises: religious anomalies often attack what they consider religious anomalies. Thus, the Lollards vilify the wandering ways of the friar; thus John Bale maliciously derogates the friars, particularly those of the Carmelite order of which he was a member for many years. To Kendall, the friars occupied an unenviable position as prominent targets of non-conformists. "So essential," contends Kendall,

did the orders become to the psychodrama of non-conformity that their ghostly presence continued to be invoked long after their enforced retreat from England. Well into the seventeenth century, radical Protestants such as Milton were still ritually slaughtering the scapegoat of the orders to appease their troubled spirits. Only if we recognize in the orders the externalized anxieties of the nonconformist mind, can we adequately account for the persistence and vehemence of such loathing as well as the recklessness with which it was indulged.¹¹

Kendall's psychoanalytic musings here offer one plausible explanation for the 'slaughtering' of the ghostly friar in puritanistic Reformation and post-Reformation literature. But the theory of displacement of ambivalence does not account for the mutations of antifraternality

¹⁰ Martin Marprelate, *Hay Any Worke for Cooper* (1589), cited in Richie Kendall, *The Drama of Dissent* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), p. 191. Kendall contends that, to Martin Marprelate as both a non-conformer and a satirist protesting against the Anglican episcopacy, "the Anglican bishops ... assume the role performed in an earlier age by the religious orders" (191).

¹¹ Kendall, p. 43.

literature as it becomes less prevalent. The friars' historical displacement, as well as the idea that they were superstitious, does.

Compared to late sixteenth- and early seventeenth- century Jesuits, Puritans, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, and other sects that noisily populated England, friars were not an externalized religious threat that required suppression. As an integral part of the Catholic establishment, they demanded attention from all anti-papists, but as an isolated papal order quite successfully dissolved in England half a century earlier, the friars were relatively benign creatures. This position -- superstitious yet benign reprobate -- perhaps explains a breed of friars appearing in some Renaissance drama. Figures such as Friar Bacon in Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589?), Friar Laurence in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1595), the disguised Duke Vincentio in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (1604), and Friar Bonaventure in John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1633) represent a curiously ambiguous type of the friar. Clearly not solely antifraternial yet bearing some traces of antifraternial sentiments found in traditional antifraternial literature, these figures, it is arguable, offer examples of a 'rewashing' of the antifraternial tradition.

In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* the Oxford scholar, Roger Bacon, initially seems to be a decidedly antifraternial figure. Although he is a renowned scholar, he nevertheless is, as Rafe reports, "a brave nigromancer, ... he can make women of devils, and he can juggle cats into costermongers."¹² A sorcerer, Friar Bacon

¹² Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. Derek Seltzer (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), i, 93-95. All further quotations from this text will be identified by scene and

first demonstrates both his magical powers and the type of magic in which he is skilled to Burden, Mason, and Clement, doctors at Oxford who have heard that Bacon is, as Burden puts it,

read in magic's mystery;
In pyromancy to divine by flames;
To tell by hydromantic ebbs and tides;
By aeromancy to discover doubts,
To plain out questions, as Apollo did.
(ii, 14-18)

Not only Oxford but also England and the court of Henry III, continues Burden, report that Bacon

art making of a brazen head by art
Which shall unfold strange doubts and aphorisms
And read a lecture in philosophy,
And by the help of devils and ghastly fiends,
[Bacon] mean'st, ere many years or days be past,
To compass England with a wall of brass.
(ii, 25-30)

Rumours are quickly confirmed when Bacon verbally acknowledges that he has "contriv'd and fram'd a head of brass/ ([He] made Belcephon hammer out the stuff)" (ii, 55- 56). And ocular proof is provided when Bacon conjures "*Per omnes deos infernales, Belcephon*" (ii, 116) (By all the infernal gods, Belcephon)¹³ the Hostess at Henley and a devil.

This initial display of magic assuredly testifies to Bacon's skill as a sorcerer. Like the benevolent Merlin, the patriotic Arthurian figure traditionally associated with beneficial magic and with helping Arthur defeat his foes, Bacon plans to use his magic to construct a wall of brass that

line number.

¹³ Derek Seltzer, ed. and trans., *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 16.

will strengthen England ...
 That if ten Caesars liv'd and reign'd in Rome,
 With all the legions Europe doth contain,
 They should not touch a grass of English ground.
 (ii, 58-61)

Yet the initial display of magic also points out Bacon's skill as a demonologist: Belcephon hammers the brass for him while a devil accompanies the Hostess. Bacon's familiarity with demons is further revealed when he welcomes Prince Edward to his cell, a study he calls "his consistory court, / Wherein the devils pleads homage to his words" (vi, 3-4) and where he commands a devil to carry "Bungay on his back" (vi, 172).

It is the emphasis upon Bacon's skill in demonology that clearly indicates that he is not an entirely benevolent wizard using "white magic." Rather, he meddles in "black magic," a meddling that reveals he has erroneously wandered into and investigated an area of knowledge that patriotic and pious scholars would not. Bacon's meddling, Derek Seltzer notes, "was in keeping with the popular opinion of the historical Roger Bacon, who was considered a demonologist and a sorcerer -- in spite of occasional protests by Elizabethan scientists."¹⁴ This meddling significantly labels Bacon an antifraternial figure. Like medieval antifraternialists who, as we have seen, identify friars as cohorts of Satan, Greene presents his friar as a familiar of demons. Indeed, Greene carefully assigns to Bacon supernatural powers that testify to his extensive familiarity with demonic activities. Bacon can, he himself vainly proclaims,

by books
 Make storming Boreas thunder from his cave

¹⁴ Seltzer, p. 13.

And dim fair Luna to a fair eclipse.
 The great arch-ruler, potentate of hell,
 Trembles, when Bacon bids him or his fiends
 Bow to the force of his pentageron.
 (ii, 46-51)

This proclamation credits Bacon with powers traditionally associated with demons. In his discussion on witchcraft and religion in *Religion and The Decline of Magic*, Thomas points out that, according to medieval demonology, the Devil supposedly "provoked high winds and thunderstorms, or ... appeared dramatically to snatch a poor sinner at his cups and fly off with him through the window."¹⁵ This belief did not vanish during the Reformation but was intensified: to many pious English people, Satan and his demonic entourage were an actualized reality. By Greene's day, as Thomas convincingly shows in his tracing of popular beliefs about Satan and demons,

meteorologists denied that evil spirits were responsible for tempests, but many contemporaries were less certain. 'It is a common opinion,' wrote an Essex clergyman in 1587, 'when there are any mighty winds and thunders with terrible lightnings that the Devil is abroad.'¹⁶

To associate Bacon, then, with acts that popular opinion viewed as the province of the devil and demons is to situate him as an irreligious, devilish figure -- one that is in keeping with traditional, antifraternel sentiments.

Bacon's own description of his meddling in the dark arts identifies him as a frightening cohort of Satan. To achieve his command

¹⁵ Thomas, p. 560.

¹⁶ Thomas, pp. 562-63.

over devils and to attain knowledge of the dark arts, he spent, he tells us,

hours ... in pyromantic spells,
The fearful tossing in the latest night
Of papers full of nigromantic charms,
Conjuring and adjuring devils and fiends,
With stole and albe and strange pentaganon,
The wresting of the holy name of God,
As Sother, Eloim, and Adonai,
Alpha, Manoth, and Tetragrammaton.
(xiii, 87-94)

Bacon essentially misuses or 'wrests' God's holy names to acquire knowledge to which man is not entitled; he refuses to acknowledge God's omnipotence. It is not surprising, then, that his meddling in the dark arts indirectly leads to the deaths of the two sons who use Bacon's mysterious "glass prospective" (xiii, 76), a glass that signifies knowledge to which man is not entitled.

As an arrogant scholar, Friar Bacon is arguably a composite of the antifraternat commonplace that friars boast of their learning and are both easily angered and vain. Bacon's academic vanity is more than evident in his reaction to Miles' not waking him when the Brass Head speaks. Bacon realizes that, if he does not attend to the Brazen head when it speaks, his seven-year task -- and "Bacon's glory and his fame" (xi, 36) -- will evaporate. The foolish Miles, of course, does not wake him in time, and Bacon sharply reprimands this poor scholar, angrily saying that, if he had done so, "The brazen head had uttered aphorisms, / And England had been circled round with brass" (xi, 104-05) and "Bacon might boast more than a man might boast" (xi 111). Concerned only with his own tarnished reputation, he curses Miles not once but twice:

My service, villain, with a fatal curse
That direful plagues and mischief fall on thee.

(xi, 121-22)

Some fiend or ghost haunt on thy weary steps,
Until they do transport thee quick to hell.

(xi, 128-29)

Evoking fiends and cursing Miles, Bacon clearly meddles in the dark forces.

But Bacon is not an entirely sinister, antifraternial figure because Greene infuses his character with qualities and actions that redeem him. This artistic infusion is one that an unadulterated antifraternalist would not inject. Greene, for instance, draws attention to Bacon's immense learning and scholarly skills, to his being a respected and respectable scholar. The extent of Bacon's knowledge and the level he has achieved in learning are made clear in the contest between him and Jacque Vandermast, the learned clerk, who, the Emperor relates,

pass'd into Padua,
To Florence, and to fair Bolonia,
To Paris, Rheims, and stately Orleans,
And, talking there with men of art, put down
The chiefest of them all in aphorisms,
In magic, and the mathematic rules.

(iv, 48-53)

Before the debate takes place at Oxford, Henry, receptive to testing the calibre of England's "only [scholarly] flower" against the epitome of Europe's scholars, challenges the distinguished Vandermast to set Bacon

but nonplus in his magic spells,
And make him yield in mathematic rules,
And for thy glory I will bind thy brows
Not with a poet's garland made of bays,
But with a coronet of choicest gold.

(iv, 61-65)

To demonstrate, as does Bacon to Henry III, the Emperor of

Germany, the King of Castile, the Duke of Saxony, and Eleanor of Castile, that England's 'scholarly flower' possesses greater skill and knowledge than does Europe's most distinguished scholar is to establish Bacon as the greatest Western scholar. To defeat the formidable Vandermast is to achieve scholarly glory, to wear metaphorically a crown of gold.

Bacon's achievements in learning, ones that include demonology, it might be argued, detract from this honour. His magic, it must be acknowledged, certainly does "worketh many woes" (xiii, 76). Yet it must also be remembered that Bacon's demonology is humorously presented at least as frequently as it is sinisterly presented. His striking Friar Bungay dumb so that he cries, "Hud, Hud" instead of marrying Lacy and Margaret, his conjuring the Hostess at Henley with a shoulder of mutton, his spiriting away Vandermast to his study in Hapsburg are all as comical as his using the glass perspective to show the unnamed sons their fathers' dispute is serious. Similarly, his curse on Miles is as sinister as Miles' silly greeting of a devil is humorous. This comic presentation of meddling in the dark arts reduces, indeed removes, some of the sinister overtones found in the friar's meddling.

Nevertheless, it is Friar Bacon's repentance that unquestionably redeems him and changes him from an antifraternial figure into an attractive, virtuous character. Following the deaths of Lambert, Serlsby, and their two sons, Bacon breaks the glass perspective and repents that he ever meddled in the occult arts. Though he suffers anguish, he does not despair because he knows contrition is religious medicine:

Sins have their salves. Repentance can do much.

Think Mercy sits where Justice holds her seat,
 And from those wounds those bloody Jews did pierce,
 Which by thy magic oft did bleed afresh,
 From thence for thee the dew of mercy drops
 To wash the wrath of high Jehovah's ire,
 And make thee as a new-born babe from sin.
 Bungay, I'll spend the remnant of my life
 In pure devotion, praying to my God
 That he would save what Bacon vainly lost.
 (xiii, 99-108)

Significantly, Bacon does not merely express contrition but is visibly contrite. At the wedding, he solemnly stands mute, a stance that conveys, as he later explains, repentance "for the follies of [his] youth, / That magic's secret mysteries misled" (xvi, 36-37). He then offers a lengthy but highly revealing prophecy of political stability and fruitful love:

That here where Brute did build his Troynovan
 From forth the royal garden of a king
 Shall flourish out so rich and fair a bud
 Whose brightness shall deface proud Phoebus' flower,
 And over-shadow Albion with her leaves.
 Till than Mars shall be master of the field;
 But then the stormy threats of wars shall cease.
 The horse shall stamp as careless of the pike;
 Drums shall be turn'd to timbrels of delight;
 With wealthy favors plenty shall enrich
 The strond that gladdened wand'ring Brute to see,
 And peace from heaven shall harbor in these leaves
 That gorgeous beautifies this matchless flower.
 Apollo's hellitropian then shall stoop,
 And Venus' hyacinth shall vail her top;
 Juno shall shut her gilliflowers up,
 And Pallas' bay shall bash her brightest green;
 Ceres' carnation, in consort with those,
 Shall stoop and wonder at Diana's rose.
 (xvi, 44-62)

No longer a meddler in the dark arts but a contrite, humble scholar, Bacon now possesses only virtuous, prophetic powers. Like Edward who "make[s] a virtue of [his] fault" (viii, 118), Bacon turns his vice into a virtue.

Seltzer astutely remarks that "the complex plots of *Friar Bacon*, taken as a whole, are an extended proof of human ability to redeem folly, each story-line reinforcing the main theme."¹⁷ Friar Bacon is certainly one of the characters whose actions demonstrate the human ability to replace folly with virtuous acts. Yet the figure of Friar Bacon reveals much more because he serves as an antifraternial figure that develops into a virtuous, fraternal figure. Unlike his pre-Reformation literary forefathers who usually remain solely anti-fraternial, who steadfastly personify folly, Friar Bacon becomes a virtuous, humane friar. He is, in a sense, cleansed of his forefathers' sins.

In *Romeo and Juliet* Friar Laurence is ostensibly a resourceful and considerate religious guide. As Romeo's "ghostly Sire,"¹⁸ he perceptively discerns Romeo's "distempered head" (II, iii, 29) and briskly chides him for his change of heart. His reason for willingly assisting the impetuous Romeo is undeniably admirable; "in one respect," he firmly tells Romeo,

I'll thy assistant be.
For this alliance may so happy prove
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.
(II, iii, 86-88)

His early advice to Romeo is timely and in keeping with basic Christian tenets: he counsels him to move "wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast" (II, iii, 90); before the marriage, he advises him "to love moderately" (II, vi, 14); and after Romeo slays Tybalt, he

¹⁷ Seltzer, pp. xx-xxi.

¹⁸ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. Brian Gibbons (London: Methuen, 1980), II, ii, 192. All further quotations from this work will be identified by act, scene, and line number.

both counsels him to "be patient" (III, iii, 16) and offers "Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy, / To comfort" Romeo (III, iii, 55-56) -- a traditional source of consolation dating back to Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*. Even Friar Laurence's plan to send Romeo to Mantua is well-intentioned and praiseworthy (III, iii, 148-51). As a friar whom Romeo describes as "a divine, a ghostly confessor, / A sin-absolver, and [a] friend profess'd" (III, iii, 49-50), Friar Laurence is initially impeccable and exemplary.

He does, however, bear some of the tragic responsibility for Romeo's and especially Juliet's death. The issue of responsibility is undoubtedly complex. Romeo and Juliet, we are immediately told in "The Prologue," are "A pair of star-cross'd lovers" (*Prol.* 6), products of "the fatal loins of ... two foes" (*Prol.* 5). "Accidents" abound in the play as when Friar John is prevented from travelling to Mantua, a circumstance Friar Laurence decries as "Unhappy fortune" (V, ii, 17), or when Romeo and Paris die at the Capulets' tomb, a bloody encounter that the horrified Friar Laurence mourns as "lamentable chance" (V, iii, 146). Indeed, it seems that "a greater power," as he tells the newly awakened Juliet in the tomb, "than we can contradict / Hath thwarted our intents" (V, iii, 153-54).

Nevertheless, the shifting sympathy of the Nurse, the Capulets' temperamental treatment of Juliet, and the friar's desperate yet ominous solution to Juliet's arranged marriage to Paris -- his meddling in the dark arts -- all hasten the ensuing tragedy. Dramatically, all these incidents make sure that the audience's sympathy rests with Juliet, and they all significantly point to the characters' flawed understanding of her. Capulet's impatient and irate treatment of her -- his verbal assault on her (III, v) -- is as callous as the Nurse's telling

her that it is "best [she] be married with the County" (III, v, 217). This callousness isolates Juliet as does the friar's desperate solution: strained "past the compass of [his] wits" (IV, i, 47), he can only "spy a kind of hope" in a desperate scheme (IV, i, 68). Counselling deceit, he advises Juliet to "go home, be merry, give consent / To marry Paris" (IV, i, 89-90) and then to administer a vial of 'distilling liquor' that enables its taker to counterfeit death. This scheme further isolates Juliet: she alone must face her dark fears. Indeed, even though she wholeheartedly embraces the friar's solution, even though it certainly prevents the impending marriage, Laurence's plan actually serves to mark the beginning of a series of deceits that, interpreted as truth, lead to deep anguish. By using his knowledge of 'dark magic,' of the superstitious arts, Friar Laurence momentarily resolves Juliet's anguish yet initiates the Capulets', Paris', and Nurse's -- and, indirectly, Romeo's.

Only after discovering the bodies of Romeo and Paris and observing Juliet awake does the Friar lose his composure. Startled by a noise, he tells her to

come away
 Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead,
 And Paris too. Come, I'll dispose of thee
 Among a sisterhood of holy nuns.
 Stay not to question, for the Watch is coming.
 Come, go, good Juliet. I dare no longer stay.
 (V, iii, 154-59)

Confronted by the ghastly situation, Friar Laurence can only panic, offer a weak solution to Juliet's plight, and then desert her. His solution is as inappropriate as the Nurse's was, while his desertion completes the pattern that began with the Nurse's. Juliet, alone and propelled to quick death by the Watchman's words, kills herself.

The sight of the bodies evokes grief and guilt from their families -- and from Friar Laurence. "Both to impeach and purge / [Himself] condemned and [himself] excus'd," he confesses his role in the preceding tragedy and requests that he be punished according to severe law, if he has been "Miscarried by...fault" (V, iii, 266). To the Prince, Laurence is still "a holy man" (V, iii, 269), yet he, like the Capulets, the Montagues, and Escalus himself (V, iii, 293-94), is guilty of perpetuating the "ancient grudge" (*Prol.* 3), of publicly "winking at ... discords" (V, iii, 293). Indeed, though the Friar's responsibility is limited, though he privately meddles for admirable reasons, he, as part of the Veronese establishment, is publicly guilty of the "scourge" that besets the town.

As a warm, compassionate religious guide, Friar Laurence is not an antifraternel figure, just as the named but unseen Friar Laurence and Friar Patrick in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* are not. Similarly, *Much Ado About Nothing's* Friar Francis is a fraternal twin to *Romeo and Juliet's* Laurence in that he enacts the same role when he advises Leonato to let Hero "awhile be secretly kept in, / And publish it that she is dead indeed."¹⁹ Yet Friar Laurence *meddles*, and this activity recalls the archetypal medieval meddler: the friars. Thus, though he is largely a holy man, though he is largely a respectable go-between, he is nonetheless slightly foolish, his actions slightly rash, because he dabbles in the superstitious arts. Furthermore, this dabbling in the occult subtly recalls, perhaps even

¹⁹ William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, ed. A.R. Humphreys (London: Methuen, 1981), IV, i, 203-04.

draws upon, the Renaissance perception of friars as types of superstition.

'*Tis Pity She's a Whore's* Bonaventura is, in some ways, a mirror image of *Romeo and Juliet's* Laurence. He is Giovanni's "reverend tutor"²⁰ who, at one time, accompanied Giovanni to Bologna, choosing "Rather to leave [his] books than part with" his student (I, i, 54). Interconnected with his role as Giovanni's academic tutor is Bonaventura's role as spiritual confidant and counsellor. He listens to and repudiates his pupil's arguments about the nature of love -- arguments that Giovanni puts forth to support Annabella as the ideal recipient of his "heroic" love. Indeed, Bonaventura consistently refutes Giovanni's impassioned yet perverted arguments supporting incestuous love, as well as harshly yet appropriately later insisting that Annabella repent.

Bonaventura is the central, religious figure in a violent revenge-tragedy that presents a lover who both perverts the ideal of Platonic love and suffers from the excesses of Burtonian religious and love melancholy.²¹ As the play's central religious figure, Bonaventura serves as the spokesperson for morally acceptable love, for the need to understand that divine law ultimately sets the rules about permissible mundane love. The opening scene in which the

²⁰ John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's A Whore*, ed. Derek Roper (London: Methuen, 1975), II, vi, 3. All further quotations from this text will be identified by act, scene, and line number.

²¹ See George Sensabaugh, *The Tragic Muse of John Ford* (New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1944), pp. 68-70 for a discussion of Giovanni as a Burtonian figure experiencing excessive love-melancholy and Mark Stavig, *John Ford and The Traditional Moral Order* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), pp. 97-102 for a discussion of Giovanni's perversion of Platonic doctrine.

Friar strongly excoriates Giovanni's "leprosy of lust" (I, i, 74) makes clear his orthodox position. Rejecting Giovanni's "unlikely arguments" supporting incestuous love, Bonaventura advises the not yet irrevocably sin-spotted Giovanni to seek remedy in traditional, religious acts; Giovanni, he says, should seek "Repentance ... and sorrow for this sin: / For thou hast moved a Majesty above / With thy unranked almost blasphemy" (I, i, 43-45). The Friar also counsels contrition, telling his pupil to return to Florio's house and "fall down / On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground; / Cry to thy heart, wash every word thou utter'st / In tears" (I, i, 70-73). Later, when Giovanni confesses his physical involvement with Annabella (II, v), the shocked and distressed Bonaventura offers again traditional advice, even though he feels Giovanni "art too far sold to Hell" (II, v, 37). He requests, for instance, Giovanni's "leave / To shrive [Annabella]; lest she should die unabsolved" (II, v, 44), and he still insists that Giovanni "leave her yet: / The throne of Mercy is above your trespass, / Yet time is left you both" (II, v, 62-64). Bonaventura's counselling of Annabella is as traditional as his counselling of her brother. When Annabella first (though only briefly) repents, he draws a conventionally horrifying picture of hell where "stands these wretched things / Who have dreamt out whole years in lawless sheets / And secret incests, cursing one another" (III, vi, 24-26). He also reveals to her the orthodox way to redeem herself: "Heaven is merciful, / And offers grace even now" (III, vi, 34-35). Thus, as a spiritual tutor, Bonaventura is appropriately rigid and orthodox.

Yet Bonaventura curiously seems to consider Giovanni incorrigible, unredeemable, even before he actually commits incest. To Giovanni's argument favouring incestuous love, Bonaventura replies,

"Have done, unhappy youth, for thou art lost!" (I, i, 35) and wonders aloud if the person speaking such blasphemy is the student whom he accompanied to Bologna. His reaction here parallels, anticipates, those he later makes. For instance, when Giovanni confesses that he has committed incest, Bonaventura laments, "I'm sorry I have heard it: would mine ears / Had been one minute deaf, before the hour / That thou camest to me! (II, v, 3-5). Bonaventura's responses to Giovanni certainly draw attention to the magnitude, the immorality, of the sin; they also perhaps suggest that a religious guide is impotent when faced with a brother so intent on possessing his sister. They nevertheless are unsettling.

This impression of uneasiness increases when Giovanni utters blasphemy sometime after the wedding of Soranzo and Annabella. To Giovanni's proclamation that "The Hell [Bonaventura] oft have prompted in nought else / But slavish and fond superstitious fear" (V, iii, 19-20), the friar merely responds, "Thy blindness slays thee" (V, iii, 21). Indeed, when Giovanni reaches what is perhaps his most dangerous spiritual and physical state, Bonaventura abdicates his role as spiritual tutor, refusing to counsel his student further:

Go where thou wilt, I see
 The wildness of thy fate draws to an end,
 To a bad, fearful end; I must not stay
 To know thy fall; back to Bononia I
 With speed will haste, and shun this coming blow.
 Parma farewell; would I had never known thee,
 Or aught of thine! Well, youngman, since no prayer
 Can make thee safe, I leave thee to despair.
 (V, iii, 63-70)

This abdication is problematic. A friar's giving up on Giovanni definitely emphasizes how much the brother is dedicated to an incestuous life, how much Giovanni devotes himself to perverted,

"heroic" love rather than godly love, yet it also points to the friar's frustration, his absence of patience, his refusal to continue to help a Christian gone astray.

Friar Bonaventura is also significantly superstitious. Following Hippolita's monstrous curse on Soranzo's and Annabella's marriage and their progeny, the friar remarks to Giovanni,

Here's an ominous change;
Mark this, my Giovanni, and take heed!
I fear the event: that marriage seldom's good,
Where the bride-banquet so begins in blood.
(IV, I, 108-111)

Even though this remark serves as a warning to Giovanni, even though it lends an air of dramatic and ominous foreboding to the play, it nonetheless is provocatively inappropriate. After all, Bonaventura knows that Giovanni disapproves of Annabella's marriage to Soranzo. To express his fear to Giovanni only reinforces the brother's rejection of the marriage; it only lends credence to his belief that Annabella must be his.

Ford's Friar Bonaventura is a curious fraternal character. Like Shakespeare's Friar Laurence, he is not really an antifraternat figure at all; Bonaventura aptly reproaches Giovanni for his "leprosy of lust" and endeavours to correct a horrific breach of religious and moral law. Yet his religious impotence and sudden departure, his perplexing attitude toward Giovanni and his expressed belief in portents, all suggestively undermine his role as the ideal "reverend" tutor. Though externally a considerate and conventional spiritual guide, Bonaventura, nevertheless, reneges on his duties and bears traces of anti-fraternal sentiments.

Shakespeare's most problematic friar, the disguised Duke in

Measure for Measure, is as perplexing a fraternal figure as Friar Bonaventura. Assuredly, Friar 'Ludovico' pursues charitable tasks and offers timely counsel, yet the role of friar that the Duke usurps allows him to meddle surreptitiously in affairs of state that he should arguably have publicly set right as Duke. Indeed, the Duke's lenient rule, his failure to enforce the law against adultery for at least fourteen years, has enabled brothels to proliferate in Vienna, particularly in its suburbs. So, despite the Duke's reasoning that it would have been too dreadful if he, rather than Angelo, "unloose[d] this tied-up justice,"²² there is an unsettling undercurrent, perhaps even a reprehensible pattern, in the Duke's strategy.

This unsettling undercurrent originates in the Duke's somewhat cryptic statement that, concerning the precise Angelo, "Hence shall we see / If power change purpose, what our seemers be" (I, iii, 53-54). This statement is significantly spoken during the scene in which the Duke requests Friar Thomas' help to disguise himself as a friar, to look what he is not. This statement introduces the pattern of false seeming that characterizes much of the play and most of the characters. Isabella decries Angelo's proposition, calling it "most pernicious purpose! Seeming, seeming! / I will proclaim thee, Angelo, look for't" (II, iv, 149-50). The fastidious Angelo laments his new-found lust for Isabella -- a lust that does not match his public reputation (II, iv, 12-15). Lucio utters false accusations against the Duke and later against the Duke as friar. And the Duke wishes

That we were all, as some would seem to be,

²² William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. J.W. Lever (New York: Methuen, 1967), I, iii, 32. All further quotations from this work will be identified by act, scene, and line number.

From our faults, as faults from seeming free!
(III, ii, 37-38)

He also, after lamenting "What may man within him hide, / Though
angel on the outward side!" (III, ii, 264-65), arranges that the

disguise shall by th' disguised
Pay with falsehood false exacting.
(III, ii, 273-74)

This strategy may seem appropriate, even sophisticated and clever,
yet the proposer of the strategy, not the strategy alone, warrants
attention. After all, the Duke himself is "false seeming," -- a distant
and removed cousin of de Meun's False Seeming -- because he dis-
guises himself as a humble friar while actually being a Duke possess-
ing human foibles.

This criticism perhaps seems harsh given the Duke's successful
trapping of Angelo, his strategy to keep Isabella chaste, his saving of
Mariana's reputation, and his saving of Claudio's life. He, however,
undeniably initiates the sequence of events by abdicating his position
and bestowing power upon Angelo, not Escalus. He realizes that the
compassionate Escalus is a most suitable replacement for himself
because, as he says, Escalus is knowledgeable in Vienna's political
laws and customs "As art and practice hath enriched any / That we
remember" (I, i, 12-13). Yet the Duke appoints Angelo as his repre-
sentative. In fact, even before he learns of Angelo's despicable
behaviour, he appears to distrust him slightly because he tells Friar
Thomas,

Lord Angelo is precise;
Stands at a guard with Envy; scarce confesses
That his blood flows; or that his appetite
Is more to bread than stone. Hence shall we see
If power change purpose, what our seemers be.
(I, iii, 53-54)

Thus, the Duke may disguise himself with seemingly commendable intentions, but the disguising is, nevertheless, unsettling. In fact, given Shakespeare's propensity for equivocation -- one we have already seen in his treatment of the issue of tragic responsibility in *Romeo and Juliet* -- the Duke's failure to behave as an ideal ruler who strikes a balance between leniency and justice, as well as his concealing himself as a friar, is suspect.

The Duke is, to use More's phrase, "playing the frere." He certainly acts hypocritically when he assumes a role for which he is "unchosen," while he abdicates one he should not. To eliminate potential difficulties arising from his usurping the role of friar, the Duke requests Friar Thomas to "Supply [him] with the habit, and instruct [him]/ How [he] may formally in person bear / Like a true friar" (I, iii, 46-48). The instruction is evidently fairly successful because, clad in his fraternal weeds, the Duke charitably visits "the afflicted spirits / Here in the prison" (II, iii, 5), compassionately ascertains that Barnardine is not adequately prepared to face death, and remains unrecognized by his subjects until he chooses to reveal himself. Contrary to what Lucio says, the Duke as friar does not simply behave as "a scurvy friar, / A very scurvy fellow" (V, i, 138-39). Rather, he consoles the unfortunate, the afflicted.

Nevertheless, he is, to use one of Lucio's charges, "a meddling friar" (V, i, 130). For instance, the disguised Duke's application of "Craft against vice" (III, ii, 270) leads Angelo to lie with "His old betrothed" (III, ii, 272), and the disguised Duke's dispatching of the head of "One Ragozine, a most notorious pirate" (IV, iii, 70) protects Claudio's life while seemingly conforming to Angelo's order. To endorse Lucio's label here after rejecting his description of the friar

as "very scurvy" perhaps seems vacillating. It is, and that is the point. Lucio, like several of the other characters in *Measure for Measure*, is neither simply a scoundrel nor a paragon of virtue: he combines characteristics of both. His fidelity to Claudio is undeniably laudatory as is his encouraging Isabella to plead her brother's case. At the same time, his boasting of avoiding child-support is despicable as is his lying about the conversations at the prison. Similarly, Isabella's devotion to a Christian life is admirable, yet her wish, for instance, for "a more strict restraint / Upon the sisters ..., the votarists of Saint Clare" (I, iv, 4-5) is too rigid, too unyielding. Indeed, Isabella's rigidity is as uncharitable, as unmerciful, as the precise Angelo's is.

Like many of the other characters in *Measure for Measure*, Duke Vincentio is neither a totally virtuous person nor a wholly bad figure. His private resolving of problems is praiseworthy while, at the same time, his public failure to rule Vienna firmly and fairly is to be criticized. His 'playing the friar,' his being neither what he seems to be nor what he should be, is wrong. Only because his private meddling in the guise of Friar 'Ludovico' leads to public peace and happiness is he not a pernicious friar, an antifraternial figure.

Renaissance writers did not, for the most part, favour stridently antifraternial types and motifs. By not always erecting clearly antifraternial figures, as does Greene, by imbedding only short antifraternial remarks, as do Burton, Ascham, and Brooke, by defusing traditional derision, as do Fuller, Ford, and Shakespeare, Renaissance writers collectively began to lay to rest a body of antifraternial conventions that had ably served antifraternialists for four hundred years. Banished almost overnight from the British reli-

gious landscape in the early sixteenth century, the friar for the most part disappeared from England. Banished more slowly from British literature during the Renaissance, the once pernicious and unsavory friar became, for the most part, a superstitious shadow of his former self.

Conclusion

The constant concern of this thesis has been to locate and isolate particularly British antifraternial sentiments. Although *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede* (c. 1394) has not been mentioned in the preceding chapters, it, too, expresses distinctly British antifraternial ideas. In this Wycliffite poem, the pilgrim encounters a Franciscan who invites him to contribute to his convent. Should a generous contribution be forthcoming, says the friar, the pilgrim will achieve immortality because he will appear in the chapel's stained glass window:

we buldeþ a burwz a brod and a large,
A chirche and a chapaile with chambers a-lofte,
Wiþ wide windowes y-wrouzt and walles well heye,
Pat mote ben portreid and paynt and pulched ful clene,
Wiþ gaie glittering glas glowing as þe sonne.
And myztestou amenden vs wiþ money of þyn owne,
Pou shuldest cnely bifore Crist in compas of gold
In þe wide windowe westwarde wel nize in the myddell,
And seynt Fraunces him-self schall folden the in his
 cope,
And presente the to the Trynitie and praie for thy
 synnes;
Bi name schall noblich ben wryten and wrouzt for the
 nones,
And, in remembrance of þe y-rad þer for euer.¹

Rejecting the Franciscan's offer, the pilgrim leaves, only to journey

¹ Walter Skeat, ed., *Pierce The Ploughmans Crede* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906), ll. 118-29. All further quotations from this work will be identified by *PPC* and line number.

to a Dominican convent which he then vividly -- and extensively -- describes:

How þe pileres weren y-peynt and pulched ful clene,
 And queynteli i-corven wip curiouse knottes,
 Wip wyndowes well y-wrouzt wide vp o-lofte.
 And þanne y entrid in and even-forþ went,
 And all was walled þat wone þouz it wid were,
 Wip posternes in pryuytie to passen when hem liste;
 Orchezardes and erberes euesed well clene,
 And a curious cros craftily entayled,
 Wip tabernacles y-tizt to toten all abouten.
 (PPC 160-68)

He further observes that this "tabernacle" has "arches on eueriche half and belliche y-corven, / Wip crochetes on corners wip knottes of golde; / Wyde wyndowes y-wrouzt y-written full þikke" (PPC 173-75).

The Dominican Church is also, according to the pilgrim, as elaborately decorated inside as it is outside:

[Made vpon marble in many maner wyse;
 Knyghtes in her conisantes clad for þe nones,]
 All it semed seyntes y-sacred opon erþe;
 And louely ladies y-wrouzt leyen by her sydes
 In many gay garmentes þat weren gold-beten.
 (PPC 184-88)

And when the pilgrim comes upon the Dominicans' cloister, he finds it to be as ornate as their church:

Þan kam I to þat cloister and gaped abouten
 How it was pilered and peynt and portreyd well clene,
 All y-hyled wip leed lowe to þe stones,
 And y-paued wip peynt til iche poynt after oþer;
 Wip kundites of clene tyn closed all aboute,
 Wip lauoures of latun louelyche y-greithed.
 (PPC 191-96)

As we have seen, the emphasis on friars' elaborate oratories (their size, decor, labyrinthine structure, cost), as well as an emphasis on friars worshipping graven images, is primarily confined to British antifraternel works that appeared between 1350 and 1530. Also emphasized in particularly British antifraternel works of this period

are the friar's association with the devil rather than Antichrist, his skill as peddler, his "stealing" of young boys, and his crafty usurpation of the impoverished curate's revenue in order to construct ornate oratories.

These emphases are conspicuously absent in many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works. Though the antifraternel figures found in these works are sometimes a composite of a few traditional antifraternel conventions dating back to William of Saint Amour's times and sometimes a composite of both British and French antifraternel commonplaces, these figures nevertheless bear only a diminished resemblance to their predecessors. As we have seen, particularly in "mery" works such as *Jak & his Stepdame & of the Frere* the friar is primarily a figure of folly deserving derision at times and lighthearted laughter at other times.

Once the target of many a social commentator, the friar lost his 'privileged' position as time passed. Supplanted by other anomalous, religious reformers as religious politics shifted direction, the friar no longer was an object of special and deep animosity. Though present in various Renaissance texts, he either becomes a representative of superstition or dissolves into a ghostly shadow of his former literary, antifraternel self.

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