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Gödelmann's Faustus (1591)
Concerning the Fluidity of the Early Transmission
of the Adventures of Faustus in Germany

Abstract

This article is the first to treat systematically the brief, contemporary references to the Fauststoff in the treatise *De magis, veneficis et lamiis* (1591) by Johann Georg Gödelmann, best known as a witchcraft theorist. He treats Johann Faustus as a “praedestigiator”, a black magician and trickster who belongs in the company of Simon Magus. Comparing Gödelmann’s versions of the adventures of Faustus with those in the chapbook, *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* (1587), published in the same city (Frankfurt am Main), one sees that these adventures were in flux in the late sixteenth century.

I. Introduction

Johann Georg Gödelmann (1559-1611) was a Rostock jurist, professor, privy counsellor (Kurfürst Christian II of Saxony) and ambassador (Emperor Rudolf II). But he is today recognized as a prominent figure in the history of learned magic and demonology in Early Modern Europe¹. This assessment is chiefly based on his tract *De magis, veneficis et lamiis* (1591), intended for the judiciary and government officials². Gödelmann’s book has

¹ Sönke Lorenz: Johann Georg Gödelmann. Ein Gegner des Hexenwahns? In: Beiträge zur pommerschen und mecklenburgischen Geschichte, ed. R. Schmidt, Marburg/Lahn 1981, pp. 61-105. See, also, H. C. Erik Midelfort: Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany 1562-1684. The Social and Intellectual Foundations, Stanford 1972, pp. 24-25; and Euan Cameron: For Reasoned Faith or Embattled Creed? Religion for the People in Early Modern Europe. In: Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe, ed. H. Parish, London and New Delhi 2015, pp. 37 and 39. Allow me here to thank Dr. Dylan Goldblatt and Andrew Merritt, M. A., for advice and aid in translation.

² Johann Georg Gödelmann: *De Magis, Veneficis Et Lamiis, Recte Cognoscendis & Puniendis, Libri Tres, His accessit ad Magistratum Clarissimi et Celeberrimi I.C.D. Iohannis Althusij Admonitio,*



<http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0001/bsb00019258/images>

Bd. 1, Frankfurt am Main 1591. <http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0001/bsb00019258/images> [accessed January 2016] Subsequent citations in the present essay are drawn from this volume. All references and page numbers are to Book One, Chapter Three, unless otherwise indicated.

two main purposes. First, he explores demon lore, charting with precision the pernicious forces that he believes threaten the Christian realm. He examines the categories of magic, defines terminology with scholastic rigor, and seeks by listing negative examples to expose the contours of a terrain of evil. Second, he puts forth an argument about the treatment of those accused of witchcraft. Gödelmann challenges regnant beliefs about witches and procedures in witch trials. Arguing from a legal perspective, he champions discriminating judgment concerning matters of evidence against witches, the justification for torture, the role of witnesses and interrogations, and the infliction of capital punishment. From the theological perspective, he explains that witches are often unknowing of their actions because the Devil has tricked their minds and induced melancholy³. Gödelmann's method influenced many, initiating greater reliance on rationality and the humane administration of justice.

Heretofore scholarship has focused on Gödelmann's status as a Protestant witchcraft theorist. This perspective, while understandable, obscures his other achievement, which is examined in this paper. He is an early contributor to the Faust-legend. In the vast Faust-literature Gödelmann is only rarely mentioned, and then in passing as a conveyor of motifs⁴. His contribution is, in fact, omitted from the otherwise meritorious critical edition of the chapbook: *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* (henceforth *Historia*)⁵. The editio princeps of this book appeared in 1587, less than five years before *De magis, veneficis et lamiis*. Both volumes were published in Frankfurt am Main. Our study uses the initial printing by Spies in 1587 as the standard of reference for Gödelmann, whose collection of maleficent exempla alludes to the exploits of "Ioan. Faustus".

Gödelmann's decision to embed the Faust-story in a manual concerning magic and witchcraft must remind us that the *Historia* itself is indebted to

³ Noel L. Brann: *Trithemius and Magical Theology. A Chapter in the Controversy over Occult Studies in Early Modern Europe*, Albany 1999, pp. 168-169.

⁴ For example, J. Scheible: *Die Geschichte vom Faust in Reimen nach dem einzigen bekannten Exemplar von 1587 in der Königl. Bibliothek zu Kopenhagen; Die deutschen Volksbücher von Faust und Wagner; und die Historien von den Zaubernern Baco, Zyto, Bruder Rausch und vielen Andern; auch vierter Band von Doctor Johann Faust*, Stuttgart 1849, pp. 294-295. The present text is cited by Alexander Tille: *Die Faustsplittler in der Literatur des sechzehnten bis achtzehnten Jahrhunderts nach den ältesten Quellen*, Berlin 1900, pp. 38-40.

⁵ *Historia von D. Johann Fausten. Text des Druckes von 1587. Kritische Ausgabe*, ed. S. Füssel and H. J. Kreuzer, Stuttgart 1988. Subsequent references and page numbers are to this edition.

contemporary literary predecessors of this genre, for example, the treatise *Christlich bedencken und erinnerung von Zauberey* (1585) by Augustin Lercheimer (known variously as Hermann Wilcken and Hermann Witekind)⁶. What Frank Baron says about Lerchheimer's book applies, as well, to Gödelmann's. Each deals with «diabolic magic, and... is dominated by the author's concern about the persecution of witches»⁷. Lerchheimer, like Gödelmann, treats "Joh. Faust" as a negative exemplum, relating his adventures as conjurer and demonic magician. Faustus in both books is a master at deception.

In circa 100 words, in Latin, Gödelmann cites several adventures of Faustus as warning examples. He needed only to copy, and render into Latin information on these adventures from the *Historia*. But he did not. His reluctance is important, since it documents, at least in the eyes of a contemporary author, that the adventures of Faustus in the *Historia* were neither fixed nor definitive. From whichever source(s) Gödelmann drew his Faustian anecdotes (and it is uncertain how much is attributable to creative license), he contents himself with bare outlines of adventures, suggesting to us that his learned readers knew the stories. Here we compare his versions with those in the *Historia*, both to show the deviations from a popular printed account and to reveal that Gödelmann did not consider the *Historia* to hold the weight of authority in its depiction of Faustian adventures. Comparison of the adventures demonstrates the elasticity of Faustian narrative in the epoch, a flexibility and flux that accommodated emendations.

Despite its brevity Gödelmann's passage gives a window on his reception of the Faust-story. Two prominent motifs mark his account: the stove, or oven ("*fornax*"); and the hiding place of Faustus after he engages in a fraudulent transaction involving animals. In Gödelmann's view Faustus is a "praedistigiator", a term that he renders at one point in the vernacular: "Zauberer" (*De magis*, p. 23). A practitioner of the black arts, Faustus is a perpetrator of fraud, illusion being his stock in trade. Gödelmann's remarks are consequential from several perspectives. First is the historical. As suggested, they arose very close in time and in locale to the publication of the *Historia*. Second is the intellectual. They show that a prominent member of the German intelligentsia was familiar with Faustus as an exemplar of de-

⁶ Hermann Witekind's *Christlich bedencken und die Entstehung des Faustbooks von 1587*. Hrsg. von F. Baron in Verbindung mit einer kritischen Edition des Textes von 1585 von Benedikt Sommer, Berlin 2009.

⁷ Frank Baron: The Faust Book's Indebtedness to Augustin Lercheimer und Wittenberg Sources, *Daphnis* 14 (1985), p. 518. See, also, Baron: Faustus on Trial. The Origins of Johann Spies's "Historia" in an Age of Witch Hunting, Tübingen 1992.

monic trickery. Third, and most important, they document a contemporary reception of the adventures of Faustus that deviates from the available versions in the *Historia*.

Part three of the *Historia* concerns, to cite the words of the chapter heading: «D. Fausti Abenthewer, was er mit seiner Nigromantia an Potentaten Höfen gethan und gewircket» [nos. 33-59]). In a series of exploits involving various social strata, Faustus gets an advantage over his adversaries by virtue of his wit and his power to create illusions. These adventures, Marguerite de Huszar Allen says, draw on «folk tales and notorious jokes» and are «permeated with danger, excitement and sex»⁸. Faustus' feats in the third part of the *Historia* are based in part on the legends surrounding the fourteenth-century Bohemian sorcerer, Zyto⁹. The capacity of the *Historia* to integrate whole blocks of material of this sort shows the adventures themselves to be open-ended and expandable. Although it is certainly too great a leap to apply Eco's classical formulation "opera aperta" to the adventures of Faustus, their elasticity is nevertheless noteworthy. When we acknowledge that the adventures cohere in the theme of illusion, their receptivity to incorporation and to emendation becomes clearer. Manipulation, both of persons and of reality, is the glue that binds otherwise loosely-connected encounters of the protagonist.

II. Definitions of Concepts and Georg Nigrinus

Gödelmann introduces Faustus in his chapter "De praestigiatoribus" (Lib. I, caput III: pp. 22-29). Citing Moses as an authority, he argues that the most ancient variety of the black arts is "praestigium", which he defines in terms of manipulating the senses through illusion and deception¹⁰. For Gödelmann this vice is a type of blindness that seeks to prevent the eye

⁸ Marguerite de Huszar Allen: The Aesthetics of the 1587 *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, In: The Faustian Century. German Literature and Culture in the Age of Luther and Faustus, ed. J. M. van der Laan and Andrew Weeks, Rochester 2013, p. 165. Cf. the use of the term «Schwank» to describe the contents of the third part of the *Historia* by Jan-Dirk Müller, *Faustbuch*. In: Frühe Neuzeit in Deutschland 1520-1620. Literaturwissenschaftliches Verfasserlexikon, Bd. 2, ed. W. Köhlmann, et al., Berlin and Boston 2012, pp. 296-305.

⁹ E. M. Butler: *The Myth of the Magus*, 1948; rpt. Cambridge 1993, pp. 112-116. See, also, Scheible (note 4), pp. 275-276; 289-291; and 296-297.

¹⁰ Gödelmann refers to the Biblical passage on the magicians of Egypt, Exodus 7:8-12. See Scott B. Noegel: Moses and Magic. Notes on the Book of Exodus, *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 24 (1996), pp. 45-59.

from witnessing reality and truth. Gödelmann is by no means original in his understanding of “praestigium” and “praestigator”. Nor does he pretend to be. His method is that of the legal brief. He collects evidence, cites the same methodically, and seeks to proffer enough material to convince the reader that those who challenge the power of perception through illusion deserve stern condemnation. Gödelmann understands “praestigium” in the conventional sense of «illusion/delusion created by demonic forces», as used in the influential, contemporary tract on demonology by the physician Johann Weyer (Wier), *De praestigiiis daemonum* (1563)¹¹. Another example from the period is offered by Johann Trithemius, the Benedictine monk and abbot who writes in his *Annales Hirsauenses* (1495-1503) about the legendary physician Sedechias, «magus & praestigator [sic] maximus»¹². Among Sedechias’ tricks was the (later to become Faustian) deception by illusion of devouring men, wagons, and beasts. As an aside we note that Trithemius writes the famous letter in 1507 about the person some consider to be the historical Faustus, Georgius Sabellicus «Faustus junior», who called himself the prince of necromancers («principes necromanticorum») ¹³. Gödelmann, citing Luther in the larger passage as an authority on demonology, introduces Johann Faustus as one of a long list of “praestigiatore” extending to ancient Greece, Egypt and the Holy Land. The magicians of the pharaoh offer one such negative archetype. Each member of Gödelmann’s list of negative exempla promotes demonic magic with the aid of evil forces. Illusion and delusion are the watchwords. One of these is Simon Magus, an arch-deceiver who performs stupendous acts of deception. From the Middle Ages Gödelmann mentions Sedechias and Albertus Magnus. The for-

¹¹ Johann Weyer: On Witchcraft. An Abridged Translation of Johann Weyer’s *De praestigiiis daemonum*, ed. B. G. Kohl and H. C. Erik Midelfort, trans. J. Shea, Asheville 1998. Johann Faust appears in Book Two under the heading of magicians of ill repute, pp. 52-53.

¹² Joannis Trithemij, Spanheimensis, ... *Tomus ... Annalium Hirsauensium: Opus nunquam hactenus editum, & ab Eruditis semper desideratum; Complectens Historiam Franciae Et Germaniae, Gesta Imperatorum, Regum, Principum, Episcoporum, Abbatum, Et Illustrum Virorum*; 1, Sankt Gallen 1690, p. 34. http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10321555_00076.html?contextType=scan&contextSo= [accessed January 2016] Sedechias (sometimes Zedechias), supposedly lived in the ninth-century, but my research suggests that he was an imaginary figure, intended to render Jewish medicine suspicious. The working title of my study is «Sedechias: Iniquitous Physician and Sorcerer. On the Long Life of an Anti-Jewish Canard».

¹³ Karl P. Wentersdorf: Some Observations on the Historical Faust, *Folklore* 89 (1978), p. 201.

mer performs a sham decollation¹⁴; while the latter engineers the illusion that summer has arrived in the middle of winter¹⁵.

In 1592, a year after the publication of Gödelmann's *De magis*, there appeared, likewise in Frankfurt am Main, a German translation. It was prepared by the pastor, renowned translator, and polemicist Georg Nigrinus, or Schwartz (1530-1602)¹⁶. It is uncertain who commissioned Nigrinus' translation. What is clear is that the publication of a vernacular text won for Nigrinus a new, wider audience, one certainly not limited to the educated professional class. His is no word-for-word rendering, but a tendentious version filled with interpolations that frequently appear as chapter headings and marginal notes. He aspires throughout to offer a «gründlicher Bericht von Zäuberern», and labels Faust, in the margin, «ein Gäuckler» (p. 28). Gödelmann has no such marginal note on Faust. We cite both versions of the definition of “praestigium”, each dependent on Isidor's *Etymologiae*:

Gödelmann: Praestigium nihil aliud est ... quam sensuum & oculorum delusio. (p. 23)

Nigrinus: Praestigium (Begauckelung vnnnd Zauberrische Verblendung) ist nichts anders ... dann Betrügnuß der Sinnen vnnnd der Augen. (p. 21)

As this may suggest, when Nigrinus translates “praestigiator”, he requires two German equivalents: «Gäuckler und Verblender» (p. 20). The

¹⁴ Gödelmann (note 2), p. 27, summarizes information on Sedechias, as given by Trithemius (see note 12, p. 34): «amputabat homibus capita manus vel crura». Beheadings and amputations are common tricks of illusion, performed both by magicians and actors on stage. See Philip Butterworth: *Magic on the Early English Stage*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 149-155.

¹⁵ Gödelmann could well be thinking of the passage by Augustin Lercheimer (note 6) on a winter miracle: «Da mußte Albertus der kurtzweilige Mönch auch bei sein. Der machte den Herrn da zu ehren vnd zum lust daß der Saal grunete vnd blüete mit beumen kreutern laub vnd groß: der guckguck lerch nachtigall sunge als wanns jm Meien were» (p. 19). Cf. *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* (n. 5), p. 269.

¹⁶ Georg Nigrinus: *Von Zäuberern, Hexen und Unholden, warhafftiger und wolgegründter Bericht Georgij Gödelmanni: wie dieselbigen zuerkennen u. zu straffen*, Frankfurt am Main 1592 http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb11110859_00005.html [accessed January 2016] Subsequent references and page numbers are to this edition. Nigrinus had published an anti-Jewish tract, *Jüden Feind. Von den Edlen Früchten der Thalmudischen Jüden, so jetziger zeit in Teutschlande wonen, ein ernste, wolgegründete Schrifft*, Frankfurt am Main 1570, p. 110, which repeats the canard that Sedechias had murdered Charles the Bald in 878 by poison. Gödelmann, we recall, names Sedechias as one of the “praestigiatores” (note 12), but fails to mention regicide. On the place of Nigrinus as a religious author, see Thomas Kaufmann: *Antisemitische Lutherflorilegien. Hinweise und Materialien zu einer fatalen Rezeptionsgeschichte*, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 112 (2015), esp. p. 196.

first of these he interprets according to the classical usage of “goukelære/gougelære”, namely “Zauberer”, “Gaukler”, “Taschenspieler”. The second, “Verblender”, is Nigrinus’ attempt to convey the bedazzlement that Faust and other conjurers call forth, and upon which they rely. These practitioners of black magic blind and confuse their audience through tricks involving illusion.

III. Faustian Trickery

In a very constricted space Gödelmann manages to treat several adventures that have rough analogues in the *Historia*. The first of these draws on Faustus’ feat of changing the seasons: «Von mannicherley Gewächß so Faustus im Winter, vmb den Christag in seinem Garten hatte in seinem 19. Jar» (no. 55). In December, the *Historia* reports, a great amount of snow lay on the ground. Faustus invites guests into his garden, where summer, not winter prevails. In the garden are beautiful roses, wine-grapes, grass, and all sorts of vegetation. During the winter season Faustus has thus conjured up a locus amoenus. A similar episode of seasonal change appears in Gödelmann’s chapter “De praestigiatores” and, in fact, provides the introduction to the adventures of Johann Faustus. Gödelmann relates the legend that Albertus Magnus, long-associated with magic, especially alchemy, had tables placed for a banquet in the middle of winter in Cologne, when the earth was covered with snow. As William II, Count of Holland and King of the Romans, sat down to eat, the snow, it was said, disappeared. Flowers bloomed, birds flew, grass grew, and foliage blossomed, as though it were summertime.

Following this scene, Gödelmann introduces Faustus, and the transitional element to his exploits is the seasonal change that Albertus has brought about by magic. Employing the first-person narrative, he claims:

Gödelmann: Vidi praestigiatores, qui nives & pruinas facere potuerunt. Hac fraude mirifice quoque fuit celebris Ioan. Faustus superiori seculo. (p. 28)

Nigrinus: Ich habe Gäuckler gesehen / die Schnee und Reiff haben machen können. In diesem Betrug war auch sehr berümbt Johannes Faustus für dieser [sic] Zeit. (p. 28)

But Gödelmann’s transition to the story of Faustus is a strange one, indeed. He claims that Faustus brings winter to summer, not summer to winter as Faustus had done in the *Historia*. For this very feat of trickery, the

reader learns, Faustus had become famous in an earlier epoch¹⁷. As a result, Gödelmann, with a single subversive and contradictory stroke, distances his Faustus-as-weather-maker from both Albertus Magnus and from his namesake in the *Historia*. Gödelmann's Faustus blazes a different path, albeit a path of deception for which he earns the writer's scorn as "praestigiator". The inverted artifice that his Faustus orchestrates thus has two aspects. It both challenges the narrative in the *Historia* regarding the specific choice of season and makes crafty schemes of this sort an object of reproach. One recalls that the *Historia* fails to pronounce moral judgment over Faustus' actions as manipulator of the weather. In fact, the summer that Faustus has conjured up attracts the description: «ein herrlich vnd lustig Spectacul» (p. 107). By contrast, Gödelmann understands tampering with weather to be a deceitful offense: «hac fraude» (p. 28). Only "praestigiatōres", so he reasons, would risk interfering with God's plan for the natural course of seasonal phenomena.

The second adventure mentioned by Gödelmann, Faustus' hostile encounter with a peasant driving a wagon, has points of reference with the following anecdote in the *Historia*: «D. Faustus frist einem Bawern ein fuder Håw sampt dem Wagen vnd Pferden» (no.36). When Faustus here observes a hay wagon approaching, he enters the road and claims to have the right-of-way over the vehicle. But the driver fails to yield the way. Faustus decides on a punishment. He creates the illusion of devouring the peasant's wagon, horses, and load of hay. To do so, he appears to expand his mouth to the size of a large tub. (Note that Faustus again appears to eat a cart-load of hay in no. 40 of the *Historia*: «D. Faustus frist ein Fuder Håuw»¹⁸). In *De magis*, these words appear:

Gödelmann: Is rustico noleti de via cedere, equos cum curru devorare visus. (p. 28)

¹⁷ Gödelmann specifies that earlier time at another place in *De magis*, Bd. 2, Frankfurt am Main 1591, pp. 46, placing Faustus in Wittenberg «temporibus diui Lutheri». <http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0001/bsb00019259/images/index.html?id=00019259&seite=47&fip=193.174.98.30&nativo=2F&groesser=100%25> [accessed January 2016] Nigrinus renders the passage: «... vnd von Joanne Fausto der zur Zeit Lutheri sich zu Wittenberg ein zeit lang hielt» (p. 212).

¹⁸ Faustus' ravenous eating episode with expanded mouth has a long tradition and is associated with Sedechias (note 12) and Zyto (note 9). See, also, the reference in the commentary to the *Historia* (note 5) to Luther's *Tischreden* (p. 259). When Melancthon claims that Faustus devoured another magician, Leo Ruickbie describes this sort of trick as «cannibal magic» (In: Faustus. The Life and Times of a Renaissance Magician, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2009, pp. 164-167).

Nigrinus: Derselbige hat einen Bauwren / so ihm nicht wolte auß dem Wege Weichen / die Pferde mit dem Wagen gefressen. (p. 28)

Although Gödelmann opts for severe narrative concision, using an extremely economical style that devotes a mere half-sentence to the adventure, he manages to make his point of view plain. Again the *Historia* does not dictate his reception of the adventure. Whereas Faustus initiates the violent encounter in the *Historia*, the *rusticus* does so in Gödelmann's version. We assume that his readers were familiar with the *Historia* and were therefore aware that the peasant failed to yield the road as a response to the abusive challenge and impertinence of Faustus. The peasant in the *Historia* is the victim, the butt of Faustus' verbal jibes and provocative actions. But Gödelmann offers no space whatever to explain the peasant's response. Instead, we read that this man would not yield the way. Gödelmann's elliptical narrative also leaves no room for reference to the contents of the wagon, hay, or to Faustus' expanding mouth and devouring trick¹⁹. Nor does he hint that Faustus spits back up his swallowed prey. In short, he truncates the adventure, offering no explanation for behavior or for motivation. Instead, he directs the reader's attention to the phenomenon of trickery itself. After all, acts of illusion and delusion provide his justification for treating Faustus as a *praestigiator*. For Gödelmann, the precise contours of Faustus' feats of magic are less important than the fact that he bewitches those around him.

In the *Historia*, as was true for the winter garden adventure, no moral judgment is expressed. The final words are that Faustus «(hatt) ihn nur geblendet» (p. 81). The mayor of the town, who is brought to the scene by the peasant to make right Faustus' act of deception, smiles and reveals to the rustic that no real harm has been done. Horse and wagon are unscathed; all was illusion. But Gödelmann does not smile. For him this very act of deluding the eyes through tricks of illusion is a vice; and conjuring up false reality betokens demonic magic. Faustus belongs, by Gödelmann's reckoning, in the company of that evil trickster extraordinaire, Simon Magus.

¹⁹ This trick does appear in *De magis* when Gödelmann, just prior to his passage on Faustus, mentions Sedechias as a devourer of wagon, horse and driver (see notes 12 and 14). Gödelmann, summarizing the testimony of Trithemius, states: «Effecit namque arte sua vt hominibus videretur deuorare virum armatum cum equo & omnibus armis: currum quoq; onustum foeno, cum equis & auriga» (p. 27). *Nigrinus*: «Dann er [Sedechias] machte mit seiner Kunst daß die Leute dauchte / er fresse einen geharnischten Mann / mit dem Pferde und allen Waffen: auch einen Wagen mit Heuw beladen / mit den Pferden vnnd dem Fuhrmann» (p. 28).

The final Faustian adventure that Gödelmann recounts is the longest, and incorporates two of the adventures seen the *Historia* (with clear differences). These two are: «D. Faustus betruget einen Roßtäuscher» (no. 39); and «D. Faustus verkauffte 5 Säw, eine umb 6. Fl.» (no. 43). The first of these tells of Faustus selling his steed at a fair. He tells the purchaser, a horse-dealer, not to ride over water, but the horseman does so anyway. The horse disappears and leaves behind a bundle of straw. The angry dealer, seeking the return of his purchase price, finds Faustus lying on a bed, snoring. Taking Faustus by the foot, the horse-dealer, in the wish to pull him off the bed, finds that the foot of Faustus has come off in his hand. Faustus cries out in pain; and the dealer runs away, believing that he has detached a bodily member. (Note that the motif of the missing foot appears again in the adventure «Wie D. Faustus Gelt von einem Jüden entlehnet vnd demselbigen seinen Fuß zu Pfand geben den er jhm selbst in deß Juden bey-seyn abgessaget» [no. 38])²⁰. The second adventure also involves selling animals. Faust transfers five pigs to a drover with the admonition to avoid water on the homeward journey. When the pigs get dirty, however, the drover takes them to a watering place. They disappear in the water; only straw wisps remain. The deceived buyer receives no reimbursement.

Animals, fraudulent business transactions, water, straw, a bodily limb: these are the motifs in the *Historia*. Gödelmann retains these, but joins the adventures, editing at will:

Gödelmann: & alius qui cuidam vendidit benè pingues & obesos porcos, quos cum emptor domum abactus in via per obiectum torrentem pelleret, sola stramina vidit defluere in aquis, amissis porcis, mox aliud insolentius inde nascitur. Nam redit ad hospitium, quesiturus venditorem nebulonem. Is in hospitio, re cum hospita composita, retro fornicem, dormienti similis, stertit, accedit iracundè emptor, heus tu impostor, ac pede trahit, pes totus sequitur, vt eximi videatur ab ipso corpore, miser hic attonitus stat, alter vni[qu]es vociferatur de accepta iniuria, tandem res amicè componitur, & crure admoto, iterū[m] suo loco refigitur &c. (p. 28)

Nigrinus: vnnd ein anderer [?] / so einem gutte fette Schwein verkauffte welche als sie der Käuffer heim treiben wolte / vnnd sie auff dem Wege durch eine Bach trieb / verlohrt er die Schwein / vnd sahe nur

²⁰ See Barbara Könnker: Die Geschichten von Rabbi Adam und der Fauststoff, Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge 6 (1978), pp. 91-106. Könnker treats «Die Geschichte vom ausgerissenen und wieder angeklebten Bein» on pp. 97-98.

Strowisch dahin fließen: Darauß baldt noch ein vngewöhnliches ent-
 stehet: Dann er kehret wiederumb zur Herberge / zu suchen den Ver-
 käuffer / den Bösewicht / derselbige legte sich in der Herberge hinder
 den Ofen / nach dem ers mit der Wirtin also angeleget / vnd
 schnarchte / als wann er schliefte: geth der Käuffer zornig hinzu / vnd
 spricht / hui du Betrieger / vnd zeucht jhn mit dem Schenckel / wel-
 cher jhm gantz folgete / deuchte jhn als wann er jhm denselbigen vom
 Leib abrisse / vnd stundt der arme Tropff gantz erschrocken: Schrey
 der ander mit dem einen Schenckel vber sein entpfangenen Schaden:
 Endtlich wirdt die Sach gütlich vertragen / vnd wirdt das Beyn wider
 an sein Ohrt gericht vnd angemacht. (p. 29)

In the *Historia*, we recall, Faustus engaged in two deceptive and deceitful business transactions, both involving animals (horse, swine). Both contain admonitions regarding water; the buyer ignores the warning; and the livestock disappear, leaving straw. The joining of these two episodes can be traced to the collection of exempla that influenced the *Historia*, the very popular *Promptuarium Exemplorum* (1568) by the Protestant pastor Andreas Hondorff²¹. When Hondorff fuses here the adventures in order to cite a negative example of a conjurer, he refers not to Faustus by name, but to a certain “Schwartzkünstler” who was hanged. Hondorff and the *Historia* retain two animal transactions (horse, swine). Gödelmann, on the other hand, removes the horse, replacing it with pigs. These changes can mean either that he was following a variant literary tradition as yet undocumented, or he

²¹ Andreas Hondorff: *Promptuarium Exemplorum*. Historienn vnd Exempelbuch. Aus heiliger Schrifft / und vielen andern bewerten vnd beglaubten Geistlichen vnd Weltlichen Büchern vnd Schrifften gezogen, Leipzig, 1568. We cite the relevant passage from the 1584 edition: «Vor etlichen Jaren ist ein Schwartzkünstler gehenckt worden / von dem gesagt ward / daß er zweymal zuvor were gehenckt gewesen / da allwege ein Strowisch am Galgen blieben hangen. Er hat einmal einem ein schönen Hengst verkaufft / vnd verboten / daß man jhn nicht ba de [sic: bald] zur Trencke ritte / Als nun solcher erfahren wolte die vrsach / vnd das Pferd ins Wasser geritten / ist es zum Strowisch worden / Derwegen er zornig / eilet zur Herberge / da der Gäuckler ware / Als dieser jn hat sehen kommen / leget er sich auff ein Banck / da kompt er mit Zorn bewegt / zeucht jhn hart bei einem Beine / das er jm bald außgerissen / vnd jn die Stuben geworffen / vnd davon gelauffen / Denn der Schwartzkünstler hat jn also verblendet / das es jn nit anders dauchte / also geschehen / etc. Jtem / er hat auch Schweine vnd anders verkaufft / das endtlich zu Strowischen worden / vnd also die Leute betrogen» (p. 74). Cf. *Historia* (note 5), pp. 261-262. On Hondorff, see Heidemarie Schade: *Andreas Hondorffs Promptuarium Exemplorum*. In: *Volkserzählung und Reformation. Ein Handbuch zur Tradierung und Funktion von Erzählstoffen und Erzählliteratur im Protestantismus*, ed. W. Brückner, Berlin 1974, pp. 646–703; and Philip M. Soergel: *Miracles and the Protestant Imagination. The Evangelical Wonder Book in Reformation Germany*, New York 2012, pp. 154 ff.

felt that a single anecdote with an animal provided a sufficiently illustrative example of illusion and deception. We lean toward the latter view, believing that one delusive transaction encapsulates Faustian legerdemain: a living object of value (pigs) disappears from view, becoming a mere wisp, worth nothing. Making nothing of something is the work of the exemplary charlatan, Johann Faustus.

Our comparison shows even further deviations in a small space from the *Historia*. Gödelmann attempts to sway the reader against Faustus in the adventure by referring to him as a “nebulo”, which Nigrinus renders with “Bösewicht”. Gödelmann omits Faustus’ admonition to the purchaser of livestock to avoid water. In addition, he leaves out the vulgar detail, as conveyed in the *Historia*, that the horse-trader, after he removes the foot of Faustus, experiences an unpleasant surprise: «da gieng jhme der Fuß aussem Arß» (p. 86). He adds two narrative details, one involving conspiracy and the other pretense, both in the inn. The female inn keeper becomes Faustus’ co-conspirator by plotting with him to find a place to hide from the angry horse-trader, who wants his revenge. And Faustus, the master pretender, feigns sleep, snoring for effect in the lodging house. The place where Faustus pretends to sleep represents the starkest divergent detail in Gödelmann’s account: Faustus conceals himself from the aggrieved purchaser by reclining behind a stove/oven: «retro fornacem» (Nigrinus: «legte sich... hinder den Ofen»). The *Historia* and Hondorff fail to mention the stove as the place where he is found by the angry, deceived purchaser. Here Gödelmann anticipates Goethe, who famously has Mephistopheles emerge from behind a stove. Whereas the *Historia* reports: «[Er] fand D. Faustum auff einem Beth ligen» (p. 86), Hondorff says that Faustus: «leget er sich auff ein Banck»²². One must ask whether the stove is an early Faustian motif.

The *Historia*, as noted earlier, is indebted to the book *Christlich bedencken und erinnerung von Zauberey* (1585) by Augustin Lercheimer (Wilcken/Witekind). In fact, Lercheimer speaks of Faustus and the “ofen” under the heading «Von gemeinen gauckelbuben»²³. In a tavern Faustus grows irritated when a serving boy fills his wine cup too full. Faustus claims that he will devour the boy if it happens again. It does, and the magician widens his mouth and eats the servant. He washes this feast down with a pail of water. Anxiously, the inn-keeper begs Faustus to return the boy. Faustus instructs the inn-keeper to look «hindern ofen», where he finds his terrified, drenched

²² Hondorff: (note 21), p. 74.

²³ Lercheimer (note 6), p. 15.

servant huddled. Lercheimer explains: «Dahinn hatte jn der teuffel gestoßen, / das waßer auff jn gestürzt: den zusehern die augen bezaubert / daß sie dauchte er wer gefreßen / vnd das waßer gesoffn»²⁴. Both Lercheimer and Gödelmann judge Faustus to be a demonic magician; and both associate Faustus with the stove, but to different effect. Whereas Lercheimer places a victim of Faustus' maleficence behind the stove, Gödelmann chooses this location for Faustus himself. In either case the stove plays a part in a Faustian trick.

It is unclear how familiar Gödelmann was with Lercheimer's work. One can in any event point to a striking similarity of vocabulary in references to Faustus' flying adventure with his cloak (*Historia*, no.37). Lercheimer refers to a certain person who had travelled «auff dem mantel mit seinen guten gesellen»²⁵. Gödelmann, in a passing reference in the second book of *De magis*, identifies this person as Faustus, and refers to the magician's companions as «socij», which Nigrinus and Lercheimer render as «Gesellen»²⁶. Returning to the motif of the stove, it is safe to assume that Gödelmann knew it had a place in Faustian anecdotes. However, although the motif is the same (“retro fornacem” / “hindern ofen”) in our examples, the differences in the narrative presentation of the same are noteworthy. Gödelmann situates the stove in an adventure with kinship to the episode concerning a horse-trader in the *Historia* (no.39), whereas Lercheimer includes the stove in a discrete adventure with a young victim. Here Gödelmann and Lercheimer employ what one might label “floating Faustian motifs”, by which is meant that the fluid adventures are so flexible as to adopt, and adapt, narrative details found in other adventures. To be sure, the parameters of the main fable are fixed, that is to say, the beginning and end of Faustus' life exhibit very little fluidity. However, the adventures in between these poles display no fully stable texts and are receptive to accretion and intertextuality. Narrative variation combined with fixity in a single work of art brings to mind the concept of the «multi-form», as articulated by Christine M. Thomas in reference to the early, apocryphal text *The Acts of Peter*. «As the narrative... passed through various versions, recensions, and translations», Thomas explains, «the repetition of the story lead to multiple attestations of individual narrative units... These attestations are not mere copies from one document to another, but re-castings. In this sense, they might be called

²⁴ Ibid, p. 17.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 6.

²⁶ Gödelmann (note 17), p. 46; Nigrinus, p. 212. In the *Historia* Faustus takes as his flying passengers “Grafen” (no. 37).

multi-forms, that is, components of a set of individual performances of the same narrative»²⁷.

IV. Conclusion

Gödelmann's version of Faustian adventures offers an aperture into the reception of the "Fauststoff" close in time to the publication of the *Historia*. That he does not borrow directly from the published book is revealing to us. This raises the larger question, yet to be explored in research, namely why the publishing of the adventures of Faustus did not fix them as a stable text. Gödelmann's stance in any case confirms what we know about the state of the general transmission of the story of Faustus in the late sixteenth century. The Faust-texts at that time reside, to adopt a critical designation applied in another context, «between fixity and flux», fixity in regard to the beginning and end of the story, and flux in respect to the middle adventures²⁸. Gödelmann's remarks come in a period of exceptional activity in the transmission of the Fauststoff. For example, in the same year that the *Historia* appeared, 1587, another edition was published²⁹. In one of these recastings there is an accretion in the adventure episodes, the so-called Erfurter Reihe (1589), a string of Faustian exploits that introduce the reader to the world of the university³⁰. As far as we know, Gödelmann did not create

²⁷ Christine M. Thomas: *The Acts of Peter, Gospel Literature, and the Ancient Novel*, New York 2003, p. 64.

²⁸ Sister Mary C. Costello: *Between Fixity and Flux. A Study of the Concept of Poetry in the Criticism of T. S. Eliot*, Washington, D.C. 1947. Useful, too, for assessing the versions of the Faust story in Gödelmann's era is the formula articulated by H. Wayne Storey in yet another context: «Textual swings between fixity and variation» In: *Mobile Texts and Local Options. Geography and Editing, Textual Cultures* 8 (2013), p. 10.

²⁹ Concerning early versions and editions of the *Historia*, see Peter Amelung: *Ein unbekanntes Faust-Buch von 1588*, *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 63 (1988), pp. 177-182; Müller (note 8); and Hans Henning's essays: *Das Faust Buch von 1587. Seine Entstehung, seine Quellen, seine Wirkung*; and *Faust im 16. Jahrhundert*. In: *Faust Variationen: Beiträge zur Editions-geschichte vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, München and London 1993, pp. 51-82; and 93-110, respectively. Cf. Maria Münkler: *Narrative Ambiguität. Die Faustbücher des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, Göttingen 2011, who observes: «Dass die Geschichte des Teufelsbündners Johannes Faustus im Laufe ihrer Tradierung schon unmittelbar nach ihrem ersten Erscheinen im Druck zahlreichen Veränderungen unterzogen worden ist, gehört zu den Standardfeststellungen der Forschung» (p. 11).

³⁰ *Historia von D. Johann Fausti*. Kritische Ausgabe der jüngeren Version von 1589, ed. Peter Philipp Riedl, Berlin 2006. See Riedl: *Nützliches Erschrecken. Die ältesten Versionen der Faust-Historia und das Verhältnis von prodesse und delectare in der Literatur der Frühen Neuzeit*, *Daphnis* 32 (2003), esp pp. 538-539. See, also, Marguerite de Huszar Allen:

adventures; he manipulated known ones³¹. And by virtue of his reception one sees that he fails to regard the adventures as fully settled. In other words, the *Historia* provides no authoritative, “final” version for him.

Up to now scholars have focused on the tabulation and categorization of early, post-*Historia* stories of Faustus. In this effort they have slighted the crucial question why the *Historia* was not perceived by contemporaries to be definitive. The answer is beyond the scope of this article. But the question raises a larger one, namely to which degree the very act of publishing a tale in a book in the sixteenth century marked it as a settled text. Regarding narrative fixity itself, most of the research has been conducted on Homeric and Mesopotamian epic³², but Elizabeth Eisenstein has also explored what she calls «typographical fixity» in Gödelmann’s age³³. She employs the term, a feature of print culture, in reference to the role of the printing press in preserving texts and linguistic phenomena. One example is the law code. But typographical fixity certainly extends before preservation and codification. It also applies to a published story, inasmuch as the printed page sets the narrative parameters, thus laying claims to fixity.

Gödelmann helps us see that the *Historia* as a point of reference was both stable and fluid; hence it could lay no claim to full textual authority. Publishing alone did not mark the end of the adventures, either in number or motif. The exploits of Faustus therefore remained in flux. No matter the contours of the early Faust story, Faustus himself remains a negative example for all Christians. That much is fixed.

The Reception of the *Historia von Dr. Jobann Fausten*, *The German Quarterly* 59 (1986), pp. 582-594.

³¹ Another example of story manipulation during Gödelmann’s period of activity, albeit a more extreme one, is when the *English Faust Book* (1592) re-structures the episode “How Doctor Faustus ate a load of hay” (= *Historia*, no. 40). The German version has a peasant driving a load of hay, while the English rendering makes this driver a clown. See *The English Faust Book*, ed. J. Jones, Cambridge 1994, p. 154 (no. 35).

³² See, for example, A. B. Lord: *The Influence of a Fixed Text*. In: *Epic Singers and Oral Tradition*, Ithaca, NY and London 1991; Ian M. Young: *Textual Stability in Gilgamesh and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. In: *Gilgamesh and the World of Assyria*, ed. J. J. Azize and N. K. Weeks, Leuven and Paris 2007, pp. 173-184; and Bruno Currie, *The Iliad, Gilgamesh, and Neo-Analysis*. In: *Homeric Contexts*, ed. F. Montanari, A. Rengakos, and C. Tsangalis, Berlin and Boston 2012, pp. 543-580.

³³ Elizabeth I. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge 1993, p. 83.