

# **"With His Blood He Wrote"**

Functions of the Pact Motif in Faustian Literature

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## 1. Introduction: The Quoted Pact

Johannes Faustus, or Jörg Faustus, or Georg Faustus, lived either in Helmstadt or in Knittlingen sometime during the first decades of the sixteenth century. He was born into an age that considered the act of pledging one's soul to the Devil in writing not only a realistic offence, but also one punishable by mutilation and death. A fictionalised account of his life was chronicled in Johann Spies's publication *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* in 1587, the same year that midwife Valpurga Hausmännin was tortured and executed in Dillingen, accused of writing and signing a pact with the Devil, amongst other acts of harmful apostasy. The work was meant to serve a dual purpose: Entertainment and moral education. It warned the proud and the curious of the dangers of devil worship and apostasy, while rewarding the curiosity of those same readers with a generous offering of devilish spectacles. Doctor Faustus's infernal pact allowed him to transcend the boundaries of his peers' experience, and, as a literary device, it allowed the God-fearing publisher Johann Spies to present to his readership a surfeit of amorality, debauchery, gluttony and at least the promise of forbidden insights – implicitly referring all criticism back to the infernal document, reportedly written by Faustus himself, that is embedded in the book's sixth chapter. The book's legacy within Western literary history is extensive: The Faustian pact motif reappears again and again in works of literature and each time it does, it creates a conflict between that context that gave birth to it and the work in which it appears.

Three and a half centuries after Spies published his *Historia*, writing and signing a pact with the Devil was no longer a punishable offence. However, as a literary motif, it was revived by Thomas Mann, who has his protagonist Adrian Leverkühn announce to bewildered onlookers during the final chapter of the fictional biography *Doktor Faustus* (1947) that he has signed himself away to the Devil. Readers of this work have been no less bewildered by the presence of this motif in Mann's novel than those fictional onlookers are as a fever-ridden Leverkühn states that he expects the Devil to come and collect his soul because of the pact that he wrote in his own blood. Scholars have been hard at work since the book was first published to banish the Devil from it, claiming – with increasing fervour in recent

decades – that there is no pact, no Devil and nothing demonic in it. The pact and its effects are thought to be limited either to the narrator Serenus Zeitblom’s elaborate mystification of his friend, or to Adrian Leverkühn’s diseased mind. These modes of reading have obscured the peculiar effect that the pact motif has on Mann’s novel as a whole, which is directly comparable to the motif’s function in the first Faustbook.

There is undeniably a pact motif in Adrian Leverkühn’s fictional biography, it is undeniably adopted from that first Faustian work, and it comes about as a result of the protagonist’s interaction with a personified Devil. Furthermore, the pact motif affects not only the way that Adrian Leverkühn composes music, but also the way in which his biography is presented. Thomas Mann’s adoption of this motif entails a colouring of his narrative, both within those sections of the book that are at the mercy of Leverkühn’s form of expression and outside of them: The old pact motif, adopted from Spies’s book, is staged as a foreign element in the organism that is Mann’s *Doktor Faustus*, and among the large number of references, quotes and paraphrases that this work contains, the motif has a particular position, because its presence influences both the arc of Leverkühn’s story and the form of the work. A sixteenth-century system of belief that allows for a pact with the Devil is brought into the work, and this staged anomaly spawns several points of conflict that some recent readers of the work have attempted to resolve by removing or bracketing the pact motif.

It is this conflict between an elaborately quoted material – a material that is clearly marked within the work as foreign to it – and the primary narrative voice that motivates this current study. This study is born out of the conflict inherent in Mann’s novel, but the following will demonstrate that the mechanics of the motif in that work is directly comparable to the motif’s figurations in two other Faustian works as well. The primary hypothesis to be tested in the following is that the pact motif appears to be present in a similar manner in several works that employ it: It is made up of text passages elaborately marked as text that has come to the work from the outside and that is embedded in the work, but it also creates an unsolvable, persistent conflict between the adopted, quoted material and other voices in the work. This hypothesis builds on two assumptions that must be tested in each case: First, that the pact motif



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is staged as quoted, meaning that it is not only adopted from somewhere else, but also marked as being foreign to the work, and second, that it is not only present in the individual work as a purely isolated piece of text, but that it is both motivically and thematically integrated into the work.

This study is motivated by the presence of this conflict in Mann's book, and Mann scholarship needs a thorough investigation of this motif – an investigation that brings to light what a pact with the Devil is in the context of the literary tradition that Mann writes his novel into, and how this inherited motif is permuted in Mann's work. Simply comparing *Doktor Faustus* with the *Historia*, however, will not sufficiently account for the development of the pact motif that leads up to Thomas Mann, and such comparison has already been performed a number of times.<sup>1</sup> When it comes to its treatment of the pact motif, Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* is very clearly positioned between two major landmarks in the extensive tradition that makes up Faustian literature. In his self-commentary, Mann has explicitly positioned his book in a direct line of influence from that first chronicle of Doctor Faustus's life, Johann Spies's *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten*, and just as explicitly he has distanced his work – or, more precisely, his *Faust*, his take on the Faust myth – from the most widely read and certainly the most extensively commented-upon work in this tradition, Johann Wolfgang Goethe's two part *Faust* (1808, 1832).

Appreciating the form and function of Mann's pact motif requires an in-depth understanding of how this motif appears, both in form and function, in each of these works. A more or less purely mechanical comparison of similar textual passages, as has been practiced and reiterated since the inception of comparative Mann studies, is an insufficient basis for being able to perform a satisfactory reading of how the presence of this outdated motif influences not only the narrative of Mann's novel, but also the way in which the narrative is conveyed. The erroneous conclusion that there

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<sup>1</sup> Comparison between Mann's *Doktor Faustus* and Johann Spies's *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* in: Bergsten (1963), Nielsen (1965), Assmann (1975). Comparison between *Doktor Faustus* and Goethe's *Faust* in: Bergsten 1963, Berendsohn 1965, Koopmann 1988, Gockel 1988, Reidy 2014, Berendsohn 1965, Koopmann 1988, Wysling 1978, Siefken 1981.

is no pact motif in the work has its roots in an insufficiently comprehensive understanding of the development of the motif. A thorough model of what the pact motif is in those works that Mann's *Doktor Faustus* directly relates to will facilitate a discussion concerning how Mann construes his own pact motif, while simultaneously offering an interpretative model for other related works. While the end point of this study is a better understanding of how the pact motif appears and functions in Mann's book, positioned in contention with significant voices in current Mann scholarship, its output should also be regarded to be a model that accounts for the form and function of the Faustian pact motif, both derived from and applied to three works in the Faust tradition, and applicable to others also.

The literary pact with the Devil is a formalised set of promises that a character makes according to some rules and rituals that are shared between works of literature. These rules and rituals make up a law that governs literary pacts with the Devil, as will be demonstrated during this study's analysis of Goethe's *Faust*, which contains a running discussion of the legalities behind this type of pact. Actions following from formalised promises that are bound by a particular species of law can be subjected to judgment that may draw on the formalities of this law; by comparing the promises that are made in a pact with the Devil with the subsequent actions of the character that made the promises, readers may judge these actions to uphold or transgress against this implied law. Readers of Faustian literature have done precisely this, discussing and debating every turn of events that somehow transgresses against the law that the pact motif implies and invokes. Readers hold the work itself to the promises that its protagonist makes, and an unexplained or unrecognised breach of contract, such as the one that seemingly takes place during the penultimate scene of Goethe's *Faust II*, can fuel decades and even centuries of debate. This study will find that the pact motif is consistently staged as foreign to the work; either stemming from a voice other than the primary voice of narration, or being brought into the work from a different historical age expressing a different world view. The narrators of Spies's *Historia* and Mann's *Doktor Faustus* explicitly distance themselves from the formalised promises, while in Goethe's *Faust* the pact is identified as belonging to a

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particular type of outdated legal formalism. One consequence of this line of reasoning that will emerge in the following analysis of these three Faustian works is that, although the pact motif is explicitly and elaborately staged as foreign to the work, it greatly influences both the story told in the work and its form.

## 1.1 Delineation: Unexplored Perspectives

Three highly complex works,<sup>2</sup> with complex reception histories, have been chosen for this exploration of the pact motif. Care will be taken to avoid treating Spies's *Historia* and Goethe's *Faust* as secondary objects of analysis, aimed only at providing a backdrop for Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, yet unless very strict prioritisation is performed, it will be impossible to do justice to any of the three works within the scope of this study. Interpretative challenges tied to the pact motif are plentiful, as the motif is the thematic locus of all three works (arguably less so in Goethe's heterogeneous *Faust*). The following three perspectives will be actively omitted from analyses of the three works.

This study is not performed from the vantage point of juridical scholarship. Johann Spies's *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* will not be read in a context of mundane or canonical philosophy and history of law, although this context offers itself very clearly when approaching the work. On the contrary, the law that is established within the work will early on in this study be contrasted to mundane law, and isolated from it, using Jacob Grimm's systematic study of juridical language structures and rhetoric, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer* (1828), to demonstrate that rituals tied to the pact with the Devil imitate rhetorical structures found in mundane legal practice, but are given a unique content. The relation between the *Historia* and

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<sup>2</sup> This statement will later be qualified in relation to Spies's *Historia*, which traditionally has been held to be anything but complex, but which on closer inspection turns out to be less unambiguous than it seems at first glance.

contemporary witch processes, which has been proven to be not a unidirectional line of influence, but rather an exchange of ideas and motifs between fictional accounts and witch processes, has been and is currently being explored by professor Frank Baron of the University of Kansas.<sup>3</sup> The pact motif in Goethe's *Faust* will only be read in the context of Goethe's legal practice and theory to a very limited degree. The establishment of a pact motif and an underlying literary law will be understood in the context of this law's literary history, and not its interaction with Goethe's thought on and practice of law.<sup>4</sup> This choice is made on the basis that this study is intended to reach a better understanding of the form and function of the pact motif, not of the manifestation of each individual author's or epoch's philosophy of law as it manifests in the work. Goethe's protagonist states that Hell itself has its laws (GF, l. 1413) and it is these laws that will be identified, isolated and analysed here.

This study will not provide exhaustive analyses or interpretations of any of the three works that are discussed; its primary object of study is the mechanics of the pact, not the thematic or moral implications of it. Of course, some variation on Faustian desire motivates the pact in all three works. The Devil is invoked because the protagonist has met a limit that cannot be transcended without otherworldly aid. This facet, however, will only be given attention where it is necessary in order to

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<sup>3</sup> See Baron 1992b and 1989. In the latter, Baron finds strong similarities between the pact in the *Historia* and a pact mentioned during the process against doctor Dietrich Flade, who confessed to "an explicit pact with the Devil". (Baron 1989, p. 17) Baron's parallel between witch processes and Faustian literature has received criticism from Karl-Heinz Hücke (1992), who in his book *Figuren der Unruhe. Faustdichtungen* argues, explicitly against Baron, that the Faustian pact has the opposite metaphysical implications from the pact in witch trials, as the latter is a one-sided dedication of the human party's servitude to the Devil, while the Faustian pact is a pact which is negotiated between equals: The Devil is servant and master, while in the witch's pact the Devil is seen to be master only. This latter power structure turns the pact into a one-sided pledging of one's soul to the Devil: "Der 'Geschäftsabschluss' nach den Vorverhandlungen (siehe die 'andere Disputation Fausti mit dem Geist, so Mephistophiles genennet wirdt') ist in dieser Form nur möglich, weil sich gerade nicht Herr und Knecht gegenüberstehen, sondern Interessenten, welche auf dem hier zur Debatte stehenden Markt frei disponieren können, Verfügungsgewalt haben über Angebot und Nachfrage." (Hücke 1992, p. 51) Without directly debating the connection to witchcraft, this study will produce an argument against Hücke, in favour of Baron, as the agreement between Faustus and Mephistophiles in the *Historia* will be proven to be formally significantly more one-sided than is implied by Hücke.

<sup>4</sup> Analyses that directly relate Goethe's *Faust* to Goethe's legal practice include Schubart-Fikentscher (1949), Cahn (1949), Simson (1949), Müller (1912).

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elucidate some aspect of the form and function of the pact motif, or where this study's conclusions may aid in resolving individual points of contention within each work's history of research. A point of discussion in *Historia* studies is whether doctor Faustus desires metaphysical insights or only increased power and earthly delights.<sup>5</sup> This study's exploration of the formal aspects of the pact motif will provide some new perspectives on this, but the interactions between a Renaissance project of enlightenment and Faustian scientific Titanism has been thoroughly explored elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> and will not be a major theme in the following. Goethe's protagonist's desire, which motivates his turn away from conventional scientific studies towards magic, and which therefore also motivates his pact (or wager), has been instrumental in the creation of major philosophical and theoretical works in the twentieth century,<sup>7</sup> and factors into most readings of the work as a whole, yet this point of discussion will not be thoroughly treated in this present study. The question of why Goethe's Faust decides to enter into an agreement with Mephistopheles is closely tied to the function of the pact motif as instigator of events, since the type of events that follows from it is determined by its contents, but this cluster of problems will nonetheless distract from the primary goal of establishing a model for understanding the pact motif that

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<sup>5</sup> The controversy was instigated by Barbara Könnker (1967), who accused readers of the *Historia* of projecting onto the work themes from Goethe's *Faust*, chief amongst which is the theme of transcendent curiosity. Frank Baron (1992) expresses explicit support for Könnker's hypothesis regarding early Faustian curiosity. Könnker writes: "Hinter der Zauberei, wie sie hier verstanden wird, steht also nicht das Streben nach Erkenntnis und Wissen, sondern das Streben nach Macht" (1967, p. 167) and "Damit ist die Frage nach dem tertium comparationis, das im Volksbuch zwischen Sünde, Zauberei und Götzendienst besteht, beantwortet: es besteht in jenem luziferischen Machtstreben, das den Menschen, der von ihm beherrscht wird, in einen Knecht des Teufels verwandelt (...)" (p. 168). Könnker's main point is that Faustus is not a hero – a titan – in the *Historia*, and that there is no ambiguity in his condemnation. He is possessed by the Devil, acts like one who is, and is punished like a devil worshipper. Oddly enough, seven years prior to Könnker's article, Hans Henning claims that Spies's Faustus' drive towards forbidden knowledge has often been denied by scholars: "Faust gilt uns geradezu als ein Prototyp des nach Wissen und Erkenntnissen strebenden Menschen. Für die Gestalt des Faust-Buches ist dies oftmals gelehnet worden. Die theologische Seite, die Warnung vor dem Teufel und seinen bösen Künsten, wurde hervorgehoben" (1960, p. 32). Henning indicates here that the approach which Könnker believes is missing from approaches to the book is in fact the dominant approach up until 1960.

<sup>6</sup> Baron 1992a, Gockel 1988, Könnker 1967 & 1991, Rudolph 1991, in particular Müller 1984.

<sup>7</sup> A small selection could include Herman August Korff's *Geist der Goethezeit* (1923–1954), Georg Lukacs's *Goethe und seine Zeit* (1947), and Ian Watt's *Myths of Modern Individualism* (1996).

transcends each individual work. The concluding foray into Mann's novel will contain a more thorough discussion of what its protagonist gains from the pact, because in that particular work, the form of the pact and its thematic consequences are tightly interwoven: The pact motif there demonstrates formal traits that are staged as the results of Adrian Leverkühn's pact with the Devil, and the pact becomes a prerequisite for its own mode of presentation.

Certain metaphysical and juridical perspectives are here being pushed into the background, and there still remains another category, the removal of which is much more problematic: Political perspectives will only be adopted and discussed insofar as they illuminate the form and function of the pact motif. All three works write themselves into, and are written during, periods of major ideological conflict. The *Historia* can be seen as part of a Lutheran polemic,<sup>8</sup> and Goethe's *Faust* may be seen as a timely response to Lessing's call to arms in his seventeenth letter of literature from 1759, wherein he argues that a definable German language literary tradition should be reinstated, inspired by English literature, and that the old Faust legend is a fitting material.<sup>9</sup> In this perspective, Goethe's *Faust* may in hindsight be understood as a contribution to the rediscovery of a German national state amongst the chaotic remnants of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>10</sup> However, these political concerns become

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<sup>8</sup> Marguerite de Huszar Allen concludes that "most Faustbuch scholars have thought it to be a work of Lutheran origin" (1986 p. 584), and Hartmut Rudolph points out, not without a measure of sarcasm, that "[p]hilologischer Spür- und germanistischer Scharfsinn haben zu der Erkenntnis geführt, daß die Faustsage sowie das Faustbuch selbst Gewächse auf protestantischem, genauer: lutherischem Boden sind" (1991, p. 42). Rudolph questions the Lutheran content of the text, and concludes that while heavily influenced by Luther, the book cannot be called purely Lutheran without certain reservations. On the other hand, Hans Henning points out that "Spies druckte streng lutherische Kampfschriften" (1960, p. 31).

<sup>9</sup> "Daß aber unsre alten Stücke wirklich sehr viel Englisches gehabt haben, könnte ich Ihnen mit geringer Mühe weitläufig beweisen. Nur das bekannteste derselben zu nennen; Doktor Faust hat eine Menge Szenen, die nur ein Shakespearesches Genie zu denken vermögend gewesen. Und wie verliebt war Deutschland, und ist es zum Teil noch, in seinen Doktor Faust!" (Lessing 1955, p. 138)

<sup>10</sup> This is a historical narrative often told in Goethe didactics. American Goethe expert Jane K. Brown tells it this way in her contribution to the *Cambridge Companion to Goethe*: "By anchoring his play so thoroughly in the European tradition, Goethe claims it for Germany, which had previously played but a marginal role in the classical revival in Europe, and simultaneously claims for Germany a place in that tradition. *Faust* is a comprehensive synthesis of European culture and as such is largely

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most pressing when the pact motif in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* is analysed: Adrian Leverkühn's pact with the Devil is explicitly tied to the German collective intoxication that led to what the book's chronicler regards as the disaster of the nineteen-forties,<sup>11</sup> and Thomas Mann's self-commentary following the book's publication offers interpretations that clearly identify it as an exploration of the psychology behind the rise of National Socialism in Germany.<sup>12</sup> Reading Adrian Leverkühn's fictional biography without drawing lines towards Fascism and National Socialism seems hardly justifiable, but adopting terminology from the book's own narrator will enable an analysis of the pact motif in terms general enough that a clear political positioning of the work will be unnecessary, save for a running commentary in the form of footnotes delimiting this parallel perspective. *Demonism* and *barbarism* are terms offered by the narrator Serenus Zeitblom that will suffice as descriptors of that realm that the protagonist Adrian Leverkühn's pact plunges his intellect and the narrative into, without the need to concretize these terms by directly relating them to the nature of and German spirit behind National Socialism as interpreted by Zeitblom, or as interpreted by Thomas Mann elsewhere.<sup>13</sup>

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responsible for the widespread perception that Germany in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had reached the pinnacle of cultural development" (Brown 2002, pp. 88-89).

<sup>11</sup> "Deutschland, die Wangen hektisch gerötet, taumelte dazumal auf der Höhe wüster Triumphe, im Begriffe, die Welt zu gewinnen kraft des einen Vertrages, den es zu halten gesonnen war, und den es mit seinem Blute gezeichnet hatte. Heute stürzt es, von Dämonen umschlungen, über einem Auge die Hand und mit dem andern ins Grauen starrend, hinab von Verzweiflung zu Verzweiflung." (MDF, p. 738)

<sup>12</sup> Helmut Koopmann's contribution to the 2013 issue of *Thomas Mann-Studien*, which is an issue that contains several attempts at identifying *evil* in *Doktor Faustus*, operates with an understanding of evil that seems to fall in line with this study's broader term *the demonic*, as something that is positioned outside of language, but which is still present throughout the novel (2013, p. 63). Koopmann attempts to answer the question of why Mann appears reluctant to separate the "evil", guilty Germany from the "good, noble and righteous" (p. 63) Germany, and concludes that the prime evil ("das Urböse", p. 76) that Mann's novel tries to circle in on is undefinable, and cannot even be positioned as the opposition to "good".

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Mann's political interpretation of his own novel in the lecture "Deutschland und die Deutschen" (1945), which responds to and reflects on the German capitulation a few weeks before Mann gave the lecture, will be traced parallel to this study's primary line of arguments, explicated in footnotes as relevant text passages are discussed.

These three rather strict choices have all been made for one reason: To narrow an immensely complex area of study down to a sufficiently homogeneous line of inquiry, so that a model of the Faustian pact motif based primarily on these three works, and geared towards understanding the consequences of Mann's inclusion of this inherited motif in his fictional biography, can be created and presented in a readable fashion.

## 1.2 Method: Tracing a Motif Through Four Centuries, from the Perspective of a Fifth

A model of pacts with the Devil, which is this study's final product, presupposes an in-depth understanding of the works on which this model is built. The pact motif is closely interwoven with nearly every aspect of the work in which it appears, from development of narratives via thematic threads to the form that the presentation is given. This means that the pact motif will be very carefully delimited and traced in a small selection of Faustian works, built only on some theoretical assumptions regarding the relation between spoken promises and written promises, and not on major preconceived ideas about the form and function of the pact motif. This ideally inductive approach to the Faustian pact motif will aid in clearing up some old entrenched ideas regarding the motif, in line with the spirit of Goethe and Schiller's observation in one of their collaborative couplets, entitled "Die Möglichkeit", from *Xenien* (1796):

Liegt der Irrtum nur erst, wie ein Grundstein, unten im Boden,  
Immer baut man darauf, nimmermehr kömmt er an Tag.  
(Schiller 1965, p. 275)

If this couplet's message concerning widely accepted – and long since buried – foundations can be applied to anything, it can be applied to the scholarly reception of the pact motif in Goethe's own two-part Faust play. This motif was frantically discussed during the first three decades of the twentieth century, but some recent



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scholars appear to regard it as exhausted.<sup>14</sup> All three analyses, of three works that are very different in form and content, will be geared towards one single goal: To discover what the Faustian pact is, and how it functions in each specific work. However, this material facilitates a comparative approach. Thomas Mann's style of composition, which he dubs "Montagetechnik", invites comparison to those works and biographies that he incorporates into his work, as does Goethe's extensive references to other works of literature and the method of composition behind the *Historia*'s creation, which involves directly and indirectly quoting large sections from religious, scientific and literary bodies of text. This study will gradually establish a clearly defined *tertium comparationis* that will transcend each single work. This approach is necessitated by a tendency within the history of comparative Faust studies specifically to project onto some works a thematic horizon belonging to other works: For example, Spies's *Historia* does not chronicle the heroic striving of modern man towards impossible insights into "(...) was die Welt | im Innersten zusammenhält" (GF, l. 382-383) unless it is read specifically as a precursor to Goethe. This is also the reasoning behind the quantitative weighting of each work in this study, and the formal separation of the line of arguments into individual parts concerning each work. The pact motif as it appears in Mann's Faustbook cannot be satisfactorily explored if all questions posed to the other two works are dictated by problem areas specific to Adrian Leverkühn's fictional biography. While the latter work will be weighted slightly more heavily than the other two, the pact motif in all three works will be thoroughly discussed on premises found within each of them and in their reception histories. Ideally, this study will lift the pact motif out of each work, leaving the work unharmed in the process, and use this once again ideally isolated interpretation in the creation of the *tertium comparationis*, the model of Faustian pacts.

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<sup>14</sup> This point is discussed in detail in 3.1. See Scholz 2011, p. 786, Schöne 2003b, p. 752.

The idea that Faust works are not at all comparable with one another has been proposed by Paul de Man, in his short essay on the Faust figure from 1957:<sup>15</sup>

The narrative motifs, if they were preserved, have taken on such a different significance that a simple comparison no longer does much good. Such comparison can only serve to demonstrate the absence of all continuity. The Faust of Goethe does not simply treat in its own way the same moral or theological problem as the Volksbuch; it treats an altogether different problem, and the narrative similarities are for the most part purely formal. (de Man 1989, p. 79)

Although de Man does not quite elucidate what a “simple” comparison entails, it is clear that he believes the complete lack of continuity in the significance of the “narrative motifs” of the tradition, which must include the pact motif, prohibits direct comparison. This perspective invites readings of Faustian works that belie the gravity of inherited motifs, as they are regarded as nods to tradition rather than comparable, effective literary devices. Later encounters with the individual reception histories of the works analysed here will show that the idea expressed by Paul de Man, that narrative similarities are “purely formal”, is often repeated and used as a simple solution to the problems caused by the conflict between new and old, between work and inherited (or assembled) motif, in each case. It is an incorrect assumption, as at least the pact motif will be shown here to have a highly comparable significance in each work. Not only is the motif itself formally relatively stable, but its functions are also, if not identical, then positively comparable, across the three works analysed here. Elisabeth Frenkel underlines in her encyclopedia of motifs, *Motive der Weltliteratur* (1976), that differences in motifs make visible the dialectical relation present in any given literary treatment of a motif between its historical situation and its transhistorical elements, and that this is a relation that should be awarded attention:

Jede literarische Gestaltung eines Motivs spiegelt die dialektische Position des Kunstwerks zwischen Überzeitlichkeit und Zeitbedingtheit, der ein Beurteiler Beachtung schenken muß. (Frenzel 1988b, p. X)

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<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Dan Latimer’s translation.

On the other hand, de Man's idea that the narrative motifs of Faustian works of literature are not directly comparable must also be taken into account in order to avoid reducing analyses of single instances of the pact motif to fit an overall theory that facilitates an elegant reading of Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*. This study will carefully avoid reducing the complexity of the pact motif in each individual work in order to facilitate comparison, and it will also treat the pact motif as an integrated part of the individual work.

This approach to three heterogeneous works prohibits complete methodological unity, except in the final process of comparison. The object of study – the pact with the Devil – is a motif, while all instances of this motif that are analyzed are inscribed in a particular material (“Stoff”), namely the Faust myth. The research tradition of “Stoff- und Motivgeschichte” will play a role in the following analyses of three Faustian works, which in turn may contribute to this research tradition's understanding of what the pact motif is and does. A *motif*, defined according to this tradition's nomenclature, is a plot trigger, not plot, as formulated in J.B. Metzler's recently published *Handbuch Komparatistik* (Zymner & Hölter 2013), and it will be understood in the following according to this definition. A motif

initiiert (...) Handlungen, ohne sie auszugestalten, transportiert und generiert Bedeutungen, ohne auf speziellen Kontexten oder Strukturformaten zu bestehen. Es gibt Motive, die bereits thematisch konfiguriert sind (Teufelspakt, Bruderzwist, Abenteuerer), diesen jedoch nicht mit z. B. bestimmten Figuren und Ereignisabfolgen verbinden. Ein Motiv ist Handlungsauslöser, nicht Handlung selbst.” (Zymner & Hölter 2013, p. 125)

This definition can be accredited to Elisabeth Frenzel, who, in the foreword to *Motive der Weltliteratur*, separates “Stoff” from “Motiv” by comparing the two to the musical categories of melody and chord, respectively:

Der Stoff bietet eine ganze Melodie, das Motiv schlägt nur einen Akkord an. Der Stoff ist an feststehende Namen und Ereignisse gebunden und läßt nur gewisse weiße Flecken im bunten Ablauf des Plots stehen, jene Rätsel oder Lücken entfaltungs-fähiger Stoffe, die immer wieder neue Autoren zu Lösungsversuchen locken, während das Motiv mit seinen anonymen Personen und Gegebenheiten lediglich einen Handlungsansatz bezeichnet, der ganz verschiedene Entfaltungsmöglichkeiten in sich birgt. (Frenzel 1988b, p. VI)

While the pact with the Devil is a motif, the Faust myth is “Stoff”.<sup>16</sup> Amongst other motifs, the pact with the Devil has a particularly strong function as “plot trigger”, because it contains explicitly given promises regarding events that will follow it. However, the property of this particular motif that drives this study is the conflict that it instates within the work that contains it. When the pact is identified through various means as in some fashion misplaced or in conflict with other elements of the work, the power that it exerts on the story by virtue of being a strong plot trigger leaves identifiable traces of this disharmonious motif throughout each work.

In those works where a narrator can actively distance himself from the contents of the pact, this structure is easily identifiable. However, the point is confounded when the object of study is Goethe’s *Faust*, which, by virtue of its form, contains several voices and several points of view that to varying degrees harmonize and compete with one another. Goethe’s drama in particular is one where even individual characters take on different roles and express different viewpoints, so an act of identifying one well placed and another “misplaced” point of view would not be reasonable. This study will nonetheless identify a positioning of the logic behind the pact with the Devil – its implied law – in opposition to viewpoints of several characters, and this explicit identification and renunciation of hellish law will greatly inform this study’s analyses of the two narrative works. The analysis of Goethes

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<sup>16</sup> The English language lacks terms that allow for strict separation of motif from “Stoff” and theme; the latter word may at times appear to encompass all three, leaving Faust, the rise of Nazism and the pact with the Devil themes of Mann’s *Doktor Faustus*. This study will initially maintain a separation of “Stoff” (the Faust myth, or “Fauststoff”), theme (the rise of National Socialism, artistic creativity, apostasy, curiosity, and so on) and motif (the pact with the Devil). While the strict separation of these three may seem an outdated operation, it is also, in the particular case of a study attempting to identify the form and function of pacts with the Devil, both necessary and productive, although the separation may be artificial, and will turn out to be difficult to uphold due to the interconnectedness between theme and motif. Just like the motif of the inquisitive scholar or scientific titan is inseparable from the theme of transcending curiosity, the motif of the pact with the Devil has its own thematic implications. The *Handbuch Komparatistik* underscores the importance of upholding an informed delineation of these terms: “Eine Differenzierung anstelle einer Akzentuierung erscheint ferner vor dem Hintergrund der aktuell proklamierten Annäherung und gegenseitigen Bedingung kultureller Phänomene obsolet. Allerdings bleiben terminologische Distinktionen, die sich der jeweiligen sprachlichen und wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Verankerung bewusst sind, unerlässlich, um innerhalb eines expandierenden Forschungsfeldes quantitative wie qualitative Aussagen treffen zu können.” (Zymner & Hölter 2013, p. 125)

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*Faust* will be guided by Peter Szondi's idea that the type of stage play of which Goethe's two *Faust* works are exemplary positions its voices dialectically without offering a reliable avenue of approach towards the "truth" or intention of the work beyond these disparate voices. Tendencies similar to this will be uncovered in those chapters that concern the pact motif in the *Historia* and Mann's *Doktor Faustus* as well, wherein different voices are set against one another without offering as clear of a prioritization of one voice over the other as held by several scholars who will be identified during the introductions to each analysis.

When analysing the *Historia*, Mieke Bal will supply a nomenclature that facilitates basic structural analysis of a narrative form which is significantly more nuanced than generally held. This terminology is all but useless in an analysis of Goethe's drama, where stage presence, or, as is the case with the written document that Faust produces, stage absence, will be a point of discussion, aided by Peter Szondi's theory of drama. The sections that relate to the pact motif in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* stand between narrative and drama, and will be analysed according to these terms and through insights that have been applied to the other two works, in addition to Thomas Mann's own theoretical writings on the form of the novel.<sup>17</sup> This background of literary theory will supply tools for analysis that will aid in bringing to light some aspects of the pact motif's presence in each work, and interpretations of these three works will not be limited by constraints such as pure structural analysis or autonomous close reading. This study does not adhere to any theoretical school of thought, but employs terminology and insights from various traditions in order to facilitate its overarching comparative project, and allows for variance in methodical approach according to the form of each individual work that is discussed. This does not mean, however, that the study will not propose and demonstrate the use of a unified method of comparative reading that is applicable to other lines of influence in other histories of literature as well.

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<sup>17</sup> Jürgen H. Petersen's (2007) assertion that Thomas Mann was a miserably inept literary theorist will be taken into account.

This study's output and contribution should be considered not only an interpretation of the pact motif in Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, but also a theory of the form and function of the Faustian pact motif. First and foremost it is a study of how this motif is shaped and how it functions in Faustian works of literature, but it should also be of relevance to related motivic figures, meaning other formalised explicit promises in literature. In what may be called the space between these various texts a figure appears that should hold validity for all formalised promises in works of literature, although testing it on other works lies beyond the scope of this current study. This type of figure will always be characterised by a measure of plasticity, since it is developed through its interaction with specific works of literature, and since this present study will not assume that any one particular work should be regarded as the defining and definitive source of the Faustian pact motif, against which all other works should be compared. Renate Lachmann (1990) regards the space between texts that in some way may be made to communicate with one another by reading them comparatively as a form of permutable architecture that is changed when it is brought into contact with other texts:

Der Raum zwischen den Texten, ist er nicht der eigentliche Gedächtnisraum?  
Verändert nicht auch jeder Text den Gedächtnisraum, indem er die  
Architektur, in die er sich einschreibt, verändert? (Lachmann 1990, p. 95)

The objects of analysis for this study are three works of literature, or one particular space between them. When approaching this tradition with the objective of creating a working model of the Faustian pact motif, two methods present themselves: One diachronous, meaning a method which takes into account a very large number of works in order to distil some common traits from them; and one synchronous, meaning a study which bases itself on more thorough analyses of significantly fewer works. The first method would facilitate a macrohistory of the pact motif and a broad overview of its development. However, there are two major challenges to this approach to the Faustian pact motif specifically, or any other aspect of Faustian

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literature.<sup>18</sup> First, the tradition is very large, and individual Faustian works tend to have prohibitively extensive histories of research. Accounting for nuances in each work would very quickly exceed the limits of a single study, threatening the unity and clarity of one single presentation, and requiring generalisation that might violate not only the distinctiveness of each work, but also nuances in the individual work's history of research. Secondly, and more importantly, the interwoven nature of the pact motif with the work as a whole prohibits the first approach if the goal is to achieve a better understanding of how the pact motif may function within each work. The pact motif will be proven here to be subtly – and occasionally unsubtly – present throughout these three works, but reaching this conclusion requires thoroughness and attention to detail that a large selection of objects of analysis would hinder. The influence of single works in the larger Faust tradition on these three objects of analysis will of course by no means be ignored, but this present study will not directly contribute to or enter into a dialogue with the research histories of works other than these three. This choice of material, which is reflected on in Chapter 1.3., may be seen as a weakness, since the chosen works are the works in the Faustian tradition that historically have received the most attention. This study could have provided an opportunity to lift less-known Faust works into the spotlight, rather than present yet another interpretation of Spies, Goethe and Mann. However, the choice of material is made on the basis of each work's potential contribution to the overarching model of Faustian pacts, as well as availability of research material that facilitates a project of this scope. Using Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* as a point of arrival for an analysis of the pact motif is suitable, since its reworking of the Faust myth is suspended

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<sup>18</sup> Marianneli Sorvakko-Spratte (2008) employed this method when studying the morality of Faustian pacts, starting with the *Historia* and its immediate successors and working her way towards Swedish and Finnish Faust stories through a selection of German works of literature including Thomas Mann's. Marina Münkler (2011) has shed light on the transference of the character Faust between works of literature by examining a large number of works. While at least the latter study holds an extremely high level of precision, both make some problematic assumptions regarding the pact motif in the *Historia* that will be challenged in Chapter 2, and that conceivably could have been avoided if each work had been awarded more attention. Their choice of method has by necessity left some blind spots which this current study will be able to bring into view. Conversely, some breadth must be sacrificed here, in contrast to Sorvakko-Spratte and Münkler's broad overviews.

between two significant works in this tradition: The first, and the most widely read and known. This selection, which allows for a defensible narrowing of perspective, will be further discussed during the following brief recounting of the history of Faustian literature.

### 1.3 A History of Faust in Literature

The history of Faustian literature is extensive, not only within German language literature, but also throughout Western Europe. Whenever the literary history of doctor Faustus is retold, it is customary to make a selection that suits a particular historical narrative. Søren Kierkegaard, for example, who in *Enten – Eller (Either – or)* (1843) writes that every noteworthy historical period would have its own Faust, probably never counted the number of Faust works that had been written up to that point.<sup>19</sup> If he did, he would have found that a historical period, or indeed a decade, after 1587 that does not have a Faust story is very rare. Not counting republications, the period between Josef Anton Stranitzky's stage play *Leben und Tod des Doktor Faust* (1715), which seems to have initiated a renewal of interest in the motif in German language literature after a seventeenth century that mostly saw republications of existing Faust works, and Friedrich Theodor Vischer's satirical *Faust, der Tragödie dritter Teil* (1862), after which Faust appears to have disappeared for a while, saw on average two new German language Faust works every decade.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The division between a proper, productive, high-quality Faust tradition and a negligible Faust tradition is also implied in Paul de Man's previously cited article on Faust. The story told by de Man seems to be the same as the story told by Kierkegaard: Somewhere in the depths of history lies the *Historia*, which, despite its poor quality, inspired the works of Marlowe and Goethe. He identifies "the two principal works based on the theme of *Faust*, namely, Marlowe's and Goethe's" (de Man 1989, p. 76), and then incorrectly states that "we know that after Malowe the theme of Faust virtually disappears from the literary scene for more than a century and a half, and that no one would have troubled himself over it any more had Lessing not rescued it from oblivion" (de Man 1989, p. 79).

<sup>20</sup> This is based on Marianneli Sorvakko-Spratte's (2008) list of what she calls a selection of Faust works (pp. 33-35).



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During the apparent seventeenth-century hiatus in German language literature, the Faust figure was kept alive by British playwrights and performers. Kierkegaard's argument is built on the assumption that a small selection of Faustian works make up the core of the tradition: The various versions of the first Faust stories that circulated during a time both of defining religious and political upheaval and cultural creativity, and Goethe's *Faust*, which was written in a time of similar ferment. This prompts Kierkegaard to find in these works a common "historical idea" that manifests differently in different circumstances, but that nonetheless expresses a tendency present at particular moments during the Western history of ideas: "Goethes Faust er ret egentlig et classisk Værk; men det er en historisk Idee, og derfor vil hver mærkelig Tid i Historien have sin Faust" (Kierkegaard 1997, p. 64). ["Goethe's *Faust* is actually a classical work of art; but it is an historical idea, and therefore every notable historical period will have its own Faust"]. Goethe's *Faust* is classical – in Kierkegaard's terminology meaning time-bound to and expressive of a particular period – but it contains an idea that exceeds this historical period. This study operates with a similar view on the Faustian material, but will demonstrate that the Faustian *idea* is not the tradition's defining historical feature: On the contrary, while some *motivic* aspects of the Faust story are consistently carried over from one work to the next, the ideas expressed in Faustian works vary significantly. The assumption that there is one Faustian idea, or one Faustian archetype, is invariably based on an understanding of Goethe's Faust as the embodiment of human striving towards knowledge, insight and boundless experience. This image of a heroic Promethean Faust translates poorly to, for example, Spies's *Historia*; Faustus has not inherited his primary character traits from the hero Prometheus, but from Lucifer. The following brief history of Faust in literature is guided by Faustian motifs as much as Faustian ideas.

The historical narrative that will be told here, and that will encompass a selection of Faust works, starts with *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* (1587), which, according to the publisher Johann Spies's foreword, was written by an unnamed friend of his from Speyer, who had taken it upon himself to finally produce a long awaited unified account of the apostate doctor's life. This work does not mark

the invention of the character Faustus, nor of the central motifs that have followed the story through more than four centuries. During the first half of the sixteenth century, a number of cautionary tales regarding doctor Faustus or Faustus-like figures circulated, most referring to the historical Johannes, Georg, Jörg or Giorgius Faustus.<sup>21</sup> The delimiting of the pre-history of Faustus – in other words of the tradition leading up to the *Historia* of 1587, which is the point of departure for this study – depends on how the central themes and motifs of the 1587 *Historia* are understood: In the *Historia*, elements from various traditions meet, tied together in the character Faustus, who was already well known by 1587.<sup>22</sup>

Frank Baron, in his article “The Precarious Legacy of Renaissance Humanism in the Faust Legend” (1992a), finds in the history of literary depictions of necromancy, understood as the act of summoning or communicating with the dead, a “convenient way to investigate the fate of Renaissance humanism in the history of the Faust legend” (Baron 1992a, p. 303). In this perspective, Baron finds figures such as the Biblical Witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28:7-15), Caspar Goltwurm’s Abbot of Sponheim (1557) and Augustin Lercheimer’s Trithemius (1585) to be sources of

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<sup>21</sup> See Frank Baron (1978) for an in-depth tracing of the historical Faustus. Günther Mahal (1995) supplements this, disagreeing with Baron’s identification of the historical Faustus’s place of residence; Mahal prefers Knittlingen, while Baron, by studying university matriculation records, concludes that he lived in the small town of Helmstadt, near Heidelberg. Thomas Mann receives criticism from Dietrich Assmann (1975) for placing Faustus in Helmstadt, but Baron is actually found to argue convincingly in favour of Mann’s perspective.

<sup>22</sup> An extensive list of Faust-stories preceding the *Historia* can be found in Füssel 1991. Some noteworthy examples include: Aurifaber’s publication of Luther’s *Tischreden* (1566), Christoph Roßhirt’s collection of six Faust stories (1575), and a letter by Johannes Trithemius from 1507, which mentions a “Georgius Sabellicus, Faustus iunior”. The *Historia*’s second preface, presumably the author’s own, lists a number of inspirations, including several biblical passages: The depiction of the Witch of Endor from 1 Samuel 28; warnings against consulting warlocks, clairvoyants, conjurers or the dead from Leviticus 18–20; characteristics of the Devil and demons found in 1 Peter 5, Luke 11 and John 8; promises of punishment after death for magicians in Galatians 5 and Revelations 21; and encouragement to God-fearing life from James 4 and Ephesians 6. Furthermore, the anonymous author names a slew of conjurers from popular literature, and finally includes a vague allusion to a Latin version of the Faustbook. In addition to biblical influences as well as this hypothetical predecessor, large parts of the book itself are paraphrases and at times direct copies from other contemporary works, fictional and religious as well as scientific and philosophical. Even the author’s foreword copies a passage almost verbatim from a widely circulated story of a shepherd who conjured and was possessed by the Devil which appeared in 1560 (Füssel 1991, p. 15).

inspiration for the *Historia*. Goethe's doctor is also a necromancer: The scene *Rittersaal* in the second part of the tragedy in which he, with the help of Mephistopheles, summons the mute Helen of Troy and Paris, echoes a similar scene from Chapter 49 in the *Historia*, where Faustus summons Helen in front of an audience of students, as well as Chapter 52, an addition in the 1589 edition, which contains a description of Faustus's summoning of Homer's heroes. Thomas Mann's Adrian Leverkühn can also be said to perform acts of necromancy, inviting the dead Baptist Spengler to the performance of parts of his composition *Doktor Fausti Weheklag* in the book's final chapter. Communication with the dead is one of the sins warned against in the author's preface to the *Historia*, and it is one component of the Faust story that follows the character through various transformations.

Wolfgang S. Seiferth (1952) regards the presence of the personified Devil and the written pact between him and Faustus as a basis for defining the Faust tradition, and thus finds Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* (approx. 1260) to be a significant influence on the tradition up to and including Thomas Mann. Seiferth identifies Voragine's text as a body of work containing "[t]he entire lore of the devil" (1952, p. 273) as well as "various notable examples" of "the pact with the devil and of its consequences" (p. 283). Following this vein of thought, Seiferth identifies a tradition that starts with pacts with the Devil in *Legenda Aurea* and continues through the mediaeval stage play concerning the bishop Theophilus and his pact with Satanus through the aid of a Jewish sorcerer, towards the *Historia*. The pact motif may be seen as the single stable defining trait of all Faustian literature. Helmut Wiemken (1980) gives voice to this opinion, stating that "d[as] Motiv des Teufelspaktes" is "de[r] eigentliche[] Kern der Faustsage" (p. XXIII).

However, the Faust tradition can be narrowed down further through closer examination of the type of pact that Faust is offered. Pacts with the Devil were commonly described throughout the late Middle Ages and sixteenth century, and most of these pact stories bear little resemblance to the Faustian pact, with the chief difference being the protagonist's motivation when turning to the Devil for aid. Legal scholar Renate Zelger points out that people turn to the Devil in popular fairytales

during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries out of poverty, desire for material gains, ambition and desire for power (Zelger 1996, pp. 67-69). In addition to these overarching tendencies, she points out that the Devil is also occasionally summoned for healing wounds, training in craftsmanship, help in pregnancy, the taking over of a soldier's guard duty, serving as a squire, giving advice in a specific matter, being godfather to a child, and, very rarely, to teach black magic (Zelger 1996, p. 72). Christoph Perels (1998) identifies an additional two categories, one under the heading of sexuality, and the other, which is an addition he attributes to Spies's *Historia* specifically, concerning scientific titanism or transcending curiosity, the Faustian desire that may be called the archetypal Faustian idea:

Ältere Sagen und Legenden, ferner die Protokolle des Hexenwahns im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert kannten als Paktmotive Geldgier, Machtgier und Sexualität; ein Teufelspakt, um „alle Gründe am Himmel und Erden“ zu erforschen, das ist neu. (Perels 1998, p. 72)

Christoph Perels here identifies two separate motifs that individually have a central position in European literature well before the Spies-book, and claims that the pairing of these two constitutes the core of Faustian literature: The apostate inquisitive scholar and the pact with the personified Devil. Sabine Doering seconds this opinion in her study concerning female Faust figures and the use of the term “female Faust” in German literature and academia, entitled *Die Schwestern des Doktor Faust* (2001). Quoting theories of mythopoetics,<sup>23</sup> she identifies two closely related “invariable components” of what she calls the Faust mythos: the protagonist's unsatisfied yearning for knowledge and the resulting pact with the Devil: “Zu den invarianten Bestandteilen des Faust-Mythos gehören als zentrale Aspekte sein unbändiger, unbefriedigter Wissensdrang und der daraus resultierende Teufelspakt” (Doering

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<sup>23</sup> The term as used by Doering refers to Ian Watt's definition in *Myths of Modern Individualism* (1996) and Hans Blumenberg's *Arbeit am Mythos* (1979). Mythopoetics is descriptive of a literary theory where individual variations in certain themes and motifs are understood as being built upon invariable fundamental characteristics of these themes and motifs. According to Doering: “Der mythische Charakter dieser Figuren [Faust, Don Quixote, Don Juan, Robinson Crusoe] und ihres Geschicks bedingt schließlich auch die bereits erwähnte Variabilität ihrer erzählerischen Gestaltung, während einige wenige Grundzüge unverändert bleiben“ (Doering 2001, p. 14).

2001, p. 15).<sup>24</sup> Although the tale of the Faust tradition is always retold with a number of minor and some major variations, these two, along with the name Faust, seem to be understood to remain stable components, and also set the *Historia* apart from previous stories of pacts with the Devil. If some very general characteristics of the Faust tradition's beginning were to be defined, then Christoph Perel's definition, the pairing of the pact motif with the theme of the inquisitive scholar who wishes to explore "alle Gründ am Himmel und Erden", might serve this purpose – of course with the addition of the name Faust or Faustus.

For now, this may seem uncontroversial, but a closer look at each work's individual reception history will demonstrate that this definition of the Faust tradition may in fact not properly fit any of the three works discussed here. This examination of the particulars of the pact motif will treat as objects of study two works, beside Spies's *Historia*, that scholars have argued contain no pact with the Devil – and the pact in Spies's *Historia* may, by the end of the negotiations between the involved parties, not contain any trace of scientific Titanism. Goethe's *Faust* may be the only of the three that depicts a scholar whose transcending inquisitiveness is the primary element in his pact – if it is indeed a pact, which is still a point of discussion in Goethe studies, with consensus leaning very heavily towards the opinion that it is not.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The notion that the pact with the Devil is the single defining characteristic of the Faust legend is repeated almost unanimously by all scholars commenting on any of the works that this study is concerned with. Even David Ball (1986), claiming that the pact in Thomas Mann's novel "scarcely [can] be termed a pact" (p. 54), states that "the pact with the devil is the essential element of all versions of the Faust story" (p. 121).

<sup>25</sup> The agreement is "nicht ein Pakt, sondern eine Wette" (Trunz 2002, p. 539). "Der Vertrag ist eine Wette" (Landsberg & Kohler 1903, p. 117). "Daß die Verschreibung nichts andres als die mündlich geschlossene Wette beurkunden könnte, versteht sich von selbst" (Müller 1912, p. 332). "Viel Verschiedenes ist zur 'Paktszene' und über sie geschrieben worden, doch herrscht seit jeher kein Zweifel darüber, daß ihr eigentümlicher Wert gerade darin liegt, daß sie keine ist. Kein Pakt, sondern eine Wette wird in ihr abgeschlossen (...)" (Molnár 1988, p. 29). "(...) Faust [zeigt] sich vertragsbereit – in form einer unsymmetrischen Wette, die vom traditionellen Muster des Teufelspakt entschieden abweicht" (Schöne 2003b, p. 260).

A difference will emerge between comparative readings and autonomous readings of these works. While those scholars that take a comparative interest in the tradition tend to accept the presence of this core Faust myth in each work, through the theme of ungodly inquisitiveness and the pact motif, researchers who have occupied themselves with the internal structures of signification in each individual work have, at least for the past fifty years, tended to emphasise the non-conformity of the work they are reading to the wider tradition that it is written into. Barbara Könneker's (1967) above described attempts at stripping the *Historia* of the reported heroic striving of its protagonist towards knowledge exemplifies this tendency. Goethe's pact is generally held to be not a pact, but a wager, while a leading expert on Thomas Mann, Helmut Koopmann, is one of several scholars who have stated that there is no pact, and no signature in blood, in Mann's Faustian novel.<sup>26</sup> It is possible that none of these three reportedly Faustian works share in these two primary qualities of Faustian works, if they are examined closely enough. The Faust tradition becomes something vague and almost intangible, existing only in that previously discussed space between them, and the name on the title page seems to be the only stable component. But this name is so far removed from the person it was first attributed to – the historical Faustus – that its inclusion in Goethe's and Mann's works in and of itself is next to meaningless, beyond the "Stoff" that the name invokes.

There is, however, some variation on the pact motif in all three works, and some variation on transcending desire, and, furthermore, the prominent position of the pact motif in the Faustian tradition is evident in the insistence by some scholars on the absence of a pact in Goethe's *Faust* and Mann's *Doktor Faustus*. Absence must only be argued for where there is a strong expectation of presence, and this

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<sup>26</sup> Koopmann argues that in Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, there is "[v]om alten Teufelspakt, vom Unterzeichnen mit einem Tropfen Blut keine Rede" (Koopmann 2008/2009, p. 11). David J. T. Ball holds that Leverkühn's syphilis infection "scarcely [can] be termed a pact" (Ball 1986, p. 54), while Jürgen H. Petersen (2007) believes that a pact motif and a related demonic principle has been placed in Mann's novel by readers who take seriously Mann's own reading instructions, which the author has presented through his self-commentary, and that there is no textual basis for such an interpretation.

expectation of a presence of certain motifs is instilled through the use of the name Faust. When an author writes a Faustian story, that author makes some implied promises regarding the story arc that will be presented: By means of a pact with the Devil, the story will move “Vom Himmel durch die Welt zur Hölle” (GF, I. 242), or it will pointedly deviate from this narrative schematic. When it does neither, it creates a conflict between reader expectation, anchored in the space between Faustian works, a space that is occupied by the Faust myth, and the narrative’s resolution. Some very pronounced examples of this conflict between an imagined Faust mythos, which contains formalised promises in the shape of a pact with the Devil, and individual Faust works will be discussed, and in this conflict the implicit literary law governing pacts with the Devil will play a significant role.

The name Faust or Faustus, regardless of the motifs that define his story, can be found throughout Western literature after 1587. Johan Spies’s *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* achieved immense popularity immediately upon being published in Frankfurt am Main, and was followed not only by a second edition the same year and a third the following year, but also by an English translation published under the pseudonym P.F. *Gent.* in 1589.<sup>27</sup> Friedericum Schotum Tolet<sup>28</sup> then wrote *Anderer Teil D. Johann Fausti Historien* (1593), which centers on Faust’s servant Christophori Wagner’s pact with the spirit Auerhan, and which has therefore become known as the *Wagnerbuch*.<sup>29</sup> The *Historia*’s author is unknown, but a preface states that he was a friend of Spies’s, and that he resided in Speyer. Spies also explains that his friend from Speyer has gathered previously existing stories of Doctor Faustus’s exploits into the first comprehensive tale of the apostate’s life, expressing surprise

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<sup>27</sup> In addition, there were translations into Danish (1588), Dutch (1592), French (1598), and Czech (1611) (Jones 1994, p. 10).

<sup>28</sup> This is obviously a pseudonym, and likely an anagram of the author’s real name, which is unknown.

<sup>29</sup> The text can be found in Wiemken 1980 pp. 137-307. In Schotum Tolet’s *Wagnerbuch*, Faustus appears as a somewhat heroic figure, whose command over spirits Wagner is unable to imitate. Early in the story, as Wagner attempts to summon a spirit to aid him, he is instead trapped in his own magic circle, mutilated by a slew of evil spirits when he tries to leave, and needs to be rescued by Faustus.

that he is the first to do so.<sup>30</sup> The various stories of the doctor and of his predecessors described above – necromantic sorcerers, curious scientists and those who entered into pacts with the Devil – come together in this work, which in turn ends up being a hub for an extensive tradition within the history of Western literature. This tradition, if read linearly, will look slightly different depending on the end point: There is one line of influence running back and forth across the English Channel, and culminating in Goethe's *Faust*, and another, more geographically uniform line,<sup>31</sup> running more or less directly from Johann Spies to Thomas Mann.

The English translation became the primary source of inspiration for Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (approx. 1604),<sup>32</sup> and in turn for English and German stage and puppet theatre adaptations throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Theatre troupes brought Marlowe's play back to mainland Europe,<sup>33</sup> colouring the tradition with the British playwright's Elizabethan influences. Meanwhile, Georg Rudolf Widman retold and greatly expanded the tale from the *Historia*, primarily with lengthy moral observations, in his 1599 publication *Das ärgerliche Leben und schreckliche Ende des vielberüchtigten Schwarzkünstlers*

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<sup>30</sup> "Deßgleichen auch hin vnd wider bey etlichen newen Geschichtschreibern dieses Zauberers vnnnd seiner Teuffelischen Künste vnd erschrecklichen Endes gedacht wird / hab ich mich selbst auch zum offtermal verwundert / daß so gar niemandt diese schreckliche Geschicht ordentlich verfassete / vnnnd der gantzen Christenheit zur warnung / durch den Druck mittheilte / hab auch nicht vnterlassen bey Gelehrten vnd verständigen Leuten nachzufragen / ob vielleicht diese Histori schon allbereit von jemandt beschrieben were / aber nie nichts gewisses erfahren können / biß sie mir newlich durch einen guten Freundt von Speyer mitgetheilt vnd zugeschickt worden / mit begeren / daß ich dieselbige als ein schrecklich Exempel deß Teuffelischen Betrugs / Leibs vnd Seelen Mords / allen Christen zur Warnung / durch den öffentlichen Druck publicieren vnd fürstellen wolte." (HDF, p. 5)

<sup>31</sup> Figuratively speaking, as Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* for the most part was written in the USA.

<sup>32</sup> Two versions of Marlowe's play exist, dated respectively 1604 ("A-text") and 1616 ("B-text"). In other words, both versions are dated more than a decade after Marlowe's death in 1593. It is even speculated that the play may be one of Marlowe's earlier plays, and that both surviving versions are heavily edited and rewritten by "hands other than Marlowe's" (Fehrenbach 2001, p. 327).

<sup>33</sup> Faustian motifs remained active in Britain as well, leading to works not explicitly Faustian, but heavily dependent on Faustian tropes, such as Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) and Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), both gothic novels concerning pacts with the Devil.



*Johannes Fausti*. Johannes Nicolaus Pfitzer continued this legacy by producing a further annotated edition of Widman's Faustbook in 1674. Pfitzer's version ended up the most long-lived of these first Faustbooks,<sup>34</sup> as it was reprinted in 1681, 1685, 1695, 1711, 1717 and 1726. In 1725 a significantly shortened version of Pfitzer's and Widman's lengthy Faust stories appeared under the title *Des durch die gantze Welt beruffenen Ertz-Schwartz-Künstlers und Zauberers Doctor Johann Fausts, Mit dem Teufel auffgerichtes Bündnüß* or, as it was later named, *Faustbuch der Christlich Meynenden*. John Henry Jones points out that this latter book was probably the one read by Goethe (Jones 1994, p. 10),<sup>35</sup> who also met the material as a child in a puppet theater form inherited from the British Faust tradition.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Without counting scholarly republications, in which case the *Historia* would be the most long-lived by a generous margin.

<sup>35</sup> "The publication of Widman's ponderous tome (1599) coincided with a decline in demand for the *Historia* which received no further reprintings until the nineteenth century and had quite disappeared from view by Goethe's time. His knowledge of Faust derived from an expanded (!) treatment of Widman, a slight, fanciful story called the *Faustbuch der Christenden Meinenden* [sic], Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and, possibly his prime inspiration, the German folk play of Faust, a favourite item in the repertoire of the puppet theatres" (Jones 1994, p. 10). A footnote attached to "expanded (!) treatment of Widman" references Pfitzer's 1674 edition. Karl Heinrich Hucke (2008b) does call Goethe "ein sublimer Kenner des 'Volksbuches'" (p. 211), implying that the "Volksbuch" is Spies's *Historia* and not Widman's *Faustbuch der Christlich Meynenden* or the Pfitzer-book, an assertion that, although undoubtedly plausible, is unfortunately unqualified by any reference that would allow substantiation. It is also conceivable that Hucke is referring to the larger tradition that in older research literature is called "Volksbücher", not discerning between Spies, Widman and Pfitzer.

<sup>36</sup> Two versions of Faustus puppet theatre will be consulted in this study: The Ulmer Puppenspiel, and Karl Simrock's 1846 reconstruction, both printed together in Mahal 2007. The latter's explicit intention is to demonstrate that the puppet theater is a more "clean" (Simrock in Mahal 2007, p. 5) version of the legend than Goethe's play, but it does bear some almost suspicious resemblance to the latter. A shining example is found during the pact scene, wherein Faust proclaims an echo of Goethe's Faust's "Auch was Geschriebnes vorderst du Pedant" (GF, I. 1716; see also I. 1966-67): "Mußt du's Schwarz und Weiß haben, so schaff Tinte herbei (...)" (Mahal 2007, p. 19), while Faust in the Ulmer Puppenspiel makes no note of this demand, other than acquiescing: "Ist's nichts anderes als dieses, so will ich schreiben". (Mahal 2007, p. 77) Simrock compares his own idea of how the puppet theatre appeared with Goethe in his foreword: "Nächst Goethes *Faust* hat ohne Zweifel das alte Puppenspiel von Faust unter allen Werken, wozu die Faustsage Veranlassung gegeben hat, das größte poetische Verdienst. Es stellt die Faustsage anziehender dar als das Volksbuch und reiner als Goethe, der sich nach dem Grundgedanken seines Gedichtes von der Sage, der Fausts Höllenfahrt wesentlich ist, entfernen mußte. Von dem Werk des großen Meisters wird es nicht in Schatten gestellt; es ist in seiner volksmässigen Art ebenso kühn und geistreich erfunden und durchgeführt; als Bühnenspiel runder und von stärkerer, wenn auch nicht so tiefgreifender Wirkung" (Simrock in Mahal 2007, p. 5).

During the Enlightenment and beyond, the Faust myth gained significant prominence amongst well-known and lesser-known poets and authors. Often cited is Lessing's seventeenth letter of literature from 1759, where he states that the time has come for German stage literature to detach itself from the French tradition and look to Britain in order to find inspiration for a new, specifically German, tradition. The ideal motif for such an endeavor would be what he calls the most inherently German motif of all, namely the Faust myth. Goethe started working on his Faust drama in two parts approximately twelve years later.<sup>37</sup> By this time, the Faust myth was well established in the German territories, and its motifs had been established in the minds of the reading public.

Following Goethe's publication of parts one and two in 1808 and 1832 respectively, the Faust material gained significant traction. Christian Dietrich Grabbe has Faust meet Don Giovanni and Leporello in *Don Juan und Faust* (1828), Hungarian author Nikolaus Lenau wrote *Faust. Ein Gedicht* in 1836, Heinrich Heine the ballet *Der Doktor Faust. Ein Tanzpoem* in 1846, while Friedrich Theodor Vischer, who was also an established Goethe scholar, published the satirical *Faust. Der Tragödie dritter Theil* in 1863<sup>38</sup> under the pseudonym Deutobold Symbolizetti Allegoriowitsch Mystifizinsky.<sup>39</sup> Whatever else Vischer's Faust drama achieved, its

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<sup>37</sup> Goethe was not the only author or playwright to work on Faust adaptations during this period. Paul Weidmann published *Johann Faust. Ein allegorisches Drama* in 1775, Friedrich Müller, or Maler Müller, wrote *Situation aus Fausts Leben* (1776) the following year, and Friedrich Maximilian Klingler published the novel *Fausts Leben, Thaten und Höllenfahrt* (1791) one year after Goethe had presented his unfinished *Faust. Ein Fragment*. In addition, several unfinished Faust fragments by other authors and playwrights were written during the last decades of the eighteenth, and first of the nineteenth century, including Lessing's own *Faust* fragment.

<sup>38</sup> First edition 1863, second edition 1886.

<sup>39</sup> This work is a testament to the staggering complexity of Goethe studies, as it satirises not only the work, but also scholarly approaches to Goethe, merely fifty-three years after the publication of the second part of Faust. Currently, the first part of Faust has passed its two-hundredth anniversary by a good margin, and Goethe research is not showing any signs of letting up. While Vischer in his theoretical writings lauded the first part of Goethe's *Faust*, the second he believed to have completely failed, in that it turned away from reality, which he found satisfactorily treated in the Gretchen tragedy, towards mystifying allegory (hence his pseudonym) when it should have turned towards political realities. See Scholz 2011, pp. 75-76.

satire of Goethe's *Faust*'s complexity and growing reception history seems to have effectively halted the German language Faust tradition until Thomas Mann reinvigorated the material 85 years later.<sup>40</sup> These 85 years make up the longest period in German language literary history since 1587 without a Faustian work of literature.<sup>41</sup>

When Thomas Mann published *Doktor Faustus* in 1947, near the end of his life, he had decided to reach back beyond Goethe to find a model for his Faustian narrative, basing the traditional adoptions in his novel on the *Historia* rather than on the monolithic two-part tragedy. As a result, two separate Faust traditions can be identified, hailing in part from the same source, the *Historia*. However, Thomas Mann's fictional biography invariably and undeniably does relate to Goethe's *Faust*, despite Mann's own apparent denial of Goethe's influence on his Faust.<sup>42</sup>

The pact with the Devil in some form follows Faust throughout this long history. However, the sixteenth-century Devil, with whom Spies's doctor makes his written agreement, is a different figure from that of the eighteenth, nineteenth and, most certainly, twentieth century.<sup>43</sup> The historical change that takes place in the

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<sup>40</sup> There may be no correlation; perhaps the Faust legend was simply exhausted at this time, and Vischer's satire an effect of a universally felt fatigue.

<sup>41</sup> This is also not entirely true, as Faust was kept alive on stages, both operatic and theatric. A selection of Faust works from this period would include: Charles Gounoud's opera *Faust* (1859), the initially unsuccessful opera *Mefistofele* (1868) by Arrigo Boito, Gertrude Stein's stage play *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights* (1938), and Paul Valéry's fragment *Mon Faust* (1940).

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Mann wrote in a letter to Hilde Zaloscer August 24, 1953: "Mit Goethes Faust – das will auch gesagt sein – hat mein Roman nichts gemein, außer der gemeinsamen Quelle, dem alten Volksbuch." This often quoted section from Mann's letter will be more thoroughly discussed during the analysis of his *Doktor Faustus*.

<sup>43</sup> Georg Müller: "Für die Menschen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts, der Zeit des Aberglaubens und der Hexenverbrennungen, war das Schicksal Fausts ein Stück furchtbarer Wirklichkeit. Kaum ein Jahrhundert verrann, und das Urteil hatte sich völlig verwandelt. Dem Zeitalter der Aufklärung ward die Geschichte vom Doktor Faust eine Sage aus längst vergangenen Tagen: beim naiven Zuschauer verursachte sie angenehmes Gruseln, der höher Gebildete sah voll gleichgiltiger Überhebung auf die Wahngelbte des alten Teufelspuks hinab" (1912, p. 316). Lucie Pfaff, who has studied the aesthetics of the Devil in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* and Paul Valéry's fragment *Mon Faust*, ties the possibility of entering into a pact with the Devil to "a strong belief in God" (Pfaff 1976, p. 13), which she claims is not present in the period she explores. While this statement is severely lacking in

Devil's role not only as spiritual reality, but also as literary figure, influences the significance of the pact motif. The pact motif is at its conception temporally bound, no less than the idea that Kierkegaard believes to be pervading the Faust tradition. Entering into a pact with the Devil was thought possible or plausible at the time of the inception of the Faust story, or at the very least it was within the limits of imaginable reality. The first comprehensive story of the ungodly doctor's exploits was published in 1587, the same year that the well-known witch Walpurga Hausmännin was mutilated and burned at the stake in Bavaria after confessing under torture to sexual intercourse with a demon and to pledging herself by written contract to the Devil. The book was motivated by an explicit Lutheran morality, but simultaneously, it offered the thrill of forbidden knowledge and diabolic mystery to the god-fearing, but nonetheless curious, reader, who, through the medium of doctor Faustus, could hope to catch a glimpse of the very same areas of experience that the book was intended to warn against.

As demonstrated by Peter-André Alt (2008), the waning interest in the Mediaeval and Renaissance conception of the physically real Devil during the Enlightenment extended not only to the areas of law and moral philosophy, but was also reflected in art and literature. During the period Alt refers to as the *Gottsched-Zeit* due to the prominent position of Johann Cristoph Gottsched, a period which leads up to Goethe's Sturm und Drang, Weimar classicism and protoromanticism, the Devil was abolished from serious literature due to the figure's exhaustion, and found its place almost exclusively in the plebeian genre of puppet theatre, or satirically when found on stage and in the emerging novel:

Als literarische Figur stirbt der Teufel unter den Bedingungen der Aufklärung zumeist an Erschöpfung. Das Drama der Gottsched-Zeit vertreibt ihn ebenso wie den Harlekin von der Bühne; die moralischen Erzählungen der Wochenschriften benötigen ihn nicht mehr; im Roman, der modernsten Gattung der Epoche, hat er nur noch als Element der Satire Daseinsrecht.

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precision (several modernists and their contemporaries entertained what may be called a "strong belief in God"), her assertion that God and the Devil since the Renaissance have undergone transformations into "principles" (p. 14) holds some merit.

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(Alt 2008, p. 74)

On one occasion, Alt finds the Devil emblematically appearing in one work of literature only to disprove himself using Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (first ed. 1781): *Baierische Kreuzerkomödie* (1791) by Johann Paul Friedrich Richter, or Jean Paul. Jean Paul puts it as eloquently as anyone could in the second scene of the first act: "der Teufel selbst glaubt keinen Teufel mehr" (Richter 1976, p. 560). However, during the period which historians of literature have deemed the age of Goethe – in other words the decades marking the complex interrelations between Jean Paul's Enlightenment, early Romanticism and Weimar Classicism – the Devil reappeared in a new guise within serious literature: that of a scholar and a gentleman. These two archetypes reflect the first two appearances in human form of Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*: First as "fahrender Scholasticus" (GF, stage direction following line 1321), then as smartly dressed man of the world – in Mephistopheles's own words "als edler Junker (...) In rotem, goldverbrämten Kleide" (GF, l. 1535-1536).<sup>44</sup> Alt makes a note of the Devil's gentlemanly appearance in Heinrich Heine's thirty-fifth poem from "Die Heimkehr" in *Buch der Lieder* (1827), wherein the Devil, contrasted to his late mediaeval and Renaissance German appearance, is seen to be a charming and affable gentleman:

Ich rief den Teufel und er kam,  
 Und ich sah ihn mit Verwundrung an.  
 Er ist nicht häßlich und ist nicht lahm,  
 Er ist ein lieber, charmanter Mann, (...)  
 (Heine 2014, p. 135)

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<sup>44</sup> This gentlemanly outer appearance of the Devil is not entirely new at this point. The author of fairy tales known as "Der Stricker" has his evil spirit appear in very elegant vestments in "Der Richter und der Teufel" (approx. 1220), and explicitly states that the judge mistakes the demon for a human being: "der tivel truoc vil rîcher kleit, / diu wâren harte wol gesniten. / dô quam der rihtære geriten. / wan er in vûr einen man sah, / des gruozte er in unde sprach / wanne er wære unde wer" (Stricker 1992, p. 150 / lines 20-25. Translation by Otfried Ehrismann: "Der Teufel trug viele prächtige Gewänder, die sehr schön geschnitten waren. Der Richter kam dahergeritten, und weil er ihn für einen Menschen hielt, grüßte er ihn und fragte, woher er käme und wer er sei" *ibid.* p. 151). In the economic writing style of *Der Stricker*, a description of vestments running over two lines is significant, and his beautifully cut clothing is also what instigates the judge's questioning of the Devil. This appearance is part of the Devil's masquerade, his "List", meant to aid in the judge's deserved punishment.

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Like his immediate predecessor Goethe, Heine also makes a point of the Devil's lack of his trademark hoof ("ist nicht lahm").<sup>45</sup> It would appear that while belief in the spiritual reality of the Devil is long since eradicated from the minds of the educated reading public in Goethe's era, he returns in full force as literary figure. However, as seen from this brief outline, the "lieber, charmanter Mann" of Heine and Goethe is far removed from the gruesome demon that appears in witch trials of Johann Spies's present time: One is reminded for example of graphic representations of the Devil such as Albrecht Dürer's grotesque fusion of various animals in the engraving "Ritter, Tod und Teufel" (1513). In the *Historia* as well as the *Wagnerbuch*, the spirits that act as emissaries for the Devil tend to appear in the form of monkeys or monstrous burning men. In contrast, Collin de Plancy, author of the infamous and in time also vividly illustrated index of demons from Goethe's era, *Dictionnaire Infernal* (first edition 1818, illustrated sixth edition 1863), rebukes theologians who attempt to visualise the torments of Hell, stating that those endeavours should be left to poets. Such descriptions of Hell, he writes, not excluding his own, are "the fruit of a more or less disordered imagination",<sup>46</sup> as it is formulated in the description of Hell in the second edition. This edition of Plancy's book may effectively illustrate the public's view of the Devil in the time of Goethe; while belief in the physical reality of the horned Devil was all but eradicated, the period witnessed a renewed interest in the Devil as literary character and moral principle.

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<sup>45</sup> In Mephistopheles's words, from the *Hexenküche* scene: «Auch die Kultur, die alle Welt beleckt, | hat auf den Teufel sich erstreckt; | Das nordische Phantom ist nun nicht mehr zu schauen; | Wo siehst du Hörner, Schweif und Klauen? | Und was den Fuß betrifft, den ich nicht missen kann, | Der würde mir bei Leuten schaden; | Darum bedien' ich mich, wie mancher junge Mann, | Seit vielen Jahren falscher Waden» (GF, l. 2495-2502).

<sup>46</sup> "(...) le fruit d'une imagination plus ou moins déréglée" (Plancy 1825, p. 208). It must, however, be emphasised that this statement from the second edition is later revised by Plancy, and the "disordered imaginations" are given far more credibility. In the fourth edition, a similar passage under the same key word (enfers/Hell) reads: "Mais les tableaux que certains poètes et d'autres écrivains nous ont faits des enfers ont été souvent les fruits de l'imagination" (Plancy 1845, p. 203). Now, the tableaux of Hell given to us are *often* fruits of certain poets' no longer disordered imaginations, indicating that they are sometimes *not* the fruits of poets' imaginations. A reasonable explanation could be that this change is a product of Plancy's increasing devotion to superstitions derived from Catholicism, which were previously his objects of scorn and satire. His conversion to Catholicism occurred between the two editions, in 1830.

The persistence of the motif of the pact with the Devil in Faustian literature throughout these four centuries, despite the significant transformations that the Devil has undergone, may create some internal conflicts in works that include a form of agreement that presupposes a Devil. At its inception, the Faustian pact is tied to a very specific, and very real, set of circumstances that dissipates during the following centuries. This conflict is very much present not only as staged conflicts within the works that will be analysed here, but also in the individual works' reception histories; readers of Mann's *Faustbook* in particular seem unable to decide what to do with the old, overtly misplaced, material, and several readers end up pushing this material off stage. The pact motif, the old promise, is similarly treated in recent Goethe studies, where the conflicts this promise gives rise to are declared unimportant and not encompassed by Goethe's grand poetic vision. The pact motif will be shown to be bracketed, despite its undeniable consequences, both formal and thematic.

## 2. Rejuvenating a Poorly Written Sorry Effort: Johann Spies's *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* (1587)

One single physical copy of the first edition of *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* (1587) has survived for 430 years, and during these four centuries, it has spawned a small library of republications, annotated editions, translations, and scholarly studies, in addition to a literary legacy that would rival any other sixteenth-century work. Reportedly, the survival and propagation of this work, predating Shakespeare's plays,<sup>47</sup> has absolutely nothing to do with its literary quality, thematic sophistication, complexity or originality. It has been repeatedly accused of possessing none of these qualities, and although it was greatly popular in the decades following its initial publication, popularity can account neither for its survival nor for the scholarly attention it has been given. Its survival is closely linked with the persistent revival of its protagonist and of its defining motifs through other works of literature: Had it not been translated into English, and had Marlowe not picked up this translation, indirectly bringing Faustus and his written pact back to mainland Europe, it is highly unlikely that it would have garnered as much attention as it has. This realisation has led its reception away from the text itself and out towards its legacy and its sources: The questions posed to the work since researchers turned their attention to the first scholarly republication by Wilhelm Scherer in 1884 have primarily regarded the identity of the author, the biographical details of the real person behind the name Faustus, the various scientific, religious and literary sources that are quoted and paraphrased in the work, and the work's effects on later Faustian works of literature. However, researchers have for the past half-century started noticing some unity of thought and narrative sophistication in the work, opening the poetic text itself up to more serious questioning.<sup>48</sup> It is this relatively new, and currently relatively active,

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<sup>47</sup> Following E. K. Chambers's chronology as it appears in *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923), where the three *Henry VI* plays are listed as the first, dated 1590–1592.

<sup>48</sup> The work's history of research is traced in detail in 2.1.



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research endeavour that drives this attempt at shedding light on a motif which is not only the most definitive element in the story that the unknown author from Speyer conveys, but which is also a source of narratological sophistication and complexity in the work. This complexity has not been satisfactorily explored yet, partly because it has been regarded not as a deliberate element of the work's relatively refined storytelling, but rather as a result of the author's incompetence. A trait of this work which has generally been held to be one of its most glaring weaknesses is its inconsistency both in voice and theme, but the following will propose that this inconsistency, which is introduced into the work during the pact chapters, is better understood as a trait of the book's narrative style rather than an oversight or a weakness. This perspective will shed new light not only on the *Historia*, but also on other works of literature that center on a Faustian pact: The pact appears to effect formal changes in the works in which it appears.

The book was published in Frankfurt am Main in 1587 by Johann Spies, who does not claim authorship of the book, but who did sign the first of the two prefaces. While Spies himself saves no superlatives in describing its merits as an educational, Christian book,<sup>49</sup> the superlatives awarded to the book by its reception in later centuries are of a decidedly different nature: It is judged to be a sorry, cheap, one-sidedly moralistic concoction of no literary merit whatsoever, and were it not for the propagation of the Faust tradition through masterpieces such as Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and Goethe's *Faust*, it would hardly have been brought to the attention of serious scholars at all.

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<sup>49</sup> "Nach dem nun viel Jar her ein gemeine vnd grosse Sag in Teutschlandt von Doct. Johannis Fausti / deß weitbeschreyten Zauberers vnnnd Schwartzkünstlers mancherley Abenthowren gewesen / vnd allenthalben ein grosse nachfrage nach gedachtes Fausti Historia bey den Gastungen vnnnd Gesellschaften geschicht. Deßgleichen auch hin vnd wider bey etlichen newen Geschichtschreibern dieses Zauberers vnnnd seiner Teuffelischen Künste vnd erschrecklichen Endes gedacht wirdt / hab ich mich selbst auch zum offtermal verwundert / daß so gar niemandt diese schreckliche Geschicht ordentlich verfassete / vnnnd der gantzen Christenheit zur warnung / durch den Druck mittheilte / hab auch nicht vnterlassen bey Gelehrten vnd verständigen Leuten nachzufragen / ob vielleicht diese Histori schon allbereit von jemandt beschriben were / aber nie nichts gewisses erfahren können / biß sie mir newlich durch einen guten Freundt von Speyer mitgetheilt vnd zugeschickt worden (...)" (HDF, p. 5)

Many researchers who read the work treat it as a dead thing that has long since exhausted its potential for signification. This is particularly true of those readers who do not first and foremost engage with the book's own research history, but who read it from the vantage point of a later instalment in the Faustian tradition. The *Historia* has birthed a character that is probably the single most widespread character in European mundane literature, but in doing so, it is understood to have fulfilled its purpose. Nothing new can be learned from the work, unless the lesson concerns the impact it has had on later iterations of the story of Doctor Faustus. In studies into Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Thomas Mann, the Spies-book's presence tends to take on a role comparable to a biography's off-handed mention of an absent parent during the introductory chapters. It takes part in these later works' origins, but is itself less interesting than these later giants of Western literary history. However, Spies's publication is significantly more complex and refined than normally held, even by some of those scholars who set out to do the work justice. The book is not morally unambiguous. It is not narratologically straightforward, either; rather, it is its highly sophisticated tangle of various narrative perspectives that give rise to a moral ambiguity that has so far gone unnoticed. The locus of this sophistication is the pact motif: The pact opens up a space within the novel where morality is inverted.

From the outset, the book is simple enough. It openly states its morale on the title page,<sup>50</sup> repeats it in two forewords, and reiterates it again and again throughout the narrative. The demise of the proud, scientifically curious and godless doctor is already on the title page deemed well-deserved, and his conduct is judged as being despicable. It is a work belonging to an, at the time, widespread genre of moral educational writings from an explicitly Christian standpoint. The work defines itself as *Historia*, being a designation for a collection of stories concerning historical

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<sup>50</sup> «Historia von D. Johann Fausten | Dem weitbeschreiten Zauberer und Schwarzkünstler / wie er sich gegen dem Teuffel auff eine benandte Zeit verschrieben / was er hierzwischen für seltsame Abentheuer gesehen / selbs angerichtet und getrieben / bis er endlich seinen wol verdienten Lohn empfangen. | Mehrerteils auf seinen eigenen hinverlassenen Schriften / allen hochtragenden / fürwitzigen und Gottlosen Menschen zum schrecklichen Beispiel / abschewlichen Exempel und treuherbiger Warnung zusammen gezogen / und in den Druck verfertigt.»

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persons, or persons conceived to be historical, meant to serve the double purpose of moral education and entertainment.<sup>51</sup> The most significant waystations in the book's narrative are present on the title page: Doctor Faustus, infamous sorcerer, makes a written promise to the Devil, experiences and orchestrates various adventures, and finally collects his well-deserved due. The book encompasses the entirety of Faustus's life span, starting with his pious parents, blame-free in their son's apostasy, and ending with the doctor's graphic demise as the time stipulated in his unholy pact runs out.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part concerns Faustus's parents, his conjuration of the Devil's servant Mephostophiles in the Spessart woods near Wittenberg, his negotiations with this evil spirit, his unholy pact, and his first interactions with his new hellish servant. The second part encompasses the majority of Faustus's scientific inquiries, including observations of natural phenomena and a purported journey to Hell, which in fact is only jugglery arranged by Mephostophiles to convince Faustus that he really has seen Hell. The third part, which is the most voluminous, describes how Faustus uses his magic powers in various encounters with archetypal citizens, such as a few bad-tempered farmers, an arrogant knight and a group of charlatan magicians, and describes the renewal of his written pledge to Mephostophiles. Finally, the short fourth part narrates his repentance, lamentations and ultimately his demise.

Although all four parts of the book are meant to serve the purpose of warning readers of the pitfalls of moral decay and apostasy, this same moral decay and apostasy motivates it, and exists as enticement directed at the reader. Obviously, and explicitly, the book is a Lutheran warning directed at the proud and the curious, and the book's narrator repeatedly reiterates that every extravagance and every scientific factoid described are meant as warnings and horrid examples of experiences that the good Christian should do everything in his power to avoid. However, there is another,

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<sup>51</sup> This definition follows Füssel & Kreutzer's. HDF, p. 181.

just as obvious motivation behind the description of these extravagances: The book promises to address the reader's own curiosity, his desire to read stories of devilish excess and debauchery, and his interest in forbidden knowledge. Although this knowledge turns out to be of a kind easily accessible to a sixteenth century reader through other means, and excessive spectacles such as the meal consisting of 50 named types of meat and 21 named wines that Faustus conjures in the book's 44<sup>th</sup> chapter will, at best, awaken rather than sate the reader's hunger,<sup>52</sup> the reader is promised to be shown something that hardly conforms to the piety that the book professes. The pact contains formal promises that are dissonant with the primary narrative voice's explicit intention; this dissonance will in the following be understood as a conflict that is reflected not only in the peculiar nature of the book's form, but also present in the book's reception history from the very first critical comments it received up to recent scholarship.

## 2.1 Reception of Spies's Book in the Sixteenth Century and Beyond

The following will be a positioning of this study in relation to past and current scholarship on Spies's *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten*. While the book may have been well received by the reading public in 1587, its history of research got off to a bad start with scientifically-orientated republications by Wilhelm Scherer in 1884 and Robert Petsch in 1911, both of whose editors were either sharply critical of its literary merit, or paid little attention to its intrinsic properties as work of literature. Scherer aggressively denounces the ability of its author, who was not an artist, but "ein rechter Stümper, dem so ziemlich alle die Eigenschaften fehlten, die man vom bescheidensten Schriftsteller verlangen darf" (Scherer quoted in Roloff 1989, p. 533).

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<sup>52</sup> Jan-Dirk Müller's (1984) main argument is that Faustus enters into a pact because he desires experiences rather than book learning – this point of view, which heavily implies a close kinship between Goethe's Faust drama and the *Historia*, has some serious deficiencies that will be explored later.

How poorly the author narrates, laments Scherer, and how badly he arranges his material! Robert Petsch, abstaining from such judgments of quality, fixates his efforts entirely on the book's relation to other works: Its sources as well as the Wolfenbüttler manuscript, which at the time had been recently discovered by Gustav Milchsack, and its followers, mainly Goethe. Petsch also opens up the question of the book's theoretical Latin predecessor, which is briefly alluded to in one of the original's two prefaces.<sup>53</sup>

The interest in the *Historia* as an in-and-of-itself relatively uninteresting origin of a circle of Faustian works has followed it throughout its reception history. Research has favoured intertextual approaches, centred on questions of sources, the historical character Faustus and its place in relation to Marlowe, Goethe, and, more recently, Thomas Mann, leaving the work itself, as work of art, largely unexplored. A few studies have surfaced that both identify and attempt to rectify this problem. In the

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<sup>53</sup> While evidence suggesting that the *Historia* was preceded by another comprehensive account of the same tale, or a number of accounts, may at times appear quite convincing, the fact that this material has not survived in any form turns it into a holy grail over which it seems hardly worth the effort to speculate. The main argument given in support of this theory hails from the hand-written Wolfenbüttler manuscript, dated at approximately the same time as the publication of Spies's *Historia* and containing several similar scenes. This manuscript is believed to have been derived from an *Urfaustbuch* or *Urfaustspiel*, as no direct connection between Spies's book and the manuscript can be found, other than the similarities in content. This, along with the occasional use of Latin in the Spies-edition, has led some to believe that a Latin *Urfaustbuch*, of which the *Historia* is but a popularised copy, has indeed existed, as is claimed in the preface to the 1587 print. This notion has been thoroughly explored throughout the history of research into the work. Marguerite de Huszar Allen (1986) claims the origin of this idea in scholarly approaches to the work is Robert Petsch's comment on the genesis of the *Historia* appended to his 1911 reprint of it, while Hans Henning (1960) mentions Herman Grimm as an earlier (1881) proponent of the idea. Henning states that a Latin Faustus-book preceding the *Historia* is highly implausible (Henning 1960, p. 46), but presents compelling textual evidence that a German *Urfaassung* has existed and influenced the printed *Historia* as well as the Wolfenbüttler manuscript and even Georg Rudolf Widman's *Das ärgerliche Leben und schreckliche Ende des vielberüchtigten Schwarzkünstlers Johannis Fausti*. Still, Henning emphasises that we lack the evidence to reach an unambiguous conclusion in the matter. More recently, Helmut Häuser further explores the question (Häuser 1973), but Henning's reservations still stand unchallenged. From Füssel's research (Füssel 1991) one might conclude that the primary source of inspiration was not one comprehensive *Urfaassung*, but rather several separate anecdotes, as Spies states in his preface. Füssel finds Cristoph Roßhirt's compilation of didactic Faustus-stories written between 1575 and 1586 to be a major source, as they make the connection between black magic, the pact with the Devil, evil mischief and the name Faustus (although his first name is Georg rather than Johann) (pp. 23-24). The latest scholar to have touched on the matter is again Marguerite de Huszar Allen, who in 2013 called the entire endeavour of reconstructing the Latin Faustbook a «blind alley» of Faustbook scholarship (Allen 2013, p. 150).

wake of renewed interest in the *Historia* created by, or at least coinciding with, Hans Henning's 1963 republication, along with Reclam's first edition the following year, is Barbara Könneker's "Faust-Konzeption und Teufelspakt im Volksbuch von 1587" (1967), wherein she argues that the work had still not been taken seriously by 1967, because it was regarded as a sorry, poorly written effort: "(...) heute noch gilt es vorwiegend als ein recht billiges, auf Publikumsgeschmack berechnetes Machwerk von stark lehrhaft moralistischem Einschlag" (p. 160). Its author, "ein ungeschickter Kompilator" (p. 160), is more of an editor than an author – and an incompetent one. She quotes Gustav Milchsack from his foreword to the Wolfenbüttler manuscript, published in 1892, where he appears quite upset at the wasted opportunity to properly present some very interesting material. As a consequence, writes Könneker, up to 1967 hardly any real attempts had been made at interpreting or studying the book as a work of literature in its own right.<sup>54</sup> Reclam's 1964 publication, facilitated by Richard Benz, contains a brief call to arms on behalf of the book's inner processes of signification,<sup>55</sup> although it, too, focuses on comparative perspectives in its short afterword.

Although interest in the *Historia* was sustained throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, some indications point to a continued disinterest in the work itself. Hans-Gert Roloff (1989) at least seems to have searched in vain for proper analyses and interpretations of the work, noticing the same almost exclusive interest in the historical Faustus and the book's sources – an avenue of approach, he adds, that has stagnated long since.<sup>56</sup> Marguerite de Huszar Allen (1986) made the same point three

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<sup>54</sup> "Es gibt also eine verhältnismässig umfangreiche und weitverzweigte Forschung zum Volksbuch von Dr. Faustus, aber sie ist recht einseitig orientiert, d. h. hat sich von Anfang an sehr entschieden auf Schwerpunkte konzentriert, die das Verständnis des Volksbuches als Dichtung nur indirekt berühren und daher auch nur mittelbar fördern können" (Könneker 1967, p. 160).

<sup>55</sup> "Scharfsinnige Untersuchungen haben eine komplizierte Entstehung dieser Geschichte wahrscheinlich gemacht, ihrem eigentlichen inneren Verlauf wird man jedoch kaum auf den Grund kommen" (Benz 1964, pp. 161-162).

<sup>56</sup> "Die Forschung hat bis in unsere Tage sehr viel Energie in die Ermittlung der historischen Figur und in die Theoretisierung der Vorformulierungen investiert. Aber sie ist nicht sehr weit gekommen und hat dabei vor allem den Text als solchen aus den Augen verloren" (Roloff 1989, p. 534).

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years earlier, but refined the book's history of research into four areas, of which the last arguably is a text-internal approach: "The interests of *Faustbuch* scholars have traditionally concentrated in four areas: the historical Faustus and the growth of the Faust legend; the *Faustbuch*'s sources; the *Faustbuch*'s origin and textual history; and its tendentious bent" (Allen 1986, p. 583). The finer points of the book's intertextual properties have been thoroughly explored during the latter half of the twentieth century by scholars such as Frank Baron, Günther Mahal, and Stephan Füssel, who have presented what is likely the most comprehensive bibliography of the history of Faustus before the Spies-book.<sup>57</sup> Füssel's and Baron's conclusions support Spies' claim from his foreword that he is the first to put into print a collection of stories detailing the entire lifespan of the well-known character Faustus, and contradicts the claim from the other foreword that there existed a Latin, implicitly much better, version of the work.

It is clear that any study intending to contribute to the history of research into this book within the field of comparative literature at the present time should read it as an autonomous work of art. Unless new material should surface, research into the question of the book's genesis appears to have been concluded. It is also absolutely necessary to prohibit the book's perceived poor quality and lack of complexity from influencing the questions that are posed to the work. It is certainly possible to question the work's tangle of various narrative perspectives without assuming that they are a result of the author's simple-mindedness.

Marina Münkler's *Narrative Ambiguität. Die Faustbücher des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts* (2011) is a comparative reading of all works concerning Faustus from the long eighteenth century, ending just before Goethe, with the intention of tracing the identity of the figure through its various iterations. Münkler asks which changes to the identity of Faustus were successful and which were not, meaning which

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<sup>57</sup> See Füssel's list of works directly or indirectly cited in the *Historia* in Füssel 1991, p. 19, which is a history that can be completed by turning to Frank Baron's tracing of the historical Faustus in Baron 1978.

character traits carried over between the different works. Münkler regards her own work as one contribution to the still hardly explored complex of themes that are treated in the Faustbooks from this period:

Eine Arbeit, die gezielt anhand bestimmter, in den Faust-Büchern verhandelter Problemstellungen und Themenkomplexe die Transformationen innerhalb dieses Korpus untersucht und analysiert, ist bislang jedoch Desiderat geblieben. Diese Lücke will die nachfolgende Untersuchung zu schließen helfen" (Münkler 2011, p. 15).

This current study will contribute to filling that gap, although its overall goal is to shed light on the Faustian pact motif, and although its material selection is significantly narrower than Münkler's. Münkler employs a narratological approach to the treatment of various iterations of the Faustus character, starting with Spies's *Historia* and ending before Goethe's *Faust*, and provides insights into historical transformations of a complex of themes related to the Faust myth. Münkler's treatment of the pact motif, however, which is not her main object of analysis, may be seen to leave something to be desired; specifically, a proper identification of what the pact is, and a comprehensive delineation of its contents, could conceivably have prevented some minor misreadings that can be found in her study and that will be discussed later on.

Another point of reference in the following will be Gerhild Scholz Williams and Alexander Schwarz's study *Existentielle Vergeblichkeit* (2003), where the two scholars read the Faustbooks of Pfitzer, Widmann, Spies and Tolet, comparing the contents of the pact as they relate to themes of ungodly curiosity and apostasy (pp. 134-135), and extending their gaze towards the figures Melusine and Eulenspiegel.<sup>58</sup> The two authors identify a legal system that governs literary pacts with the Devil, and

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<sup>58</sup> Williams has written the chapters on Melusine and Faust, while Schwarz has written the chapter on Eulenspiegel. They are both credited with the introduction and conclusion, so references will be made to both names, despite this study primarily utilising Williams's chapter on Faust. Their names will appear in references in the order that they are credited on the book's title page, i.e. Williams & Schwarz.



they elect to isolate this set of laws from a “juridical discourse on contracts”.<sup>59</sup> Williams and Schwarz’s book has been accused of historical imprecision,<sup>60</sup> and this current study will also bring to light some weaknesses in their analysis of the *Historia*. However, the two scholars’ implication of the reader in Faustus’s pact with the Devil will play a role in the following reading of the *Historia*. Williams & Schwarz state that the pact with the Devil reflects not only Faustus’s desires, but also the book’s readership’s desires: “Der Pakt steht für die Wünsche von Faust und Wagner und die ihrer Leserschaft; er symbolisiert die Erweiterung des Bewegungsspielraums und einen beträchtlichen Zugewinn an Lebensqualität” (Williams & Schwarz 2003, p. 128). The two scholars here implicate the book’s contemporary readers in the pact, putting them in the same position as Faustus, the proud and curious apostate.

This perspective identifies the book not as harmless entertainment, but as a morally dubious piece of text. The *Historia*’s title page may promise moral education, but its preface makes another vow, much harder to defend from a standpoint of Christian morality: To show the reader excessive eating, drinking, whoring and luxurious voluptuousness. Between its covers, readers will find “viel seltzamer Abentheur vnd grewliche Schandt vnd Laster (...) mit fressen / sauffen / Hurerey und aller Vppigkeit” (HDF, p. 11). Even the moderation of these titillating vows, the well-deserved end to Faustus’s wretched existence, is an almost shameless guarantee extended to the reader that he will witness a fascinatingly gruesome end: Faustus will

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<sup>59</sup> «Auch wenn Interdikte, Pakte und Verträge im Mittelpunkt dieser Studie stehen, wollen die Verfasser doch darauf bestehen, dass es sich in diesen fiktionalen Texten nicht um direkte Übertragungen aus zeitgleichen juristischen Vertragsdiskursen handelt.» (Williams & Schwarz 2003, p. 11)

<sup>60</sup> Albrecht Classen’s review in *Mediaevistik* (Classen 2008) is one-sidedly scathing, concluding that the study contains nothing new – «[s]o schön auch die zwei Autoren ihre Studie verfaßt haben, so gut sie sich auch in ihrer Materie auskennen, so wenig erreichen sie doch neue Ufer» (p. 533) – and that the two authors lack the material to back their initial hypothesis that the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw an increase in contractual exchanges: «Allerdings konzentrieren sie sich dabei mehr auf die pragmatische und philosophische Seite eines Vertrages, ohne die Entwicklungsstufen selber genauer ins Auge zu fassen oder ohne jegliche statistische Angaben darüber zu machen, ob man im 15. Jh. z.B. mehr Verträge geschlossen hat als etwa im 12» (p. 532).

go on with his excesses until “im zu letzt der Teuffel seinen verdienten Lohn gegeben / vnd im den Halß erschrecklicher weiß vmbgedrehet” (HDF, p. 11).

Noticing that the *Historia*, along with other morality tales, invite the reader to witness titillating spectacles is hardly revolutionary,<sup>61</sup> but the *Historia* does not simply put an amoral spectacle on display, securing its author’s (and publisher’s) own morality behind a narrative distance that introduces a difference between the described and the way in which it is described: The book’s perspective shifts between several narrative instances, one moment professing Lutheran morality, and the next allowing demons and apostates to address the reader indirectly or even directly. At the centre of these intertwined perspectives stands the pact, which not only makes some formalised promises to the reader regarding the direction the narrative is going to take, but also introduces a foreign element into the book’s discourse: A voice other than the narrator’s. Although, as this study will point out, the written document that contains Faustus’s promises is very carefully set apart from the narrative, and a distance between the voice of Faustus and the voice of the narrator is ritually reinforced, the narrative is tainted by the presence of this document, leaving the book an impure amalgamation of Christian and markedly un-Christian points of view. This current reading of the *Historia* will argue that the book is not as morally straightforward as many scholars have held throughout the past four centuries, an entrenched idea recently summed up by Marguerite de Huszar Allen, who claims that “[t]here is more than sufficient evidence within the text to conclude that this story of Faustus reflects the views of its orthodox Lutheran narrator, author(s), and publisher” (Allen 2013, p. 150). The story does reflect these views, but it also reflects other views, which are brought to the reader unmoderated, and so the book as a whole cannot be said to bear witness to an unambiguous Lutheran morale.

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<sup>61</sup> Jan-Dirk Müller, for example, points out this point only in passing, not awarding it much attention: “Das curiositas-Verbot ist ambivalent: es erlaubt zu artikulieren, wonach man fragen kann, aber nicht fragen soll” (Müller 1984, p. 257).

The potentially subversive sides of the book did not go entirely unnoticed in the decades following its publication, although no evidence suggests Spies himself was chastised for it. Stephan Füssel (1991, pp. 34-35) has found evidence that the book was intermittently quite harshly received both by church officials and jurists, and speculates that the morally instructive aspect of the book was probably not taken seriously, while its intention of entertaining its reader was regarded as its most prominent feature. Johann Papus, church president in Straßburg at the time of the book's publication, believed the book to be dangerous, according to Füssel, while Johann Drexler, who was involved in witch processes in the seventeenth century, found the problem with the Faust book, and other entertaining literature, to be its mixing of truth with lies.<sup>62</sup> This mixture, or tainting of the narrative, does not only extend to the factual truth (or probability) of the events described in the book; its intertwining of holy and unholy, moral and amoral, is more profound than these critics realised. It seems that the book was not taken entirely seriously even by its contemporary critics, who saw it as not good (Papus) and untruthful (Drexler), but never truly as a threat to Christian morality. Hans Henning (1960) recounts a similar mildly critical notion in Lercheimer von Steinfeldens's polemics directed towards the work in the third edition of his *Christlich bedencken vnd erjnnern von Zauberey* (1597),<sup>63</sup> where he, according to Henning, views the book as "eine Verführung der Jugend" (Henning 1960, p. 53). Henning also describes the legal proceedings against a group of students from Tübingen who were incarcerated for having rhythmically adapted the book.<sup>64</sup> Although the verdict was based on the students' lack of a publishing permit, Henning sees this as a pretext, while the true motivation was to

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<sup>62</sup> «Vor allem der einflußreiche Kanzelredner des Jesuitenordens, Hofprediger und Förderer der Hexenprozesse, Johann Drexler, zog gegen schlechte Romane und besonders gegen den 'Amadis' und gegen das Faust-Buch zu Felde, mit dem Hauptargument, daß dort Wahres mit Falschem vermischt werde.» (Füssel 1991, p. 35)

<sup>63</sup> Lercheimer von Steinfeldens is a pseudonym of Hermann Witekind.

<sup>64</sup> The text of this «Reim-Faust» is available in Mahal 1977.

limit propagation of the work.<sup>65</sup> The students from Tübingen might have had the right idea in using Faustus as a conveyor of amoral pleasures, but somehow their coarse verses did not escape censorship to the degree that the parent work did, or, indeed, the copies, continuations and re-evaluations of the *Historia* that appeared in the months, years and decades following its first publication. In the following analysis of Spies's book, several acts of hitherto unnoted narrative subterfuge that enable a direct presentation of amorality and excess will be pointed out, and contrasted to indirect reference and distanced judgment. This direct presentation of amorality may nevertheless escape censorship due to a clever intertwining of various voices, facilitated by the presence of the pact motif.

The foreword entices the reader with the book's morally-bankrupt joys and delicacies. Quite obviously aimed at the reader's curiosity is also the primary, original desire present in the ungodly doctor's pact, which is that Mephistophiles shall show Faustus the elementary building blocks of nature: Forbidden knowledge. How could the unnamed author from Speyer make these promises in a book concerning witchcraft and still for the most part escape censorship in the late sixteenth century, just as the inquisition's pyres lit up mainland Europe? This was partly accomplished through the trope of promising delights as repulsive examples, to serve as warnings against indulging in them.<sup>66</sup> The book contains descriptions of scandalous sexual encounters, delicious meals and forbidden insights – and then strictly judges them. Furthermore, Roloff (1989) has demonstrated that the Devil's

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<sup>65</sup> “Als Vorwand gilt zwar, die nötige Druckerlaubnis seitens des akademischen Senats habe nicht vorliegen. Der eigentliche Grund ist aber in der Mißbilligung zu suchen, die die Verbreitung des Buches durch die Authores, d.h. durch die Versbearbeiter, seitens des akademischen Senats fand” (Henning 1960, p. 54).

<sup>66</sup> This is Marguerite de Huszar Allen's (2013) explanation for the introduction of a didactic aspect to the story of Faustus in Spies's book, contrasted to the straightforward storytelling of saint stories from the *Legenda Aurea*. The only way to present Faustus's amoral temptations in a morally defensible manner was to stage them as repulsive examples, and to introduce an unambiguously virtuous narrator: “Naturally, this fantasy would have been unacceptable, as such, to sixteenth-century readers, Catholic and Lutheran alike. Thus, the formula underwent a second major change. The Faustian reversal was placed within a didactic framework: the voice of an orthodox Lutheran narrator who condemns Faustus's actions and interprets his violent end as just and necessary punishment for his sins” (Allen 2013, p. 161).

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assistance always takes place in the realm of illusions, unsatisfying experiences and lies, thus teaching the reader that the Devil's offers are hollow. However, the book's author also cleverly divides responsibility between various narrative and paratextual instances; while the voice that may be ascribed to those responsible for the book's publication is morally sound, there are other, more demonically inclined, voices present in the work, and by virtue of the effects of the pact motif on the narrative, they are allowed to speak directly to the reader, unmoderated.

The *Historia*'s lack of narrative unity has consistently been regarded as a problem and a consequence of the author's poor literary abilities. Narrative unity has been a widespread criterium for quality in the book's commentary literature, and readers have found none of it in a book which is a patchwork of quotes, paraphrases and allusions. Frank Baron has concluded that "[w]hen we examine the *Historia* on its own terms, we find that the prose lacks the harmony and unity of a literary text" (Baron 1992b, p. 95), insinuating that the work is not even deserving of the designation "literary text". The hypothesis to be tested in the following, and then brought to two other works that write themselves into the Faustian tradition, relates to this observation by Baron, although this study will refrain from explicit judgments of quality.<sup>67</sup> The presence of the Faustian pact motif facilitates narrative ambiguity. The pact motif is always present in these works in the form of a quotation or a paraphrase, which means that it is staged as a foreign element brought into the work, in many cases adopted from a world view that clashes with that which is present elsewhere in each work. The more strictly traditional tropes tied to the pact motif are adhered to, the more strongly dissonant the work rings out. In the following, no judgment of quality will be performed, and no criteria for literary quality will be proposed, but the work's disharmony and lack of unity will be examined very closely, and it will be understood to be not a deficiency or defect, but simply a trait not only of the *Historia*,

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<sup>67</sup> Allen presents a well-founded argument for the literary quality of Spies's Faustbook (Allen 2013, pp. 163-170). She bases this argument on the idea that if the book is read in light of its intended audience and intended function, it is well crafted, but if qualitative criteria that belong to a different segment of literature – the segment that Goethe's *Faust* belongs to – is applied to it, it is of poor quality. She reads the book in the context of popular literature.

but of two other works of literature, of undeniable literary quality, that concern the character Doctor Faustus.

## 2.2 The Pact

The pact motif in the *Historia* has the following functions: It drives the narrative in certain directions, expands the protagonist's abilities, promises the reader some spectacles that are only available when mediated by an accomplice of the Devil, and it creates spaces within the narrative that in various ways are inversions of its main mode of narration. This latter function entails that the perspective shifts from one that is morally acceptable from the Christian, Lutheran, point of view that can be ascribed either to the unknown author or to the publisher, to one that must be called subversive to this otherwise dominant perspective through which the book is narrated. In some sections of the book, a substitution of unholy for holy, amoral for moral, and so on, takes place. Of these four functions, the first two are as unproblematic as they are uncontroversial, even though there is still some uncertainty regarding what it is Faustus actually gains through the pact. The two latter functions, however – the reader's involvement in the pact and the shifts in perspective that the pact motif seems to invite into the narrative – are underexplored and, in the case of the final category, unrecognised.

Few would contest that the pact in Spies's *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* is a major driving force behind the direction of the narrative. Marina Münkler (2011) calls the pact a performative speech act which strongly influences the sequence of events,<sup>68</sup> and in Gerhild Scholz Williams and Alexander Schwarz's perspective, the written pact is a limiting factor in a work of art that contains it, not

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<sup>68</sup> "Das Zentrum des Verlaufsschemas, auf das alles zu- und von dem alles wegläuft, ist ein performativer Sprechakt: Der Pakt, in dem Faustus dem Teufel seine Seele verschreibt. (...) Die Erzählung folgt in erheblichen Teilen den Paktbedingungen und verwirklicht so die detaillierten Festlegungen der ihm vorausgehenden Verhandlungen" (Münkler 2011, pp. 91-92).

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only to the parties that sign the document, but also to the narrative: Without a breach of contract, they argue, everything that follows after the point of agreement can only be a simple report, not a story, because every conceivable event is prefigured in and limited by the promises and counter-promises given in the pact. However, the two latter acknowledge that the Faustian pact in particular is not only a formalised agreement that limits the actions of those involved, but that it is also intended to expand the range of what is possible beyond limits that could not have been breached without the abilities that are bestowed through the pact.<sup>69</sup> This means that while Faustus in the *Historia* is given the ability to fly and thus to visit the entirety of the German territories, greatly expanding his mobility in an age when moving from one territory to the next generally meant walking,<sup>70</sup> the narrative cannot depict a truly repentant Faustus, or grant him salvation, or deny him any of the powers that he has been promised, without incurring a breach of contract that somehow must be recognised and resolved. While the pact expands the freedom and abilities of the work's protagonist, it also dictates a model for the range of directions the narrative may move in. Broadly speaking, this model narrative has two possible outcomes: Either according to or contrary to the pact's articles, in other words according to or contrary to the implied law that gives the pact with the Devil its authority.

However, despite this limiting function, the pact also opens up a narrative space that would otherwise be inaccessible. Not only does this space contain the physical locations that are made available through Faustus's newly-gained supernatural means of travel, from the entirety of the known world down to the Pope's wine cellar; it also creates a narrative space which is dominated by a voice

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<sup>69</sup> "Obwohl jeder Pakt Grenzen zieht, wird er hier abgeschlossen, weil zumindest ein Paktpartner, ob Mann oder Frau, intellektuelle Grenzen überschreiten, soziale Misstände mildern oder familiäre Konflikte beseitigen will. Das heißt, der Partner will die Grenzen durchbrechen, die seine Lebensqualität, aus welchen Gründen auch immer, beeinträchtigen" (Williams & Schwarz 2003, p. 28).

<sup>70</sup> "Die Überwindung zeitlicher und geographischer Grenzen innerhalb des Paktzeitraums – Faust fliegt einmal nach Istanbul und Wagner besucht die Neue Welt – steht im Kontrast zu der relativen Enge der frühneuzeitlichen Lebensumstände und der Begrenztheit der städtischen Lebens" (Williams & Schwarz 2003, p. 121).

expressing a travesty of Christian virtue. There are sections of the book where the narrator's perspective gives way to other, less morally sound perspectives, without explicitly instating any distance between the described and the tone of its description. One such instance is the written document that Faustus writes "in his own hand" (HDF, p. 22) as a confirmation of his pact; another is Mephostophiles's formulation of demands taking place in the chapter preceding this embedded document.

Although the novel's readers unanimously recognise the importance of the pact, it is rarely discussed in a systematic manner. This has some very tangible effects not only on its research history, but also on the research histories of the two other works that this study is concerned with. There appears to be significant confusion regarding what the word "pact" points to; more often than not, the first written document that the ill-fated doctor produces with his own blood, presented in its entirety in the book's sixth chapter, is understood to be the pact. At the same time, however, the two-stage negotiation between Doctor Faustus and Mephostophiles which precedes the sixth chapter are occasionally quoted as part of the agreement as well, and in other lines of argumentation, all or some of them are selectively excluded.

The assumption that one knows what the pact is and does is, however, widespread. Marianneli Sorvakko-Spratte's relatively recent doctoral thesis on the subject of the morality (or amorality) of the Faustian pact hardly gives any attention to the pact itself when commenting on Spies's book, discussing only the doctor's motivation. His motivation is defined according to a tradition that regards it as an exchange of soul for insight, and it misses the difference between what Faustus desires from the pact, and what the pact actually contains. Sorvakko-Spratte finds Faustus's desire for insights that transcend theological insights specifically to be decisive in his turn towards dark magic:



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Der Faust der Historia war wissensdurstig (und dies nicht hinsichtlich göttlicher Dinge), kühn, und sein Verhalten war von Gebot und Sitte abweichend. Alles Werte, die vom kirchlichen Standpunkt her äußerst fragwürdig waren. Somit wird Fausts Paktschließung mit dem Teufel begründet: er will über das theologische Wissen hinaus Neues erfahren, zu neuen Erkenntnissen gelangen. (Sorvacko-Spratte 2007, p. 36)

The pact is understood by Sorvacko-Spratte to be a simple trade of insight for eternal soul,<sup>71</sup> with a single line from the text of the written document in Chapter Six being quoted. However, the pact is significantly more nuanced. If the written document from Chapter Six is regarded as the entire agreement, then not only are these nuances missed, but the agreement cannot even necessarily be called a pact, as will be demonstrated in the next subchapter, because on closer inspection, the text turns out to contain chiefly one-sided promises, and no counter-promises, whereas a “pact” in the following will be defined as an exchange of reciprocal promises. The written document, Faustus’s *Verschreibung*, is a written confirmation of something that has already been agreed to, and the wording of the document explicitly points back to this agreement. The written document will be proven to be secondary to the promise that it attests to and fixates in time and space. The pact will in the following be understood not to be the written document, but rather the entirety of the agreement between Faustus and Mephostophiles, one part of which is a handwritten and signed text.

Marina Münkler (2011) does not explicitly differentiate between oral agreement and written agreement when discussing the effects of the pact on the narrative, despite her very careful examination of the various stages of Faustus’s negotiations: “Das Zentrum des Verlaufsschemas, auf das alles zu- und von dem alles wegläuft, ist ein performativer Sprechakt: der Pakt, in dem Faustus dem Teufel seine Seele verschreibt” (Münkler 2011, p. 92). She points out that the book’s narrative

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<sup>71</sup> She is hardly alone in this; Jane K. Brown, for example, expressed the exact same sentiment the same year that Sorvacko-Spratte published her thesis, but in a book chapter that treats Goethe’s *Faust*: «The questions surrounding Faust’s identity have always been central to the Faust legend: the Faust of the chapbook is, after all, a sinner who barter his soul for knowledge» (Brown 2011, p. 235).

follows from the pact, but when briefly describing what this “Verlaufsschema” consists of, she blends elements from Faustus’s initial three demands, which do not make it into the pact, the oral pact, and the written document.<sup>72</sup>

Die Erzählung folgt in erheblichen Teilen den paktbedingungen und verwirklicht so die detaillierten Festlegungen der ihm vorausgehenden Verhandlungen: Vom Abschluss des pacts an hat Faustus vierundzwanzig Jahre, innerhalb derer ihm der Teufel zu Diensten ist, seine Fragen beantwortet, ihn belehrt, ihm außergewöhnliche Erfahrungsmöglichkeiten verschafft und die Fähigkeiten eines Geistes verleiht. (Münkler 2011, p. 92)

Münkler operates with an understanding of the written document as the “pact itself” (p. 245), missing a series of indications that the pact is active before the document is written and signed. This difference will be made visible through the following identification of the crucial role that temporality and ritual play in the book’s pact chapters.

Upon closer inspection, Mephostophiles will turn out to promise neither to teach Faustus, nor to answer his questions, even though Faustus wants him to do so. A conceptual clarification is necessary in order to achieve a defensible understanding of what the pact is and the effects it has on the narrative. This has not yet been done in a systematic manner, despite the pact being operative in most readings of the work – whether comparative, structural, thematic, historical, or other – an oversight that results in arguments that are threatened by a degree of imprecision that easily may lead to one of two erroneous conclusions: Either that Spies’s *Historia* is poorly and thoughtlessly written, or that the Devil and his proxies do not heed written pacts.<sup>73</sup> The following two-part foray into *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* starts with the most pressing concern, which is the delimiting of what the pact is in this particular work. Having given an answer to this question, the perspective will shift towards

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<sup>72</sup> Marina Münkler does, however, elsewhere differentiate between Faustus’s three initial desires, centered on curiosity, and the replacement in his following six wishes of curiosity with desire for power (p. 244).

<sup>73</sup> “(...) wenn schon der Gott des Nominalismus die Naturgesetze transzendiert, warum sollte sich dann ausgerechnet der Teufel an die Paragraphen auf einem Stück Papier halten?” (Müller 1984, p. 260)

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what the pact does to the narrative, but this must be preceded by a very clear understanding of what is meant when the word “pact” is used. What are those promises that Mephostophiles makes to Faustus and to the reader, how do they relate to Faustus’s desires, and what are the rituals that attest to it?

### **2.2.1 The Concept of the Pact, and the Difference Between Spoken and Written Promises<sup>74</sup>**

In the following, a difference will be identified in the *Historia* between spoken promises and written promises. This difference will aid in identifying the contents and form of the pact as it appears in Spies’s Faustbook, and will also yield a theoretical backdrop for understanding the role of writing and ritual in pacts with the Devil. The narrative told in Spies’s *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* is instigated by and emanates from the articles in Faustus’s pact with the Devil, which are surrounded by what will be identified as quasi-judicial rituals that strengthen the rigidity of these articles both in regards to Faustus’s range of action and to the narrative’s direction. The references to this agreement in juridical and quasi-judicial terminology are as frequent as they are diverse. These references, however, clearly differentiate between the written document and the oral pact.

From the outset, the *Historia* gives significant weight to the written part of Faustus’s agreement with the Devil: the title page invokes the written document, promising that the book contains the story of how Faustus “sich gegen dem Teuffel auff eine benandte Zeit verschrieben” (HDF, p. 3). The document in question is later referred to as Faustus’s “Verschreibung”, “Instrument”, “Recognition”, “brieffliche Vrkund”, “Bekanntnuß”, “Obligation”, “Receß” (HDF, p. 22-23), “Brieff” and “schreiben” (HDF, p. 103), while the oral promises that precede it are referred to as

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<sup>74</sup> Small sections of the following chapter, as well as sections from 3.3, have been used in an anthology contribution slated to be published in 2017, and is repeated with permission from the editors. See Muellneritsch, Helga and Rosenhaft, Eve (eds.) 2017 *The Materiality of Writing: Manuscript Practices in the Age of Print*, Uppsala: Uppsala University Press.

Faustus's "Promission" (HDF, pp. 21) and "Versprechen" (HDF, p. 103) – the latter word encompasses both written and oral promise. Currently, the authoritative scholarly edition of *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* is Reclam's edition from 1988, republished and expanded in 2006, which contains extensive commentary and inclusion of source material facilitated by Stephan Füssel and Joachim Kreuzer. When these two experts on the *Historia* explain the above-listed designations for the written and oral agreement, they invariably return to the term "Vertrag", contract.<sup>75</sup> It would appear that there is an implied lack of differentiation between written and oral agreement in Füssel and Kreuzer's commentary, and that the entirety of the agreement between Faustus and the Devil is gathered under the term "Vertrag".

A contract, "Vertrag", can be defined as a bilateral exchange of promises, regardless of whether the medium the promises are conveyed through is ink on paper or oral statements. A contract is simply a set of promises with counter-promises.<sup>76</sup> The word "Pact", which is not among the words used in the *Historia* to describe Faustus's arrangement with Mephostophiles, is definable as a plebeian substitution for "Vertrag", a designation for reciprocal promises that according to Adelung's definition is only commonly used in ordinary life.<sup>77</sup> This idea of reciprocity has been seen to be where Karl-Heinz Hücke (1992) draws the line of demarcation between pacts from witch processes, which he holds to be one-sided pledges of the apostate's

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<sup>75</sup> "Verschreiben" is taken to mean "vertraglich verpflichten", "Instrument" is translated as "(notariell beglaubigter) Vertrag", "Recognition" is "Vertragsüberprüfung", "Receß" is "Vertrag" and "Promission" is "Versprechen; Verschreibung" (HDF, p. 188).

<sup>76</sup> Adelung: "[E]ine gegenseitige Bewilligung einer Zusage, ein Versprechen mit einem Gegenversprechen, zu bezeichnen, besonders eine feyerliche Verabredung einer solchen Bewilligung; im gemeinen Leben, ein Contract, in manchen Fällen auch der Vergleich" (vol. IV, 1161, "Vertrag"). This definition is reflected in Gerhard Köbler's (2007) *Juristisches Wörterbuch*, where "Vertrag" is defined as a "zweiseitiges Rechtsgeschäft, das grundsätzlich durch zwei sich deckende bzw. einander wechselseitig entsprechende Willenserklärungen (Antrag, Annahme) zustande kommt."

<sup>77</sup> Adelung: "[E]in aus dem Lat. Pactum entlehntes, aber nur im gemeinen Leben übliches Wort, einen Vertrag zu bezeichnen. Einen Pact mit jemanden machen. Den Pact brechen. Einen Pact mit dem Satan haben" (vol. III, 639-640, "der Pact").

soul, and Doctor Faustus's pact, which is a negotiated reciprocal promise.<sup>78</sup> The importance of separating written document from pact or contract will become clear in the following, as the written document will be seen to contain only one-sided promises, and not a bilateral pact or contract. As a consequence, references to Faustus's "Verschreibung" will be seen to point to a one-sided pledge of Faustus's soul to the Devil, and not the pact or contract that precedes the creation of this document.

The difference between written agreements and oral agreements in Faustian literature, and in related literature featuring the Devil, is profound. Written agreements, and particularly agreements that are written according to some specified rituals, are regarded as more strictly binding than oral promises, and the handwritten document can be used as tangible evidence of the agreement that was reached. Oral promises, on the other hand, are rarely good enough; the involved parties cannot be trusted to uphold oral promises. Implied in this weighting of material evidence, which is not unique to Spies's book, is a particular view on the relation between speaking and writing: A living, present person utters living, present words that rapidly dissipate, while a piece of paper, parchment or vellum, made of dead trees, dead reeds or dead animals, facilitates transference of dead words over time through the medium of dried ink or ink substitute. A glance at Doctor Faustus's prehistory will show that it is consistently the Devil who requires a written document, and that his reasoning is that man is fickle and unreliable, while the grace of God is an ever-present threat to the ungodly deal struck between the two parties. The need for a written confirmation of a pact arises from distrust, specifically the Devil's distrust towards man, and the written word is deemed more trustworthy than the spoken.

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<sup>78</sup> This definition resting on reciprocity is also the basis for Williams and Schwarz's analysis of what they call *Verträge* in Jean de Arras's *Mélusine*, various versions of the *Eulenspiegel* and three Faustbooks: "Man hat Verträge bedingte Versprechen genannt und damit den Umstand hervorgehoben, dass die Vertragspartner sich selbst binden – unter der Bedingung, dass die Gegenseite es auch tut" (2003, pp. 13-14); "Wie jeder Vertrag impliziert auch der Teufelspakt Gegenseitigkeit" (p. 26).

An early piece of fiction which centres on a written pact with the Devil is the fourteenth-century story of the bishop Theophilus, a character well-known from plays, poems and morality tales in the European Middle Ages. The story of Theophilus, who employed a Jewish sorcerer to help him arrange a pact with the Devil, gives distrust as the sole reasoning behind the need for a written pact.<sup>79</sup> The following quote is taken from one of Satan's remarks as it appears in Johannes Wedde's 1888 reconstruction of the play:

Wir Teufel müssen haushälterisch sein.  
 Wir ließen schon oft uns darauf ein,  
 Daß wir den Leuten Reichtum gaben.  
 Sie pflegten sich erst an der Wollust zu laben  
 So zwanzig, dreißig Jahre lang.  
 Wenn aber der Leib ward alt und krank,  
 Dann sind sie auf einen Weg gekommen,  
 Wo uns die Seelen wurden benommen.  
 Willst Du es aber mit Ernst betreiben,  
 So sollst Du einen Pakt uns schreiben.<sup>80</sup>  
 (Wedde 1888/2013, p. 35)

Wedde demonstrates that the pact is meant to ensure that the immortal soul in particular does not escape the grasp of Satan, who is the other contracting party. As soon as the bishop enters into an agreement with the Devil, his body is forfeit, but the status of his immortal soul is still in question. After the Virgin Mary reclaims the physical document from Satan, Theophilus's soul is redeemed, yet his body is not. He must give up his body in order to save his eternal soul, demonstrating that Satan's fear of losing the sorcerer's soul despite their agreement was well justified. This particular species of the Devil's distrust towards his human contrahent is also the rationale behind the very early instance of a pact with the Devil in the account of

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<sup>79</sup> Works that tell and retell the story of Theophilus make up a large tradition, including, but far from limited to, a sixth-century story written in Greek by Eutychianus Adanesis, who claims to have been an eyewitness to the effects of Theophilus's unholy agreement, as well as Paulus Diaconus's ninth-century Latin *Miraculum S. Marie de Theophilo penitente*, which was the basis for Hroswitha of Gandersheim's tenth-century poem on the same figure, found in her book of legends. (Frenzel 1998b, pp. 683-685)

<sup>80</sup> Wedde's version of the Theophilus legend stresses the difference between body and soul, but the author emphasises in a footnote that the line concerning old and sickly flesh is not «expressly» described in the originals that he bases his reconstruction on.

St. Basil in Jacobo de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* (ca. 1260), yet here the difference between body and soul is not emphasised. It is a general distrust towards Christian believers specifically which motivates the pact, because Christians, according to the Devil, are deceitful and untrustworthy:

“You Christians are a perfidious lot,” the devil retorted. “Sometimes when you need me, you come to me. Then, when your wish is gratified, you deny me and turn to your Christ; and he, out of the abundance of his clemency, takes you back! But if you want me to fulfil your desire, write me a script in your own hand, in which you profess to renounce Christ, your baptism, and the Christian faith; to be my servant; and to be condemned with me at the Last Judgement.” (Voragine 1993, p. 110)<sup>81</sup>

The written pledge in literature concerning the Devil is necessary because the Devil is unable to trust his contrahent, and the authority of the pact resides in and depends on the physical integrity of the material document. The externalised, material promise must survive to be effective. The *Ulmer Puppenspiel* explicitly ties the pact to distrust between men on the one hand, and distrust of the “hellish domain” towards men on the other: “*Mephistopheles*. Gleichwie ihr Sterbliche einander nicht traut, also traut euch das höllische Reich nicht. Daher muß du dich mir verschreiben” (Mahal 1991, p. 77). In Fridericum Schotum Tolet's *Wagnerbuch* (1593), the pact is required as insurance, “damit ein jeder seiner Sache umso gewisser versichert sein könnte” (Wiemken 1980, p. 173). While Williams and Schwarz judge the Devil to be the “Vertragsbrecher *par excellence*” (2003, p. 27), the Devil's fidelity to his promises is never in question when it comes to pacts with the Devil: It is man who is inclined to violate agreements.

In this is gleaned a persistent difference in accountability between a spoken and a written promise, invariably emphasised by the Devil. The spoken word is inherently untrustworthy, while the written word is a trustworthy substitution. The

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<sup>81</sup> “Perfidi estis uos christiani, quia quando quidem me opus habetis ad me uenitis, quando autem desiderium uestrum assecuti estis, statim me negatis et ad Christum uestrum acceditis. Ille autem quia clementissimus est suscipit uos. Sed si uis ut tuam compleam uolontatem, fac mihi manu tua scriptum, in quo confitearis te abrenuntiare Christo et baptismati et christiane professioni, et meus sis seruus et mecum in iudicio condempnandus” (Varazze 1999, p. 183).

various devils and spirits mentioned above require the human contracting party to repeat what he has said in writing: In further confirmation, so that his soul will not be purloined, so that everyone may be reassured, and so on. The reason is not that the initial word given is likely to be a lie at the time it is given, but that the spoken promise cannot be reliably reanimated at a later time: At the time of death, or at a time when clemency is sought or regret expressed. Writing becomes the physical substitute for two human shortcomings: Poor memory and fickle intentions. When Goethe's Faust rhetorically asks Mephistopheles whether or not he "has known a man's word" (GF, I. 1717), the answer would be that he does know it.

Mephistopheles, who during the pact scene in Goethe's *Faust* makes his appearance more or less as sixteenth-century Devil for reasons that will be explored in detail later on, knows the word of man from his own literary history, and he knows it to be inherently untrustworthy. Yet throughout this same literary history, the various manifestations of the entity persistently seem to place a greater degree of trust in a man's word when it is written down.

Writing in itself, however, is not a trustworthy source of information on a living person's past intentions. Anyone who can write can also attribute what they have written to any other person. There is a weak connection – or no direct connection at all – between words on paper and a living, speaking human being. Furthermore, written words can, like spoken words, be meant or interpreted sarcastically, ironically, satirically, fictionally or they may simply be lies. This is why certain rituals are put in place, that ensure that a written pact can be attributed to the correct person and that its contents can be reliably interpreted as sincere, literal, true statements. These are rituals such as positioning of functions relative to one another, standardised formulations, signature, and, unique to pacts with the Devil, blood replacing ink for this last attribution of text to living person.<sup>82</sup> Laws governing

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<sup>82</sup> Zelger (1996), quoting Frick (1982), argues that the one-sided signature in blood separates pacts with the Devil from other blood pacts: In other words, blood is normally used to reinforce agreements bilaterally, by mixing blood or drinking blood, but in pacts with the Devil, it is used unilaterally, as pledge rather than contract: "Das Bluttrinken ist als Ritual einer Teilanthropophagie zuzuordnen, und die Blutsbrüderschaft zweier Vertragspartner, deren Blut vermischt wird, ist antiker



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contractual exchanges are put in place in order to avoid the misunderstandings that always threaten written language: Certain rituals are followed which avow to the genuineness of the statement, as well as the intended literal meaning.

The name at the end of a legal document will always say the same thing: It always earnestly intends the preceding statement. Additionally, signatures always attest to an event that took place at a particular point in time. This last point is of great consequence to the agreement that is reached between Mephostophiles and Faustus in the Spies-book, as will be shown below. Once a document is signed, the signer cannot add anything to it. Additions below the signature line will not be regarded as part of the agreement contained in the document; the moment a document is signed temporally marks the final, irrevocable closing of an agreement.<sup>83</sup> One might be tempted to claim that the name at the bottom of the page is an extension of the signer's intention, but, crucially, it is not: It may be precisely the opposite. The signature is a frozen intention, removed from the signer. Living human beings have ever-changing intentions, while signatures do not. If they did, the written pact would be worthless. The signature stands in place of the person who signed the document at the specific time of signing, and, as soon as pen leaves paper, it has no part in the living human being that created it, other than the various referential relations that

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Herkunft. Dagegen ist der einseitige Blutpakt 'mehr oder weniger (...) ein Privileg des Paktes mit dem Bösen, also besonders mit dem Teufel' [(Frick 1982, p. 52)] Dies ist einer der Gründe, warum der Blutpakt mit dem Teufel sich von anderen Blutsbündnissen unterscheidet" (Zelger 1996, p. 86).

<sup>83</sup> In his habilitation, known as the *Strassburger Thesen*, Goethe comments on the positioning of the signature relative to the contents of the document is meant to cover. His twelfth thesis states that "[t]he document's signature does not cover what is written after it" ["Subscriptio instrumenti non continuo obligat scribentem"] (Goethe in Schubart-Fikentscher 1949, p. 79). Gertrud Schubarth-Fikentscher understands this thesis in spatial terms, to mean that a signature binds the contracting parties to what is written above it, but not to additions below the signature: "These 12: Subscriptio instrumenti non continuo obligat scribentem meint offenbar, daß die Unterschrift einer Urkunde alles über ihr stehende deckt und damit eine Verbindlichkeit erzeugt, aber nicht darüber hinaus sich auch auf Zusätze erstreckt, falls diese nicht durch diese Unterschrift, oder eine neue, mit gedeckt werden" (Schubart-Fikentscher 1949, p. 79). Such additions must be covered by a new signature, and thus do not modify the already existing agreement, but creates a new agreement. This seemingly mundane insight carries a significant consequence: At the moment a document is signed, its statement is made unchangeable and irrevocable. While Schubarth-Fikentscher interprets the line in spatial terms, there is also this temporal component. To Goethe, time plays a crucial role in contractual exchanges: After the document has been signed, its contents have been fixed.

exist between words and things. The use of blood as writing material in literature concerning the Devil emphasises this temporal aspect of agreements. Blood that is removed from the body will coagulate and die; it no longer takes part in the system in which it previously was a vital component, and a bloodstain will always point back to that precise moment in time when it left a body. It cannot be returned to the body, and it cannot be revitalised outside of it. It is a witness to the fact that it once belonged to a living body, as the signature is a witness to the fact that at one particular moment in time, a living human being intended the words preceding it. The signer's intention has become a trait of a material object at precisely the moment in time when the document was signed.

The act of signing a Faustian agreement is a singular event, located at one particular moment in time by the coagulation of blood, and requiring the presence of Faustus, the signer. Not only is it Faustus's own blood that he signs with, but the signature is also a unique shape that only one person can produce. Beatrice Fraenkel's (1992) categorisation of signs used in the identification of individuals according to Charles Sanders Peirce's three classes of sign-object relations can shed some light on this relation between signer and signature. Fraenkel points to three types of identifying sign: The *name*, for example, is a *symbol*, pointing to its object in an arbitrary fashion, dependent on conventions of identification shared between sender and receiver. The *photographic portrait* can be understood as an *icon*, referring to its object by virtue of visual similarities. The *fingerprint*, which can only be produced by the person to whom it refers, can, when it is used as identifying imprint, be categorised as *index*, because it has a direct relation to the entity that it signifies: It was literally created by the person's hand. Fraenkel points out that the signature shares characteristics with all three of these categories of identifying signs.<sup>84</sup> The

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<sup>84</sup> "Ces trois signes, nom propre, portrait, empreinte [*this category includes, but is not limited to, the fingerprint. My note.*], peuvent être considérés comme signes élémentaires de l'identité et d'un point de vue beaucoup plus large que celui de l'identité judiciaire. Ils correspondent aux trois catégories fondamentales de signes dégagées par C.S. Peirce, le symbole, l'icône et l'indice, subsumant toutes les relations possibles entre un signe et son objet. (...) Qu'en est-il de la signature vis-à-vis de ces trois signes élémentaires de l'identité? Force est de constater qu'elle possède tout à la fois un caractère symbolique, iconique et indiciel" (Fraenkel 1992, p. 200).

Faustian signature appears to share characteristics with the proper name and the fingerprint, or, in Peirce's terminology as defined here, symbol and index: The proper name embedded in the signature symbolically, and arbitrarily, points to the signer, while the sign left on the paper is only useful as an identifying mark if it has been produced by the signer, as index.<sup>85</sup> The Faustian signature's indexicality hinges not only on the Faustian signature's material, but also on the uniqueness of the physical sign's shape. A prerequisite for functioning signatures is the idea that only one person can produce the exact shape of his or her signature; in fact, only one hand can produce this shape. The signature is in this respect a unique sign, and the act of signing a singular event that requires the presence of the signer.

This short preliminary probing of the difference between written promises and spoken promises indicates that the clear separation of the two types of agreement in the *Historia* should be taken into account. The word "Promission" is in the *Historia* not synonymous with "Verschreibung", as Füssel and Kreuzer imply, because the first refers back to Faustus's oral promise, which he made before the set of promises referred to with the second term, which is his written promise.<sup>86</sup> The word "Verschreibung" invokes the act of writing something down, as does "briefliche Vrkund". During the course of Faustus's biography, he is reminded of his oral promise by the Devil when he attempts to repent, while his written promise is silently presented as damning material evidence after his promised twenty-four years have passed. The first is used as an argument to convince Faustus to refrain from

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<sup>85</sup> The iconicity of signature touches on an idea that Johann Wolfgang Goethe implies in *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809): The notion that the signature somehow visually resembles the person to whom it belongs. Otilie's handwriting gradually takes on the shape of Eduard's during her work on copying his writing, indicating her infatuation with him, and is an expression of their uncontrollable chemical affinity for one another. Otilie's copying of Eduard's words is a mere representation of another's work, but her gradual appropriation of his handwriting throughout the process of copying constitutes a change in identity. When Eduard cries out "Das ist meine Hand!" (Goethe 1956, p. 88) on seeing the final pages of her work, he indicates that she in one sense has become him: She has gained the ability to produce those unique marks that positively identify the person that made them. See Puszkar 1986.

<sup>86</sup> «Nach dem D. Faustus dise Promission gethan» (HDF, p. 21) is the opening line in Chapter 5, preceding the written pact.

repenting, while the second is used as unalterable material evidence. In the story of Theophilus, the physical document must be destroyed in order to save the bishop's soul, and there is a similarly strong weighting of the material trace, as "hard evidence" or tangible proof, versus the spoken promise in Spies's book.

The word "pact", which has become the idiomatic designation for agreements with devils and evil spirits, is not used by the unknown Speyer author to describe the written document or the agreement that precedes it.<sup>87</sup> It is, however, used in a different context, in Chapter 43, which describes one of Faustus's many comical adventures and mischiefs. The godless doctor raises five pigs and sells them to a farmer on the condition that they must never cross water. After the pigs dirty themselves in mud, the swineherd disregards Faustus's instructions, and lets them swim in water, with the result that they disappear, leaving behind a few bales of hay that float to the surface and a perplexed owner.<sup>88</sup> Faustus promised the farmer the five swine, and demanded a promise in return. When one promise was broken, the agreement was no longer valid. This exchange of promises is referred to as a pact:

Doctor Faustus fängt wider ein Wucher an, rüstet ihme 5. gemester Schwein zu / die verkaufft er eine vmb 6. Fl. doch mit dem Pact / daß der Säw treiber vber kein Wasser mit inen schwemmen solte. (HDF, p. 88)

Two important points can be learned from this story: First, in the *Historia's* nomenclature, "Pact" is used in the sense of a promise with counter-promises: One party will only be held to his promises if the other does so as well. Second, a pact may be an oral agreement, and does not require a written component. While the story

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<sup>87</sup> Fredericum Schotum Tolet's *Wagnerbuch* (1593), on the other hand, mentions Wagner's "Pact mit dem Teufel" on its title page.

<sup>88</sup> Robert Petsch appends to his edition of the *Historia* a very similar, but significantly longer, story from a different set of Fauststories, named the Nürnberger Faustgeschichte, which were penned by Christoph Roßhirt. The third of Roßhirt's Faust-stories was almost certainly the inspiration for this chapter. In Spies's short retelling of this originally long-winded story, the swine are sold on the condition that they not be driven across water, while in Roßhirt's, the swineherd, who is there portrayed as rather arrogant, is warned not to do so after the sale has been finalised. The exchange is not referred to as a pact in the latter version, implying that the *Historia's* narrator has a very clear idea of what a pact is, and that this idea corresponds with Adelung's definition resting on reciprocity. Roßhirt's story can be found in Petsch 1911, pp. 206-208.

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of the swineherd strongly indicates that the *Historia*'s narrator operates with an understanding of "Pact" as reciprocal promise, the word is not used to describe the arrangement that Faustus and Mephostophiles (as the evil spirit is named in Spies's book) reach. This obviously does not mean that their agreement cannot be called a pact or, indeed, a contract, but it does open the possibility that it is not a reciprocal promise and that Faustus is, following Hucke's definitions, a witch more than a promethean hero of men who is able to negotiate with the Devil's subordinates for increased insight. The question that stands at the end of this line of thought should be of great consequence to any reading of Spies's *Faustbook*, and particularly to one that will identify what the pact motif is: Has Mephostophiles made promises to Faustus that, should they be broken, would free Faustus from his obligations towards the evil spirit?

In the following, the entirety of the agreement between Faustus and Mephostophiles will still be referred to as the pact motif, but it is vital to differentiate between oral pact and written document. Preliminarily, those parts of the interaction between the two parties that directly relate to their agreement will be identified, and the extent of the pact and the role of the written document will be delimited through examination of the many designations used to describe the agreement, as well as the contents of the pact. Although great emphasis will not be placed on the ideas that drive the pact in each work discussed here, in the following it will be necessary to clear up the difference between what Faustus wants – his motivation in turning to magic – and what he gains through the pact, as this difference reflects the structural difference between negotiations, pact and written document, and is a persistent problem for readers of the book. Barbara Könniker's idea that Faustus's pact with Mephostophiles contains no element of scientific curiosity (Fürwitz) will be given support, while her assertion that scientific curiosity is not Faustus's primary motivation will be challenged.

## 2.2.2 Faustus Summons the Devil and Makes Three Demands

The difference between spoken promises and written promises has been identified, but another line of demarcation still needs to be drawn before the pact motif can be delimited. Two types of ritual acts of apostasy must be separated: The pact with the Devil and summoning the Devil. Some of the interpretative errors noted above stem from an unclear positioning of the pact relative to Faustus's initial attempts at commanding the Devil to do his bidding; the following will point out that readers tend to introduce the pact motif too early, at a point in the book's narrative where no pact is yet being negotiated.

The book's narrative opens with Faustus's first attempt at summoning the Devil, after a short introduction of the doctor's guiltless parents and his education and personality. His intention is to bend Lucifer, the Prince of the Orient, to his will, and not, crucially, to enter into a bilateral agreement with him.<sup>89</sup> This act of summoning is located at a crossroads in the Spessart woods near Wittenberg,<sup>90</sup> and the event is very precisely determined in time, as are all of Faustus's initial interactions with the evil spirit: It takes place in the evening, between the hours of nine and ten. The Devil puts on a demonic spectacle for Faustus, feigning futile resistance to make the doctor believe that he is able to command the Devil through jugglery, "Gaukelei".<sup>91</sup> The

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<sup>89</sup> "(...) daß dann D. Faust auch gar hoch erschracke / jedoch liebete im sein Fürnemmen / achtet ihms hoch / daß ihm der Teuffel vntherthänig seyn solte / wie denn D. Faustus bey einer Gesellschaft sich selbst berühmet / Es seye ihm das höchste Haupt auff Erden vntherthänig vnd gehorsam (HDF, p. 16)"

<sup>90</sup> Spessart is spelled "Spesser" in HDF.

<sup>91</sup> "In diesem Wald gegen Abend in einem vierigen Wegschied machte er mit einem Stab etliche Circkel herumb / vnd neben zween / daß die zween / so oben stunden / in grossen Circkel hinein giengen / Beschwure also den Teuffel in der Nacht / zwischen 9. vnnd 10. Vhrn. Da wird gewißlich der Teuffel in die Faust gelacht haben / vnd den Faustum den Hindern haben sehen lassen / vnd gedacht: Wolan / ich wil dir dein Hertz vnnd Muht erkühlen / dich an das Affenbäncklin setzen / damit mir nicht allein dein Leib / sondern auch dein Seel zu Theil werde / vnd wirst eben der recht seyn / wohin ich nit (wil) ich dich meinen Botten senden / wie auch geschah / vnnd der Teuffel den Faustum wunderbarlich öffet vnnd zum Barren bracht. Denn als D. Faustus den Teuffel beschwur / da ließ sich der Teuffel an / als wann er nicht gern an das Ziel vnd an den Reyen käme / wie dann der Teuffel im Wald einen solchen Tumult anhub / als wolte alles zu Grund gehen / daß sich die Bäum biß zur Erden bogen" (HDF, pp. 15-16).

Devil sends a messenger who finally appears in the shape of a “gray monk”, and Faustus commands the apparition to reappear in Faustus’s home at twelve the following evening. When Faustus the next day recommences his summoning, it is the spirit Mephostophiles who appears, although his name is not revealed at this time. The two then hold a “disputation” in Faustus’s private chambers that lead to a bilateral agreement and a written pledge.

The temporal and spatial locations of these and the following events are significant due to the relation between pact-ritual and promise: The time and place at which a document is signed together constitute that moment that the signature attests to and makes present, the same way a handshake positions an agreement in space and time. These ritual actions, or symbolic actions, serve as both temporal and spatial markers that at a later time may provide avenues of return to the place and time at which an agreement was reached. The term “symbolic action” as descriptive of actions that situate promises comes from Jacob Grimm’s catalogue of language and rituals in German legal practice, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer* (first published 1828).<sup>92</sup> Symbolic actions visualise and concretise the moment in time at which an agreement was entered into, writes Grimm: “(...) die symbolischen handlungen (...) beruhen in der idee, daß sache oder person dabei selbst sinnlich und leiblich vergegenwärtigt werden müssen” (Grimm 1955, p. 153). The word *gegenwärtig*, from which *vergegenwärtigen* is derived,<sup>93</sup> has two meanings that underline the point being made by Grimm here: one temporal and one spatial. It can mean “at this time”, or it can designate something that takes place close by or in the vicinity of something else; a

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<sup>92</sup> The following quotes are from a 1955 reprint based on the fourth edition, the publication of which was facilitated by Andreas Heusler and Rudolf Hübner in 1899, 36 years after Grimm’s death in 1863.

<sup>93</sup> Although Jacob Grimm himself got no further than the letter E in his work on his own and his brother Wilhelm’s German dictionary before he died, the *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm* can be used for definitions: “vergegenwärtigen, verb. zu einem gegenwärtigen machen, zusammensetzung mit gegenwärtigen”; “gegenwärtigen, gegenwärtig machen” (Grimm, vol. 25, 395).

duality also apparent in the English “present” (to be present / at the present time).<sup>94</sup> Symbolic actions fix the persons entering into the agreement as well as the agreement itself in time, allowing for future reference to the instance at which it was entered into. They also concretise an agreement by localising it, which means tying it to a physical location. Understood as symbolic action, one function of the signature and the written pact is to make an intangible agreement physically manifest, and thereby easier to refer back to, by tying it to the place and time at which it was reached: it aids in keeping the agreement present, *gegenwärtig*.

There are three events in the first six chapters of the book that directly relate to the pact, in addition to Faustus’s second written document, which he produces seventeen years into his companionship with Mephostophiles. These three events are carefully spaced apart from one another in time by the narrator, and just as carefully spatially located, and those that result in binding promises are clearly marked by symbolic actions that provide avenues of return to those times and places. The events are: Faustus and Mephostophiles discuss Faustus’s initial wants and desires around twelve on the second day after the initial summoning in the Spessart woods; they reach an agreement between three and four in the afternoon on the third day in Faustus’s small study; and Faustus writes and signs his document during the morning hours of the fourth day at the same location.

Doctor Faustus, who after the ordeal in the Spessart woods believes that he has bent the Devil to his will by the power of his incantations, first presents a list of demands, delivered in Faustus’s private quarters between nine and ten in the evening of the day after he first attempted to summon the Devil. This list reflects the two major sins that he is accused of as early as on the title page, namely pride and curiosity:

Erstlich / daß er ihm solt vnterthänig und gehorsam seyn / in allem was er bete / fragte / oder zumuhte / biß in sein Fausti Leben und Todt hinein.

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<sup>94</sup> The expression “sich etwas gegenwärtig halten” means to keep something in mind or to think about something: Literally to keep something present to oneself.



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Daneben solt er im das jenig / so er von im forschen würd / nicht verhalten.  
 Auch daß er im auff alle Interrogatorien nichts unwarhaftigs respondiern  
 wölle. (HDF, p. 18)

Even the form of Faustus's address towards the evil spirit attests to his pride:<sup>95</sup> He commands the spirit to follow these three articles. Faustus "legt dem Geist etliche Artickel für" (HDF, p. 18). Faustus, who still believes that it is the Devil he is interacting with, not only desires to gain the evil spirit's aid, but also to make him his servant, or, at the very least, to have it appear to others that the spirit is subservient to him. In the first of Faustus's three initial demands, the protagonist's pride manifests as a wish to act as master over the spirit Mephostophiles. His desired mastery over the spirit extends beyond the instrumental use of Mephostophiles's powers and insights towards a specific end. The service that Faustus requires is not only instrumental to the two following demands, but is meant to establish his dominance over the spirit. The doctor requires that the spirit shall be "vnterthänig", subservient, and "gehorsam", obedient, towards him. Faustus, rather than simply seeking the fulfillment of his desire for earthly goods or for knowledge, demands that he is given the role of master over the spirit, and it is important to the doctor that this power relationship is visible to others. During the first summoning of Mephostophiles at the crossroads in Chapter Two, the doctor is reported to have taken pride in the fact that the spirit appeared "vnterthänig" towards him: "deß jedoch [despite his terror at the Devil's appearance] liebete im sein Fürnemmen / achtet ihms hoch / daß ihm der

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<sup>95</sup> Pride is put on display and judged throughout the book. Jan-Erik Ebbestad Hansen (2007) argues from a theological standpoint that Faustus's pride to a degree mirrors Lucifer's *superbia*. However, he also accentuates the difference between Lucifer's rebellion, which is motivated by a form of "pride shared by all humans" ("et hovmod som er felles for alle mennesker", p. 212), and Faustus's intellectually motivated rebellion, which is "tied to Faust[us]'s extraordinary abilities and limitless intellectual ambitions" ("knyttet til Fausts ekstraordinære evner og grenseløse intellektuelle ambisjoner") (p. 212). Faustus's pride is motivated by *Fürwitz*, impious curiosity, according to Ebbestad Hansen, and this in turn means that pride is secondary to curiosity, or that pride is a function of the primary sin of curiosity. The doctor is described as having "einen thummen / vnsinnigen vnd hofffertigen Kopff" (HDF, p. 14), he falls from grace because of his "stoltzer Hochmut" (HDF, p. 21), he is compared to "dem bösen Engel" (Lucifer) who was banished by God because of his "Hoffahrt vnd Vbermuht" (HDF, p. 21), the modified verse from Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff* which appears in Chapter 7 is a warning to those who direct their desire towards "stoltz vnd Vbermuht" (HDF, p. 23), and after Faustus hears of the banishment of Lucifer, he despairingly reflects that if he himself were not "Trotzig vnd Hochmütig wider Gott gewesen", he would have "ein ewiges Himmlisches wesen vnd wohnung" (HDF, p. 33).

Teuffel vntherhänig seyn sollte” (HDF, p. 16). The apparent submission shown by the spirit towards the doctor reflects on the latter’s power as such rather than his power to perform certain otherwise impossible feats with the help of the Devil.<sup>96</sup>

The second article of Faustus’ first list of demands is of great importance to the development of the Faust figure after Spies, as it reflects the doctor’s impious desire for knowledge. Füssel and Kreutzer define *Fürwitz* as a desire for knowledge which is sinful because it is directed only towards worldly knowledge: “wißbegierden und, da nur auf weltliche Erkenntnis ausgerichtet, zugleich sündigen” (HDF, p. 182). While the word *Fürwitz* literally may denote curiosity as such, including desire for new experiences, it is here understood as desire for insight specifically. Faustus’s primary character trait, and his primary motivation for turning to the dark arts, is mostly held to be a form of curiosity that is directed towards an expansion of his insights beyond what he is capable of achieving through his own God-given intellect.<sup>97</sup> Barbara Könneker, however, argues that the overarching sin that the *Historia* warns against is neither pride nor curiosity, but the use of magic, which is an infringement against the first commandment, and that Faustus desires to expand his power, not his insight:

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<sup>96</sup> The spirit’s submission is, however, described in the same paragraph as pure jugglery, “Gaukelei”, intended to make him believe that his rituals force a reluctant Devil to do his bidding, and thus to also obscure the fact that the Devil is the one leading him. Faustus is later seen to be content with “Gaukelei”: During the second disputation between Mephostophiles and Faustus, the word “vntherhänig” is repeated, and in this case it is made clear that its meaning is not that the spirit shall be subservient to Faustus, but that he shall appear to be so. Faustus’ third requirement from the second list is that Mephostophiles is “vntherhänig” and acts “als ein Diener” (HDF, p. 20) towards him: Mephostophiles is to act like a servant towards the doctor, and this appears as important to him as Mephostophiles actually being his servant.

<sup>97</sup> It is taken as a given, for example, by the following 21st century scholars who have read the book in light of a larger comparative project: Marianneli Sorvako-Spratte (2007): «Somit wird Fausts Paktschließung mit dem Teufel begründet: Er will über das theologische Wissen hinaus Neues erfahren, zu neuen Erkenntnissen gelangen.» (Sorvako-Spratte 2007, p. 41); Williams & Schwarz (2003); Sabine Doering (2001): «Zu den invarianten Bestandteilen des Faust-Mythos gehören als zentrale Aspekte sein unbändiger, unbefriedigter Wissensdrang und der daraus resultierende Teufelspakt.» (Doering 2001, p. 15); Marina Münkler (2011): «(...) Faustus [ist] eine Erfindung des ersten Faustbuch-Autors. Das begründet sich zuallererst darin, dass er Faustus mit den zentralen und umkämpften Semantiken verknüpft hat, in denen problematische Identität in der Frühen Neuzeit verhandelt wurde: *curiositas*, Melancholie und Gewissen» (Münkler 2011, p. 15).

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Der Faust des Volksbuches erhofft sich von ihnen nicht, wie in allen späteren Dichtungen, höheres Wissen oder geheime Offenbarungen, die ihm von der Religion her verboten sind, sondern Kenntnisse und Fähigkeiten, die ihn in den Besitz jener Machtvollkommenheit setzen sollen, die Gott ihm grundsätzlich streitig macht. (Könneker 1967, p. 177)

Faustus's motivation in turning to the dark arts is seemingly, and contrary to Könneker's hypothesis, very easily identified; most analyses of the work that touch on Faustian desire quote the opening lines of the book's second chapter, which identify at least one strong desire that drives Faustus towards the Devil, namely curiosity:

Wie obgemeldet worden / stunde D. Fausti Datum dahin / das zulieben / das nicht zu lieben war / dem trachtet er Tag vnd Nacht nach / name an sich Adlers Flügel / wolte alle Gründ am Himmel vnd Erden erforschen / dann seine Fürwitz / Freyheit vnd Leichtfertigkeit stache vnnnd reizte ihn also / daß er auff eine zeit etliche zäuberische vocabula / figuras / characteres vnd coniurationes / damit er den Teufel vor sich möchte fordern / ins Werck zusetzen / vnd zu probiern im fürname. (HDF, p. 15)

The term "Fürwitz" as it is used in the *Historia* has occupied a large number of scholars, and the general consensus is, and has been at least since the early 1960s, that it is identifiable as sinful scientific curiosity, comparable to the term *curiositas* as it is used in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* (5<sup>th</sup> century) and Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* (2<sup>nd</sup> century).<sup>98</sup> Faustus's desire to take on eagle's wings is often understood in the

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<sup>98</sup> Horst Rüdiger (article first published 1963) pointed out what he perceived to be a disappointing tendency in research into the *Historia*, whereby the obvious kinship between the concept of *curiositas* in Apuleius' book and Spies' *fürwitz* was ignored (Rüdiger 1990, p. 75). Perels (1998) also gives voice to the notion that *Fürwitz*, which undeniably appears prominently throughout the *Historia*, bears a strong resemblance to the Augustinian concept of impious scientific curiosity (*curiositas*). Füssel and Kreuzer agree in their afterword to the latest Reclam edition of the *Historia* (HDF, p. 340). The term *curiositas* as it is used in this context originates in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (2nd century AD), or *The Golden Ass* as it was named by Augustine, according to Rüdiger (1990) and P. G. Walsh (1988). In Apuleius' text, the curiosity of the protagonist is demonstrated to be an "attempt to unlock the secrets of the universe by recourse to magic" (Walsh 1988, p. 76). The author of the latter article finds the noun *curiositas* to be used comparably in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* (5th century AD), where he finds it to appear repeatedly in conjunction with the adjective *sacrilega*. He concludes that "[t]he repeated use of *curiositas* to describe the perverted pursuit of other religious enthusiasms is a legacy from Apuleius" (p. 82). Horst Rüdiger emphasises the notion that the similarity between the *Historia* and Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* lies in the protagonists' use of magic in order to satisfy their impious curiosity. Both Apuleius's protagonist Lucius and Doctor Faustus are seen to desire knowledge that lies beyond human capacity: Lucius

context of Proverbs 23:5, which in Luther's translation warns against letting your gaze be dragged towards that which cannot be had, because it will take on the wings of an eagle and escape towards heaven.<sup>99</sup> The analogy to Apuleius perhaps works slightly better than the analogy to the proverbs, seeing as the *Metamorphoses*'s protagonist Lucius himself wishes to become a bird in order to expand his perspective, which appears to be the narrator's meaning in the above-quoted section of the *Historia*, whereas in the Proverbs verse, fleeting things sprout eagle's wings and drag the gaze of the onlooker with them. It is quite clear that godless curiosity is partly Faustus's reason for turning to magic; variations on the desire to explore the foundations of everything on earth and in heaven as primary motivation carries over to later Faustian works, including the two that will be explored in this study. However, close scrutiny of the pact will reveal that Spies's Faustus does not actually gain insights of this nature – not because Mephostophiles does not uphold his formalised promises to the doctor, but because Faustus's wishes change drastically during the hours that separate the first from the second negotiation between Faustus and Mephostophiles. The second item on Faustus's list of commands, which appears to concern curiosity directed towards forbidden insights, is not present in his second list of wishes.

The third demand from the doctor's first list is also absent from Faustus's second list of wishes. It states that Mephostophiles shall answer truthfully all of the doctor's inquiries. Faustus knows that the entity he is dealing with is the very embodiment of lies, so he tries to have the spirit promise not to lie – because in literature featuring the Devil, the Devil may lie, but he does keep his formalised promises. Lying is in the *Historia* understood as a significant part of the Devil's

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attempts to transform himself into a bird, failing miserably and turning into a donkey, and Faustus in his second initial demand requires Mephostophiles not to withhold any insight he may desire.

<sup>99</sup> «Laß deine Augen nicht fliegen nach dem, was du nicht haben kannst; denn dasselbe macht sich Flügel wie ein Adler und fliegt gen Himmel.»

nature,<sup>100</sup> and it is precisely as answers to Faustus's *Interrogatorien* into matters that exceed his God-given intellect that Mephostophiles lies. When the doctor in the book's twenty-second chapter asks Mephostophiles about how God created the world and how humankind was first born, the spirit gives him an incorrect answer. The chapter heading reads: "Ein Frage Doctor Fausti / wie Gott die Welt erschaffen / vnd von der ersten Geburt deß Menschen / darauff ime der Geist / seiner Art nach / ein gantz falsche Antwort gab" (HDF, p. 48). Mephostophiles is lying in this particular case, and this he does according to his species or genus (*Art*). The spirit's answer is godless and untruthful: "ein Gottlosen und falschen Bericht" (HDF, p. 48). Faustus later asks to be shown Hell, and although this should be Mephostophiles's domain, the doctor is still only presented with an "Affenspiel" to give him the impression that he has seen Hell (HDF, p. 52). During his final speech to the students, a repentant Faustus warns against the Devil's deception and cunning ("trug vnnnd List". HDF, p. 120), and thus demonstrates that he is now familiar with and accepts the Devil's deceitful nature.

Mephostophiles lies despite Faustus requiring that he should withhold nothing. This is taken by Jan-Dirk Müller (1984) to mean that the Devil would not be held to his word by a piece of paper, while Williams & Schwarz (2003) have named the Devil a "Vertragsbrecher *par excellence*" (p. 27). Neither of these assumptions is true. The Devil is the keeper of pacts *par excellence*, as this study will continue to demonstrate: The evil spirit honours his agreements to the letter. There is a crucial gap in time and content between the first three demands made by Faustus and his second list of wishes; something is lost between the evening of the second day, on

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<sup>100</sup> The preface names the Devil "einen bösen verfluchten Lügen <-> vnd Mordgeist" (HDF, p. 8), echoing Luther's translation of John 8:44: „Ihr seid von dem Vater, dem Teufel, und nach eures Vaters Lust wollt ihr tun. Der ist ein Mörder von Anfang und ist nicht bestanden in der Wahrheit; denn die Wahrheit ist nicht in ihm. Wenn er die Lüge redet, so redet er von seinem Eigenen; denn er ist ein Lügner und ein Vater derselben“. This verse is also alluded to a further three times in the book, first in Chapter 9: „Wie Christus der HERR durch Johannem / den Teuffel auch einen Dieb vnd Mörder nennet / der er auch ist“ (HDF, p. 27), then in a comment entered into the margin of Chapter 53: „Si Diabolus non esset mendax et homicida“ („If the Devil were not a liar and murderer“) (HDF, p. 104), and finally in Chapter 65: "dieweil er [the Devil] Gottes Aff / auch ein Lügenger vnnnd Mörder ist" (HDF, p. 116).

which no agreement was reached, and the afternoon of the third. The third article would contradict Mephostophiles's nature, which is to be an evil, accursed spirit of lies and murder, and Mephostophiles could not enter into a formalised agreement that contained articles he would be unable to adhere to. The spirit responds to these initial demands by explaining that fulfilling them is beyond his reach, and that only the hellish God himself could do so: "Lieber Fauste / dein Begeren zu erfüllen / stehet nicht in meiner Kur vnd Gewalt / sondern zu dem hellischen Gott" (HDF, p. 18). When Doctor Faustus first attempted to summon the Devil, his intention was not to negotiate with the evil spirit or to enter into a pact with him, but to command him. The Devil sent one of his proxies, later identified as Mephostophiles, in his stead, and the latter, on hearing Faustus's list of demands, regrets to inform the ambitious doctor that these demands are not in his power to effect: Only Lucifer himself could do so, and no man would be able to command Lucifer.<sup>101</sup> In this way, the spirit, who is not yet named, reveals itself to the disappointed Faustus to be part of a lesser regiment of evil spirits. On learning this, Faustus says that he does not wish to be condemned for the sake of a lesser demon, but the demon replies in verse that he now has no choice in the matter.<sup>102</sup>

The three initial demands put forward by Faustus reflect his motivation in attempting to summon the Devil. They also put on display Faustus's major sins of pride and impious curiosity, against which the book is intended to serve as a warning. Reaching no agreement with Mephostophiles, Faustus demands that the spirit shall return around vespers the next day, at which time he presents a second set of wishes, this time formulated more carefully as desires rather than demands. When Faustus finds that he cannot be master even of a member of one of Hell's lesser regiments, he tries another avenue of approach, which is that of economical exchange between

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<sup>101</sup> "Denn sondst köndte der Mensch mit allem seinem Gewalt vnd Künsten ihm den Lucifer nicht vnterthänig machen" (HDF, p. 18).

<sup>102</sup> "Wiltu nit / so hats doch kein Bitt / | Hats denn kein Bitt / so mustu mit / | Helt man dich / so weistu es nit / | Dennoch mustu mit / da hilfft kein Bitt / | Dein verzweifelt Hertz hat dirs verschertzt" (HDF, p. 19). No source has been discovered for these (repetitive, and quite circular) lines. Füssel and Kreutzer ascribe them to the author (HDF, p. 187).

equals. Crucially, no symbolic action takes place around twelve in the evening on the first day after Faustus first performed his rituals in the Spessart woods, because no binding promises are made by either involved party at that time. That moment in the book's narrative passes, and the three initial demands, requiring Mephostophiles to answer Faustus's questions truthfully, are left behind, discarded.

### 2.2.3 The Twelve Articles of the Pact

The idea of a reciprocal agreement is brought into the book in the fourth chapter, and is introduced into the narrative at between three and four in the evening on the third day. Mephostophiles at this point indicates that he has returned from his master Lucifer with a proposal for a reciprocal agreement. He has brought back an answer from Hell regarding Faustus's first list of demands, and he needs Faustus to give him an answer in return: "Die Antwort bring ich dir / vnnd Antwort mustu mir geben" (HDF, p. 19). This exchange of answers, and consequently of promises, is the first proposal for a reciprocal agreement that appears in the book, and so Mephostophiles introduces the idea of a pact at this point. The exchange that follows from this is Faustus's pact with the Devil. Failure to recognise the temporal distance and difference in contents between the three initial demands and the twelve articles of the pact has led to some confusion amongst readers of the *Historia*.

Faustus's second interaction with Mephostophiles is meticulously temporally located. The opening sentence of the fourth chapter gradually narrows down the precise time at which Mephostophiles reappears after having brought Faustus's initial three demands to his master Lucifer: "Abendts oder vmb Vesperzeit / zwischen drey vnd vier Vhren / erschien der fliegende Geist dem Fausto wider" (HDF, p. 19). It is in the evening, around vespers, between three and four. Before this time, no agreement has been reached between Mephostophiles and Faustus, and the latter has failed in his attempt to bind the former to his will. This time, however, Faustus does not make demands, but presents a list of desires. He "begert vom Geist wie folgt":

Erstlich / daß er auch ein Geschickligkeit / Form vnnd Gestalt eines Geistes  
möchte an sich haben vnd bekommen  
Zum andern / daß der Geist alles das thun solte / was er begert / vnd von ihm  
haben wolt.  
Zum dritten / daß er im gefliessen / vntherhänig vnd gehorsam seyn wolte / als  
ein Diener.  
Zum vierdten / daß er sich allezeit / so oft er in forderte vnd beruffte / in  
seinem Hauß solte finden lassen.  
Zum fünften / daß er in seinem Hause wölle vnsichtbar regiern / vnd sich  
sonsten von niemandt / als von im sehen lassen / es were denn sein Will vnd  
Geheiß.  
Vnd letztlich / daß er ihm / so oft er ihn forderte / vnnd in der Gestalt / wie er  
ihm aufferlegen würde / erscheinen solt. (HDF, p. 20)

This entire list is in essence an expansion on Faustus's previous demand for a submissive Devil. Only the first request in this list concerns something other than the servitude of Mephostophiles. The second states that the spirit should do whatever Faustus wants him to do, while demands three through six concern the manner in which the spirit should serve: He should serve politely and willingly, appear in the doctor's house whenever Faustus wishes it, be invisible to everyone except the doctor, and he should (again) appear at any time and in any form Faustus wishes him to.

Faustus initially required that Mephostophiles should submit to him, that the spirit should answer all of his questions, and that he should do so truthfully. Now, the doctor's desires have shifted towards action: Mephostophiles is now required to do various things for Faustus, rather than truthfully disclose secrets concerning the nature of heaven and earth. The third request is an expanded version of the first demand from the first list, but this time the doctor emphasises that Mephostophiles should be obedient like a servant, implying that he will not be his servant, but that it would appear to an onlooker as though he were. There is an implied moderation of Faustus's initial desire to be the spirit's master in the final clause of the third request from the second list, in that Faustus there recognises that Mephostophiles will not be his servant, but rather that he will only appear to serve. Mephostophiles is also no longer required to answer metaphysical questions or to sate Faustus' impious curiosity; his main task as servant to Faustus is now to do whatever the doctor requires him to, and to bestow on Faustus the powers of a spirit. Faustus ends up



requesting expansion of his power on earth rather than insight.<sup>103</sup> If there is curiosity still present in these new demands, it is not Augustinian *curiositas*, or scientific *Fürwitz*, but a more mundane species of curiosity. Faustus is later shown realms both distant and near, he drinks from the Pope's wine, and he commits various acts of debauchery and gluttony. He does not in fact learn forbidden metaphysical knowledge throughout the work, arguably excluding his foray into astrology.<sup>104</sup> In a significant portion of the first part of the book, he is seen exploring earthly matters well within the limits of contemporary knowledge.<sup>105</sup>

Throughout the book, the pact will point back to the disputation that took place during the evening hours, which is decidedly different from the first disputation.

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<sup>103</sup> This is in line with Münkler (2011, p. 244), who sees the second list as an expression of Faustus's desire to exercise power, but contrary to Williams (1991, p. 21), who sees the second list as an expansion of the articles in the first. The latter misses the point that the *Historia's* author makes during the opening chapter in the Spessart woods, namely that Faustus cannot command the Devil, but must humbly ask one of the Devil's servants, and then take what is on offer rather than what he at first wanted.

<sup>104</sup> This, however, does not put a stop to his curiosity, or his desire to "speculate the elements". Faustus still wishes to expand his insights, but this is not what his pact enables him to do. The spirit is kept in Faustus' study (HDF, p. 26), already indicating a certain kinship between it and Faustus' studies, and although chapters 9 and 10 are mostly devoted to describing the food, drink and women Faustus conjures, steals and lures with the help of Mephostophiles, this is merely a background for what follows: six chapters of questions and untruthful answers regarding the nature of Mephostophiles, Lucifer and Hell (chapters 11-17), three chapters containing Faustus' newfound insights into the physical world (chapters 18, 19, and 20, which respectively treat astrology, astronomy and the seasons), and finally two chapters wherein Faustus asks questions of heaven and God (chapters 21 and 22) and Mephostophiles answers with lies, before what may be considered physical demonstrations, consisting of Faustus' travels into these three domains, begin. The first eight years of Faustus' twenty-four year agreement with Mephostophiles are primarily spent studying and learning: "Doct. Faustus war auff das achte Jar kommen / vnd (...) / war auch die zeit daß meisten theils mit Forschen / Lernen / Fragen vnd Disputiern vmbgangen." (HDF, p. 52) These initial chapters of questions and answers are clearly fuelled by one principle, which is Faustus's *Fürwitz*. After the short description of his lavish lifestyle in chapters 9 and 10, the doctor finds that "[b]ald sticht in der Fürwitz" (HDF, p. 29), and for this reason he desires a conversation with the spirit, who is locked away in his study. When the doctor is forbidden by the spirit to inquire further into the topic of the Lord's Heaven, the prohibition distresses him greatly: "Doctor Faustus dorffte (wie vorgemeldet) den Geist von Göttlichen vnd Himmlischen dingen nicht mehr fragen / das thäte ihm wehe / vnd gedacht ihm Tag vnd Nacht nach" (HDF, p. 46). Faustus retains a desire for insights, but he has not entered into a pact that will allow him to gain insights.

<sup>105</sup> "Was ihm der Teufel über die Kosmologie, das Zustandekommen der Jahreszeiten usw. erzählt, beschränkt sich auf längst überholten Wissensstoff, über den man in jedem der damals so beliebten Kalender nachlesen konnte (...)" (Könneker 1991, p. 5).

Barbara Könneker is correct when she points out, contrary to general consensus then and now, that Faustus does not gain forbidden or hermetic insights from the evil spirit, but she incorrectly holds that this is not what Faustus wants. Könneker identifies the first of Faustus's second list of requests as his primary motivation: "Diese *Geschicklichkeit* der Geister zu erwerben, die wesentlich an ihre besondere *Form und Gestalt* gebunden ist, ist also Fausts wichtigste Forderung, ist sein eigentliches Paktziel" (Könneker 1967 p. 181). Könneker points out that the form of a spirit will allow Faustus to transcend limitations of space and time, thus increasing his power. While the abilities this demand gives the doctor certainly occupies a central role in Parts II and III of the book, it is crucial to keep in mind that this second list of demands is only put forth once Mephostophiles has rejected the first on behalf of Lucifer. If Faustus' *Paktziel* had been to obtain the form of a spirit, he would have immediately demanded this of the spirit Mephostophiles, while he was still under the impression that he had bent Lucifer to his will.

Könneker's questioning of Faustus's motivation is threatened by one weak link in her chain of arguments, which regards the relation between the doctor's first demands and his second, moderated list: Not enough attention has been given to the importance of temporal sequence in the matter of formalised agreements. Könneker puts weight behind the fact that the first request that Faustus makes during his afternoon interaction with Mephostophiles is the first, indicating that it has priority. However, it is not the first, it is in fact the fourth desire that Faustus presents to the spirit. The first three demands are not present in Könneker's argumentation at all, except in a relatively short footnote, where she acknowledges that a counterargument to her hypothesis may be found here. However, she soon dismisses the idea on the grounds that Faustus' first set of demands are not his real demands, but rather a basis for negotiation, a "Verhandlungsbasis" (p. 181) for the actual negotiations taking place in Chapter Four. In other words, Könneker stages Faustus as an occult used car salesman, initially offering a very high price for his soul so that his subsequent offers will appear more reasonable. This view clashes sharply with the sequence of events as they are described in the book: It is Mephostophiles who first introduces the idea

that Faustus must pay for each of the promises the spirit makes with a counterpromise, and so they are not “negotiating” before the third day.

As an immediate response to Faustus’s new list of more carefully formulated wishes, Mephostophiles refines his initial proposal for a reciprocal agreement down to the notion that they shall exchange an equal number of promises: “Auff diese sechs Punkten antwort der Geist dem Fausto / daß er ihm in allem wolt willfahren vnd gehorsamen / so fern daß er im dagegen auch etlich fürgehaltene Artickel wölle leisten” (HDF, p. 20). Faustus’s list of six requests on the one hand concerns an expansion of the doctor’s abilities, and on the other hand concerns power structures: The doctor wants to ensure that Mephostophiles will follow his whims and desires. However, much more profound is the power structure immediately established in the list of six counter-demands that the evil spirit sets forth: Faustus may be allowed to command Mephostophiles, and to have him appear at any time and in any guise he desires, but in return he must pledge himself completely to the spirit, meaning that the latter will own him:

Erstlich / daß er / Faustus / verspreche vnd scwhere / daß er sein / des Geistes  
/ eygen seyn wolte  
Zum andern / daß er solches zu mehrer Bekräftigung / mit seinem eygen Blut  
wölle bezeugen / vnd sich darmit also gegen im verschreiben.  
Zum dritten / daß er allen Christgläubigen Menschen wölle Feind seyn.  
Zum vierdten / daß er den Christlichen Glauben Wölle verläugnen.  
Zum fünfften / daß er sich nicht wölle verführen lassen / so ihne etliche  
wölle bekehren.  
Hingegen wölle der Geist ihme / Fausto / etliche Jahr zum Ziel setzen / wann  
solche verloffen / soll er von ihme geholt werden.<sup>106</sup>  
(HDF, pp. 20-21)

The written document mentioned in the second demand is specifically meant to attest to the first requirement that Mephostophiles sets forth, which is that Faustus shall belong to him. Faustus’s *Verschreiben* is one-sided: As part of the pact he is about to enter into with Mephostophiles, he must promise to pledge himself in writing to

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<sup>106</sup> The pact’s temporal duration is here included in Mephostophiles’s list of counter-demands, despite its formatting indicating that it is an addendum, and its wording rather inelegantly referring back to Faustus’s six demands (“Hingegen”), as if the list preceding it were not there.

Mephostophiles. This pledge is that he shall belong to the spirit. The other articles are subjected to this first: Faustus promises to be the enemy of Christians, deny the Christian faith and not allow himself to be dissuaded from his continued apostasy. Mephostophiles shall finally “take” Faustus after twenty-four years have passed, and it is implied that he will bring his immortal soul to Hell.<sup>107</sup>

These twelve statements make up the entirety of the pact between Faustus and Mephostophiles. As soon as Mephostophiles has made his proposal, the narrator dwells on Faustus’s acceptance, which is described three times, and marked with a handshake.<sup>108</sup>

D. Faustus war in seinem Stoltz vnnd Hochmut so verwegen / ob er sich gleich ein weil besunne / daß er doch seiner Seelen Seligkeit nicht bedencken wolte / sondern dem bösen Geist solches darschluge / vnnd all Artickel zuhalten verhiesse. (...) Nach dem D. Faustus dise Promission gethan (...) (HDF, p. 21)

The handshake takes place at this time, between three and four in the afternoon, and this symbolic action marks the finalisation of the reciprocal agreement between Faustus and Mephostophiles. Although the book says nothing of Mephostophiles’s formal acceptance of Faustus’s six articles, a handshake is inherently bilateral, despite Faustus being the subject in the sentence that describes it. This handshake marks the moment at which a deal is struck, and a pact is put in effect.

The development of Faustus’s interaction with the Devil has so far been the following: He summons the spirit and attempts to command him. When this fails, the spirit returns at a later point, carrying a proposal for a reciprocal agreement which is an exchange of an equal number of duties or promises on both sides. The doctor orally agrees to the exchange of promises, and his agreement is referred to with the

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<sup>107</sup> The book operates with an understanding of Hell as a physical location where the immortal component of human existence is subjected to physical torture such as intense heat or cold.

<sup>108</sup> The verb “darschlagen” from the following quote can be understood in this sense because it is a response to Mephostophiles’s proposal, so it would make little sense to read it in the sense of “propose”.

noun “Promission” (HDF, p. 21). It seems clear at this point that the pact consists of the exchange of promises in these two lists, and does not encompass the three demands that the doctor first made. Faustus is granted six powers, and in return he must abide by six articles laid down by Mephostophiles. Amongst the latter articles, the second is for a document written in Faustus’s own blood that attests to one particular point in their agreement: That Faustus shall pledge himself to the spirit. The following chapter will make a point of the marked temporal difference between these two symbolically reinforced sets of promises, isolate the pact from Faustus’s written pledge, and demonstrate beyond doubt that the two latter are not the same.

## 2.2.4 The Contents of the Written Pledge

The written document produced by Faustus is a ritualised attestation to an agreement that was reached before the document was penned. The contents of the document are written before the signature, which attests to the signer’s intention to uphold the articles written above it. This is put in place in order to create an avenue of *Receß*,<sup>109</sup> of returning to that place and moment at which an agreement was reached or a promise was made, so that each party involved can remember that the agreement did take place. Memory is forced when the mark that is left is writing: Mephostophiles only has to show Faustus the document, without comment, for Faustus to remember his promise and to realise its inevitable consequences. This document also puts some constraints on the direction of the narrative: The ritualised promise inscribes the narrative into the logic of a particular form of inherited law, which is the hellish law that governs pacts with the Devil. The author certainly loses none of his freedom to have his protagonist die in agony, live forever, be redeemed, or end up in any other conceivable position, but the narrative will inevitably be subjected by its readership

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<sup>109</sup> “Receß”, used by Faustus to describe his written document (HDF, p. 23), is derived from the Latin noun *recessus* (return), and has a range of meanings all related to the act of returning to some disputable matter: It may describe a dispute or confrontation, a comparison, or a written account of the results of a negotiation. Ritualised writing, and in particular the signature, points back to some spatially localised event that took place around the time the writing was done.

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to judgment based on this implicit law. Two related ideas will guide the following discussion: All references to Faustus's written document attests to an agreement that is contained within it, and this formalised, and through symbolic action reinforced, piece of material evidence creates a narrative obligation.

The narrator may be said to put himself in a somewhat difficult position by including the written document in the narrative in this manner, because he creates an obligation that mirrors the contents of the pact: It is he, the narrator, who must fulfill the promises that are given in the written document before the eyes of a witness, the reader. Faustus, on his part, introduces some rituals that strengthen his intention, embedded in the document, but the narrator also formalises the pact and consistently reinforces this formalisation through the way in which the written document is referred to and used in the narrative. The manner in which the document is consistently referred to imitates an aspect of juridical terminology, namely the structure of redundant pairs of terms, pleonasm, which is explored below. In this way, the narrator emphasises the invariability of the document's contents every time he refers to the physical document. The system of pact rituals established in the *Historia* instates a law that governs its Faustian pact, and that dictates the book's adherence to this same law.

Every law governing written agreements has its rituals and formulaic expressions that strengthen the legality of the document, and the Faustian pledge is no exception. Most widely associated with pacts with the Devil is the signature in blood, but there are other formalities as well, that carry over to the Faust tradition after the *Historia*, and some of which have been tied to pacts with the Devil before it.<sup>110</sup> While

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<sup>110</sup> Zelger (1996) performs a thorough study of pacts with the Devil in German fairy tales up to, but not including, the first Faustbook. When it comes to the pact motif in Faust literature, the two most prominent symbolic actions explicitly tied to the written document are that they are written in blood, and in Faustus's own hand. *Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* includes two transcripts of Faustus's pact. The first opens with the phrase "Ich Johannes Faustus D. bekenne mit meiner eygen Handt offentlich (...)" (HDF, p. 22), and the second with "Ich D. Faustus bekenne mit meiner eygen Handt vnd Blut" (HDF, p. 104). These phrases carried over into the English translation of 1589, by the elusive P. F. *Gent.*: "I Johannes Faustus, Doctor, do openly acknowledge with mine own hand (...)" (Jones 1994, p. 98). The second written document in the latter work varies slightly from the

these rituals are unique to pacts of this kind, they do build on structures that are present in mundane legal documents. For example, the signature in blood imitates the basic structure of signatures attesting to written agreements, but is unique because it is the only formalised one-sided agreement that involves blood (Zelger 1996, p. 86).

The written document is secondary to the pact. This is confirmed as at least one of the pact's articles has been put in effect before the document is written: During the time period that separates the oral pact from the written pledge, the former is seen to be already in effect. In the fifth chapter, placed between the initial exchange of promises and the presentation of the written pact in its entirety, the doctor commands the spirit to appear in a particular guise, a power that he is granted through the spirit's acceptance of Faustus's sixth wish. It is the day after the pact has been agreed on, early in the morning, and Mephostophiles is commanded thenceforth to appear in the form of a Franciscan monk carrying a little bell that he must use to warn Faustus whenever he approaches:

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*Historia*, as the mention of blood is moved from Faustus's own «handwriting» to the chapter heading: "How Doctor Faustus wrote the second time with his own blood and gave it to the devil. Chap. 49. | I doctor John Faustus, acknowledge by this my deed and handwriting (...)"; the final line in Faustus's written document then reinvoles hand and blood, reflecting a similar line in the *Historia*, and P. F. also adds a date which is missing from the latter: "Of all this writing and that therein contained, be witness, my own blood, the which with mine own hand I have begun, and ended. | Dated at Wittenberg, the 25th of July" (Jones 1994, p. 167). The same phrasing was almost immediately adopted by Christopher Marlowe, whose Mephistopheles demands: "But now thou must bequeath it solemnly | And write a deed of gift with thine own blood" (Marlowe 1995, B-text, II. 1., l. 34-35). Variations on Marlowe's play were brought back to Germany, first in the form of popular stage adaptations, and later as puppet theatre, the form in which the Faust material probably first presented itself to Goethe. The Ulmer Puppentheater version refers to the entire document as Faust's handwriting, 'Handschrift', and here the signature is emphasised: The evil spirit is first given an unsigned document, but demands Faust's "Name (...) darunter" (Mahal 1991, p. 77). At this point an angel interjects, warning the godless conjuror against giving away his "handwriting": "Faust, gib die Handschrift nicht von dir, oder du bist in Ewigkeit verloren" (Mahal 1991, p. 77). Goethe's Mephistopheles is far more terse and sober: Offhandedly, he requires only "ein paar Zeilen", (GF, l. 1715) signed with "einem Tröpfchen Blut" (GF, l. 1737), but the gravity of writing one's name in one's own hand is not lessened in Goethe's work. In fact, Goethe imbues handwriting with a great deal of significance.

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Nach dem D. Faustus dise Promission gethan / forderte er deß andern Tags zu  
Morgen früe den Geist / dem aufferlegte er / daß / so offt er in forderte / er im  
in gestallt vnd Kleydung eines Fransiscaner-Münchs / mit einem Glöcklin  
erscheinen solte / vnd zuvor etliche Zeichen geben / damit er am Geläut  
könnte wissen / wenn er daher komme. (HDF, p. 21)

This opening line invokes the fourth and sixth article from the pact: That Faustus may command the spirit to appear whenever he wishes, and in whichever form he desires. The document, which has not been written yet, appears at this point to be rather unimportant; the pact is already in effect, and its finalization has been marked by Faustus's oral promise and a handshake. However, as discussed, the written document in pacts with the Devil is not meant to hold the Devil to his word, but is rather intended to counteract the poor memory and variable intentions of the human party. The written document does not put anything into effect: It is not performative. Even Faustus's fall from grace takes place before he signs the document that attests to his apostasy. The narrator states that Faustus irredeemably falls from grace the moment he hears the spirit's name, which also happens in the intervening time between oral promise and written pledge, that is, the morning after the pact was agreed upon:

Fragte den Geist darauff / wie sein Name / vnnd wie er genennet werde?  
Antwortet der Geist / er hieß Mephostophiles. Eben in dieser Stundt fellt  
dieser Gottloß Mann von seinem Gott vnd Schöpffer ab / der ihne erschaffen  
hatt / ja er wirdt ein Glied deß leydigen Teuffels. (HDF, p. 21)

Between Faustus's oral promise and his written pledge, both promises and counter-promises from the pact are already active: Mephostophiles and Faustus are both seen to be affected by their respective promises. This is admittedly the second time before the pact is ritually attested to in writing that Faustus is deemed lost beyond hope of salvation, and the first took place before the twelve articles were agreed on: Mephostophiles delivered it in verse form when Faustus refused to be condemned for the sake of a lesser demon, and now the narrator mirrors this condemnation.<sup>111</sup> The narrator's judgment carries more weight than that of the spirit of lies and murder,

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<sup>111</sup> Mephostophiles, however, is already established as a spirit of lies, and it is in the spirit's interest to convince the doctor that he is already condemned, and that repentance is futile.



indicating that the point at which Faustus is condemned beyond hope of salvation is during this intervening time between oral promise and written confirmation, at the moment when the doctor learns the spirit's name.

After issuing commands to the spirit, learning the spirit's name, and irrevocably falling from grace the morning after he made his oral promise, Faustus immediately writes his document, which the narrator claims is written by Faustus's own hand and copied word for word into the book. The doctor opens the first written document by emphasising his motivation for writing and signing it. The didactic effect of this would be to inform the reader of the source of or the reasoning behind his blasphemy and his subsequent fall from grace. And he does so publicly (öffentlich), for all to see, so he can serve as a warning, as the title page indicated that he would.<sup>112</sup> Faustus's written document is introduced with a short description of the practicalities of writing it, before it is presented in its entirety:

6. D. Faustus läst ihm das Blut heraus in einen Tiegel / setzt es auff warme Kolen / vnd schreibt, wie hernach folgen wirdt.

Ich Johannes Faustus D. bekenne mit meiner eygen Handt öffentlich / zu einer Bestettigung / vnnd in Krafft diß Brieffs / Nach dem ich mir fürgenommen die Elementa zu speculieren / vnd aber auß den Gaaben / so mir von oben herab bescheret / vnd gnedig mitgetheilt worden / solche Gechickligkeit in meinem Kopff nicht befinde / vnnd solches von den Menschen nicht erlernen mag / So hab ich gegenwertigen gesandtem Geist / der sich Mephostophiles nennet / ein Diener deß Hellischen Printzen in Orient / mich vntergeben / auch denselbigen / mich solches zuberichten vnd zu lehren / mir erwehlet / der sich auch gegen mir versprochen / in allem vnderthenig vnnd gehorsam zuseyn. Dagegen ich mich hinwider gegen ihme verspriche vnd verlobe / daß so 24. Jahr / von Dato diß Brieffs an / herum vnd fürvber gelauffen / er mit mir nach seiner Art vnd weiß / seines Gefallens / zuschalten / walten / regieren / führen / gut macht haben solle / mit allem / es sey Leib / Seel / Fleisch / Blut vnd gut / vnd das in sein Ewigkeit. Hierauff absage ich allen denen / so da leben / allem Himmlischen Heer / vnd allen Menschen / vnd das muß seyn. Zu festem Vrkundt vnnd mehrer Bekräftigung / hab ich diesen Receß eigner Hand geschrieben / vnderschieden / vnd mit meinem hiefür getrucktem eygen Blut / meines Sinns / Kopffs / Gedancken vnnd Willen / vernküpfft / versiegelt vnd bezeuget / etc.

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<sup>112</sup> There "zum schrecklichen Beispiel / abscheuwlichen Exempel vnd treuherziger Warnung".

Subscriptio /

Johann Faustus / der Erfahrne der Elementen / vnd der  
Geistlichen Doctor.  
(HDF, pp. 22-23)

This first written document contains the following elements: Faustus's reasoning behind turning to the dark arts and to the Devil, his promises to Mephostophiles, and one reference to a promise that Faustus believes Mephostophiles has previously made. These three elements reflect the sequence of negotiations that led to the pact in the previous chapters: The written pledge is purely descriptive of a process that has preceded its creation in time. Faustus initially states that he has turned to the dark arts because of his scientific curiosity; this is his motivation. He wishes to "speculate the elements", which means to scrutinise the smallest components with which the natural sciences occupy themselves. This first part of the written pledge clearly only discloses Faustus's desire, reflecting his initial three demands, and not his understanding of what the pact that he entered into the day before writing his document entails. He also states that he has chosen Mephostophiles to be his teacher; this statement is another attestation to his pride and his desire to show off his power, and it is also false. He had no say in the matter of which evil spirit the Devil sent to him. On the contrary: When discovering that the entity he was dealing with was not the Devil himself, he stated that his soul would not be lost for the sake of a lesser demon. Faustus chose Lucifer to be his teacher in scientific matters, but ended up with Mephostophiles promising to aid him in non-scientific endeavours and to appear subservient to him. The fact that the written document attests to his belief that he is dictating the agreement, that he is commanding Mephostophiles, indicates that he is a victim of the spirit's *Gaukelei*.

The written pledge was demanded by Mephostophiles, and it is also dominated by three promises that Faustus makes: He shall be "vnterthänig" towards the spirit, he will belong to Mephostophiles after 24 years have passed, and he refuses all men and the heavenly host. From Mephostophiles's list of counter-demands given the day before Faustus signs the pact, the first and the sixth are the promises that the written pact chiefly revolves around: Faustus shall be the Devil's subordinate, he shall be

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fetches by Mephostophiles after a certain time has elapsed, and he shall shun men and heavenly beings. Finally, the last promise that Faustus makes in the written document reflects the third and fourth condition from Mephostophiles's list. This part of the document is quite elaborate compared to the terseness with which the spirit formulates his six demands; it is as if the doctor, in writing out the pact, wishes to further emphasise the consequences of his blasphemy rather than the benefits he expects to gain. Mephostophiles shall not only fetch the doctor (and, implicitly, bring him to Hell), but after the allotted time he shall do precisely as he pleases with the blasphemer and his property.

Mephostophiles, on the other hand, is credited only with one single promise in the document, which is different from Faustus's promises in that it is not made in and with the document, but rather that it refers to a promise that was made on the previous day. While Faustus's promises are formulated in the present tense, Mephostophiles's is conveyed in the past tense, and it is not Mephostophiles's own voice that presents it. One of Faustus's statements may at first glance appear as if it is made dependent on this promise, the same way that Faustus's agreement with the swineherd depended on the latter not letting the swine cross running water: That after twenty-four years, he will belong to the evil spirit in body and soul. In other words, the doctor promises to be Mephostophiles's property in body and soul after twenty-four years, but only if Mephostophiles has been subservient and obedient during this period. However, the temporal distance between these two promises weakens their status as part of the same reciprocal agreement: Faustus states that Mephostophiles has already promised to be obedient, and then goes on to say that in return for this promise, Faustus now, at the time of writing the document, pledges his body and soul to the Devil after twenty-four years have passed. The second pact, found in Chapter 53, emphasises this point, as Faustus there states that he gives away his body and soul "with this", with the written pledge, despite having already given his body and soul to Lucifer previously: "hiemit setz ich hindan Leib vnd Seel / vnd vbergib diß dem mächtigen Gott Lucifero" (HDF, p. 104).

Mephostophiles's promise is only present in the document through a reference pointing outside of it, and, additionally, the reference is made by Faustus, not by Mephostophiles. The signature at the bottom of the page points to Faustus's intention at the time of writing the document. This means that the written document, which was Mephostophiles's requirement, is a one-sided pledge, and not a bilateral pact: Only one character is made present when the document is referred to, and that character's presence is represented by the unique shape of his signature and his temporally-charged coagulated blood. The *Historia*'s carefully executed temporal sequencing of events has a great impact on the shape of the final agreement between Faustus and Mephostophiles. The written document reflects the difference between Faustus's wish and what he can expect to gain from his pact: He wishes to "speculate the elements", but has not been promised to be enabled to do so. He understands Mephostophiles to have made one single promise to him, which is to act subserviently and be obedient, and he himself makes two promises in writing: To belong to the spirit after twenty-four years, and to refuse all humans and the heavenly host. The subtle difference between a promise previously made and a promise ritually made here and now, in writing, means that only Faustus makes promises that leave a material trace. The nature of the symbolic actions tied to the pact, explored in detail below, further reinforce this.

One consequence of this line of reasoning is that one particular point of criticism that has been directed at the *Historia*'s literary quality, which regards it as inconsistent, is revealed as entirely mistaken. Marguerite de Huszar Allen is undeniably wrong when she reasons that the pact's wording is inconsistent, or that "there are two slightly different versions of the first pact" because

[t]he articles proposed by Faustus in chapter 3 emphasise Faustus's drive for absolute truth and harmonize with the pact signed in blood in chapter 6, while the demands proposed in chapter 4 emphasise Faustus's desire to possess magical powers. (Allen 2013, p. 170)<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Allen being wrong at this particular point actually strengthens her argument in defense of the relative literary quality of the *Historia*. The work's quality is relative, argues Allen, because it relates

The three initial demands do not harmonise with Faustus's written document, which is also not a pact, while the pact, containing twelve articles, is very clearly located in Chapter Four. Conceivably, Faustus's promise of body and soul to Lucifer would be valid even if Mephostophiles lied when he promised to be obedient, since it is the fact that the spirit (of lies and murder) made the promise that is the reason for Faustus's delivery of body and soul to the hands of the Devil. This point can be made visible by turning to a revealing difference between the wording of Faustus's written pledge in the *Historia* and that same document in the English translation by P. F. *Gent*. The English Faustbook contains some minor, yet crucial differences in the wording of the document. These differences transform the document into a pact or contract, wherein Faustus gives his body and soul to Lucifer on the condition that Mephostophiles shall be subservient to him. In Spies's book, the two promises are not made codependent. P. F. *Gent.*, however, turns the document into an exchange that may be called a conditional set of promises or a reciprocal pact:

(...) now have I Doctor John Faustus, unto the hellish prince of the Orient and his messenger Mephostophiles, given both body and soul, upon such condition that they shall learn me and fulfil my desire in all things, as they have promised and vowed unto me, with due obedience unto me, according unto the articles mentioned between us. (Jones 1994, p. 98)

A comparison between the English pact and the German pact shows that the English translator has taken care to transform the document from a one-sided pledge into a pact, and that he also has retained Mephostophiles's role as teacher as a condition for Faustus's pledging of body and soul. The English document mentions the price (body and soul) and the rewards, and includes a reference to the articles of the pact that was previously agreed on. It binds Mephostophiles to his word, and makes his ownership of the doctor's body and soul conditional on the fulfillment of these demands, while the German pact only directly influences Faustus.<sup>114</sup> The gentleman P. F. elects to

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to the work's genre, which Allen understands in a context of recent theory of popular literature: It is imperfect, but fulfills its purpose, and leads to the creation of "a new archetypal plot and hero" (Allen 2013, p. 171).

<sup>114</sup> This difference is anything but trivial; it is the difference between a German Faustus, a witch and a heretic who pledges himself to the Devil, and an English Faustus, a vaguely promethean figure who

further reinforce the juridical legality of the pact by having the doctor invoke “the infernal, middle and supreme powers” as witnesses to his “letter” (Jones 1994, p. 99), which is an addendum the translator has made. A point should be made of this difference not only because it sheds light on the difference between a written pact and a written one-sided pledge, but also because the English Faustbook is the origin of the Faust tradition’s thickest vein, even in German-language literature: Goethe first met the material in puppet theatre form, which had its wellspring in Marlowe’s drama, which in turn was based on P. F.’s version.

Sorvakko-Spratte (2007) uses a statement from Faustus’s first written document to demonstrate what she believes to be the core of the agreement between Faustus and Mephostophiles, namely the exchange of Faustus’s soul for insights that extend beyond those Faustus can learn with the use of his God-given intellect alone, while Münkler calls the document “the pact itself”. However, these are both incorrect assertions. The document contains only Faustus’s promises, with one outside reference to Mephostophiles’s pledge to be obedient, and only Faustus signs it. After a formal introduction that imbues the document with an air of juridical validity, Faustus immediately states why he has subordinated himself to Mephostophiles: he did it because he wanted to “speculate the elements”. This does not mean that the pact that exists between Faustus and Mephostophiles revolves around the expansion of Faustus’s ability to speculate the elements, as Sorvakko-Spratte holds: It only means that the pact is motivated by his impious curiosity. The written pledge tells us something we already know, which is that Faustus wished to “speculate the elements”, and therefore attempted to summon the Devil. However, it does not tell us that the spirit will enable him to do so.

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can negotiate a price for his body and soul, and who demands forbidden insights. The brief disagreement between Frank Baron and Karl Heinz Huckle referred to in 1.3 does not take this difference into account, and the contrast between the two different Faustuses indicates that Baron’s idea of a Faustus that stands in a direct line of influence from and towards witch processes is indeed plausible, since his written “pact” is a one-sided pledge, while the English Faustus, even by the end of the sixteenth century, starts to look like the promethean titan that he will eventually turn into.

There is not only one, but two written documents in the *Historia*, the second appearing in the third part of the book, and reinforcing the notion that Faustus is simply required to pledge himself unilaterally to Mephostophiles.<sup>115</sup> Here, the doctor has visited a God-fearing neighbour and received a speech on virtue, instilling in him a desire to repent and to rescind his promise to Mephostophiles: “Er wolte Buß thun / vnnnd sein versprechen dem Teuffel wider auffhsagen” (HDF, p. 103). The spirit then appears before the doctor in order to remind him of his promises, and threatens to twist his neck unless he writes and signs a second document. This time, the negotiation takes on a slightly different form: Mephostophiles offers nothing in return for Faustus’s renewed written pledge, but threatens to break his neck and tear his body into pieces if he refuses. The designations used for the second written document are the same as for the first, and the difference between oral promise and physical proof of this promise is retained: Faustus must again write a document in his own blood, and thereby promise not to allow himself to be tempted to repent:

er solle sich alsbald nider setzen / vnd sich widerumb von newem  
verschreiben mit seinem Blut / vnd versprechen / daß er sich keinen  
Menschen mehr wöll abmanen vnd verführen lassen. (HDF, p. 103)

The act of “verschreiben” here describes a secondary attestation of the already-performed act of making an oral promise. The oral promise has been made, and now it must be reinforced a second time through the medium of ritualised writing. The second written document, embedded in the narrative like the first, refers back to Faustus’s “erst Instrument vnnnd Verschreibung”, and takes on the form of a

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<sup>115</sup> “53. Doct. Fausti zweyte Verschreibung / so er seinem Geist vbergeben hat. Ich D. Faustus bekenne mit meiner eygen Handt vnd Blut / daß ich diß mein erst Instrument vnnnd Verschreibung biß in die 17. jar / steiff vnd fest gehalten habe / Gott vnd allen Menschen feindt gewest / hiemit setz ich hindan Leib vnd Seel / vnd vbergib diß dem mächtigen Gott Lucifero / daß so auch das 7. jar nach Dato diß verlossen ist / er mit mir zu schalten vnd zu walten habe. Neben dem so verspricht er mir mein Leben zukürtzen oder zulängern / es sey im Tod oder in der Hell / auch mich keiner Pein theilhaftig zumachen. Hierauff versprich ich mich wider / daß ich keinen Menschen mehr / es seye mit vermahren / lehren / abrichten / vnterweisen vnd dräuungen / es sey im Wort Gottes / weltlichen oder Geistlichen Sachen / vnd sonderlich keinem Geistlichen Lehrer gehorchen / noch seiner Lehr nachkommen wil / Alles getrewlich vnd kräftig zu halten / laut dieser meiner Verschreibung / welche ich zu mehrer bekräftigung mit meinem eygen Blut geschrieben hab / Datum Wittenberg / etc.” (HDF, p. 104).

confirmation of the promises that Faustus made in this. The document is further referred to with the noun “schreiben” (HDF, p. 103) and again “Verschreibung” (HDF, p. 104). This second document is twice removed from the pact: While the first written document was a confirmation of the oral agreement, the second is a confirmation of the promises made within the first document, and it is entirely one-sided. The second written document reinforces this idea that Faustus’s *Verschreibung* is purely for the benefit of Mephostophiles, and that it is secondary to the pact.

Jan-Dirk Müller (1984) builds a significant portion of his argument regarding Spies’s book on the assumption that the third article from Faustus’s first list of demands, which states that the spirit shall always answer Faustus’s questions truthfully, is part of the pact. He then goes on to explain why Mephostophiles lies despite this by asking the following rhetorical question: “(...) wenn schon der Gott des Nominalismus die Naturgesetze transzendiert, warum sollte sich dann ausgerechnet der Teufel an die Paragraphen auf einem Stück Papier halten?” (Müller 1984, p. 260). The Devil’s actions really are limited by paragraphs on a piece of paper, not only in the *Historia*, but also in the wider tradition of literature concerning the Devil. Mephostophiles can lie to Faustus without breaching their pact because he never promises not to lie. Hans-Gert Roloff (1989) makes an equally strong point of the absence of this same third article of the first list from the pact, regarding Mephostophiles’s unwillingness to promise to tell the truth as part of the author’s sophisticated demonstration of the emptiness of hellish insights and delights. Müller is correct when he regards something from outside of the handwritten document as part of the pact, but he is slightly careless in his selection. The pact in the *Historia*, in other words, is not limited to the written document, but it is also not unlimited or unclearly limited.

Both Faustus and Mephostophiles have made their promises before the document is written, and the narrator has demonstrated that at least some of their obligations have already been put in effect: Mephostophiles obeys Faustus’s command to appear in the guise that the doctor wishes, and the latter is already irredeemably condemned. Faustus’ signature in blood apparently has no bearing on



the condemnation of his immortal soul – the act of signing is not performative, but descriptive, and this is also how the document is used in the narrative. It is a material reminder of some of the promises from the day before. The formal execution of the document’s creation, together with the way in which it is referred to, turns it into an invariable promise, an absolutely binding pledge regarding future events: Each time the document is referred to, its elements are reintroduced into the narrative. These elements are Faustus’s scientific curiosity, his pride, Mephostophiles’s promise to serve made on the previous day, Faustus’s pledge of body and soul to the Devil after twenty-four years, and his refusal of all men and the heavenly host. These unchristian inclinations and pledges are recalled every time the written pledge is invoked, and at the same time, the written document holds Faustus to his word.

### 2.2.5 Writing and Ritual

The written document is given great emphasis in the *Historia*’s narrative, while the pact is hardly given any attention at all after it has been entered into. When the narrator introduces the document in the fifth chapter, he does so in a torrent of juridical nouns that prefigure a rhetorical trope strongly present in Faustus’s written document as well as in the narrator’s later references to it, namely the structure of redundant terms, or pleonasm:

Nach diesem richtet D. Faustus / auß grosser seiner Verwegung vnd  
Vermessenheit / dem bösen Geist sein Instrument / Recognition / briefliche  
Vrkund vnd Bekanntnuß auff / Dieses war ein gewlich vnd erschrecklich  
Werck / vnd ist solche Obligation / nach seinem elenden Abschied / in seiner  
Behausung gefunden worden. (HDF, p. 22)

The document is rarely referred to with a single noun, but rather with two or more collated nouns that have more or less the same meaning. This type of tautological pairs of terms was – and still is – widely used in juridical language. This juridical trope is employed diligently in the *Historia*, but while the structure carries over from mundane legal rhetoric, the terminology does not. In other words, the book contains a well-established juridical structure, but with unique content. The narrator instates a

set of juridical formulaic expressions that are unique to the pact with the Devil, and that carries over into the Faust tradition beyond the *Historia*; a legal nomenclature for pacts with the Devil is instated by the author from Speyer.

Jacob Grimm explains in his study into German language juridical terminology that the function of tautologies or redundant sequences of terms in legal documents is to give the sentence more force and firmness through the repetition of words that have more or less the same meaning:

Der Gedanke des ersten worts wird durch den gleichen oder verwandten eines zweiten und dritten, wenn schon diese weder alliterieren noch reimen, wiederholt. Der ganze satz gewinnt damit erhöhten, belebteren sinn und mehr stärke und festigkeit. Mitunter sollen aber auch in dem zweiten und dritten wort bestimmte besonderheiten hervorgehoben werden. (Grimm 1955, p. 19)

Grimm's comprehensive list of tautological phrases within German jurisprudence does not include the phrases from the pact in the *Historia* that conform to the format of juridical pleonasm. Faustus's pledge of body and soul is written in a juridical syntax, but with a unique phraseology. Within the two written documents, the following tautologies are employed:

verspriche vnd verlobe;  
zuschalten / walten / regieren / führen / gut macht haben solle;  
Fleisch / Blut vnd Gut;  
zu festem Vrkundt vnnd mehrer Bekräftigung;  
Sinns / Kopffs / Gedancken vnnd Willen;  
versiegelt vnd bezeuget. (HDF, pp. 22-23)  
Handt vnd Blut;  
Instrument vnnd Verschreibung;  
schalten vnd walten;  
getrewlich vnd kräfttig. (HDF, p. 104)

The terms that are collated in these pleonastic expressions are not all entirely synonymous with one another. For example, flesh and blood both point to Faustus's physical body, but "Gut", goods, also includes his worldly possession, and blood has a further connotation that will be explored below. Almost all of these phrases do, however, point to the act of making a promise and to the wilfulness, the strong intention, of the person who makes the promise.

The phrase “Handt vnd Blut” warrants particular attention, as it is almost identical to a phrase from Grimm’s list, namely the metonymical pledge “mit handt und mundt” (Grimm 1955, p. 20), which is also used in ritualised written agreements, and which emphasises that someone has promised something orally, with his mouth, and in writing, with his hand. The *Historia*’s “Hand vnd Blut” refers to the two primary formal characteristics of Faustus’s written pledge: It is written in his own hand and in his blood, both having a bearing on the indexical relation between signer and material object. Faustus has also made his promise with his mouth, as oral promise, and with his hand, as written pledge, but this pledge in addition uses his own blood as writing material. The signer’s body is physically present in his freshly extracted blood, and Faustus’s flesh and blood are elsewhere in the book seen to incorporate, or stand in place of, his will and intention: After Mephostophiles answers the doctor’s questions regarding Lucifer’s fall from Heaven, Faustus laments that his own conceited flesh and blood led him to damnation: “(...) mein übermühtig Fleisch und Blut hat mich / an Leib und Seel / in Verdammlichkeit gebracht” (HDF, p. 33). This same flesh and blood is incorporated into the creation of his document, indicating proximity between the message which is written on parchment and the person who wrote it, and to whom the message refers. Hand, blood and mouth all indicate an indexical relation between message and origin: These metonymical terms call on the presence of the person who entered into an agreement.

Both of these pleonastic phrases, one from mundane juridical terminology and one from the *Historia*’s quasi-juridical terminology, refer to the act of reinforcing a promise in writing, and both expressions emphasise physical properties of the person making the promise, establishing a close relation between the promise, manifested in writing and as sound, and the person who makes the promise. In Spies’s book, blood explicitly ties the contents of the pact to Faustus’s “mind, head, thought and will”:

Zu festem Vrkundt vnnd mehrer Bekräftigung / hab ich diesen Receß eigner Hand geschrieben / vnderschieden / vnd mit meinem hiefür getrucktem eygen Blut / meines Sinns / Kopffs / Gedancken vnnd Willen / verknüpfft / versiegelt vnd bezeuget / etc. (HDF, p. 22)

Faustus's hand and blood are both awarded significant attention in the chapters surrounding the pact. The narrator points out that the doctor opens a vein in his left hand, in which the following injunction then appears: "O homo fuge", which is immediately interpreted as a warning to flee and do what is right.<sup>116</sup> The left hand is also the hand that Faustus signs with, and in the document he emphasises that he attests to his promise with his own hand ("bekenne mit meiner eygen Handt"). When Mephostophiles demands a second written pledge, it is worded as a "newem verschreiben mit seinem Blut" (HDF, p. 103). The phrase "with hand and blood" can clearly be understood as a Faustian equivalent to Grimm's "with hand and mouth", and its function is to doubly reinforce Faustus's agency in his written promise, his intention to stand by the statements written in the document. It is just as clear that this ritual is particular to pacts with the Devil: As Renate Zelger has pointed out, the pact with the Devil is the only one-sided pledge that uses blood in its finalisation, and the substitution of the left hand for the (presumably) dominant right is an inversion of rituals pertaining to mundane written agreements. Faustus signs with his own hand, but with his "other" hand, in keeping with the idea that devilish pact rituals are similar in form to mundane legal rituals, but with variations. There is in this context no functional difference between hand and blood: They are both meant to reinforce the indexical relation between Faustus and his written words.

Four of the pleonasms that appear in the two written documents refer to the power and rigidity of the doctor's resolve, his intention: He makes his written promise "zu festem Vrkundt vnnd mehrer Bekräftigung", with "Sinns / Kopffs / Gedancken vnnd Willen" and, as discussed, his own "Handt vnd Blut", and he does so "getrewlich vnd kräftig". Jacob Grimm points to the similar pleonastic statements "kraft und macht" and "fest und dauerhaft" (Grimm 1955, p. 20). These phrases, which are worded by Faustus in his written pledge, together with the *homo fuge* motif, all underline the doctor's guilt, his personal agency in his apostasy. The doctor

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<sup>116</sup> "(...) name D. Faustus ein spitzig Messer / sticht ihme ein Ader in der lincken Hand auff / vnnd sagt man wahrhaftig / daß in solcher Hand ein gegrabne vnnd blutige Schrift gesehen worden / O homo fuge / id est / O Mensch fleuhe vor ihme vnd thue recht / etc." (HDF, p. 22).

produces material evidence that demonstrates his wilful submission to the Devil, and his renunciation of a religious life. Consequently, he must be condemned by the end of the book. He has no avenue of escape, because the Devil possesses a piece of material evidence of his wilful apostasy.

So far, all the redundant phrases touched on here regard his intention and thus the inescapability of Faustus's fate. But there is another type of pleonasm present throughout the book that strengthens not the idea that Faustus is an apostate deserving of eternal damnation, but rather that the written pledge itself is a document as important to the narrative as it is inviolable. The second written document contains a reference to the first, and it is done in a manner which is consistent throughout the *Historia*: With the pleonasm "Instrument vnnnd Verschreibung". Grimm has also found that mundane legal documents can be emphasised in this manner, through for example the phrase "begriff / verzeichnis u. zettel" (Grimm 1955, p. 22), and the function of such a repetition is to emphasise the binding legality of the written promise. This is done repeatedly throughout the *Historia*, which hardly contains any references to the written documents that are not structured like this. The five different designations that introduce the first written pledge in Chapter Five are admittedly not exclusively redundant phrases used for dramatic effect or in imitation of that juridical structure of repetition that Grimm has pointed to: A few of them add to the reader's understanding of what the written document is and is not. What it is not is a pact or a contract, a reciprocal agreement. Two of these nouns are of particular interest: An "Obligation" is a promissory note or a deed of gift, wherein one person promises payment to another,<sup>117</sup> and although "Instrument" may in this case simply mean "document", or, as Füssel and Kreuzer explain it, "notariell beglaubigter Vertrag", Adelung lists another meaning of the word when it is used in a context of written agreements that better fits the described object: It is a statement that attests to an

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<sup>117</sup> Adelung: "das schriftliche Bekenntniß einer Schuld, welche man einem andern zu bezahlen hat" (vol. III, 569-570, "die Obligation"; Füssel & Kreuzer: "Schuldverschreibung", HDF, p. 188). Christopher Marlowe's written document is also not a pact or a contract, but a deed of gift: "But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly / And write a deed of gift with thine own blood, / For that security craves great Lucifer" (Marlowe 1995 / A-text, sc. 2.1., lines 34-36).

action or serves to prove that an action has taken place.<sup>118</sup> The first of these two nouns, “Obligation”, indicates that the written document is not in and of itself a pact, because it lacks reciprocity. The second, “Instrument”, implies that the written pledge, with its signature, is not performative; it does not effect anything, but is a reminder of an oral speech act that has effected something.

Although it is his oral promise that ensures his damnation, Faustus’s written word is given an increasing amount of weight as the end-point of his twenty-four years of devilish excess draws near. It seems important to the evil spirit that Faustus renews his written promise in the seventeenth year of their pact, as the doctor’s resolve begins to falter. Furthermore, when the twenty-four years have passed, Mephostophiles appears before him again, and gives Faustus the document, stating that the Devil will come and claim his body in two nights:

Die 24. Jar deß Doctor Fausti waren erschienen / vnd eben in solcher Wochen  
erschiene ihm der Geist / vberantwort ihme seinen Brieff oder Verschreibung  
/ zeigt im darneben an / daß der Teuffel auff die ander Nacht seinen Leib  
holen werde / dessen solte er sich versehen. (HDF, p. 118)

The document – again referred to by two nouns where one would seemingly suffice – is used without comment as tangible proof that Faustus’s body now belongs to the Devil. This is in line with the current identification of the two documents as promissory notes. Faustus is filled with fear and regret, but, met with the irrefutable written evidence of his pledging of body and soul to the Devil, he harbours no doubts that he must give up his body, knowing full well that he must pay for his “Verschreibung” or “Versprechung” with his skin: “Doctor Faustus / der nicht anders wuste / dann die Versprechung oder Verschreibung müste er mit der Haut bezahlen (...)” (HDF, p. 119). The document is rarely referred to with a single noun, and this invocation of juridical rhetoric whenever it is brought onto the scene repeatedly reinforces its juridical validity and rigidity. In particular, the pleonastic references to the document when it is reintroduced towards the end of the protagonist’s life instils

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<sup>118</sup> Adelung: “Eine Urkunde, so fern sie zum Beweise einer Handlung dienet; ein Document” (vol. II, 1389-1390, “das Instrument”).

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in the reader a sense of invariability and of undeniable validity: Now, it is not the doctor's initial oral promise that serves as proof of his impending damnation, because that promise left no material mark on the story's diegetic plane: It is the letter and written promise, the obligation, *recessus* and note.

When Jacob Grimm discusses symbolic actions in relation to agreements, he states that in most cases, some relation between sign and matter can be identified, while in others, the relationship is obscured.<sup>119</sup> The symbols tied to the pact emphasise that the matter, the subject of the agreement, is Faustus's body and soul. Every time the document is reintroduced into the narrative, the person, Faustus, and the subject of the agreement, Faustus's body and soul, are explicitly referenced with the phrases previously discussed. The use of blood also gives the document a temporal dimension, since coagulated blood points to that moment just before it coagulates, when it is still part of the body of the person who is about to make a ritualised promise. The *Historia* introduces the motif of Faustus's heating of his own blood in a kettle to keep it from coagulating, a motif to which Christopher Marlowe awards significant attention in his *Doctor Faustus*. There, the writing difficulties induced by the coagulation of Faustus's blood gives the doctor time to reconsider what he is about to do, and strengthens his agency in signing, simply because the process of signing takes longer and is more convoluted. This process, relatively elaborate in Spies's *Faustbook* as well, marks the last point in time at which the blood that Faustus used to write and sign his pact still took part in a living organism. Coagulated blood points to the moment of its death, which is also the moment of Faustus's pledge to Mephostophiles. This is, however, not the moment at which Faustus and Mephostophiles enter into a pact with one another: The narrator points out that these two pledges were made on two different days, and the pact explicitly refers back to that agreement that took place the day before. So the words on paper do not point to a change that was effected at the same time that they materialised, but to

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<sup>119</sup> "In den meisten symbolen läßt sich der bezug des zeichens auf die sache nachweisen, in manchen ist er ganz verdunkelt" (Grimm 1955, p. 153).

a change that was effected before that, and marked by another symbolic action which is by no means unique to pacts with the Devil, namely a handshake.

The pact may also be followed by yet another symbolic action, copulation with the Devil, but the presence of this motif in the *Historia* cannot be conclusively determined, due to the brevity of the book's description of it, and due to uncertainty regarding the proper meaning of the verb "lieben" in the following section of the narrator's description of a grotesque spectacle taking place in Faustus's home immediately after he has written his pledge:

Hierauff ward wider gesehen ein grosser alter Aff<sup>120</sup> / der bot D. Fausto die Handt / sprang auff in / liebet in / vnd lieff die Stuben wider hinauß. (HDF, p. 25)

Is Faustus physically made love to by the Devil in the shape of a big, old monkey? Williams & Schwarz believe so, or at least they find in this line a suggestion of copulation with the Devil.<sup>121</sup> The verb "lieben", however, is understood by Füssel & Kreutzer in their commentary to mean "flatter". (HDF, p. 189) There may not be a historical reason to prefer either meaning; on the one hand, the word was used in Luther's Bible translation in the sense that Williams & Schwarz understand it – King Salomo "liebte viel ausländische Weiber," and had "siebenhundert Weiber zu Frauen" (1 Kings 11, 1-3) – but on the other hand, the *Historia's* narrator does not shy away from describing sexual intercourse in more direct terms elsewhere in the book.<sup>122</sup> Doctor Faustus does copulate with the Devil in the shape of beautiful women

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<sup>120</sup> The Devil is «God's monkey», also in the *Historia*: «du soltest dem Teuffel nit so wol vertrauet haben / dieweil er GOTTes Aff / auch ein Lügner vnd Mörder ist» (HDF, p. 116).

<sup>121</sup> «Das Drama von Fausts Paktschließung wird dadurch erhöht, dass er sein Bündnis nicht nur mit seinem Blut, sondern auch mit der Andeutung der Teufelsbulschaft besiegelt» (Williams & Schwarz 2003, p. 126).

<sup>122</sup> «Als Doctor Faustus sahe / daß die Jahr seiner Versprechung von Tag zu Tag zum Ende lieffen / hub er an ein Säuwisch vnd Epicurisch leben zu führen / vnd berüfft im siben Teuffelische Succubas / die er alle beschlieffe / vnd eine anders denn die ander gestalt war / auch so trefflich schön / daß nicht davon zusagen» (HDF, p. 109); «Als nun D. Faustus solches sahe / hat sie [Helena] ihm sein Hertz dermassen gefangen / daß er mit ihr anhub zu Bulen / vnd für sein Schlawfweib bey sich behielt» (HDF, p. 110).



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at a later time,<sup>123</sup> after he has been dissuaded from marrying by the spirit, but that act appears to be a reward that he receives rather than a way of symbolically reinforcing their agreement. There are, then, good reasons to disagree with Williams and Schwarz in their tentative identification of *Teufelsbuhlschaft* as pact ritual in the *Historia*. These should perhaps instead be understood as two separate acts of apostasy: Pact with the Devil and *Teufelsbuhlschaft*.

In conclusion, a time span of one night separates the majority of symbolic actions tied to Faustus's pledge to the Devil from the agreeing on an actual pact. The moment at which Faustus signs, and his blood transitions from one state to another, is a different moment from that at which he reaches an agreement with Mephostophiles, and, more importantly, the moment at which Mephostophiles makes his promises to Faustus. The signature in blood and the use of Faustus's own hand are symbolic actions that attest to a moment in time at which Faustus pledges something in writing. The document that is left as physical trace, however, is given significant weight throughout the narrative, as pointed out above, while his oral promise by comparison is rarely invoked. The written pledge is different from the pact. The pact has been identified as the contents of the two equally long lists in Chapter Four, and the written document as a secondary and one-sided confirmation and reminder of these, with particular weight given to the first of Mephostophiles's counterdemands. The written document also contains reminders of Faustus's sins, his pride and ungodly curiosity, which drove him towards apostasy.

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<sup>123</sup> "Dem D. Fausto gieng solchs also wol ein / daß sein Hertz für freuden zitterte / vnd rewte ihn / was er anfänglich hatt fürnemmen wöllen / Gerichte auch in eine solche Brunst vnd Vnzucht / daß er Tag vnnnd nacht nach Gestalt der schönen Weiber trachtete / daß / so er heit mit dem Teuffel Vnzucht triebe / Morgen einen andern im Sinn hatte" (HDF, p. 29).

## 2.3 Other Narrative Voices

Faustus's shift from scientific curiosity to desire for power to, finally, a document that ritually attests to the Devil's ownership of his body and soul, marks a gradual submission of Faustus to Mephostophiles and to the Devil. He at first wishes to command the spirit; then he barter for the illusion that he is in command; then, finally, he produces a document that marks his complete submission to the evil spirit. This submission to Mephostophiles has some substantial effects on the narrative as well, and on the way in which the narrative is told: In a sense, the narrator intermittently ends up taking part in the same apostasy that Faustus represents and gives voice to.

The presence of the pact motif effects a change in the book's narrative style. The story of the *Historia* follows from the pact, and the pact's ritualised promises extend to the reader, who will be shown devilish encounters and adventures. The book presents itself as negative example and warning. Hans-Gert Roloff (1989) has shown that its execution in this regard is systematically consistent, as the book demonstrates the emptiness and futility of everything that Faustus gains from the Devil's subordinate Mephostophiles. This means that the story that is driven by the twelve articles of the pact is conceivably an effective dissuasion directed at the proud and dangerously curious reader. Through the sobering and moderating voice of the book's narrator, whose observations are fuelled by Lutheran morality, the reader will see through the illusions, lies and empty experiences that are on offer during contractual negotiations with the Devil. If there was only one unified and clearly moralistic single voice that influenced the way the story of Doctor Faustus was told, this would be true; however, there is, on the contrary, not a single textual (as opposed to paratextual) voice in the work which is persistently unified, and which is untainted by the presence of the pact. The weight that is given to the pact and, in particular, to the written pledge through the elaborate rituals described above, creates a locus of sinfulness in the work. The assumption that the *Historia* is narratologically straightforward and unsophisticated could not be further from the truth, and its tendency to allow different voices to intertwine and to affect one another leads to a

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level of moral ambiguity that, in its systematic implementation, should not be ignored.

The *Historia* is told not through one voice of absolute moral authority, but through several voices of varying moral standpoints: Besides the narrator's voice, there are the voices of an editor or commentator, Doctor Faustus, Mephostophiles, the doctor's servant Wagner, and, in the background, the demon Auerhahn. In addition, there are all those voices that scholars have been hard at work identifying since the *Historia* first garnered scholarly attention: Hidden quotes, paraphrases and references. Disentangling these voices, and shedding light on their interrelations, requires that the work is taken seriously; the variances in style that are pointed out below have been regarded as weaknesses in the narrative style of the work and as results of one or more less than ingenious authors' fumbling attempts at writing popular fiction. This perspective will be replaced in this study by the idea that many Faustian works share one narratological trait, which is their staged impurity, their elaborate positioning of noticeably incommensurable voices and points of view that affect one another and create unsolvable, persistent conflicts.

Spies's *Historia*, regardless of the identity of its author, authors or compiler, is a patchwork of quotes and paraphrases, most of them known as such but probably still some unknown, from highly heterogeneous sources. In other words, the book contains a plethora of voices that sometimes are distinguishable from one another, and sometimes not, and which are tied together by the voice of the narrator. Scholars have worked very hard to identify the various hidden sources scattered throughout the book. This endeavour has been prompted by the narrator's failure to identify his sources: The *Historia* hides its sources, or at least makes no effort to identify them. Consequently, the unity of the narrator's voice is not necessarily challenged by the wealth of other voices that it is intermingled with. When, for example, the narrator includes long, almost unedited passages from Hartmann Schedel's *Buch der Chroniken*, it is a matter of impersonation: It is still the narrator who voices these sections, although Hartmann Schedel wrote down the words first. The singular identity of the text's point of origin, its voice, is no more confounded in those

sections of the book where only parts of the source are quoted, while other parts are changed, such as the verse from Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff* in Chapter Seven, where the *Historia*'s narrator has substituted "Seel / Leib vnd Gut" (HDF, p. 23) for Brant's "Lib und Blut" (Brant 2011, p. 118 / chapter heading to Chapter Three). The narrator's implied statement remains the same through these quotes and paraphrases: "I'm telling you this". There are, however, some points in the narrative where the narrator explicitly gives up his own voice for another voice, most notably in the two chapters where Faustus's written pledges are presented, and here, the implicit statement is very emphatically expressing the opposite: "I'm not telling you this, I'm showing it to you." The narrator becomes an editor, and presents to the reader a piece of embedded text that the narrator does not wish to be held accountable for, but which is ascribed to an actor who is present on the book's diegetic level. The narrator distances himself from the contents of Faustus's first written pledge in the sixth chapter not only by identifying the document as something that someone else wrote, but also by explaining that he includes it only as horrid example and warning:

Dieses war ein grewlich vnd erschrecklich Werck / vnd ist solche Obligation / nach seinem elenden Abschied / in seiner Behausung gefunden worden. Solches wil ich zur Warnung vnd Exempel aller frommen Christen melden / damit sie dem Teuffel nicht statt geben / vnd sich an Leib vnd Seel mögen verkürzten / wie dann D. Faustus baldt hernach seinen armen famulum vnnd Diener auch mit diesem Teuffelischen Werck verführt hat. (HDF, p. 22)

This trope of including or staging found material in a narrative bolsters the plausibility of the story, and also removes the narrator's responsibility for the godless, apostatical nature of the work. Apostasy in the *Historia* emanates from Faustus's pact, and a piece of material evidence that absolves the narrator is here given, placing the responsibility for all those events that hinge on the pact, and thus for the primary driving force in the narrative, on Faustus. The pact forces the narrator's writing hand, and here he has demonstrated that he is not responsible for the narrative's un-Christian inception.

Faustus's voice is different from that of the narrator, marked not only by the narrator's insistence that his hand did not compose the infernal pact, but also by a grammatical oddity that may have slipped through the very fine-meshed net of

*Historia* scholars: Faustus's spelling is different from the narrator's. The word "vnterthänig", used repeatedly in the chapters immediately preceding the pact chapter, is here spelled "vnderthenig".<sup>124</sup> The book's grammatical inconsistency is very well known, and is incidentally something that Thomas Mann's Faustian book's narrator Serenus Zeitblom makes a point of, but this single anomalous occurrence of a word that is used several times in this part of the book marks a difference between the sixth chapter and the chapters surrounding it. The narrator's claim regarding this document may actually be true, to some degree: There may be a secondary source for it. The identity of this source is of no great consequence; the indication that the document that sets the book's narrative in motion is attributable to some voice other than the narrator's is. There are so far two voices present in the pact chapters: The narrator's voice may be called primary, in that it precedes, is a prerequisite for, and quantitatively overshadows this other voice, which the narrator ascribes to the doctor. However, there is also a third, paratextual voice in this pivotal section of the book: The author of the margin comments.

The margins of the book are riddled with comments, distinguished from the main narrative by their physical placement: their placement on the page's physical space indicates that they are paratext, text besides text.<sup>125</sup> Another indication of this is their temporal distance to the narrative: They are in some form or another all comments on the narrative, and therefore they follow behind the act of narration in time. This indicates that they were written by an editor, or by the publisher, or even by the author, but after the story was narrated. Throughout the book they consist of 25 bookmarks that neutrally refer to events in the narrative,<sup>126</sup> 31 place names relevant to the story,<sup>127</sup> and finally two prayers for protection,<sup>128</sup> five theological

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<sup>124</sup> Spelled "vnterthänig" in Chapters 2, 3 (twice) and 4.

<sup>125</sup> The term paratext as used by Gerard Genette in *Seuils* (1987) is discussed in 3.2.5.

<sup>126</sup> HDF, pp. 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 26 (x2), 28, 29 (x2), 32, 37, 44, 47, 51, 53, 57, 68, 103, 120, 121.

<sup>127</sup> HDF, pp. 60 (x4), 61 (x4), 63 (x4), 64 (x4), 65 (x2), 66 (x2), 67 (x3), 68, 70 (x4), 71 (x3).

reflections, proverbs or moral judgments,<sup>129</sup> and one proper name.<sup>130</sup> The latter is the instance that most sharply separates the voice present in these comments from the narrator's: The proper name is one that the narrator refuses to give in the main body of text, due to this person's high status and the ridiculous nature of his encounter with Doctor Faustus, while the author of the margin comments has no such qualms. The narrator explains, discreetly: "die Person aber (...) hab' ich mit Namen nicht nennen wollen / denn es ein Ritter vnd geborner Freyherr war" (HDF, p. 79). To this, a margin comment bluntly adds that the man's name was Erat Baro ab Hardeck. Erat Baro from Hardeck is a man whose identity beyond his name is currently unidentified, but who undoubtedly had in some way irked or amused the author of the margin comments. Obvious, then, is the difference between these two writers: The margin comments reveal something that is explicitly not revealed on the diegetic level. Despite the enthusiastic morality of the former elsewhere, the author of the margin comments is here being less ethically sensitive than the narrator.

The two chapters that contain Faustus's pledges are separated from the narrator's discourse, actively set apart from the narrative, and it is also next to these anomalous chapters that the margin comments take on a unique form. Only two of the margin comments are prayers for protection, and both are inserted into the margins of the book next to the doctor's written pledges. The first pact is accompanied by an emphatic "O HERR Gott behüt", the second with "Behüt Allmächtiger Gott". Even the voice behind the margin comments distances itself from the embedded documents and the terrible incantations that they contain. These prayers for protection bracket Faustus's written pledge, placing it in a ritually separated narrative space where neither the narrator nor the author of the margin comments can manipulate it directly, and instead resort to commenting on it before, after and during its presentation. This space is marked as an unholy, dangerous space, containing words that the narrator

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<sup>128</sup> HDF, pp. 23, 104.

<sup>129</sup> HDF, pp. 17, 48, 104, 108, 110.

<sup>130</sup> HDF, p. 79.

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could not utter himself, conceivably because they are performative words that threaten the utterer's salvation, and the document in and of itself is capable of tempting Christians to sin, as it did according to the narrator's introduction to it in Chapter Five with Faustus's servant Wagner. The first of the two pledges is placed in a narrative space that is isolated from the rest of the book: By the blank spaces separating one chapter from the next, by the narrator's assertion that he includes the document as a terrifying and dangerous example, and by the prayers for protection that the voice of the margin comments supplies. Despite these efforts, the document is very much present in the narrative. It attests to the pact that is the story's engine, and it reappears at key points in the story. Although the typeset and format are the same as the surrounding text, the written pledges are both staged as material items that are introduced as strange elements into the relative unity of the narrator's discourse. The signature that is included in the first document, but not the second, is the final, conclusive piece of evidence that this document is not represented through the narrator's voice: Doctor Faustus, whether impersonated by the narrator, author, editor, or simply faithfully repeated by the typesetter, owns the voice that is uttering the statements contained within Faustus's written pledge.

There are three voices present in and around the book's pivotal sixth chapter: The narrator, who included the document, Doctor Faustus, whose left hand held the pen that produced it, and the author of the margin comments, who isolated it from the rest of the text with prayers for protection. This argument is not dependent on the pact chapter objectively being written by someone other than the Speyer author, which is a question of minimal interest; the chapter is staged as written by someone else, down to the minor detail of Faustus's spelling. One consequence is that neither the narrator, nor the author of the margin comments, nor the publisher is to be held morally responsible for the pact's contents, or for its consequences throughout the narrative. These consequences include every immoral, forbidden or scandalous action and event in the Spies-book, cleverly blamed only on Doctor Faustus and on his infernal pact. The author-editor stages himself as a faithful chronicler who can do nothing other than report the obscenities that Faustus has left in writing, signed by his own hand, for posterity to discover.

Although the moral integrity of the narrator is protected through this setting apart of Faustus's written pledge, the pact and its written confirmation also end up threatening the purity, the unity, of the narrator's voice. A fourth voice can be added to these three different voices in the book, and this fourth is invited into the book through Faustus's incantations and pact: That of Mephostophiles. Due to the way in which the narrator occasionally conveys dialogue, his voice at some points impersonates the various actors' voices. Sometimes, dialogue is clearly marked through verbs indicating direct speech.<sup>131</sup> At other times, it is indirectly repeated or paraphrased, identifiable as dialogue by the use of the third-person case.<sup>132</sup> This indirect style of narration, where the act of narration is clearly set apart from its focal object, dominates the *Historia*. However, there are also sections where it is impossible to structurally separate the narrator's voice from the voice that it quotes. Mephostophiles's voice is strongly dissonant with the narrator's voice, so those sections in which they become structurally interchangeable are disharmonious meeting points of conflicting views.

During the preliminary negotiations between Doctor Faustus and Mephostophiles, immediately preceding the pact chapter, one of the demands that the evil spirit makes of the doctor is that Faustus shall be prohibited from allowing himself to have his mind changed and be convinced to repent: "Zum fünfften / daß er sich nicht wölle verführen lassen / so ihne etliche wölln bekehren" (HDF, p. 20). The line is written in the third person, and is not a quoted line of dialogue. It is paraphrased in a style resembling free indirect discourse. By using words generally associated with the language of Christian believers in describing Mephostophiles's attitude towards a religious conversion, the author firmly roots the list of demands in Mephostophiles's language and perspective. Here, temptation (*Verführung*) threatens to lead to conversion (*Bekehrung*) from what in this section is the correct system of

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<sup>131</sup> "Doctor Faustus klagte vnnd weynete die gantze Nacht / also daß ihme der Geist in dieser Nacht wieder erschiene / sprach ihm zu: Mein Fauste (...)" (HDF, p. 118).

<sup>132</sup> "Er meynet der Teuffel wer nit so schwartz / als man ihn mahlet / noch die Hell so heiß / wie mann davon sagte / etc" (HDF, p. 21).



belief: A satanic one. In the Lutheran translation of the Gospel of John, which is frequently alluded to and paraphrased in the *Historia*, the word *verführen* is used twice by the Pharisees in the sense of leading astray in a religious sense (John 7:13, 7:47). In another of the book's major influences, Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff*, the word is used similarly, to describe a ruler's potential conversion to evil ways: "gott liesz, das mancher fürst regiert / langzyt, wann er nit würd verfürd / und unmilt wurd und ungerecht" (Brant 2011, pp. 258-259). The word is also used within the *Historia* by the narrator to describe Wagner's temptation through Faustus's written pledge, this time in the sense of being led from the righteous path: The narrator promises in Chapter Five to later describe "(...) wie dann D. Faustus baldt hernach seinen armen famulum vnnd Diener auch mit diesem Teuffelischen Werck verführt hat" (HDF, p. 22). The word always has a negative connotation when it describes changes in mental inclinations.<sup>133</sup> Being tempted to convert back to Christianity has a negative connotation in Mephostophiles's list of counter-demands; while Christianity throughout the work is deemed the correct world view, at this point it is the incorrect world view because Mephostophiles possesses the moral perspective. However, the list of counter-demands is not quoted dialogue or even paraphrased dialogue; the spirit is referred to in the third person in the first of Mephostophiles's demands. An omniscient narrator thus impersonally repeats in the third person a perspective which belongs to a diegetic actor.

This instance of what Mieke Bal (2009) calls interference consists of a blending of the actor's voice with the narrator's: The *Historia*'s narrator's voice is tainted by Mephostophiles's, and the latter is embedded in the former. An "impersonal language situation" (Bal 2009, p. 54), identifiable by the narrator's use of the third person, indicates that the narrator has not let another voice take over for his own – as he does when Faustus's infamous document is presented in the sixth chapter, or as he does when he is directly quoting dialogue, but the moral perspective

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<sup>133</sup> Grimm: "auf geistige thätigkeit übertragen; verleiten, vom wege abführen, stets in schlimmer bedeutung" (Grimm, vol. 25, 361, "verführen").

is incommensurable with the narrator's. The consequence of this interference is that, in this particular instance, the narrator's voice is formally inseparable, indistinguishable, from the actor's: "When there is text interference, narrator's text and actor's text are so closely related that a distinction into narrative levels can no longer be made" (Bal 2009, p. 56). This blending results in a momentary destabilization of the narrator's moralistic voice.

The narrator's voice, when interfered with by Mephostophiles's voice, formally differs from others present in the book, a fact most easily confirmed by comparing it with the narrator's voice when it is influenced in the same manner by the apostate doctor. During the negotiations between Doctor Faustus and the demon that lead to their pact, a sharp line is drawn between Faustus's offhand, untidy and careless demands that he makes of the demon, and Mephostophiles's precise, formal and convoluted counter-demands. The confusing and confused use of pronouns in Faustus's second set of demands contrasts the syntactic precision with which the narrator subsequently presents Mephostophiles's final counter-demands. Faustus's second list is explicitly directed towards the spirit: Faustus "(...) begeret vom Geist wie folgt" (HDF, p. 20), yet the subject of the first demand is not the spirit, but Mephostophiles: "Erstlich / daß er auch ein Geschickligkeit / Form vnnd Gestalt eines Geistes möchte an sich haben vnd bekommen" (HDF, p. 20). Contextually, this first demand makes little or no sense when read as a demand Faustus makes of the spirit. The sentence rather concerns Faustus himself, and so the subject, which should be "der Geist" if it followed the form the list is given through its introduction and which the rest of the list conforms to, is Faustus. Faustus wants to have the abilities, form and appearance of a spirit, yet it is very vaguely and imprecisely formulated, as is the rest of his list of six requests. As Mephostophiles presents his first counter-demand, it immediately becomes apparent that there is a significant difference between the two voices. While Faustus in the above quoted introduction to his demands "wants the following from the spirit", Mephostophiles requires that he in return follows certain articles, which is a juridical term for sections in a legal text or a contract: "daß er im dagegen auch etlich fürgehaltene Artickel wölle leisten" (HDF, p. 20). This juridical

precision is reflected in the first of these counter-demands as well, which is impeccably clear in its prudent identification of actors: “Erstlich / daß er / Faustus / verspreche vnd schwere / daß er sein / des Geistes / eygen seyn wolte” (HDF, p. 20). There is no confusion of pronouns in Mephostophiles’s list. His language is unequivocal in its juridical precision: He, Faustus, promises and swears that he will be his, the spirit’s, own. The contrast between wishes and legal articles underlines the difference in approach between Faustus and Mephostophiles. To Faustus, the exchange is a route to fulfillment of his vaguely formulated inclinations, while to Mephostophiles it is a legally binding, contractual exchange of services. The Devil of Faustian literature is, as previously indicated, consistently a business-minded Devil, who places great emphasis on and trust in formalities of law. The difference in precision between the two lists that are presented in the same chapter can hardly be construed as accidental, and should be seen as a deliberate staging of dissonant material: Mephostophiles’s voice is established as markedly different from Faustus’s.

Mephostophiles is also not purely characterised as a malicious spirit in the book. Towards the conclusion of the *Historia*, after Faustus has realised and accepted that his body and soul are forfeit due to his written pledge,<sup>134</sup> Mephostophiles consoles him and tells him that he shall not suffer like the other damned souls in Hell, but that the Devil has promised to give him a body and soul made of steel: “hat dir doch der Teuffel verheissen / er wölle dir einen stählin Leib vnnnd Seel geben / vnd solt nicht leyden / wie andere Verdampte” (HDF, p. 119). The narrator immediately judges this idea to be false and contrary to the Holy Book: “falsch vnd der heyligen Schrifft zu wider” (HDF, p. 119), but why does Mephostophiles tell this lie to Faustus at all, when the doctor is already irredeemably condemned and does not need to be further convinced? The inception of this idea that the worthy apostate shall be given a privileged place in Hell is not negated by the narrator’s immediate comment claiming

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<sup>134</sup> “Die 24. Jar deß Doctor Fausti waren erschienen / vnd eben in solcher Wochen erschiene ihm der Geist / vberantwort ihme seinen Brieff oder Verschreibung / zeigt im darneben an / daß der Teuffel auff die ander Nacht seinen Leib holen werde” (HDF, p. 118). Faustus himself believes that because of his written pledge, his body is forfeit: “Doctor Faustus / der nicht anders wuste / dann die Versprechung oder Verschreibung müste er mit der Haut bezahlen (...)” (HDF, p. 119).

it to be godless and contrary to the Holy Book, it is simply judged as being wrong in a purely mechanical formulaic response. Mephostophiles's words of consolation appear to be sympathetic towards the doctor. Certainly, there is no longer any need to tempt Faustus, as he has already consigned body and soul to the Devil in writing. John Henry Jones (1994) points out that Widman's *Faustbook* contains a Mephostophiles figure who is essentially sympathetic towards Faustus, and who is even well-meaning and helpful:

In Widman's work, this proto-Mephostophiles is the spirit sent to Faustus in fulfilment of the conditions of the pact, a pact there made with the Devil in person. It is an essentially friendly spirit whose great mischance it is to be subject to Lucifer. (Jones 1994, p. 7)

In Spies' *Historia*, on the other hand, Mephostophiles is generally malicious, with the exception of this particular chapter, where he lies purely for the benefit of Doctor Faustus – or, one might venture to say, for the benefit of the curious reader. The idea that the spirit presents to Faustus and the reader, idiomatically formulated in line 263 of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) some eighty years later as Lucifer's "Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven", is a dangerous one, from a Christian point of view.

Faustus's signed document is also dangerous; it seduced his famulus and servant Wagner. Yet it is still included in the *Historia*, which then subjects its readers to this same danger. There is an indication towards the end of the book that Wagner not only has a more significant role in the narrative than his sparse appearances should indicate, but that he has a voice of his own in it as well. If the following assertion from the sixty-first chapter that Wagner in fact wrote and compiled the *Historia* is taken seriously, then the narrator is identified not only as a diegetic actor, but also as a godless apostate: With the help of the demon Auerhahn, Wagner has compiled the story of his master into a *Historia*, at Faustus's behest: "(...) alsdenn wöllest es auffzeichnen / zusammen schreiben / vnnd in eine Historiam transferiren / darzu dir [Wagner] dein Geist vnd Auwerhan helffen wirt (...)" (HDF, pp. 112-113). This assertion is partly an attempt at giving the narrative additional credibility, by introducing the eyewitness narrator, but it could also be construed as looking like a

devilish joke embedded in a work which is turning out to be less morally unambiguous than it seemed to be at first glance. The second-to-last paragraph of the book's last chapter reiterates Wagner's role in composing the text of the *Historia*, although here the possibility that he may have written a version of the story, not necessarily the version that the reader is currently reading, is broached:

Diese gemeldte Magistri vnnnd Studenten / so bey deß Fausti todt gewest / haben so viel erlangt / daß man ihn in diesem Dorff begraben hat / dernach sind sie widerumb hineyn gen Wittenberg / vnd ins Doctor Fausti Behausung gegangen / allda sie seinen Famulum / den Wagner / gefunden / der sich seines Herrn halben vbel gehube. Sie fanden auch diese deß Fausti Historiam auffgezeichnet / vnd von ihme beschrieben / wie hievor gemeldt / alles ohn sein Ende / welches von obgemeldten Studenten vnd Magistris hinzu gethan / vnnnd was sein Famulus auffgezeichnet / da auch ein neuw Buch von ihme außgehet. (HDF, p. 123)

Wagner may have written down the story, completed by the students that followed Faustus, and the narrator may then have used this story, of a much more sinful origin and inclination, as a basis for his own retelling of it. The origin of the story, then, is Wagner's account, written with the help of the demon Auerhan and finished by the students, while the narrator's account is merely based on this godless work. The narrator cannot take advantage of the plausibility the story gains through the trope of the first-hand witness without subjecting his own account to the original's demonic nature: If Wagner is used as witness, and Wagner is also an apostate influenced by a demon specifically in his writing, then the narrator follows a demonic account, which means that it in its entirety is "ein Gottlosen und falschen Bericht" (HDF, p. 48). The narrator's mechanical invocations of Christian morality during the most morally questionable sections of the book do nothing to alleviate this aspect of the narrative. At the very least it is possible to conclude that Spies's *Historia* is anything but formally and morally straightforward; it is highly complex, and its complexity arises from the intermingling of several sharply different voices.

Christian morality explicitly motivates the book, but it is more significantly, and more forcefully, driven by the formalised promise in the embedded written pledge. The influence of the pact on the narrative turns Christian morality into a superficial veneer, or an apology for the amorality that is its driving force. The

following writers, meaning origins of voice, are identifiable in the book, and all are influenced by apostates and evil spirits, except for the paratextually-positioned margin commentator: The various sources for hidden quotes, structurally indistinguishable from the narrator's voice; Doctor Faustus, the apostate who incites the narrative through his unholy pact; Mephostophiles, whose presence in the book hinges on the pact; Wagner, who was lead to apostasy by Faustus's written pledge, and who was promised the aid of the spirit Auerhahn in compiling a *Historia* concerning Faustus's life; and finally the narrator, whose voice is not only intermittently tainted by Mephostophiles's through narrative interference, but who is also conceivably identifiable as Wagner.

The voice with the most significant influence on the story's course is the doctor's own. As he pledges his body and soul to Mephostophiles, he makes a ritualised promise regarding future events. In essence, the promise is this: Mephostophiles has previously promised to fulfill various objectionable desires that Faustus has, and in return, Doctor Faustus shall belong to the Devil with body, soul and property after twenty-four years have passed. Mephostophiles's promises are made by the author to the reader, fittingly enough in a voice intermingled first with Faustus's, then with Mephostophiles's: The three voices present the twelve promises from the fourth chapter in unison. The reader is afforded an opportunity to witness Faustus's excesses without being subjected to the counter-promises, while the author is given the opportunity of presenting to the reader amoral delights without risk. However, there is risk after all in the invocation of a Faustian pact in a narrative: The pact's influence pushes the narrative in a direction dictated by the pact's contents, and it even taints the manner in which the story is told, threatening the moral integrity of its narrator. The book is clearly, as Lercheimer von Steinfeldten judged, according to Hans Henning, "eine Verführung der Jugend" (Henning 1960, p. 53), not only because the book includes the "devilish work" (HDF, p. 22) with which Faustus tempted Wagner, but also because this devilish creation dictates the narrative's direction.

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Faustus's written pledge has been carefully set apart by the book's narrator and by the margin commenter. Together, they create a space that is not only isolated from the book's narrative space, but that is also surrounded by protective rituals that are meant to contain this document's adverse effects: The narrator repeatedly emphasises that he himself bears no responsibility for its creation, and asserts that he includes it as a terrible example, while the margin commenter calls on the Lord for protection as it is introduced into the book. The narrator's treatment of this document as it is first presented and as Faustus's pact with Mephostophiles nears its end turns this space into a juridical, lawful space, which becomes not only the instigator of action that the pact motif always is, but also a binding promise that both limits the narrative's direction and opens it up, the same way that the pact limits and expands Faustus's range of actions and experiences. This piece of writing that was set apart becomes the centerpiece in the narrative, and so its contents end up not being separated from the narrator's story and voice, but deeply embedded in both. The interference of Doctor Faustus's voice and of the voices of the demons that surround him with the narrator's permeates the entirety of the *Historia*, and becomes its most prominent formal characteristic. The *Historia* is a masterpiece of impurity, mixture, tainting, and ambiguity, and at the center of these traits stands the pact motif and its written confirmation.

*Historia von Doktor Johann Fausten* is a subversive, dangerous, seductive, demonic work of art. Its author, narrator, editor and particularly its publisher may not have intended this. Despite scholars' best efforts, next to nothing is known about the book's author; perhaps Thomas Mann's assertion from his Princeton lecture on Goethe that Johann Spies himself compiled the book and made up his friend from Speyer is true,<sup>135</sup> in which case it is safe to assume that no apostate or enemy of the (Lutheran) Church was involved in the book's creation, since Spies was otherwise a publisher of Lutheran writings and decrees from the palatinate. The mere inclusion of

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<sup>135</sup> "Das müßigste Zeug war eben recht, die sensationelle junge Technik zu speisen, und um nur zu produzieren, machte der Drucker oft selbst den Verfasser. So ist das älteste Faust-Buch, vom Jahre 1587, wahrescheinlich vom Buchdrucker Spies in Frankfurt selbst kompiliert" (Mann 1974a, p. 592).

a pact with the Devil in this narrative is performative; the promises made in the pact cannot be ignored by the narrator, and these are promises of amoral spectacles. The narrator goes to great lengths to strengthen the unalterable nature of Faustus's promises through the quasi-judicial rituals that surround them: The written pledge and the pact that precedes it in time are rarely referred to without pleonastic reinforcement, and Faustus's elaborate symbolic actions instate a legality that binds not only the doctor but also the narrator to Faustus's written word.



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### 3. Hell Itself Has Laws: Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *Faust. Eine Tragödie*

The following analysis of sections of Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *Faust I* and *II* will argue two points: First, that the pact motif is brought into the work by Mephistopheles as part of his subterfuge directed at Faust, and second, that the law that governs pacts with the Devil is explicitly positioned, discussed and ultimately rejected throughout the two parts of the play. The first of these two hypotheses presupposes a defensible understanding of which type of reciprocal agreement, if any, Faust and Mephistopheles enter into, while the second demands an exhaustive analysis of the formalities of this agreement. A consequence of this line of thought will be that, in Goethe's take on the Faust myth, the quasi-judicial system that is a prerequisite for pacts with the Devil is not only identified and discussed, but also marked as a motif that has come to the work from outside of it. While the work's dramatic form prohibits the use of certain terms that have been operative in the analysis of Spies's *Historia*, and that seek to identify the pact motif as deliberately bracketed or staged as quoted from somewhere else, a similar structure of setting apart the entire system to which the pact motif belongs will be uncovered. The play deliberately experiments with, or toys with, the function of the pact with the Devil as established "plot trigger".

Goethe's two closet plays built on the old Faust myth undeniably rise above the literary tradition that gave birth to the apostate doctor, both qualitatively and in terms of impact. A point that is occasionally repeated by readers of the two works is that they also rise above, and leave behind, the motivic trifles of the popular Faust myth, notably the pact motif. A. R. Hohlfeld (1921) was an early proponent of the idea that Goethe's adoption of the old pact motif was purely "mechanical" (p. 123), meaning that it should be understood as an empty nod to tradition, a dead trope of minimal significance to the work. However, throughout the two plays, a running discussion of the logic behind pacts with the Devil can be discovered. This embedded model of pacts with the Devil will give to this study the most completely realised explicit discussion of the function of Faustian pacts found in any of the three works

analysed here, as well as a theory of the function of ritualised written promises as such. In other words, the parts of the narrative machine driven by the pact motif are disassembled and put on display in Goethe's two-part drama. The pact motif will also be seen to be unfairly bracketed in some readings of the work, when the work itself so blatantly offers a mode of reading that can account for it. Approaching Goethe's *Faust* with the intention of systematically discussing the pact motif will make apparent a fact that is rarely recognized: That the material document that Faust produces with his own hand is anything but a "mechanical" transference of an old motif, but rather an integrated element in Goethe's reworking of the old Faust myth. The piece of paper produced by Faust during the second *Studierzimmer* scene according to inherited rituals is invoked at some critical moments throughout both Parts I and II, indicating that the pact ritual that Mephistopheles requires Faust to go through is not an empty homage to tradition, but constitutes a meaningful act of transforming a spoken promise into a material promise and reinforcing this with symbolic actions.

There are some challenges facing this current comparative study when the object is Goethe's *Faust* and the intention is to extract from it insights regarding the pact motif that may serve as points of comparison to Mann's and Spies's Faustbooks. First of all, current and past consensus identifies no pact, but a wager, in the work. Furthermore, the agreement between Faust and Mephistopheles appears to have no effect, being ignored near the end of the tragedy's second part. Additionally, the work is written in dramatic form, significantly impacting not only the balance of different voices against each other, but also the presence or absence of material objects. Finally, Goethe's position within German literary history sets the work apart from the other two: Readers keep returning to the idea of Goethe's creative genius, his immense creative power that elevates his work beyond the trifles of tradition and inherited motifs. A vein in Goethe studies regarding the machinations of the inherited pact motif, identified in 3.1, seems to be built on the idea that the force that this motif exerts on the work, the obligation that is created when Faust makes his ritualised promise, is gloriously nullified by the poetic genius of Goethe.

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On the other hand, reading Goethe's *Faust* with the intention of discovering the form and function of the formalised agreement between its protagonist and Mephistopheles will have the advantage of aiding in dislodging some entrenched ideas regarding this motif, that upon closer inspection turn out to be less unambiguous than often held. It will be possible to carefully propose that the agreement between Faust and Mephistopheles may after all be understood to be a pact, not a wager, and to point out that this pact does have an effect on the outcome of the play, although it is still ultimately violated. The material object that Faust creates at Mephistopheles's behest takes centre stage during the widely discussed *Grablegung* scene of the second part of the play, wherein devils and angels battle for Faust's immortal soul in a humorous transformation of an old motif, and by no means is it ignored or forgotten. A ritualised promise is broken, but it is not broken quietly; the broken promise is loudly announced to the audience or reader, and an explanation is given. A Faustian story in which the pact by all appearances is not honoured, and the laws according to which it has been sealed are not recognized, creates a dissonance and a conflict which is evident in the countless attempts made by readers at explaining the events that accompany Faust's death in Goethe's take on the "Fauststoff". This conflict between a promise that is formalised according to some rules and rituals that are inherited from a different age – carefully staged within the work as being foreign to it, in an operation similar to that which has been found in the *Historia* – and the outcome of the second part of the play will guide the closing discussion of this analysis of Goethe's *Faust*.

The following discussion will be structured similarly to the analysis of the *Historia*, in that it first will identify the type of agreement that is proposed and reached, then discuss the formalities of this agreement, and finally draw some wider conclusions regarding the agreement's consequences. Three separate types of reciprocal agreement will be identified: Erotically charged betrothal, pact with the Devil modelled on the tradition that was sketched in 1.3, and wager. The initial discussion of the pact's place in Goethe scholarship will show that these are often regarded as sequentially replacing one another. Contrary to this notion, all three will be understood to be part of the agreement that is formalised, marked by symbolic

action, and committed to writing. One line of argument in the following will be geared towards the establishment of a model of Faustian pacts, while another, closely related, line will make a point of the motif's form and function in Goethe's two *Faust* plays. The latter will offer an alternative viewpoint to some relatively recent readings of Goethe's *Faust*, and will at the same time reinstate the pact motif as a meaningful object of study within an academic climate that seems to regard it as significantly out-researched.

### 3.1 "Noch einmal": The Pact's Place in Goethe Scholarship

Karl Heinrich Hucke's essay on the pact motif in his major commented edition of Goethe's *Faust* has been given a title that is telling of the current status of the pact motif in Goethe scholarship.<sup>136</sup> "Noch einmal: Vertrag statt Pakt, Versprechen statt Wette" (Hucke 2008a, p. 539). Scholars are tired of the pact motif and the uncertainties surrounding the classification of the agreement from the second *Studierzimmer* scene, and Hucke's 118 pages on the subject is prefaced by a humorous apology for bringing the old conflict up *yet again*. This study must contend with three assumptions regarding Goethe's transformation of the old pact motif within an academic climate that largely seems to have moved on from this entire problem area. The first of these is the adamant refusal of allowing a pact motif into readings of the work; readers are very clear in their insistence that the agreement

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<sup>136</sup> Hucke's writing style is highly essayistic, in a continental European sense, with frequent digressions and diversions. This trait is also pointed out by Rüdiger Scholz (2011), who regards it as a significant weakness that threatens the clarity of Hucke's argument: "Das Buch [Hucke 2008a] hat einige interessante Bemerkungen, die aber nicht bis zu einer Interpretation des Werkes gedeihen. Obwohl Hucke mehrmals auf den historischen Wandel von Feudalismus zur Neuzeit auch ganz konkret eingeht, ergibt sich keine Bild der Verbindung zwischen Drama und Realität. Das liegt auch darin, dass sich Hucke nicht festlegt, sondern im Stil der Möglichkeit schreibt" (Scholz 2011, p. 683). Scholz's insistence on the importance of drawing the line from *Faust* to reality – political, historical, and in particular sociological – colours his judgment of several scholars and research traditions. Friedrich Theodor Vischer's satirical *Faust. Der Tragödie dritter Teil* (1862) levels a similar criticism at the second part of Goethe's tragedy, which the author believed to have moved away from reality at a point where it should have concretised insights from the first part.

reached between Faust and Mephistopheles is “not a pact, but a wager”.<sup>137</sup> The second, which is related to the first, is the widely accepted idea that Mephistopheles is tricked by Faust during the negotiations that lead to this wager, and that Faust is simply using the old pact motif to his benefit by trading Mephistopheles’s servitude for nothing.<sup>138</sup> The third is represented by a particular vein in Goethe scholarship that regards the agreement between the two characters as ultimately unimportant or inconsequential.<sup>139</sup>

At the core of these three assumptions lies the unfortunate idea that the pact motif in Goethe’s *Faust* is significantly out-researched, and has been completely exhausted, given the daunting quantity of research literature dedicated to it.<sup>140</sup> This is not, however, a problem limited to a study attempting to contribute to a better understanding of the pact motif, but one that applies to most avenues of approach towards the work. The point of departure for a recounting of the history of research

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<sup>137</sup> “[N]icht ein Pakt, sondern eine Wette” (Trunz 2002, p. 539); “Der Vertrag ist eine Wette” (Landsberg and Kohler 1903 p. 117); “Daß die Verschreibung nichts andres als die mündlich geschlossene Wette beurkunden könnte, versteht sich von selbst“ (Müller 1912, p. 332); „Viel Verschiedenes ist zur ‘Paktszene’ und über sie geschrieben worden, doch herrscht seit jeher kein Zweifel darüber, daß ihr eigentümlicher Wert gerade darin liegt, daß sie keine ist. Kein Pakt, sondern eine Wette wird in ihr abgeschlossen (...)“ (Molnár 1988, p. 29); “(...) Faust [zeigt] sich vertragsbereit – in form einer unsymmetrischen Wette, die vom traditionellen Muster des Teufelspakt entschieden abweicht” (Schöne 2003b, p. 260). There have, however, been scholars who have thought otherwise. Hermann Weigand (1961), for example, tries to imagine how the written document was created – in other words, at what time during the second Studierzimmer scene it could have been produced. He concludes that, due to the scene’s tempo in the lines surrounding Faust’s signature, the document must have been pre-fabricated by Mephistopheles, and only signed by Faust; there would have been no time to write down the wager that Faust proposed. Since Mephistopheles could not have known that Faust would think to propose a wager, Weigand concludes that either the document must have appeared magically, or it must contain some formula that the spirit had thought up beforehand. Weigand’s second argument is that a written contract, “Vertrag”, can only conceivably be morally valid if both involved parties are aware of the promises that it contains: “Andernfalls hätte sich Mephisto einer Fälschung schuldig gemacht, er hätte dem Faust seine Unterschrift betrügerisch abgelistet; damit wäre der Vertrag vor jedem moralischen Forum als ungültig verworfen” (Weigand 1961, p. 329). Consequently, the written document contains Mephistopheles’s proposed bilateral exchange of services: “Dem Sinn nach muß der Wortlaut des Zettels dem mündlich vorgeschlagenen Pakt völlig entsprochen haben” (Weigand 1961, p. 329).

<sup>138</sup> Brüning (2010); Huckle 2008a, p. 597; Scholz 2011, p. 786.

<sup>139</sup> Hohlfeld (1921); Schöne (2003); Huckle (2008b).

<sup>140</sup> Scholz 2011, p. 786; Eibl 2004, p. 1.

into Goethe's *Faust* is invariably the same, here as formulated by Ulrich Gaier in his commented edition, first published in 1989: "Die Forschung zu Goethes *Faust* ist unüberschaubar" (Gaier 1999b, p. 875). Attempts have been made at writing macrohistories of *Faust* studies,<sup>141</sup> but these reveal that a history of *Faust* studies within disciplines related to comparative, historical or theoretical literary studies invariably looks very much like a history of literary studies as such, since the work has been read by representatives of every major school within this cluster of disciplines.<sup>142</sup> The following analysis will make this material manageable by limiting its ingress into Goethe studies to the previously mentioned three points of contention that directly relate to the pact motif.

The identification of a pact motif in Goethe's *Faust* is confounded by one very simple fact: The exact wording of the document that Faust signs during the second *Studierzimmer* scene is effectively unidentifiable. The ritualised promise is kept hidden from the reader or audience, set apart from the narrative in a manner that hides rather than puts on display, and the primary effect has been that readers have filled this void with strongly differing ideas. The effectively empty document that is not only implied during the second of the two *Studierzimmer* scenes, but also referred to in several subsequent instances, creates one of literary history's largest unsolved

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<sup>141</sup> The latest is Rüdiger Scholz's two-volume *Die Geschichte der Faust-Forschung* (2011). Histories of research are also found in the major commented Faust-editions. In the following, four of these are used: Erich Trunz's (1949/2002), selected because of its text-internal approach, which perhaps was necessitated by the work's ideological flammability in the years immediately following the Second World War, but which nonetheless conforms well to this current attempt at shedding light on a particular motif's qualities intrinsic to the work; to a lesser extent Ulrich Gaier's (first part 1989/1999), primarily used as an aid in simple definitions; Albrecht Schöne's (1994/2003), which contains a very thorough reading of the pact motif that reflects the position that this study aims to challenge, namely the idea that the pact motif in certain respects is unimportant; and finally Karl Heinrich Hucke's (2008) quantitatively daunting edition, initially selected due to its recent publication, but containing a comprehensive chapter on the pact motif. In addition, Stiftung Weimarer Klassik's *Goethe-Bibliographie 1950-1990* (1999) has been used for a mapping of the motif's research history, along with Gert Mattenklott's chapter on *Faust* in J. B. Metzler Verlag's *Goethe Handbuch* (1996). One minor, and very much outdated, overview over Goethe research will also be used in this study, due to its almost mythical status in recent research literature that concerns the pact motif specifically: Ada Klett's *Der Streit um 'Faust II' seit 1900* (1939).

<sup>142</sup> Rüdiger Scholz: "Die Geschichte der *Faust*-Forschung spiegelt zu einem guten Teil die Geschichte der wissenschaftlichen Literaturinterpretationen überhaupt". (Scholz 2011, p. 12)

mysteries: Something has been promised in a ritualised fashion that has left behind a material piece of evidence within the work's diegesis, and one of the work's characters, Mephistopheles, insists on the importance of this written promise concerning the direction and outcome of the sequence of events, but the reader or onlooker cannot positively know what the promise is or how it is formulated.

Since the very beginning of Goethe research, scholars have thrown themselves at the agreement that is reached between Faust and Mephistopheles during the second of the two *Studierzimmer* scenes. In 1939, Ada Klett performed a study not primarily of this problem area in itself, but of the various approaches to it: She made a schematic list of 58 studies that had been published up to that point that directly discussed the matter of who, in the end, won the wager that is assumed to be the agreement between Faust and Mephistopheles. The history of research reflected in Klett's list seems in some cases to have led to a complete resignation before the massive challenge that the presence of some version of a pact motif presents readers of Goethe's *Faust* with. This resignation may have started as early as 1921, with A. R. Hohlfeld, who announces the unimportance of the pact motif to Goethe's *Faust* as a whole, calling it a mechanical transference of an old motif that holds no further significance than to honour the tradition from which Faust has been adopted.<sup>143</sup> Albrecht Schöne, who adopts a similar position, and who references Hohlfeld in German translation, points out the utter stagnation in the question proposed by Ada Klett since her study:<sup>144</sup> The six positions according to which Klett indexes the studies survive through all major periods of Goethe scholarship.<sup>145</sup> Schöne's

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<sup>143</sup> "In passing, as it were, Goethe here merely pays his respects to one of the time-honored traditions of the theme, as he has done in numerous instances elsewhere" (Hohlfeld 1921, p. 123). A footnote attached to this sentence gives as an example of the "numerous instances" only the signature in blood: "Cf. e.g., the signing of a document with Faust's blood."

<sup>144</sup> "In der Frage, wer da nun 'gewonnen' habe (...) gibt es keinen Konsens. Die von 1900-1939 erteilten Auskünfte hat Klett 1939,63 ff. ohne jede Ironie in einer 'Tabelle' erfaßt, deren Quoten bei Berücksichtigung des folgenden Halbjahrhunderts etwa gleich geblieben sein dürften." (Schöne 2003b, p. 752)

<sup>145</sup> The challenge that prompted the large number of studies that Ada Klett mapped is found in the *Grablegung* scene of the second part of the drama: Faust seemingly loses his wager to

conclusion after facing this by now infertile question is a complete dismissal of the pact motif based on the same assumption that stands at the centre of Hohlfeld's analysis: He believes that the agreement reached in the second *Studierzimmer* scene ends up being inconsequential in the grand poetic vision that fuels Goethe's *Faust*.<sup>146</sup> It is, in Schöne's perspective, a foreign element in the work, brought into it by necessity because Goethe has inscribed his work in the Faustian tradition, and, as will be discussed in 3.5, he provides an insufficient explanation for why the pact is ultimately ignored.

Part of the problem is the unclear identification of what kind of agreement Faust and Mephistopheles enter into. It is clear that they both have a set of obligations towards one another, and that at least some of these obligations are put into writing, but the exact wording of the pact or wager has proven very difficult to identify, not in the least because the document that Faust signs is denied stage presence. Faust's signing of the written document is not even given a stage direction indicating that it takes place. The act of signing does, however, take place, as will be demonstrated in the following, and, as was the case in the *Historia*, scrutiny of the time at which it takes place and the symbolic actions that surround it may aid in identifying plausible contents of the agreement, and of the written confirmation of this agreement. This does not mean that this "grotesque[ly]" (Eibl 2004, p. 1) over-commented motif in

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Mephistopheles, yet he is still not condemned, as the wager stipulated he would be. Klett found six positions in this matter: Either researchers believed Faust to have won the wager both literally and in the higher sense, "im höheren Sinne" (Klett 1939, p. 67), or they believed him to have lost literally, but won in the higher sense, or they opined that he lost in both senses, or that he half won, half lost, or that neither of the two won (or lost), or finally that neither could have won because the wager was made on invalid grounds. While it may seem that these positions are exhaustive, Karl Eibl (2004) has pointed out that the question they are trying to answer itself rests on an invalid presupposition: They all agree amongst themselves that the agreement between Faust and Mephistopheles is a wager rather than a pact.

<sup>146</sup> "Es ging dem Autor am Ende wohl gar nicht mehr darum, ob sein Faust die alte Wette verloren oder gewonnen habe. Für das nämlich, was sich in der Grablegungs-Szene abspielen wird, für das vor allem, was sich in den Bergschluchten ereignet, spielt die Wette so oder so keine Rolle mehr. Daß Faust ‚gewonnen‘ habe, bildet nicht einmal den Ermöglichungsgrund dieses Geschehens. Es ging allein noch darum, daß der Ausgang der Wette dem Ausgang des Spiels nicht hindernd im Wege stand." (Schöne 2003b, p. 754)



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Goethe's *Faust* will be laid to rest once and for all, but the following discussion will contribute to reinstating the pact motif's importance in the work, pointing out that Goethe's narrative is not beyond the power that the Faustian pact motif exerts on the works in which it appears. This study will thereby enter into a history of research that recently has been judged in its entirety to be an "involuntarily satirical comedy" by Rüdiger Scholz (2011), who paints it as a comical sideshow of Goethe studies that has missed the vital point; that Faust's intellect is so far beyond Mephistopheles's that the pact is nothing other than Faust's successful attempt at securing Mephistopheles's aid without having to give anything in return.<sup>147</sup> This complete dismissal is built on the assumption that there is an obviously correct answer to the question of whether Mephistopheles is tricked by Faust into accepting an agreement that only Faust benefits from. Gerrit Brüning (2010) holds a similar opinion, but argues that Faust realises that Mephistopheles is trying to manipulate him, and proposes his own wager as an attestation to the spirit's inability to do so. Scholz takes for granted universal agreement on the idea that Faust manipulates Mephistopheles through clever juridical trickery during the second *Studierzimmer* scene, but the following will bring to light an aspect of the relationship between Faust and Mephistopheles that makes this power relationship appear significantly less one-sided. The old, inherited rituals tied to the pact motif are not for the benefit of Mephistopheles, but for the benefit of Faust; they can reasonably be understood as part of Mephistopheles's subterfuge, his "Verführung" of Faust, while to the spirit, these and other inherited rituals are unimportant throughout the first part of the play. This study will explore the idea that Mephistopheles introduces the old pact motif,

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<sup>147</sup> "Eine Art unfreiwillig satirisches Lustspiel in der Geschichte der *Faust*-Forschung bietet die Diskussion über Pakt und Wette. Um die Dominanz des Teufels gegenüber Faust zu brechen, hat sich Goethe u. a. eine bewusst unklare Regelung zwischen Faust und Mephisto einfallen lassen. Mephisto darf mit Gottes Erlaubnis den redlichen Faust auf die Probe stellen, Faust selbst sieht sich gegenüber Mephisto haushoch überlegen, er gibt ein Versprechen zur Kontinuität seines rastlosen, niemals zufrieden zu stellenden Charakters ab und sichert sich dadurch Mephistos praktische Naturüberlegenheit. Alles Schachern um 'Faustens Unsterbliches' macht Goethe zur Burleske." (Scholz 2011, p. 786)

and the old laws that govern it, because Faust exhibits towards him an inclination towards old rituals that the spirit may take advantage of in his seduction of the doctor.

Karl Heinrich Hücke (2008a) more or less negates the relevance of the pact or wager to Goethe's *Faust*, based on the idea that Mephistopheles is nothing other than a projection of an aspect of Faust's self: Mephistopheles appears as an externalised embodiment of the Faustian principle.<sup>148</sup> In an article tying into his chapter in his commented *Faust* edition, Hücke explains that many questions regarding the wager would have been significantly easier to answer if only it had been asked whether it was still possible during and after the Enlightenment for a literary character to enter into a pact with the Devil.<sup>149</sup> Hücke's implied answer is that it is not. What he does not point out, is that, within both of Goethe's *Faust* plays, there is a running debate concerning this very problem: The problem of the validity of pacts with the Devil in the works' contexts. The Faustian pact, as shown previously, governs both the range of actions available to the protagonist, and expectations that the reader brings to the work. A pact with the Devil must end with the human party's damnation; it is the law. The contractual law of Hell is explicitly positioned, recognized and ultimately rejected in Goethe's two *Faust* plays. Hücke's reading of the work positions Faust as the ultimate guarantor of any law; if he makes his formalised promise to himself during the second *Studierzimmer* scene, in the presence only of himself, then a breach of contract is entirely unproblematic, because the law that is broken is one that has no precedent, and no outside reference. Hücke argues that Goethe's work does not break a particular species of law that is inherited from a literary tradition: It only allows its

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<sup>148</sup> "Der eine ist der Alter Ego des anderen, das sich manchmal wohl selbst bestärken muß: Ja, so mache ich es! 'Top!' Ja, so wird es gemacht! | Faust hat ein Gelöbniß abgegeben, eine Selbstverpflichtung ist er eingegangen, und dazu hat Mephisto 'Top!' gesagt: er hat sich in Dienst nehmen lassen, weil er endlich, nach so langer Durststrecke im hellen Licht der Aufklärung, einen kongenialen Meister gefunden hat (...)" (Hücke 2008a, p. 597)

<sup>149</sup> "Vieles wäre einfacher zu erklären gewesen in der langen Debatte über die Frage, wie die berühmte 'Wette' (V. 1698) in Goethes Faust-'Tragödie' von 1808 zu verstehen ist, hätte man sich gefragt, ob denn nach der Epoche der Aufklärung eine literarische Figur in einem Drama noch einen Vertrag, gar einen 'Pakt' mit dem Teufel schließen kann." (Hücke 2008b, p. 211)

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protagonist to break his promise to himself, which is not much more than an Easter-time equivalent of a New Year's resolution.

The core of the dispute regarding the contents of the pact has been the fact that at least two versions of the agreement are proposed. The first is worded by Mephistopheles, and is a pact not entirely dissimilar to the pact in the *Historia*, while the second is proposed by Faust, and is a wager. Most scholars agree that the second replaces the first, but the following will demonstrate that it is possible to regard Faust's wager as an additional article in the pact, while the formalised agreement at its core remains the traditional exchange of services that has been found in the *Historia*. The agreement creates an obligation, and if Ada Klett's list demonstrates one point beyond doubt, it is that the apparent violation of this obligation in the second part of the tragedy has created a major conflict amongst readers of the work. Recently, this conflict has been pushed aside in some analyses, and been given simple solutions that do not do justice to the motif's integration into the work. The following analysis, clustered around three areas in the reception history of *Faust*, and intended to argue that Mephistopheles proposes his outdated pact for the benefit of Faust and that the logic behind this old pact motif is explicitly questioned, will start with an identification of the type of agreement that Faust and Mephistopheles enter into.

## 3.2 The Pact

### 3.2.1 Faust's Aesthetic Inclination Towards Ritual

One major difference between the *Historia* and Goethe's *Faust* is that in the former, it is the evil spirit who demands a reciprocal pact to be negotiated and then confirmed in writing, while in the latter, the apostate doctor is seen repeatedly insisting on this formality. Faust wants a pact, and Mephistopheles acquiesces. Faust then adds an article to this pact, formulated as a wager. A prerequisite for the agreement that is

entered into during the second *Studierzimmer* scene in the first part of Goethe's *Faust* is Faust's own inclination towards ritual and magic, made immediately evident in his first encounter with Mephistopheles. Unlike the protagonist of Spies's *Historia*, Faust does not initially summon Mephistopheles through occult rituals; Mephistopheles appears in the shape of a black dog during the scene *Vor dem Tor*, where Faust and Wagner observe representatives of various common walks of life while discussing the merits of science, academia and book learning. Faust describes to Wagner the dog running around them in increasingly narrow circles, dragging a swirl of fire in its wake. Wagner, however, sees only a black poodle:

*Faust.*

Bemerkst du, wie in weitem Schneckenkreise  
Er um uns her und immer näher jagt?  
Und irr' ich nicht, so zieht ein Feuerstrudel  
Auf seinen Pfaden hinterdrein.

*Wagner.*

Ich sehe nichts als einen schwarzen Pudel;  
Es mag bei Euch wohl Augentäuschung sein.

*Faust.*

Mir scheint es, daß er magisch leise Schlingen  
Zu künft'gem Band um unsre Füße zieht.

*Wagner.*

Ich seh' ihn ungewiß und furchtsam uns umspringen,  
Weil er, statt seines Herrn, zwei Unbekannte sieht.

*Faust.*

Der Kreis wird eng, schon ist er nah!

*Wagner.*

Du siehst! ein Hund, und kein Gespenst ist da.  
Er knurrt und zweifelt, legt sich auf den Bauch.  
Er wedel. Alles Hundebrauch.

*Faust.*

Geselle dich zu uns! Komm hier!

(GF, l. 1152-1166)

Faust's initial response to seeing the dog indicates that the black poodle is circling in on him. The dog is tying a magical fiery band around his feet, gradually trapping or enclosing him in a ritualistic fashion. In the eyes of Wagner, however, it is just a well-trained dog looking for its owner – a perspective that Faust in the end somewhat

disappointedly agrees to.<sup>150</sup> The circling motion of the dog indicates a power relationship between this demonic figure and Faust that is similar to that in the first chapter of the Spies-book, where Faustus attempts to command the Devil, but in reality is being set up to be the Devil's subordinate: Both Faust figures are initially gradually being ensnared by Mephistophiles/Mephistopheles, one by being lured into believing that he can bend the Devil to his will, the other by being ritually encircled by the flame in the dog's wake. At least the latter himself initially believes that the dog's pattern is an ensnaring circular motion.

The first appearance of the hellish figure in Goethe's *Faust* is in other words in a literal sense accompanied by "viel Zirkel", as Thomas Mann's Adrian Leverkühn puts it (MDF, p. 721), referring to Spies's Faustus's ritual conjuration of the Devil in the Spessart woods.<sup>151</sup> This immediately establishes the context of Faust's understanding of Mephistopheles, which is a context consisting of magic, superstition, and ritual. However, the scene also emphasises the fact that this is Faust's aesthetic inclination, which he does not share with Wagner. Since the work is in dramatic form, and since there is no stage direction pointing to the dog's appearance, there is no narrator who can judge Faust's vision to be true or "falsch vnd der heyligen Schriffte zu wider" (HDF, p. 119). Peter Szondi points out in his dissertation, *Theorie des Modernen Dramas* (1956), that the drama, meaning a type of historically-situated stage play of which Goethe's dramatic production is exemplary,<sup>152</sup> is dialectic. In contrast to epic form, the drama has no narrator to which conflicts of this kind can be referred: Two actors deliver two versions of an

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<sup>150</sup> "Faust. Du hast wohl recht, ich finde nicht die Spur | Von einem Geist, und alles ist Dressur". (GF, I. 1172-1173)

<sup>151</sup> "In diesem Wald gegen Abend in einem vierigen Wegschied machte er mit einem Stab etliche Circkel herum / vnd neben zween / daß die zween / so oben stunden / in großen Circkel hinein giengen / Beschwure also den Teuffel in der Nacht / zwischen 9. vnnnd 10. Vhrn". (HDF, p. 15)

<sup>152</sup> "Den terminologischen Ausgangspunkt bildet so bloß der Begriff des Dramas. Als historischer steht er für eine literaturgeschichtliche Erscheinung, nämlich das Drama, wie es im elisabethanischen England, vor allem aber im Frankreich des seibzehnten Jahrhunderts entstand und in der deutschen Klassik weiterlebte". (Szondi 1969, p. 12)

appearance on stage, a thesis and an antithesis, if one will, and the appearance remains at this level of conflict without reaching a synthesis by virtue of an authoritative voice.<sup>153</sup> Furthermore, Szondi argues that the drama is “absolute”, meaning that there is nothing outside of the stage that the events on stage can refer to for clarification, including the playwright, who has instated dialogue, but who himself is silent.<sup>154</sup>

The consequences of the two incommensurable dogs in the *Vor dem Tor* scene are immensely meaningful to the play as a whole, since the question raised by the uncertain status of the dog will determine how Mephistopheles can be understood: If the absolute, dialectically instated world contained in Goethe’s drama is one where demonic dogs lay snares for apostate academics, it is also a world where he can enter into a formalised pact with a personified Devil who is external to the academic. The pact can then be understood to be governed by a law that has a guarantor who is also external to Faust. If, on the other hand, the dog’s appearance is hellish only because Faust perceives it as such, Karl Heinrich Huckle’s interpretation of the pact scene, wherein Mephistopheles is understood to be an aspect of Faust’s self, gains traction, and the pact is Faust’s promise to himself, without an external guarantor. This first encounter with the black dog relativises Faust’s concept of devilish magic and occult ritual by having the pragmatic Wagner interpret the dog’s behaviour entirely in another light:<sup>155</sup> One of them sees a demonic black dog with a wake of fire in the process of laying down a magical snare, while the other sees a slightly lost, slightly playful poodle; and there is no authoritative narrator who can mediate between them.

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<sup>153</sup> “Die Ganzheit des Dramas schließlich ist dialektischen Ursprungs. Sie entsteht nicht dank dem ins Werk hineinragenden epischen Ich, sondern durch die je und je geleistete und wieder ihrerseits zerstörte Aufhebung der zwischenmenschlichen Dialektik, die im Dialog Sprache wird. Auch in dieser letzten Hinsicht also ist der Dialog Träger des Dramas. Von der Möglichkeit des Dialogs hängt die Möglichkeit des Dramas ab.” (Szondi 1969, p. 19)

<sup>154</sup> “Das Drama ist absolut. Um reiner Bezug, das heißt: dramatisch sein zu können, muß es von allem ihm Äußerlichen abgelöst sein. Es kennt nichts außer sich. Der Dramatiker ist im Drama abwesend. Er spricht nicht, er hat Aussprache gestiftet.” (Szondi 1969, p. 15)

<sup>155</sup> At least the ritual is hidden from Wagner, making the word “occult”, from the Latin *occultus* (“hidden”), fitting.

As seen in the next interaction between Faust and Mephistopheles, after Faust has brought the poodle into his study, he retains an expectation of magic rituals to occur between them, and one such ritual is the pact ritual. Faust is the one who first introduces the idea that the two of them can enter into a pact:

*Faust.*  
 Die Hölle selbst hat ihre Rechte?  
 Das find' ich gut, da ließe sich ein Pakt,  
 Und sicher wohl, mit euch, ihr Herren, schließen?  
 (GF, l. 1413-1415)

A prerequisite for the pact, and for Mephistopheles's offer of a pact, is Faust's strong propensity towards magic rituals, apparent in his first encounter with the demonic figure in the shape of a dog. The old motifs are brought into the work by Faust, and, as a consequence, so is the old law of Hell that governs one of these motifs, namely the pact. The following identification of three different forms of reciprocal agreement will be built on this initial insight regarding Faust's inclination towards occult rituals, and the lack of any narrative instance that may substantiate or reject his vision of a hellish entity.

### 3.2.2 The First Type of Agreement: Mephistopheles Proposes to Faust

The first part of Goethe's *Faust* is established during one of its three prefacing scenes as a play with a plot emanating from an instigating act of exchanging conditional promises. This exchange of promises between Mephistopheles and the Lord in the *Prolog im Himmel* is prefigured not in the Faustian tradition, but in the book of Job, which is paraphrased in the Lord's first mention of the play's protagonist.<sup>156</sup> More than anything, this first wager establishes limitations for Mephistopheles's influence

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<sup>156</sup> "Der Herr. Kennst du den Faust? | Mephistopheles. Den Doktor? | Der Herr. Meinen Knecht!" (GF, l. 299); in the book of Job, 1,6-8: "Es begab sich aber auf einen Tag, da die Kinder Goettes kamen und vor den Herrn traten, kam der Satan auch unter ihnen. Der Herr aber sprach zu dem Satan: Wo kommst du her? Der Satan antwortete dem Herrn und sprach: Ich habe das Land umher durchzogen. Der Herr sprach zum Satan: Hast du nicht achtgehabt auf meinen Knecht Hiob?"

over Faust, while establishing a framework for the play's contents. Mephistopheles proposes a wager concerning Faust's piety towards the Lord:

*Mephistopheles.*

Was wettet Ihr? den sollt Ihr noch verlieren,  
Wenn Ihr mir die Erlaubnis gebt,  
Ihn meine Straße sacht zu führen!

*Der Herr.*

Solang' er auf der Erde lebt,  
Solange sei dir's nicht verboten.  
Es irrt der Mensch, solange' er strebt.

Mephistopheles. Da dank' ich Euch; denn mit den Toten  
Hab' ich mich niemals gern befangen. (GF, I. 312-319)

This exchange does not truly depict a wager, even though Mephistopheles vulgarly calls it one. There is no stake, and Mephistopheles is simply being informed of the futility of his striving, which has a predetermined outcome. Mephistopheles's question, "Was wettet Ihr?", is not answered. There are two points in this exchange that has a bearing on the pact motif as it develops throughout both parts of the play: First, Mephistopheles's intention is to lead the Lord's *Knecht* down his own path, and make him his *Knecht*. Second, Mephistopheles's power over Faust is limited to the doctor's life on earth, his existence within time, and he neither cares for nor is given power over Faust's *Unsterbliches*. The two parts of the play, which both take place within temporal, earthly existence, is completely in Mephistopheles's hands; but their framework in Heaven, both before the opening of the *Nacht* scene and after the closing of the *Grablegung* scene, are outside of his sphere of influence. This means that the agreement he enters into with Faust during the second of the two *Studierzimmer* scenes is also limited in this fashion, and concerns only Faust's existence within time – an interpretation that will find support in the following analysis of the minutiae of the pact motif in Goethe's *Faust*.

This delineation of what the pact motif is in Goethe's *Faust* will start with an identification of the various types of reciprocal agreements that are invoked during



the scene that may be called the pact scene.<sup>157</sup> The current initial task is simply to locate the pact motif: When Mephistopheles brings forth the physical document during the *Grablegung* scene of the second part of the tragedy, (GF, I. 11613) which frozen moment in time, and which formalised promise, is it that is brought back into view? This question will be given an answer in the following, through a tracing of the negotiations concerning various types of agreements that are described in the second *Studierzimmer* scene, which is the fourth scene in the first part of the play, not counting the three introductions. Faust and Mephistopheles here go through a staged arbitration, presenting at least three different proposals for an agreement, and finally agreeing on one, marking their agreement orally, with a symbolic action, and in writing. The old pact rituals will be identified as Faust's idea, and Mephistopheles will be seen to simply play along as part of the ongoing *Gaukelei* that the equivalent figure in Spies's *Historia* performs in order to seduce Faustus and turn him away from any righteous path. Seduction is Mephistopheles's overarching project, and this is revealed early during the second *Studierzimmer* scene.

The first reciprocal agreement that is suggested during this scene is not a pact with the Devil, but a betrothal. Mephistopheles at first proposes to Faust, in terms of marriage, immediately invoking the old ritual of *Teufelsbuhlschaft*: He suggests that Faust may walk with him through life, united ("vereint") with the spirit. In return for Faust pledging this, Mephistopheles will be "his", he will belong to Faust:

*Mephistopheles.*  
 Ich bin keiner von den Großen;  
 Doch willst du mit mir vereint  
 Deine Schritte durchs Leben nehmen,  
 So will ich mich gern bequemen,  
 Dein zu sein, auf der Stelle.  
 Ich bin dein Geselle,

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<sup>157</sup> This designation, often used to describe the second *Studierzimmer* scene, is here used slightly prematurely on the informed assumption that there is a pact in Goethe's *Faust*. Geza von Molnár points out the perceived contradiction between the designation "pact scene" and the prevailing idea that there is no pact: "Viel Verschiedenes ist zur 'Paktszene' und über sie geschrieben worden, doch herrscht seit jeher kein Zweifel darüber, daß ihr eigentümlicher Wert gerade darin liegt, daß sie keine ist. Kein Pakt, sondern eine Wette wird in ihr abgeschlossen (...)" (Molnár 1988, p. 29).

Und mach' ich dir's recht,  
Bin ich dein Diener, bin dein Knecht!  
(GF, I. 1641-1648)

There is clearly an erotic subtext in this first offer of an agreement. The verb "vereinen" is used comparably during Goethe's description of the famously eroticised companions Achilles and Patroclus in the unfinished hexametric epic poem "Achilleis",<sup>158</sup> there by the hero mourning the death of Patroclus.<sup>159</sup> The first pact that is suggested is a marriage pact, a reciprocal agreement to be bound to one another for the duration of one's earthly existence: Mephistopheles suggests that Faust may walk with him through life. Mephistopheles's initial offer is not only to be united with Faust, but also to be subservient to him: He offers to be his companion, his servant, and his "Knecht". This last term, "Knecht", is a carrying theme throughout Faust's negotiations with Mephistopheles in the second *Studierzimmer* scene, which, entirely in accordance with the pact chapters in Spies's *Historia*, more than anything concerns who will be whose "Knecht", and who will serve whom.

The close relation between *Teufelsbuhlschaft* and pact with the Devil in this first proposal of Mephistopheles's is reiterated and reinforced during the *Walpurgisnacht* scene. Mephistopheles there introduces Faust to young, naked witches, as well as old, wisely covered ones, in a highly sensual passage ending with the implication that Faust's effortless enjoyment of the witches will represent a renewal of their pact.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> The erotic undertones of Achilles's relation to Patroclus can be said to have been discussed since the fifth century B.C.; Aeschylus has a scene which is similar to Goethe's epic poem in that it describes Achilles's speech before the dead body of Patroclus, in which the hero identifies himself as the lover, and Patroclus the beloved, in an erotic relationship, while Plato lets Phaedrus express the same view in *Symposion*, but with opposite roles (Achilles as the beloved) (Mariscal & Morales 2003).

<sup>159</sup> "Denn mich soll, vereint mit meinem Freunde Patroklos, / Ehren ein herrlicher Hügel, am hohen Gestade des Meeres / Aufgerichtet, den Völkern und künftigen Zeiten ein Denkmal" (Goethe 2000b, p. 516).

<sup>160</sup> David Ball (1986) makes a note of this erotic aspect of the agreement, speaking of similarities between Adrian Leverkühn's pact with the Devil in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* and Goethe's Faust's pact (p. 96).

*Mephistopheles.*

Da seh' ich junge Hexchen nackt und bloß,  
 Und alte, die sich klug verhüllen.  
 Seid freundlich, nur um meinetwillen;  
 Die Müh' ist klein, der Spaß ist groß.  
 Ich höre was von Instrumenten tönen!  
 Verflucht Geschnarr! Man muß sich dran gewöhnen.  
 Komm mit! Komm mit! Es kann nicht andres sein,  
 Ich tret' heran und führe dich herein,  
 Und ich verbinde dich aufs neue.  
 (GF, I. 4046-4054)

Through intercourse with the witches, Mephistopheles will bind Faust again. Besides being an erotically-charged proposal from Mephistopheles, the notion of being united with the spirit bears a wider significance in the context of their negotiation in the second *Studierzimmer* scene. It implies that Faust will gain some of the spirit's character traits. The process that drives Faust's companionship with Mephistopheles throughout the first part of the drama is a gradual transformation of Faust: At the closing of the *Wald und Höhle* scene, Mephistopheles remarks that the doctor has come a long way towards being "eingeteufelt".<sup>161</sup> Faust's "Einteufung" starts with Mephistopheles in the shape of a dog running in circles around Faust and Wagner in the scene "Vor dem Tor", gradually enclosing them in a fiery spiral, and it continues not only as the spirit has Faust drink the magical potion in the *Hexenküche* scene, but also through the various misdeeds and crimes that Faust performs. This endeavour of Mephistopheles's, to make Faust more devilish, hails back to his understanding of the original wager with the Lord in the *Prolog im Himmel*: Mephistopheles's task is to lead Faust down his own path.<sup>162</sup> "Vereinen", which is the spirit's first proposal, does not only signify the tying together of two companions by an accord, but also ritual erotic unification with the Devil and an accompanying transference of traits and inclinations. Mephistopheles may appear to offer to be Faust's "Knecht", but his wager in Heaven has already dictated that his project is to make Faust, who is already

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<sup>161</sup> "Es lebe, wer sich tapfer hält! | Du bist doch sonst so ziemlich eingeteufelt" (GF, I. 3371).

<sup>162</sup> "*Mephistopheles*. Was wettet Ihr? den sollt Ihr noch verlieren, | Wenn Ihr mir die Erlaubnis gebt, | Ihn meine Straße sacht zu führen!" (GF, I. 312-313).

the Lord's "Knecht", his own, and this endeavour consists in making Faust more like himself. He arrives in Faust's study during the second *Studierzimmer* scene with an invitation for Faust to dress similarly to himself: in a notably worldly, and devilishly fire-coloured, garb, indicating that this attire would set Faust free and allow him to experience "what life is".<sup>163</sup> If Faust dons Mephistopheles's clothing, his mental inclinations will change; he will proceed in his "Einteufung", and will gradually move towards becoming one with the spirit, in other words being united with Mephistopheles.

Mephistopheles's "ich verbinde dich aufs neue" is a demand directed at Faust for the doctor to unilaterally bind himself. If Mephistopheles is trying to make Faust bind himself to the spirit, his reasoning during the "pact scene" is not entirely dissimilar to the reasoning behind the written pact in the *Historia*, which has been seen to be a one-sided pledge of Faustus's body and soul to the Devil. Mephistopheles from Spies's book also wants Faustus to bind himself, and this is the effect of the written component of his pact.

### 3.2.3 The Second Type of Agreement: The Old Pact

"Verbinde dich" is also Mephistopheles's encouragement in line 1672, just as he has informed Faust of the conditions of his proposed pact. This pact is the second reciprocal agreement that is discussed during the second *Studierzimmer* scene, and it can be seen as modelled on the old pact as it is found in the Spies-book: It is an exchange of Mephistopheles's servitude "here" for Faust's servitude "over there". Faust insists on hearing the payment for Mephistopheles's services:

*Faust.*

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<sup>163</sup> "Mephistopheles. (...) Denn dir die Grillen zu verjagen, | Bin ich als edler Junker hier, | In rotem, goldverbrämten Kleide, | Das Mäntelchen von starrer Seide, | Die Hahnenfeder auf dem Hut, | Mit einem langen spitzen Degen, | Und rate nun dir, kurz und gut, | Dergleichen gleichfalls anzulegen; | Damit du, losgebunden, frei, | Erfahrest, was das Leben sei". (GF, I. 1534-1543)

Und was soll ich dagegen dir erfüllen?

*Mephistopheles.*

Dazu hast du noch eine lange Frist.

*Faust.*

Nein, nein! der Teufel ist ein Egoist  
Und tut nicht leicht um Gottes willen,

Was einem andern nützlich ist.

Sprich die Bedingung deutlich aus;

Ein solcher Diener bringt gefahr ins Haus.

*Mephistopheles.*

Ich will mich hier zu deinem Dienst verbinden,

Auf deinen Wink nicht rasten und nicht ruhn;

Wenn wir uns drüben wiederfinden,

So sollst du mir das gleiche tun.

*Faust.*

Das drüben kann mich wenig kümmern

Schlägst du erst diese Welt zu Trümmern,

Die andre mag darnach entstehn.

Aus dieser Erde quillen meine Freuden,

Und diese Sonne scheint meinen Leiden;

Kann ich mich erst von ihnen scheiden,

Dann mag, was will und kann, geschehn.

Davon will ich nichts weiter hören,

Ob man auch künftig haßt und liebt,

Und ob es auch in jenen Sphären

Ein Oben oder Unten gibt.

*Mephistopheles.*

In diesem Sinne kanst du's wagen.

Verbinde dich; du sollst, in diesen Tagen,

Mit Freuden meine Künste sehn,

Ich gebe dir, was noch kein Mensch gesehn.

(GF, l. 1649-1674)

Mephistopheles's offer is only presented after Faust has asked him to clarify the expected payment for the spirit's services. Faust is in Goethe's drama a Renaissance scholar who is familiar with the character that he believes that he is dealing with, a spirit of lies and murder,<sup>164</sup> and he expects that the spirit will require something in

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<sup>164</sup> In the first Studierzimmer scene, Faust names Mephistopheles "Fliegengott, Verderber, Lügner" (GF, l. 1333) and "Sohn der Hölle" (GF, l. 1397). The hebraic "Beelzebub", which is a biblical designation for the Devil in two books of the New Testament (Matt. 10,25; 12,24; 12,27; Mark. 3,22), translates into "god of flies" or "Fliegengott", while "Verderber" is an epithet tied to the Devil in Exodus 12,23; 2. Samuel 24,16; Jeremiah 6,26 and 1. Corinth. 10,10. (See Trunz 2002, p. 533) "Lügner" is also one of the Devil's primary characteristics in Spies's *Historia*. Faust believes that he has before him Mephistopheles of the *Historia*, and as such, he expects the outcome of their interaction to be a pact sealed according to the laws of Hell.

return for his service. As Faust himself believes that he has come to a realisation of who the spirit is during the first *Studierzimmer* scene, he immediately suggests that perhaps it would be possible to enter into a pact with Mephistopheles, and he is still under the impression that this is the spirit's function. Faust expects his interaction with a Devil to end in a symmetrical bilateral agreement, a pact, and Mephistopheles plays along: He first downplays the importance of Faust's payment for his services, stating that the payment is still far in the future. Faust, however, insists on having explained to him the full extent of the pact, asking Mephistopheles to express the condition clearly, while in reality, there is no condition. Mephistopheles wants to make Faust his companion, to ensure that Faust "binds himself" to him, and lead him through the world that he knows. Service and payment are inseparable. Faust, however, sees a traditional devil figure in the spirit, and employs his knowledge of Renaissance devils to negotiate a favourable agreement.

Mephistopheles does not require any explicitly-formulated payment for his services, at least not until Faust insists on hearing the condition for his pact, because the spirit does not intend to purchase the doctor's soul, but rather to effect a change in him. It is Faust's preconceived idea that interactions with the Devil begin with "viel Zirkel" and result in hellish pacts, in which one must pay dearly, that drives the pact motif forward during the second *Studierzimmer* scene. Mephistopheles delivers exactly what Faust asks for, presenting to the doctor a reciprocal hellish pact, with only a slight and very subtle variation from the pact with the Devil that Spies's doctor enters into, introduced as an uncertainty arising from his use of the equivocal word "wenn" in line 1658: Faust shall allow Mephistopheles to serve him "here", that is, during Faust's existence within time, and in return Faust will serve Mephistopheles *wenn*, if and when, they meet again "over there". At first glance, this does not seem to differ significantly from Spies's pact. The Faustian pact with the Devil is at its core an exchange of services and an establishment of a hierarchy. The matter is, however, confounded in line 1658, as Mephistopheles sketches the doctor's future service "over there". Not only does the spirit use the ambiguous word "wenn", which has a conditional and a temporal meaning, but he also points very vaguely to the place at

which the two may meet again. While “wenn” traditionally has been read in the temporal sense,<sup>165</sup> meaning “when”, and “drüben” was once understood to “obviously” mean Hell,<sup>166</sup> these interpretations can be challenged with more recent insights into the Devil’s position in late eighteenth-century literature.

Reading “wenn” temporally seems at first to be a very reasonable approach, with a very clear motivation. If the word “wenn” is understood in the conditional sense, that is, if it is taken to mean “if”, then Faust’s salvation or damnation seems to be not influenced by this pact or by the written document that he produces and signs, provided that this document points back to this proposal by Mephistopheles. The pact itself, in that case, contains a conditional statement that is dependent on the Lord’s judgment, and consequently it would be irrelevant to ask whether or not Mephistopheles loses the wager in the end; Mephistopheles’s return to the written document in the *Grablegung* scene of the second part of the play would be meaningless, because the spirit has from the start deferred judgment to the Lord. In other words, the performativity of Faust’s pact is greatly diminished, as it does not irrefutably consign Faust to Mephistopheles’ servitude. It merely binds Mephistopheles to Faust, and describes a point of fact that does not require an elaborately-executed pact to reinforce: If one goes to Hell, one serves the Devil. Within the perspective that is being developed here, however, the word may retain its conditional uncertainty, since Mephistopheles is not trying to barter for Faust’s soul, but uses the Renaissance doctor’s expectation for this type of exchange as a means to tie the doctor to him. Faust refuses to believe that Mephistopheles’s service has no cost, and so the spirit conforms to his preconceived idea of how interactions with the Devil proceed.

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<sup>165</sup> “Like most critics who discuss at all the meaning of ‘wenn’ in 1. 1658, I take it as temporal, not conditional” (Hohlfeld 1921, p. 523). Hermann Weigand (1961) offers a different opinion, as he sees Mephistopheles’s original meaning of the word to be purely temporal, but, coloured by Faust’s wager, it subsequently gains a conditional uncertainty that the reader may make use of.

<sup>166</sup> “Selbstverständlich die Hölle” (Müller 1912, p. 321).

Albert Daur (1950) has proposed a reading which is in line with Peter-André Alt's (2008) understanding of the dubious position that devils and demonic figures occupy in eighteenth century German language literature.<sup>167</sup> Daur understands "wenn" both in the conditional and the temporal sense: If and when. The conditional uncertainty does not concern Faust's salvation or damnation, but rather reflects Mephistopheles's own doubts that there is a "drüben" at all.<sup>168</sup> Jean Paul described the Devil's disproof of his own existence using Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* in his *Baierische Kreuzerkomödie* in 1791, and a similar profoundly ironic appearance of a devilish figure is more than plausible in Goethe's drama. "Over there" is, after all, the location that both characters that are about to enter into a pact with one another care the least about. Faust's immediate response to Mephistopheles's proposal is that "Das drüben kann mich wenig kümmern", and that he wants to hear nothing further of whether there is an "above" and a "below" in "those spheres". Mephistopheles has also already stated during the *Prolog im Himmel* that he cares little for the dead.<sup>169</sup> One enigma that will be explored in the following is Mephistopheles's indignation when Faust's *Unsterbliches* is lifted away during the second part's *Grablegung* scene, which seems paradoxical in light of his apparent lack of concern for the dead. Mephistopheles ends up producing Faust's material pledge, his "blutgeschriebnen Titel" (GF, l. 11613), before the doctor's dead body, expecting it to prevent the outcome that the second part of the drama has, and ensure that the doctor's spirit will belong to him in a heavily implied "over there". At least two conceptions of the Devil are at play here: The symbolic, allegorical Devil who may doubt or even disprove his own existence, and the eater of souls at whom Luther once threw an inkwell, and who bargains for Faust's soul.

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<sup>167</sup> Alt's history of the Devil's aesthetic appearance is discussed in 1.3.

<sup>168</sup> "Wenn hat, nach Mephistos Sprechart tief ironisch, ungewissen Sinn, weil es sich auf die Zeit wie auf die Möglichkeit des Wiederfindens – da Mephisto ja auch seine eigne Existenz ironisiert – beziehen kann (...)" (Daur 1950, p. 61)

<sup>169</sup> "*Der Herr*. Solang' er auf der Erde lebt, | Solange sei dir's nicht verboten. | Es irrt der Mensch solang' er strebt. | *Mephistopheles*. Da dank' ich Euch; denn mit den Toten | Hab' ich mich niemals gern befangen". (GF, l. 315-319)



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So far, two types of reciprocal agreement have been identified: Betrothal, or erotically charged unification, and a pact with the Devil that, aside from its ironical conditional uncertainty, conforms to the pattern that is found in Faust's literary history before Goethe. The latter simply entails trading one's body and soul for the Devil's services. The symmetrical pact, however, does not replace Mephistopheles's initial proposal; it contains articles that conform to Faust's formal and aesthetic requirements, for the benefit of Faust. The doctor adds to this another form of reciprocal agreement, which readers of the work are very much inclined to regard as a replacement of this symmetrical exchange of services: The wager.

### **3.2.4 The Third Type of Agreement: Faust's Wager**

The final type of two-sided agreement that is proposed during the pact scene is presented by Faust. So far, the two other proposals have been demonstrated to be closely intertwined rather than a progression through various types of agreement, as was the case in Spies's *Historia*, and the following will suggest that the wager does not replace the other two proposals, but is a continuation of them, a reformulation of the initial proposal by Mephistopheles. Despite the fact that the pact Mephistopheles proposes is two-sided, and despite the fact that Mephistopheles's servitude is most clearly defined in it, he replies to Faust's short soliloquy concerning the "over there" and his lack of concern for whether or not there is a Heaven and a Hell in lines 1660-1670 with an encouragement for the doctor to "bind himself" ("verbinde dich"). The original erotically-suggestive proposal, the process of Faust's "Einteufung", is still Mephistopheles's primary purpose: This is, as shown, the meaning behind Mephistopheles's use of the word "verbinden". "Over there" does not matter, and neither does Faust's payment for services rendered, because Mephistopheles still primarily wishes to make Faustus more like himself. "Verbinde dich", Mephistopheles's initial suggestion, is a one-sided proposal, while the reciprocal pact is presented in response to Faust's explicit expectation that a reciprocal pact will be

the outcome of his interaction with a figure that he identifies as a Renaissance Devil, a “Fliegengott” and “Verderber” (GF, l. 1333).

It may appear that Faust replies to Mephistopheles’s proposal for an exchange of services with a counterproposal, and this is indeed how the next few lines have been understood. Faust introduces a condition to their agreement, and he calls it a wager. This he does in two separate speeches, which are set apart from one another by a line of dialogue that indicates a particular type of handshake has taken place. This wager is very well known: If Mephistopheles can appease Faust, and end his striving through flattery and lies, then Faust will lose the wager:

*Faust.*

Werd’ ich beruhigt je mich auf ein Faulbett legen,  
So sei es gleich um mich getan!  
Kannst du mich schmeichelnd je belügen,  
Daß ich mir selbst gefallen mag,  
Kannst du mich mit Genuß betrügen,  
Das sei für mich der letzte Tag!  
Die Wette biet’ ich!

*Mephistopheles.*

Topp!

*Faust.*

Und Schlag auf Schlag!  
Werd’ ich zum Augenblicke sagen:  
Verweile doch! du bist so schön!<sup>170</sup>  
Dann magst du mich in Fesseln schlagen,  
Dann will ich gern zugrunde gehn!  
Dann mag die Totenglocke schallen,  
Dann bist du deine Dienstes frei,  
Die Uhr mag stehn, der Zeiger fallen,  
Es sei die Zeit für mich vorbei!  
(GF, l. 1692-1706)

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<sup>170</sup> Karl Heinrich Huckle’s (2008b, p. 226) very convincing interpretation of this line is that the lingering moment is one that may be scrutinized and judged, as opposed to the unhindered flow of events that Mephistopheles tries to keep up in Faust’s trajectory. When Faust finally lingers on a moment, he may be judged, or may judge himself, morally, and vice versa: only when a moment is judged morally is it given duration. Judgment presupposes an ability to give the moment duration – an ability that Goethe bestows only on man in the poem “Das Göttliche”: “Nur allein der Mensch | Vermag das Unmögliche: | Er unterscheidet, | Wählet und richtet; | Er kann dem Augenblick | Dauer verleihen” (Goethe 2000a, p. 148). “Beharren” prepares the grounds not only for choice and deliberation, but also for moral judgment.

However, what happens when Faust loses the wager? Both of Faust's blocks of dialogue, separated by what is undoubtedly a bilateral symbolic action (l. 1698), concern time: First, he states that the moment at which he is satisfied with himself, and has let Mephistopheles deceive him with pleasure, will mark his final day. Then, he utters a list of temporally-motivated statements: If Faust wants the moment to linger, and finds it beautiful, then, at that time, may Mephistopheles lock him in chains, then he will perish, the death bells will toll, and the spirit will be free of his service. Four lines start with the word "dann", and following these is a concluding description of the end of time, of the moment at which clocks stop counting minutes.<sup>171</sup> In short, when Faust ends his striving, the pact reaches an end point. This is prefigured in Faust's response to Mephistopheles's indication that he will be required to serve "drüben" in lines 1665-1666: "Kann ich mich erst von ihnen [the earth and the sun] scheiden, | Dann mag, was will und kann, geschehn." The earth and the sun are the bases of temporality: One's revolution around the other recalls one of the oldest means of measuring time. The moment of Faust's separation from his temporal existence is dependent on his momentary appeasement and thus the end of his striving. Faust says nothing of what comes after the moment of his departure from the temporal sphere of existence, and why should he, since he cares little for the beyond. Spies's Faustus is given twenty-four years with his hellish servant, while Goethe's Faust is given the span of his life, which will be extended for as long as he

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<sup>171</sup> This is not a new insight; Ada M. Klett (1939) lists the question of whether Faust wagers his immortal soul or only his temporal existence as one of four main areas of disagreement regarding the wager. She found that a majority of scholars believed the first to be the case (she lists amongst others the English translator Sir George William Buchanan, Landsberg (1903), Witkowski (1923)), while a handful of scholars (Pospischil (1902), Harnach (1902), Michels (1906)) believe that the wager only concerns Faust's physical body (Klett 1939, pp. 61-62). It is telling that Scholz (2011) does not mention this conflict during his recounting of the pact motif's history of research; presumably not because an answer has been found, but because the question is exhausted with no conclusive answer having been found. One is left choosing between two equally defensible, but contradictory, standpoints. This is also Klett's conclusion concerning whether Faust wins or loses the wager: "Keiner der drei Beweise (...) ist völlig eindeutig, keiner ist im ganzen genommen überzeugender als die beiden andern. Man muß sich wohl dabei beruhigen, daß die Dichtung zu einer verstandesmäßig eindeutigen Klärung der Frage keine Handhabe bietet" (Klett 1939, p. 70). Klett's three other identified areas of discussion are: What are the conditions for Faust's loss of the wager, are these conditions fulfilled in the end, and does the wager correspond with the conditions of Mephistopheles's agreement with the Lord in the prologue in Heaven?

keeps striving. It would not make sense to stipulate a time-frame of twenty-four years in this work, since Goethe's *Faust*, in contrast to Spies's *Historia*, does not contain clear temporal markers related to the microcosm of Faust's life; the second part of the play goes through historical periods spanning three thousand years, while the passage of time is unclearly designated in the first part. In the Spies-book, time is very dutifully measured in years, months and even hours, evident in the chapters leading up to the pact, and in the narrator's repeated return to the number of years that at any given point in Faustus's life has passed since the pact was finalised. The passage of time is a vital narrative device in Spies's book, while the careful measuring of twenty-four years would fit Goethe's *Faust* very poorly.

The condition of Faust's wager has a function similar to the twenty-four years that Spies's Faustus is given, but it does not necessarily replace the original exchange of services that Mephistopheles proposed, which once again was nothing other than a means to make Faust "bind himself" to the spirit. The final two lines in Faust's wager (1705, 1706) describe the end point of the pact, which is also the end of time, or the end of Faust's existence within time – in other words, his death. At that specific time, says Faust, the death-bells shall toll, and Mephistopheles shall be free of his service. This line of reasoning has two consequences: Faust's life is not forfeit until he loses the wager, and Mephistopheles will be his servant up to that point. This indicates that Faust shall live on, and that Mephistopheles shall remain his servant, until the day Faust finally achieves an adequate aesthetic experience within the confines of his earthly existence. Of course, nowhere is the possibility excluded of Faust dying for other reasons before his momentary happiness is achieved, but neither is the traditional timeframe of twenty-four years included. If the idea was to change the pact to a wager of the type that can be won or lost, a set timeframe would facilitate this: As long as the time-frame of the wager is determined by one of the parties losing, the wager only has one possible outcome. Faust's winning the bet would require Mephistopheles to give up, as no end point is specified other than Faust's satisfaction. The wager is only discontinued when Mephistopheles inevitably wins.

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The agreement between Faust and Mephistopheles can be understood as an exchange of services with a time-frame that is determined by the condition in Faust's wager. It seems reasonable, then, to infer that the pact may indeed be understood as a pact, and not a winnable wager, or that it is not replaced by Faust's wager. Some interpretative challenges are laid to rest if this viewpoint is adopted. Erich Trunz, who believes the wager to have replaced Mephistopheles's initial proposal, and who also holds that the exchange of services is not part of the agreement, has stated that the agreement cannot be viewed as an "ordinary" wager, that it is somewhere between pact and wager, because Mephistopheles offers nothing in return for Faust's stake.<sup>172</sup> Only Faust has something to lose, so it is not a true wager, argues Trunz. They both may expect the outcome to be what it ends up being, that is, they both may expect Faust to lose, which would explain why Mephistopheles offers nothing in return. If it indeed is a wager, it is a wager where only one party has something to lose, and where the outcome is taken for granted. Albrecht Schöne offers a different view on the second of these two points, as he claims that Faust in fact does not expect to lose the wager. Faust believes everything Mephistopheles has to offer is hollow and insubstantial, something Schöne infers from Faust's scathing monologue concerning fleeting joys in lines 1678-1687 ("Doch hast du Speise, die nicht sättigt (...)" ), and so Mephistopheles will be unable to sate Faust. This reading is in accordance with one major motivation behind wagers as such, namely expressing confidence in some matter of dispute: Faust is willing to bet his immortal soul that Mephistopheles cannot sate him, clearly expecting not to lose the wager. Géza von Molnár has discovered a section in Goethe's copy of Immanuel Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* where Goethe has marked a passage containing this very insight. The line in Kant's book marked by Goethe is: "der gewöhnliche Proberstein, ob etwas bloße Überredung, oder subjektive Überzeugung, d.i. festes Glauben sei, was jemand behauptet, ist das Wetten" (Kant quoted in Molnár 1988, p. 38). Here, the willingness

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<sup>172</sup> "Bei einer gewöhnlichen Wette sind beide Partner erst dann zu etwas verpflichtet, wenn das erwartete Ereignis eingetreten ist und sich dadurch zeigt, wer recht hatte; dann muß der Verlierer dem Gewinner etwas geben, der Einsatz ist für beide gleich". (Trunz 2002, p. 540)

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to enter into a wager marks the difference between a pragmatic persuasion and a true conviction.

It may be plausible that Faust's wager expresses confidence, but it would still be impossible for the doctor to win the wager that he sketches. Continued striving is only possible in life, and his ultimate "beharren" is inevitable. Perhaps Faust is confident that Mephistopheles will never be able to appease him, and perhaps Mephistopheles is equally confident that he will be, but they still agree on an exchange of Mephistopheles's servitude during Faust's earthly existence for Faust's servitude if and when they find one another in the beyond. Goethe's Doctor Faust enters into a traditional pact with Mephistopheles, believing that he exchanges his future condemnation for an extension of his abilities during his existence within time through the services that Mephistopheles provides. Even his reasoning is in accordance with the old Faustus's: He, like Spies's Faustus, who "meynet der Teuffel wer nit so schwartz / als man ihn mahlet / noch die Hell so heiß / wie mann davon sagte / etc.» (HDF, p. 21), offers little thought to the afterlife: "Over there" or the beyond simply does not concern him. The pact has an end point which is determined by the condition in the wager that Faust proposes. The repetition of the word "servant" (GF, l. 1648, 1655, 1689, 1713, 1704)<sup>173</sup> in Faust's and Mephistopheles's descriptions of the latter's role in relation to the former throughout their negotiations in the second *Studierzimmer* scene reinforces this point: Mephistopheles pledges to be Faust's servant, but only after Faust has introduced the idea of a reciprocal pact.

Faust implicitly demands a pact by requiring Mephistopheles to formulate Faust's payment for the spirit's services, and he modifies this pact with a condition that expresses confidence that Mephistopheles will be unable to fulfill his desires. The pact is this: Mephistopheles will serve Faust for the duration of Faust's existence

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<sup>173</sup> Additionally, Mephistopheles is «dienstlich» when Faust demands to see Gretchen in the scene *Straße*. (GF, l. 2664)

within time, the span of which is determined by Faust's conditional addition.<sup>174</sup> When Faust dies, following his momentary appeasement, he will serve Mephistopheles in a vaguely determined "over there", provided there is an "over there". At the point of entering into the agreement, Mephistopheles himself is uninterested in this outdated formality, but acquiesces to Faust's expectation for a hellish, ritualised pact. History of research into the pact motif has shown that the audience has shared Faust's tradition-influenced understanding: The two-hundred year long quibble over who wins the wager is based on a mode of reading that is adopted from Spies's present time, and that Faust himself embodies within the work. However, as soon as the pact is formalised, and the agreement turned into writing, it undergoes a transformation: The material document, while built on subterfuge, takes on a life of its own, and at the end of the second part of the play, even Mephistopheles seems to expect its structure of promises, adopted from a different time, to be honoured.

### 3.2.5 Mephistopheles, the Eater of Souls

A strong counter-argument to the idea that Mephistopheles invokes the old pact motif simply for the benefit of Faust exists in four lines of dialogue that have been taken to indicate that Mephistopheles really is bargaining for Faust's soul during the second *Studierzimmer* scene. Albrecht Schöne (2003) has taken these four lines to be an indication that Mephistopheles's self-professed disinterest in the dead is subterfuge, and that the evil spirit in fact still, albeit intermittently, is the soul-eating Renaissance Devil who more than anything desires the imprisonment of Faust's *Unsterbliches*. This would imply that there really is a condition in Mephistopheles's proposal, that it

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<sup>174</sup> This is only a slight moderation of Karl Eibl's proposal: "Der Inhalt des Paktes (...) ist dieser: 'Ich will mich hier zu deinem Dienst verbinden, / Auf deinen Wink nicht rasten und nicht ruhn; / Wenn wir uns drüben wieder finden, / So sollst du mir das Gleiche tun'" (Eibl 2004, p. 5). This is also in line with Hermann Weigand's (1961) understanding of the pact's contents, although the path to this conclusion must not necessarily be paved with Weigand's misplaced demand for temporal accountability. The latter believes that there is not enough time during the pact scene for a written document to be created, so it must have been written by Mephistopheles beforehand.

is an economical exchange of soul for services, and that the spirit meets Faust with a preconceived plan that has as its end point the enslaving of the doctor's immortal soul. Consequently, Mephistopheles appears as a Renaissance pact-offering Devil not because this is what Faust expects of him, but because this is his stable, unchanging identity. These four lines do however present a significant methodical problem that must be addressed before their relation to the pact or wager that Faust and Mephistopheles enter into can be determined: Some time before the publication of *Faust I* in 1808, they were removed from the work by Goethe, and they reach the reader in the form of *paralipomena*, omitted passages of text that are printed along with the work, but not as part of the work, in some scholarly editions.

The four lines cast a very particular light on the pact motif, because in them, Mephistopheles reveals what Schöne regards as his true intention, which is to entrap, and even consume, Faust's soul:

Mein Freund wenn je der Teufel dein begehrt  
Begehrt er dein auf eine Andre Weise  
Dein Fleisch und Blut ist wohl und schon etwas werth  
Allein die Seel ist unsre rechte Speise. (Schöne 2003a, p. 544)

In these lines, Mephistopheles dons the attire of a soul-consuming Devil. While he shows a limited interest in the doctor's physical body, his primary motivation is to secure the servitude of Faust "over there". Schöne believes that while these lines are omitted, the message expressed through them still reflect Mephistopheles's plans: "So unverhohlen redet er hier nicht mehr, aber so denkt und plant er offensichtlich noch immer" (Schöne 2003b, p. 262). The interpretative consequences of this statement by Schöne are significant: He indicates that Mephistopheles has a clearly-defined plan, and that the spirit envisions an end point to his companionship with Faust that conforms to his proposed pact in lines 1656-1659. Furthermore, the conditional uncertainty in "Wenn wir uns Drüben wiederfinden" is dissolved, from Mephistopheles's perspective; he is robbed of his ironic self-annihilation, and is eagerly expecting his reunion with Faust "over there". If there is conditional uncertainty in "wenn", it concerns the possibility of the Lord's mercy despite Faust's



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unholy pact; a possibility that has been identified in other works containing pacts with the Devil.

These four lines present a challenge because they also can serve as indications to the antithesis to Schöne's thesis. Omitted text can be used as a textual negative, since the reason for their omission is often unidentifiable. In an abstract to his recent article on the conception of the Devil in Goethe's *Faust*, Peter-André Alt, commenting on a different set of omitted lines that make up an unfinished black mass scene, states that "[t]he paralipomena show that Goethe considered making evil into an independent principle, but abandoned the idea" (Alt 2011). In his reading, Alt finds it "telling that Goethe decided to withhold from contemporary audiences a narrative so focused on presenting evil", and speaks of Goethe's "self-censoring" (Alt 2011, p. 161). Alt argues that Goethe purposely obscured the evil principle, and regards the removed, or never finished, scene as strongly indicating the willed lack of a clearly defined evil principle in the work. In other words, Alt regards omissions as textual negatives; they express ideas abandoned by the author of the work.

These two approaches to omitted material are obviously incommensurable, unless some tertiary indication can be found that proves that one set of lines was removed because it stated too clearly something that should be hidden, while another contradicted the presentation of evil within the work. Such an indication is unlikely to be discovered. While the *Historia* can be said to present a dual carrying theme or intention, Goethe's *Faust* does not say one thing. In fact, if a reader turns to other statements made by its author concerning a unified idea behind the work, the notion that the work is heterogeneous rather than homogeneous would be strengthened: Goethe once famously referred to his *Faust* as "eine Schwammfamilie" (letter from Goethe to Schiller, 1. July 1797), a family of sponges growing from the same soil but with otherwise unrelated individual parts.<sup>175</sup> Furthermore, according to his assistant

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<sup>175</sup> Few would contest the fact that both Part One and Two of Goethe's *Faust*, published in 1808 and 1832 respectively, are heterogeneous in style as well as in content and theme. In contrast, Johann Spies's *Faustbook* is designed with the dual purpose of entertainment and moral education, and the latter thematic vein can be conceived as a unidirectional presentation of a specific warning directed

Eckermann, he stated on May 6th 1827 that the more incommensurable and unfathomable a work of poetry is, the better: “je inkommensurabler und für den Verstand unfasslicher eine poetische Produktion, desto besser”. Considering these “Schwammfamilie”-poetics, Mephistopheles’s four omitted lines can be regarded as sponges that have been picked and put aside for some reason; either to give other sponges better conditions, or because they were worm-eaten and undesirable.

The term most widely applied in German research literature to omissions of this kind, is *paralipomena*. The Greek *παράλειπω* translates into [I] *leave unnoticed, pass over, neglect or leave for someone*. The omissions of Goethe’s *Faust* have in no way been neglected, left unnoticed or passed over. They have been objects of scrutiny since they were published alongside the work itself in the Weimar edition of Goethe’s complete works (1887-1919), but this does not mean that they were left *for* someone. Three major commented editions of *Faust* from the twentieth century – Albrecht Schöne’s, Erich Trunz’s and Ulrich Gaier’s – all include a significant number of these omissions, while their respective commentators implement these in their readings to varying degrees. The question that impacts an understanding of the four omitted lines spoken by Mephistopheles is whether or not these lines, or the ideas they convey, have been left for someone to find, or if they are purposely censored.

Meyer’s *Enzyklopädisches Lexikon* defines the word *paralipomena* as descriptive of pieces of text which are either not taken into consideration or actively

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towards the proud and the curious. Because paratextual elements such as the title page of the work, as well as both of the two prefaces, state this objective, an intention of the work is established, against which every line and chapter can be compared. Each chapter, paragraph or line may then be judged to be in accordance with or contrary to the pervading idea of the work. Goethe’s *Faust*, however, does not have a discernible single carrying theme or idea to serve as a point of departure for analysis. No unifying principle may be discovered. The problem is confounded by the vast amount of available material not included in the final printed versions of the two works, but written by the same author on the same theme and motif, such as the publication of *Faust. Ein Fragment* in 1790, the discovery in 1887 of the early draft later named *Urfaust*, the vast amount of available omitted passages, and Goethe’s extensive correspondence concerning his plans and ideas for the Faust material, as well as his autobiographical *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (1808-1831), which covers the years during which Goethe started working on his Faust play. Many have looked for some interpretative key to the finished work in this material; comparative analyses of *Urfaust* and *Faust* abound, and omitted passages are used diligently in commentary literature in order to solve a variety of difficulties.

omitted before the publication of a work of literature, but which are still considered “supplements” to the work, that is, not parts of the work, but external to it:

Paralipomena. [gr.; = Übergangenes, Ausgelassenes],  
 Bez. Für Textvarianten, Fragmente, Ergänzungen, Nachträge usw., die bei der endgültigen Fassung eines litterar. Werkes nicht berücksichtigt oder für die Veröffentlichung (zunächst) ausgeschieden wurden, z.B. werden als P. bezeichnet die beiden Bücher der Chronik im A. T. als Ergänzung der Bücher Samuel und der Könige oder die Ergänzungen zu Goethes „Faust“; P. sind wichtig für textkritik oder textgenet. Untersuchungen.

The notion that paralipomena are external to the work must be modified. Gerard Genette’s concept of *paratext*, which is descriptive of pieces of text in the widest sense which are published alongside the work or in extension of its publication (title, chapter headings, prefaces, journal articles, etc.), and which in various ways influence our reading of the work, does not encompass paralipomena. Genette categorises various types of paratext by their relation to the work temporally (published before, during or after) and spatially (published alongside or apart from the work), by their form, function, and, importantly, by whom it is written and towards whom it is directed. This last category makes the paralipomena a unique phenomenon amongst paratextual elements; at some point the omitted passage was addressed to the reader of the work, but the address was revoked, and it ended up no longer being addressed by the author to anyone. In his aptly titled book *Seuils* (thresholds), published by Editions de Seuil in 1987, Genette divides addressees into three wide categories: public, private and intimate, which are descriptive of, for example, a journal article, a private letter and an author’s work note respectively. While an omission by its similarity to sketches, plans and work notes can be categorised as an intimate piece of paratext, meant only for the author’s own eyes, this was not its function at the time of its conception. An omitted passage, before it was omitted, was addressed to the public, and was, furthermore, part of the work. The reader to whom it was subsequently addressed by the editor in collaboration with the diligent researcher, not by the author, must regard it as a negative, that is, a removed part of the work itself, not as a supplement. Still, it appears to the readers, the addressees of a piece of text which has had its address revoked, as paratext which is published alongside the work and which has some connection to it that may or may not make it a useful tool for

analysis of the work. It is this unique relation between paralinguistics and the work which makes the status of Mephistopheles's four lines highly uncertain.

The difference between the two possible interpretations of the term present both in its Greek counterpart and in its contemporary German use is of great interest when attempting to place this particular omission relative to the work. If a piece of text written by the same author during the same time span on the same subject and in the same style is found apart from the published work, one would assume that it has some connection to the work itself, yet this connection could be one of two: Either the passage was passed over, which means it was not taken into consideration, or it was actively omitted by the author. If the first is the case, the connection to the work would be very weak. "Nicht berücksichtigt" indicates that the piece of text was simply not included, and does not leave an interpreter with any hope of discovering the reason, which could be utterly arbitrary. In the latter case, one would have to assume there is a specific rationale behind its omission. The author actively chose to remove text from his work, presumably for one of the two reasons noted previously: either because the idea expressed in the removed text was abandoned, or because it expressed too clearly something that should remain hidden. The four lines were removed either because Mephistopheles should not be understood as a soul-eating Devil, or because this shade of his kaleidoscopic character should be more difficult to glean, both for Faust and for the reader or audience, or they were simply overlooked. The difference which emerges is at its core one between text which was not included and text which was removed.

Turning to the author in order to attempt to discover his specific reason for omitting a piece of text from his work appears to be futile. Goethe could have made omissions because he considered the removed fragment to be too long, not elegantly worded, too dogmatic, too obvious, not in accordance with the overall idea of the work, unnecessary, and so on. Yet there are two broad categories of understanding omissions that must be considered. On the one hand, a fragment may have been omitted because it found no place within the work, for formal reasons, which means it was "overlooked", "nicht berücksichtigt". It may even be considered to have been *left*

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*for someone*, that is, the reader, to find and use at his discretion, although it found no place within the work. In this case, the omission may be considered by the interpreter a supplement to the work. It may explain something which is otherwise left unexplained, or it may expand on a theme or motif found in the work. On the other hand, it may have been removed because it contained a meaning which was contrary to that of the work. This would mean that it could not be used as a supplement, or, if it was, it would have to be used as a negative supplement.

The only viable methodical approach to this unique type of textual material is to regard them as dual interpretative hypotheses. Mephistopheles's four lines contain at least two hypotheses that must be tested by recourse to the work, but the contents of these four lines cannot serve as arguments, or evidence, in support of either conclusion. The poet left a note for the reader, or left a note which the reader accidentally found, that contained two contradictory statements regarding the intention behind his work. One can assume that one of these, or both, may lead in the direction of reasonable interpretations of the work, but one cannot use one of the statements, excluding the other, as argument in support of a particular interpretation, like Schöne does when he reads the four lines as indications of Mephistopheles's hidden intention.

These four lines impact how a reader can understand the nature of the agreement that Faust enters into with Mephistopheles in the second *Studierzimmer* scene. Either Mephistopheles tries to bargain for Faust's soul, simply because he is a hungry devil whose proper food is souls, ending up with a wager that has this soul as stake, or the exact nature of their agreement matters much less than somehow gaining Faust as his companion, being united with the doctor. The four omitted lines offer no solution to this challenge: They only state and emphasise the problem. This also means that they are not indices that point away from the argument that this study is in the process of making, although the lines certainly would have done so if they were included in the work. While the current reading by no means should be held to be the only viable reading of the pact scene and related scenes, it remains a defensible interpretation despite these four lines that by themselves contradict it.

### 3.3 Formalities of the Pact

The problem of what Faust and Mephistopheles end up agreeing on is pertinent because their agreement is formalised. The formalisation, which entails materialisation of their promises, creates a physically manifest obligation that is given a measure of quasi-judicial validity according to an old law that governs pacts with the Devil. Some promises are written down and signed in blood, “ein ganz besondrer Saft” (GF, I. 1740), and these material promises are brought back into the work early during the second part as well as at its closing. Neither the reader or audience nor Faust is allowed to forget the promise or deny that it took place; but the reader cannot know exactly what was promised. Similarly to the process behind the pact in the *Historia*, Faust makes his promise twice, or he makes two separate promises: One orally, marked by a handshake, and one in writing. It is the latter which has proven to pose the most significant problem to readers of Goethe’s *Faust*. The assumed contents of this written agreement create a conflict during the *Grablegung* scene in the second part of the play: Mephistopheles presents the physical document before Faust’s dead body, and sets the play up to end in a manner similar to the end of Spies’s *Historia* – in other words, lawfully. However, the document ends up being ineffectual. The written promise or promises appear to not be kept, unless one concludes that the document contains a wager that Faust wins.

Oral promise is sharply separated from written promise in the second *Studierzimmer* scene. The moment at which Faust and Mephistopheles reach an oral agreement is solidly positioned in space and time by a handshake. Not only Faust’s reference to a wager ritual that takes place at that time, during which the participants strike their hands together successively, but also Mephistopheles’s contribution to that same run-on line marks a formalisation of their agreement:

*Faust.*  
Die Wette biet’ ich!  
*Mephistopheles.*

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Topp!  
*Faust.* Und Schlag auf Schlag! (GF, l. 1698)

“Topp” marks Mephistopheles’s agreement to what Faust just proposed, the wager he offered. “Schlag auf Schlag” is, according to Ulrich Gaier, a ritual in which two parties enter into a wager by first striking the right, then the left hand against each other’s: “Wettritual; bei ‘Schlag auf Schlag’ schlagen die Partner die rechten, dann die linken Hände gegeneinander” (Gaier 1999a, p. 254). This is the moment at which the deal is struck, symbolically,<sup>176</sup> marked by expressions of consent from both parties, and, presumably, the interlocking of hands. It is immediately preceded by Faust’s proposal for a wager, and it has been identified by Gaier as a wager ritual specifically. Faust initiates this particular symbolic action after having proposed what is by many considered to be the core of the agreement between Mephistopheles and Faust: The wager with Faust’s eternal servitude as stake and his continued striving as victory condition. However, the spirit’s next line of dialogue indicates that no finalised agreement has been reached yet, or, alternatively, that a more elaborate ritual is required. There is still time for Faust to reconsider after their handshake. Mephistopheles asks Faust to think carefully before agreeing, stating that they will not forget their agreement:

*Mephistopheles.*  
 Bedenk es wohl, wir werden’s nicht vergessen.  
*Faust.*  
 Dazu hast du ein volles Recht;  
 Ich habe mich nicht freventlich vermessen.  
 Wie ich beharre, bin ich Knecht,  
 Ob dein, was frag’ ich, oder wessen. (GF, l. 1707-1711)

The handshake is one symbolic action which is meant to ensure that agreements are not forgotten; it is one way in which a reciprocal promise can be tied to one particular place at one particular time. The place of this wager is determined: It is Faust’s study,

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<sup>176</sup> Müller (1912): “Die folgenden Worte Fausts ‘Und schlag auf Schlag! ...’ tun, außer dem in ihnen niedergelegten Gelöbnis, die Überzeugung kund, daß ein Vertrag zustande gekommen ist” (p. 325). Müller does not relate this form of handshake to wagers, but instead states that the reciprocal action marks the inception of a contract (Vertrag).

which Mephistopheles returns to as he recalls their agreement at the opening of the second act of the second part of the play. The time of this event, however, cannot be determined: The scene only contains one temporal marker that may be returned to at a later time, and it is tied directly to the form that the written agreement is given: It is written in Faust's blood, which is still a fluid with the same temporal characteristics as Spies's Faustus's blood. Furthermore, the memory of the oral promise may be strengthened by the memory of a tactile sensation and a willed act, but neither of these leaves a material trace, and material traces of morally-charged actions are, as will be shown below, given significant weight in Goethe's play. The handshake demonstrates the sincerity of both parties, but Faust's sincerity is not in question; his memory is. "Wir werden's nicht vergessen," says Mephistopheles, forewarning Faust of a written agreement that will ensure that the promise cannot be forgotten, while at the same time indicating that their current agreement could be forgotten if steps were not taken to aid its survival through time.

Mephistopheles then says that he will assume his role of servant, obviously referring to the core of their formalised agreement, which is the initially proposed exchange of servitude, at the "Doktorschmaus", an event celebrating the bestowal of a new doctoral degree, on the same day. However, the spirit first requires one seemingly unimportant detail to be fulfilled: "A couple of lines":

*Mephistopheles.*

Ich werde heute gleich, beim Doktorschmaus,

Als Diener, meine Pflicht erfüllen.

Nur eins! – Um Lebens oder Sterbens willen

Bitt' ich mir ein paar Zeilen aus.

(GF, l. 1712-1715)

The off-handed tone of this request made by Mephistopheles would indicate that the couple of lines are unimportant or inconsequential; indeed, it could sound as if Mephistopheles himself is only dutifully fulfilling a demand that is forced upon him by the unfortunate fact that he himself and his partner both hail from a tradition that is defined by its pact motif. The role given to the materiality of writing in the following lines and, in particular, in the second part of Goethe's *Faust* contradict this idea, however. Writing, the material that makes up its letters, and the material on which



these letters are imprinted are not only reflected upon in Faust's *Rednerei* in the following lines 1716-1733, but also near the beginning of Faust's story arc in the second part of the drama, as well as at the very end of it. The material object that is a reminder of the bilateral promise is reintroduced, and its materiality emphasised, at key points in the narrative. Faust's immediate reaction to the written pact is somewhat surprising, because Faust, as shown above, must have expected a written pact or pledge to be the outcome of his negotiations with Mephistopheles. It was Faust who proposed a pact and who insisted on learning the conditions of his exchange, and in so doing, he effectively created the pact-offering Mephistopheles by projecting onto the spirit his own expectation of a particular species of devil figure. Yet now he appears to be taken aback when confronted with Mephistopheles's demand for a written version of their agreement:

*Faust.*

Auch was Geschriebnes vorderst du Pedant?  
 Hast du noch keinen Mann, kein Manneswort gekannt?  
 Ist's nicht genug, daß mein gesprochenes Wort  
 Auf ewig soll mit meinen Tagen schalten?  
 Rast nicht die Welt in allen Strömen fort,  
 Und mich soll ein Versprechen halten?  
 Doch dieser Wahn ist uns ins Herz gelegt,  
 Wer mag sich gern davon befreien?  
 Beglückt, wer Treue rein im Busen trägt,  
 Kein Opfer wird ihn je gereuen!  
 Allein ein Pergament, beschrieben und beprägt,  
 Ist ein Gespenst, vor dem sich alle scheuen.  
 Das Wort erstirbt schon in der Feder,  
 Die Herrschaft führen Wachs und Leder.  
 Was willst du böser Geist von mir?  
 Erz, Marmor, Pergament, Papier?  
 Soll ich mit Griffel, Meißel, Feder schreiben?  
 Ich gebe jede Wahl dir frei.

*Mephistopheles.*

Wie magst du deine Rednerei  
 Nur gleich so hitzig übertreiben?  
 Ist doch ein jedes Blättchen gut.  
 Du unterzeichnest dich mit einem Tröpfchen Blut.

*Faust.*

Wenn dies dir völlig Gnüge tut,  
 So mag es bei der Fratze bleiben.

*Mephistopheles.*

Blut ist ein ganz besonderer Saft.

*Faust.*

Nur keine Furcht, daß ich dies Bündnis breche!  
Das Streben meiner ganzen Kraft  
Ist grade das, was ich verspreche.  
(GF, l. 1716-1743)

When met with the demand for a written pact, Faust recoils, accusing Mephistopheles of pedantry, and rhetorically inquiring whether or not the spirit ever knew a (trustworthy) man's word. Mephistopheles calls the monologue "Rednerei", and he is right; Faust embraces ritual and magic formulae, and it is this trait of his that by all appearances prompts Mephistopheles to propose a written pact. Albert Daur (1950) argues that Faust's speech is deemed "Rednerei" because it is without real substance, and is meant to stall for time, since Faust entertains fear for the written promise. Void of semantic value, Faust's monologue on the difference between writing and speech, and on the material properties of the former, puts off the fateful moment of writing down his promise.<sup>177</sup> However, the monologue's meaning is slightly different when seen in the light of Faust as a self-aware traditional character who himself is responsible for the pact with the Devil. Mephistopheles's comment on Faust's heated exaggeration questions Faust's feigned surprise at the demand for a written confirmation of the promise: Faust does not hesitate at all. He is highly prepared to sign his document, and greatly overstates his hesitation. True to his propensity towards grand rituals, he even suggests signing on marble with a chisel – a laborious way of writing pacts without historic precedent within literature concerning the Devil.

Although Faust's "Rednerei" is heated exaggeration, pretence and perhaps an attempt at stalling for time, it does demonstrate that Faust, more than any of his namesakes, recognises the gravity of the materialisation of promises. His monologue positions the opposed concepts of speech and writing: On the one hand something written, "was Geschriebnes", and on the other Faust's spoken word or oral promise, "mein gesprochenes Wort". Obvious in these lines is Faust's expressed disdain even of

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<sup>177</sup> "Widerlich jedoch ist ihm gerade das, was für Mephisto unerlässlich bleibt: Geschriebenes, das als ein Drohgespenst, die Forderung in Händen, ihm Angst machen will; und hitzig übertreibt er, wie Mephisto tadelt, seine *Rednerei* und stellt dem Teufel jedes Material und jedes Schreibzeug frei". (Daur 1950, p. 66)

the spoken promise, which irreversibly binds his future intention to his present intention: Context and situation may change, but the promise given in one specific set of circumstances will remain equally valid in another, by recourse to the time and place at which the promise was made. Line 1719 indicates that even the oral promise exerts a violent power over Faust's future being; in "schalten" resonates the expression "schalten und walten", or indeed "zuschalten / walten / regieren" (HDF, p. 23), and so on. Spies's Faustus states in his pact that Mephostophiles shall exert whatever violent power he wishes over Faustus after twenty-four years have passed, but Goethe's Faust is worried that the promise itself will wield this same power over him. Faust's spoken promise, as soon as the moment at which it was made has passed, is external to Faust himself, and exerts control over him from outside his own will and intention. This forceful, external influence is precisely what Faust fears of the spoken promise, yet he did not hesitate to make his promise orally, marking it with a handshake; he is currently in the process of apparently resisting a written confirmation of the binding promise that he willingly made.

The signature, and the pact with the Devil in which it is a crucial component, serves to counteract the volatile intentions and poor memory of the living.<sup>178</sup> Although this point seems to worry Goethe's Faust, he acknowledges it when stating that writing marks the death of the spoken word (GF, l. 1717-1729). The spoken word belongs to the world, raging forth "in all its currents". Spoken words are continuously being born and immediately die, vitally tied to the utterer. It is quite telling that Goethe has his Faust use the metaphor "ghost" or "spectre". The word 'Gespenst' would at the time have had primarily strong negative connotations in the direction of fear, horror, and annoyance.<sup>179</sup> A ghost is the imperfect, and horrendous, reflection of something that was once alive, now able only to haunt and be a nuisance. "The

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<sup>178</sup> Cf. 2.2.1.

<sup>179</sup> Adelung: "eine geistige Substanz, wenn sie unter einer angenommenen Gestalt den Menschen erscheint; doch am häufigsten nur von solchen Substanzen, welche, wie man sich einbildet, den Menschen nur zur Plage, oder zum Schrecken erscheinen. Ein Gespenst sehen. Es lässet sich ein Gespenst sehen. Figürlich oft ein erdichteter Gegenstand des Schreckens oder der Furcht" (vol. II, 631-632, "das Gespenst").

word”, “das Wort”, in this case encompasses not the written word, but exclusively the spoken word, present only at the time of its utterance, and attended by the presence of the person uttering it. Faust himself has “Herrschaft”, command, over his spoken word, but as he writes it down, he relinquishes control to wax and leather, the material properties of the document. Feather and ink kill the living, spoken word and leave a dreadful object: the parchment which has writing on it. Although Faust during the second *Studierzimmer* scene explicitly has no intention of breaking his promise to Mephistopheles,<sup>180</sup> he still shies away from (“scheut sich vor”) the written word. Faust does not fear a binding promise – on the contrary, he deems happy the men who possess fidelity to their promises – but he finds the written pact horrid. He has good reason to do so. Signing an agreement is in a sense suicidal, as it creates a dead imprint of the signer’s intention at the time of signing. The only element of written pacts that gives Faust pause and inspires his lengthy “Rednerei” is the consigning of his intention to a material object.

Jacques Derrida states in “La Pharmacie de Platon” from *La Dissémination* (1972) that putting words on paper is described in Plato’s works as an act which replaces “living voice” with “breathless sign”: “N’oublions pas que, dans le Phédre, on reprochera aussi à l’invention du pharmakon<sup>181</sup> de substituer le signe essoufflé à la parole vivante (...)”<sup>182</sup> (Derrida 1972, p. 113). This substitution comes about due to the agency inherent in any statement consisting of words. Spoken words are perceived to be closer to the truth of whichever matter is under discussion than written words, because spoken words can be accounted for; the speaker is present, and he is able to modify and explain his statement *a priori* based on situation, and *a*

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<sup>180</sup> See Goethe, 1699–1706, 1741–43 and particularly 1710–11.

<sup>181</sup> Derrida discusses the word *pharmakon*, which means both *cure* and *poison*, using it as a figurative replacement for writing throughout his text.

<sup>182</sup> Translations by Barbara Johnson have been used in the following. “We should not forget that, in the Phaedrus, another thing held against the invention of the pharmakon is that it substitutes the breathless sign for the living voice (...)” (Derrida 2004, p. 95).

*posteriori* based on reactions from his listeners. Being alive in this context means being able to change and adapt to circumstances:

Or l'écrit, en tant qu'il se répète et reste identique à soi dans le type, ne se ploie pas en tous les sens, ne se plie pas aux différences entre les présents, aux nécessités variables, fluides, furtives de la psychagogie. Celui qui parle, au contraire, ne se soumet à aucun schème préétabli ; il conduit mieux ses signes ; il est là pour les accentuer, les infléchir, les retenir ou les lâcher selon les exigences du moment, la nature de l'effet cherché, la prise offerte par l'interlocuteur. (Derrida 1972, p. 142)<sup>183</sup>

Writing, claims Derrida, is self-referential in the sense that the self being referenced is the dead reflection of living speech: it “repeats itself” whenever it is read, rather than repeating the speech or living memory that seemingly produced it. Writing does not change with varying circumstances and intentions, and this is what murders it, according to Derrida’s reading of Plato. He emphasises the double function of the Egyptian god Theuth as described in Plato’s *Phaedrus*: he is both the god of death and the god of writing, and, says Derrida, this is how it must be: “Car le dieu de l’écriture est aussi, cela va de soi, le dieu de la mort”<sup>184</sup> (Derrida 1972, p. 113).

Reading, which means questioning writing, appears in this light to always be an act of necromancy. Conjuring the ghost of the writer, present for instance in the signature, a reader may attempt to divine the meaning of the words.

The living writer is unavailable for questioning, and his ghost is decidedly different from him, present only in writing and as writing. From written words one may glean a living intention frozen in time, but the spoken word is then no longer primary, as it is derived from the written words. Time and mortality reverse the order of speaking and writing. Ultimately, time and mortality are also what threaten Faust’s

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<sup>183</sup> “But writing, in that it repeats itself and remains identical in the type, cannot flex itself in all senses, cannot bend with all the differences among presents, with all the variable, fluid, furtive necessities of psychagogy. He who speaks, in contrast, is not controlled by any preestablished pattern; he is better able to conduct his signs; he is there to accentuate them, inflect them, retain them, or set them loose according to the demands of the moment, the nature of the desired effect, the hold he has on the listener” (Derrida 2004, p. 116).

<sup>184</sup> “It goes without saying that the god of writing must also be the god of death” (Derrida 2004, p. 95).

oral promise; once a sequence of words is uttered, the exact wording, intonation and circumstance cannot be reproduced. The living word immediately dissipates. Some measures can be taken to fix the precise moment in time during which a promise is uttered, thus allowing for the moment to be remembered by the rituals or symbolic actions conducted.

Faust places a great deal of emphasis on the material aspects of his written promise: Wax, leather, brass, marble, parchment, paper, stylus, chisel, and feather are all suggested as writing paraphernalia, but Mephistopheles requires only materiality as such, stating that “ein jedes Blättchen” is good enough. Any material will do, so long as a physical manifestation of their agreement is created. But a “Blättchen” is not an object as inconsequential and innocent as Mephistopheles’s diminutive makes it sound. Paper is called a “ghost” not only by Faust in the second *Studierzimmer* scene, but also by Mephistopheles in the *Finstere Galerie* scene in the first act of the second part. In this latter instance, paper with writing on it is a sign which has a non-existent outside reference: Mephistopheles convinces the Kaiser and his court that they should pay their subjects in letters of debt that entitle the holder to a part of the empire’s buried treasure. In other words, the malicious spirit invents paper money. Mephistopheles himself refers to this paper, which holds value despite its lack of an outside reference, as “das Papiergespent der Gulden” (GF, I. 6198). When Faust writes and signs his pledge, any little piece of paper will do, because all paper is equally dangerous.

The spirit’s only specific requirement besides this is that Faust signs with a drop of blood. The diminutive form of the word “Tröpfchen” again indicates that this whole charade, “Fratze” according to Faust, is unimportant, and merely a formality that they have to go through for some external reason, perhaps due to the laws contained in their own literary history. However, the act of signing in blood is still a significant one, as gleaned from the often overlooked short sequence of events following Mephistopheles’s demand for a signature in blood. The sequence is this: Faust agrees, signs, and then reassures the spirit that he will not break their written agreement, “Bündnis”. This sequence of events contains the only referable temporal

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instance in the second *Studierzimmer* scene, and this moment of signing is recalled at later points in the play.

Although Faust's signing of the pact is not marked in Goethe's drama by stage direction or unequivocal dialogue, it is apparent that it takes place as Mephistopheles delivers his line regarding the quality of blood: "Blut ist ein ganz besonderer Saft".<sup>185</sup> This short interjection does not address what Faust says before it, nor does Faust respond to it, indicating that it is an aside, directed at the reader or audience, and not at the other actor in the scene, who presumably is busy signing while the line is uttered. Mephistopheles here indicates that despite his own off-handedness during the process of negotiating a written confirmation of the agreement, and despite his lack of interest in the old Faustian rituals, the signature in blood is still significant. Blood is a "special juice" because it incorporates the body and intention of the signer, and because it irrevocably points to one singular event, a particular point in time, which is that moment at which it leaves the body of the person who uses it to sign and starts to coagulate. Blood used in pacts embody the dying of a person's living intention more than any other form of material promise, and this dying of a living intention is the *raison d'être* of signatures. The signature in blood is an emblematic expression of how written agreements work: Faust leaves a piece of his own body which signifies his intention on a piece of paper, and these drops of blood immediately die and turn into signs that can only point to that exact moment in time when this transformation occurred, and to the wilful act behind their creation, by the person who produced the blood. It was previously indicated that the lack of temporal markers threatened the usefulness of the handshake and Mephistopheles's "Topp!" as avenue of return or *recessus* to the moment of agreement: A return to the moment of agreeing would not be possible, because the moment is not unambiguously defined. The moment of signing, however, is, because there is only one moment in time at which the document that Mephistopheles later presents before Faust's body after the latter has

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<sup>185</sup> "Den Akt des Unterschreibens kommentiert Mephisto mit den Worten: Blut ist ein ganz besonderer Saft". (Weigand 1961, p. 328)

died could have been written. This moment is quite short; both Spies's and Christopher Marlowe's doctors are forced to keep their blood heated so that it will remain fluid until they have finished signing. Blood is indeed an exceptional juice when it is used to create written words, because its coagulated form temporarily identifies the act of writing, and places the person whose blood it is at the same time and place. Faust's words written in congealed blood can later reliably be tied to Faust's intention at a particular moment.

### 3.4 Returning to the Written Pledge in Part II

The document is undeniably signed in Faust's blood at some point during this scene, and the most plausible moment is the one described above, as Mephistopheles reflects on the particular quality of blood. This is reinforced on two occasions in the second part of the play. The second act of the second part opens with Mephistopheles revisiting Faust's study, recalling the time and place at which the written agreement was signed, and dwelling on the material properties of the writing paraphernalia that Faust used. Mephistopheles reiterates one observation which is also present in the stage direction for this scene: That Faust's study, the location of his signature, is unchanged since their departure from it. The stage direction's "unverändert" is echoed in the spirit's "Allunverändert":

*Zweiter Akt: Hochgewölbtes enges gotisches Zimmer. Ehemals Faustens, unverändert.*

*Mephistopheles.*

Hinter einem Vorhang hervortretend. Indem er ihn aufhebt und zurückzieht, erblickt man Fausten hingestreckt auf einem altväterischen Bette.

Hier lieg, Unseliger! verführt  
Zu schwergelöstem Liebesbande!

Wen Helena paralyisiert,

Der kommt so leicht nicht zu Verstande. *Sich umschauend.*

Blick' ich hinauf, hierher, hinüber,

Allunverändert ist es, unversehrt;

Die bunten Scheiben sind, so dünkt mich, trüber,

Die Spinnewebe haben sich vermehrt;

Die Tinte starrt, vergilbt ist das Papier;



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Doch alles ist am Platz geblieben;  
 Sogar die Feder liegt noch hier,  
 Mit welcher Faust dem Teufel sich verschrieben.  
 Ja! tiefer in dem Rohre stockt  
 Ein Tröpflein Blut, wie ich's ihm abgeloct.  
 Zu einem solchen einzigen Stück  
 Wünscht ich dem größten Sammler Glück.  
 (GF, l. 6565-6591)

It is not entirely true that the scene is unchanged. Mephistopheles's monologue concerns the visible effects of the passage of time on material objects in Faust's study: Window panes have turned cloudy, cobwebs have increased in numbers, ink has solidified, and paper has turned yellow. The spirit's observations of the passage of time gains significance as he turns to the writing paraphernalia with which Faust signed his documents. By describing yellowed paper and congealed ink, he recalls a time when ink had not solidified and paper was white and fresh: The moment at which Faust left his study in the first part of the drama, and the moment at which he signed his pact, when he "bound himself" to Mephistopheles. The spirit notes the presence of the quill that Faust used to sign, and a little drop of congealed blood still visible in its calamus. With this pen, Faust "wrote himself away to the Devil" (GF, l. 6587). He did not use it to put a wager into writing, but to pledge himself to Mephistopheles. The diminutive "Tröpflein" is repeated from the second *Studierzimmer* scene, but is also ominously weighted by the effects that Faust's accord with the Devil has had on his interaction with Gretchen towards the end of the first part of the drama. This "Tröpflein" set the Gretchen tragedy in motion.

Mephistopheles's initial monologue in the second part of the drama's *Hochgewölbtes enges gotisches Zimmer* scene has one primary function: It recalls the time and place at which Faust accepted the agreement, and it dwells on the material evidence of his acceptance, while silencing Faust himself. Faust's written words speak for Faust here, despite the exact contents and form of these words effectively being unknown by the reader or audience. Faust is asleep, even "paralyzed" (l. 6568) by Helen of Troy's apparition from the previous act, and is therefore quieted and not allowed to speak. The living Faust's words have been replaced by the dead words that

were written in now dead blood, precisely as Faust feared during his “Rednerei” in the second *Studierzimmer* scene.

The materiality of Faust’s quill with his little drop of blood is emphasised as Mephistopheles turns it into a prized collector’s item: It is an item of significance and power. The recall of Faust’s misdeeds through things, material objects, is here performed in a manner which is familiar to a reader of Goethe’s *Faust*: The “Trödelhexe” of the first part’s *Walpurgisnacht* scene offers Faust wares that reflect his crimes up to that point:

*Trödelhexe.*

Ihr Herren, geht nicht so vorbei!  
 Laßt die Gelegenheit nicht fahren!  
 Aufmerksam blickt nach meinen Waren,  
 Es steht dahier gar mancherlei.  
 Und doch ist nichts in meinem Laden,  
 Dem keiner auf der Erde gleicht,  
 Das nicht einmal zum tücht’gen Schaden  
 Der Menschen und der Welt gereicht.  
 Kein Dolch ist hier, von dem nicht Blut geflossen,  
 Kein Kelch, aus dem sich nicht, in ganz gesunden Leib,  
 Verzehrend heißes Gift ergossen,  
 Kein Schmuck, der nicht ein liebenswürdig Weib  
 Verführt, kein Schwert, das nicht den Bund gebrochen,  
 Nicht etwa hinterrücks den Gegenmann durchstochen.  
 (GF, l. 4096-4109)

The Trödelhexe offers daggers that have spilt blood, recalling his murder of Gretchen’s brother Valentin, poisoned chalices, pointing to Gretchen’s accidental poisoning of her mother by the sleeping potion that Mephistopheles procured, jewellery used in seduction, which is a central motif in the Gretchen tragedy, and swords used for backstabbing, again recalling Faust’s murder of Valentin. These objects are contrasted to the momentum that Mephistopheles attempts to keep up in Faust’s exploration of his world. The spirit’s immediate response is that the “Trödelhexe” should not dwell on the past, but turn towards new things, “Neuigkeiten”.<sup>186</sup> Material objects embody the presence of these events that

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<sup>186</sup> “Mephistopheles. Frau Muhme! Sie versteht mir schlecht die Zeiten. | Getan geschehn! Geschehn getan! | Verleg’ Sie sich auf Neuigkeiten! | Nur Neuigkeiten ziehn uns an”. (GF, l. 4110-4113)

Mephistopheles does not wish Faust to dwell on: Things that gain symbolic significance are tied to moments in time that are returned to, remembered, when the things are brought to light again. The written pledge, pact or wager, whatever its contents, brings a particular moment from the second *Studierzimmer* scene into the second part of the play, and also momentarily replaces Faust's current intentions with his past, solidified intention. Crucially, this moment that is recalled is the moment of Faust's signature, not of the handshake, and every indication points to this moment containing an agreement that is either a one-sided pledge or a bilateral pact, not a wager.

At the start of the first scene of the second act, the written promise is in this manner reinstated as a binding promise that will continue to lead the narrative in the direction that was promised by the director during the *Vorspiel auf dem Theater*: "Vom Himmel durch die Welt zur Hölle" (GF, I. 242). This reactivation of the pact motif is achieved through the drawn-out description of its material trace in Mephistopheles's opening monologue in the second act's second scene. Early in the second leg of Faust's journey, references to the old pact motif are even more explicitly traditional than during the pact scene itself, as the quill is here the feather "mit welcher Faust dem Teufel sich verschrieben". Writing himself away to the Devil is one action that follows Faust through all three works analysed here, and all three use slight variations on this particular expression: The Spies-book describes on the title page how Faustus "sich gegen dem Teuffel auff eine benandte Zeit verschrieben" (HDF, p. 3), while Thomas Mann's Adrian Leverkühn shocks his guests who have gathered at his home in Pfeiffering in the book's final chapter by announcing that he is waiting to be brought away by some entity "gegen den ich mich mit meinem eigenen Blut so teuer verschrieben" (MDF, p. 719).

When Mephistopheles paraphrases this sentence from the Spies-book he is effectively alone, since Faust is asleep, so his adherence to a trope from the old "Fauststoff" is not for the benefit of the Renaissance scholar Faust, but is directed at the audience or reader. The formalised promise is reiterated at this point, and Mephistopheles does not paint this picture of a pact-offering Devil who desires

nothing other than to usurp the soul of an apostate in order to entice Faust. It is the spectator who is the recipient of this renewal of the promise that the same spectator cannot decidedly know the contents of. The agreement still binds the play's actors, and still leads the audience on their way from Heaven through the world into Hell. Mephistopheles appears at this point to convey a very strong sense that the written document is an effectual piece of material evidence, which, according to a set of laws that govern it, will ensure that the outcome of the drama will mirror the outcome of previous Faust stories: Either Faust will be condemned, or some flaw will be found in the agreement that will allow him to escape judgment. The invocation of an expression which is firmly rooted in this tradition strengthens the message that Mephistopheles is conveying: Faust is about to resume his amoral journey towards Hell, following the known pattern of Spies's apostate doctor. However, the old law on which the pact rests, and which is recalled at this point, is not an implicit, inviolable law in Goethe's take on the Faust material: It is an explicit item of discussion, and it ends up being relativized. Mephistopheles acts as a conveyor of this law, reminding the reader, who is presumably familiar with it, of it. This has so far been the primary function of the pact motif in Goethe's *Faust*: Its presence and form creates very strong expectations in the reader or audience of the arc of Faust's story, and it is Mephistopheles who creates and reinforces this expectation. He knows his audience the way he knows Faust: He knows that they, when faced with a Faustian narrative, expect certain rituals to be present, and the book's reception history on this point, effectively illustrated by Ada Klett's list from 1939, has proven him entirely correct.

### 3.5 "Juristerei" and the Old Laws of Hell

When reading the *Historia* and its immediate predecessors and successors, a reader never encounters a formalised pact with the Devil which is ignored, lost or forgotten at the end of the narrative. A material ritualised promise that remains intact at the end of the tale must either be adhered to, be negated, or be explicitly broken. Whether the

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virgin Mary destroys the material object, as in the legend of Theophilus of Adana, or whether the document is judged to be unlawful according to moral criteria, as in some fifteenth and sixteenth century German language folk tales,<sup>187</sup> the written pledge or pact is invariably addressed. Sometimes its articles are fulfilled, and sometimes they are not, but the reader is always offered a reason, or at the very least an acknowledgment of the breach. The laws that govern pacts with the Devil are always implicitly recognised, and never ignored. A reason for this apparent necessity that arises from the pact motif was proposed in this study's analysis of Spies's *Historia*: The written agreement which is formalised according to a law established between the work itself and the work's relation to other works that contain pacts with the Devil creates a very strong expectation that the written promise will be honored. Goethe's *Faust* also creates a ritualised promise in this manner, reinforcing it through its anchoring in the traditional quasi-legal form of law that governs pacts with the Devil.

It would seem, however, that the choir of angels that carry away Faust's *Unsterbliches* during the *Grablegung* scene of the second part of Goethe's play may do precisely what previous Faust works never do: The choir ignores the written document and the promise that it invariably makes every time it is addressed. Albrecht Schöne gives voice to this idea that the written agreement, which he holds to be a wager, is simply pushed aside and made irrelevant:

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<sup>187</sup> Renate Zelger has uncovered that pacts with the Devil in German folklore in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were valid only if they were morally defensible. She points to one particular instance where the Devil appeared in the shape of an angel and entered into a written pact with a female hermit. The pact was later judged to be invalid, because the Devil's ruse was deemed immoral and contrary to the divine order: "Denn der aus dem Himmel verstoßene Teufel hat sich angemäßt, als Lichtengel zu erscheinen. Damit hat er gegen Gottes ordnung und somit auch gegen die guten Sitten verstoßen. Verträge dieser Art sind nach der Moral der Volkserzählung nichtig" (Zelger 1996, p. 78).

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Es ging dem Autor am Ende wohl gar nicht mehr darum, ob sein Faust die alte *Wette* verloren oder gewonnen habe. Für das nämlich, was sich in der *Grablegungs*-Szene abspielen wird, für das vor allem, was sich in den *Bergschluchten* ereignet, spielt die Wette so oder so keine Rolle mehr. Daß Faust ‚gewonnen‘ habe, bildet nicht einmal den Ermöglichungsgrund dieses Geschehens. Es ging allein noch darum, daß der Ausgang der Wette dem Ausgang des Spiels nicht hindernd im Wege stand. (Schöne 2003b, p. 754)

Schöne here claims that not only the choir of angels, but even Goethe the poet or playwright ignores the formalised promise, and his reasoning is not understood by Schöne to be moral or juridical, but aesthetic. This implies a certain inelegance and thoughtlessness inhabiting the larger structure of Goethe’s drama: The playwright himself struggles with his own choice to write his character into the Faust tradition by having him adhere to the old, inherited laws of Hell, which create a formal obligation that threatens the creative freedom of the playwright, who then almost carelessly chooses to ignore this obligation. Goethe is thought to follow a literary law that dictates some elements to a Faustian narrative, but then to ignore that same tradition’s set of rules as they manifest in the work. The reinvocation of the old pact motif in terms that are adopted directly from the *Historia*’s immediate successors during an early scene in the second part of the tragedy becomes utterly perplexing in this light; the sacrifice on the altar of tradition has been made during the first part, so why would it be repeated here, only to be ultimately ignored? Schöne is correct when he regards “die alte Wette” as being pushed aside during the play’s penultimate scene, but there is a strong line of statements present in both parts of the play that can account for why this happens, and provide an explanation significantly more elegant and fruitful than the one proposed by Schöne, seemingly resting on the idea that the playwright simply ignores or pushes aside the old motif.

Goethe’s valuation of artistic freedom over the constraints of formal boundaries is well known, as even in his Weimar classicist period he stated, in a letter to Schiller dated December 30<sup>th</sup> 1797, that inherited rules must always come second to creative genius.<sup>188</sup> However, rather than adopt this idea of a proto-Romantic

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<sup>188</sup> “Ich bin Ihrer Meinung daß man nur deßwegen so strenge sondern müsse, um sich nachher wieder etwas durch Aufnahme fremdartiger Theile erlauben zu können. Ganz anders arbeitet man aus

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Goethe refusing to adhere to the old laws of Hell, but paradoxically introducing into his narrative the very strong inherited promise that a formalised pact constitutes, and furthermore having Mephistopheles remind the audience at a crucial point in the second part of the play of the work's indebtedness to this tradition, the following will be an investigation of the work's own running debate concerning hellish law. From Schöne's comment it can be inferred that some sort of unrecognised breach of contract takes place at the closing of *Faust II*, but this event occurs in a work that more than any other establishes and discusses the laws according to which devilish pacts are arranged. Although Faust is redeemed, the outcome leaves an unresolved conflict between it and the reader's (and at that point also Mephistopheles's) expectations, rooted in tradition. The pact, and the laws that govern it, are not forgotten, passed over, ignored or even overruled; the form of the pact motif in this work is not "mechanical" (Hohlfeld 1921, p. 123), but rather adapted to the work's circumstance. When Hohlfeld uses the word "mechanical" to describe Mephistopheles's first pact proposal, he indicates, like Schöne does, that there is a contrast between the vitality of the work and the lifelessness of this inherited motif. The pact refuses to adapt to circumstances, rigidly binding even the playwright to a tradition that threatens the integrity of the work that he creates. As such, it mirrors the function of written pacts: A written pact or pledge is a frozen, unalterable statement that may differ from the living intention of an individual, but that will never change its contents. Goethe, according to Hohlfeld, "merely pays his respects to one of the time-honored traditions of the theme" when he includes his pact (Hohlfeld 1921, p. 123), but paying one's respects in this manner – introducing a formalised promise into a narrative – is not an operation as innocent or inconsequential as Hohlfeld's "merely" or Schöne's dismissive "die alte Wette" would have it, as the work's reception history clearly demonstrates: The outcome of the second part of the play has been extensively discussed. If the formalised promise is made "mechanically", and therefore is not adapted to the situation at hand but rather adopted from an

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Grundsätzen als aus Instinkt, und eine Abweichung, von deren Nothwendigkeit man überzeugt ist, kann nicht zum Fehler werden."

entirely different situation – meaning in this case the situation of other Faustian works – then this promise constitutes a problem.

The very first introduction of the idea of a pact with the Devil in the first part of Goethe's *Faust* is made in conjunction with the introduction of the concept of a hellish law, separated from other species of law, and containing its own rules and rituals.<sup>189</sup> During the first *Studierzimmer* scene, Faust, who the reader knows is a legal scholar, gives voice to a notion that has been a theoretical presupposition in this study: That Hell itself has its laws, and that these hellish laws are a prerequisite for and govern pacts with the Devil. Goethe's Faust knows that the closing of a pact presupposes law; some structure must be in place which ensures that the articles of the pact are kept. When Mephistopheles explains why he is physically trapped by Faust's pentagram in the first *Studierzimmer* scene by referencing "ein Gesetz der Teufel und Gespenster" (line 1410), Faust interprets this as the opening of the possibility of entering into a pact with him:

*Mephistopheles.*

Der Pudel merkte nichts, als er hereingesprungen,

Die Sache sieht jetzt anders aus:

Der Teufel kann nicht aus dem Haus.

*Faust.*

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<sup>189</sup> Müller (1912) identified three possible legal horizons which intersect in the work: the law of the historical Faustus's Neuzeit, the law of Goethe's Enlightenment, and finally another, older law intermittently visible during the Middle Ages, but with a genesis lost in time: "Und endlich wäre noch ein Drittes denkbar: Daß die Wette des Titanen mit dem Teufel weit zurück verlegt werden müßte, tief ins Mittelalter oder ganz in graue Ferne, in eine Zeit ursprünglicher Rechtszustände und Rechtsbestrebungen" (Müller 1912, p. 333). Despite his use of the term "primary state of law" (ursprünglicher Rechtszustände), it is reasonable to assume that Müller does not speak of Naturrecht, but rather a historically situated horizon of law with a genesis unavailable to us. He tentatively situates this law in the Middle Ages or "ganz in graue Ferne". When it comes to this third and final possibility, however, Müller indicates that as a basis for interpretation it is only very weakly supported by the text itself, but in order to avoid fixating the narrative of Goethe's grand work strictly in time and space, he believes it must be considered. He emphasises the notion that Goethe's play takes place not within a particular historical or spatial localisation, but anywhere, at any time: When discussing in which city of the Holy Roman Empire Faust signs his pact, Müller emphatically concludes: "Das ganze Deutschland soll es sein!" (Müller 1912, p. 333). This study operates with a fourth legal horizon, which is only loosely tied to the three mentioned here, and which has its own specific practices, but which is a very good candidate for Müller's vague law from the "graue Ferne", as it does indeed emerge during the Middle Ages. This is a law developed not within a philosophical, societal or juridical context, but one hailing from a literary tradition.



Doch warum gehst du nicht durchs Fenster?  
 Mephistopheles.  
 ‘s ist ein Gesetz der Teufel und Gespenster:  
 Wo sie hereingeschlüpft, da müssen sie hinaus.  
 Das erste steht uns frei, beim zweiten sind wir Knechte.  
*Faust.*  
 Die Hölle selbst hat ihre Rechte?  
 Das find’ ich gut, da ließe sich ein Pakt,  
 Und sicher wohl, mit euch, ihr Herren, schließen?  
 (GF, I. 1413-1415)

Faust proposes a pact, and in doing so, he seems to be familiar with the Devil’s literary history. Although more than two hundred years separate Goethe’s *Faust* from Spies’s *Historia*, its protagonist is still historically localised at the same period,<sup>190</sup> at least during the first part of the play, and Goethe’s Faust meets the Devil with some aesthetic expectations that belong to this period – and, one might add, that the work’s reception history has shown have carried over to the present day. Mephistopheles, on the other hand, is a notably modern devil figure, who has done away with his hoof and wings to better meet the expectations of an age, the late eighteenth-century, that has banned the Devil from serious literature.<sup>191</sup> However, he still displays towards Faust – and to Faust alone – a tendency to follow rigid rules and to adhere to hellish rituals.<sup>192</sup> This is evident both in his entrapment by the pentagram in the first

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<sup>190</sup> This is Harold Jantz’s (1951) main argument: “Goethe from the very beginning intended to present Faust objectively as a man of the Renaissance whose thoughts and actions are in just correspondence to the intellectual and spiritual climate of those times. (...) the larger complexes within the drama, and actually the overall patterns, are distinctly Renaissance in character rather than eighteenth century from the period of Goethe’s youth and after” (Jantz 1951, pp. 3,5). Rüdiger Scholz characterises the Faustus-figure as such in similar terms, not excluding Goethe’s Faust: “Die Faustus-Figur verkörpert den mittel- und nordeuropäischen Renaissance-Menschen” (Scholz 2011, p. 38).

<sup>191</sup> When Mephistopheles is not recognised by the witch as the Devil during the *Hexenküche* scene, he explains the outdated nature of his traditional aesthetic appearance: “Mephistopheles. (...) Auch die Kultur, die alle Welt beleckt, | hat auf den Teufel sich erstreckt; | Das nordische Phantom ist nun nicht mehr zu schauen; | Wo siehst du Hörner, Schweif und Klauen? | Und was den Fuß betrifft, den ich nicht missen kann, | Der würde mir bei Leuten schaden; | Darum bedien’ ich mich, wie mancher junge Mann, | Seit vielen Jahren falscher Waden” (GF, I. 2495-2502).

<sup>192</sup> Hucke (2008a) uses the above quoted lines 1410-1412, which are here interpreted as subterfuge and *Gaukelei*, as indications that Mephistopheles has no will of his own, but is purely a servant to Faust and to hellish rules: “Eine solche Beeinträchtigung zeugt nicht gerade von ‘Souveränität’; es wird mit diesem scheinbaren Codex ein tabu ausgesprochen, das auf feudale Rechte und Pflichten

*Studierzimmer* scene, and also as he reappears in the following scene. When Mephistopheles appears the second time in Goethe's drama, in the opening lines of the second *Studierzimmer* scene, he invokes another hellish ritual: He requires that Faust invites him three times. When the doctor acquiesces, the spirit approvingly states that he likes him:

*Faust.*

Es klopft? Herein! Wer will mich wieder plagen?

*Mephistopheles.*

Ich bin's.

*Faust.*

Herein!

*Mephistopheles.*

Du mußt es dreimal sagen.

*Faust.*

Herein denn!

*Mephistopheles.*

So gefällst du mir.

Wir werden, hoff' ich, uns vertragen!

(GF, l. 1530-1533)

Mephistopheles is testing Faust; he probingly attempts to have Faust follow the rigidities of hellish law, and not only is the spirit delighted when the doctor does as he is asked, but he immediately indicates that this means that they may reach an agreement bound by this same law. The requirement for a thrice repeated invitation is described by Erich Trunz as a remnant of "a strange formalism" found in "the old books", and states that Goethe has kept some traits of this strange formalism.<sup>193</sup> This opening of the second *Studierzimmer* scene is, however, not a hollow remnant of some strange old ritual; it is Mephistopheles's probing attempt at seeing whether Faust will adhere to this old hellish rule, which would facilitate his *Einteufung* of the doctor. Ulrich Gaier's understanding of this seemingly pointless ritual is similar, as he sees in Faust's acquiescence the doctor's submission to Mephistopheles, and, vice

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verweist. Das Prinzip, das Mephistopheles verkörpert, ist nicht 'autonom'; 'es' braucht einen 'Willen', der es freisetzt und funktional, wirksam, werden läßt" (Hucke 2008a, p. 569).

<sup>193</sup> "Der Verkehr mit Höllengeistern hat in den alten Büchern einen seltsamen Formalismus. Goethe hat Züge davon beibehalten". (Trunz 2002, p. 537)

versa, Mephistopheles's establishment of his dominant position.<sup>194</sup> Gerrit Brüning (2010) has pointed out that Faust's later proposal for a wager has one primary function, which is to announce that he will not allow himself to be manipulated by Mephistopheles: "Kannst du mich schmeichelnd je belügen, | Daß ich mir selbst gefallen mag" (GF, l. 1694-1695) is Faust's challenge directed at the spirit, which, according to Brüning, is his way of stating that he will not be subjected to Mephistopheles's trickery.<sup>195</sup> It is not, however, Mephistopheles's dominion over Faust that is being tested at the opening of the pact scene, the second *Studierzimmer* scene; it is Faust's propensity towards rituals and old, hellish laws. The doctor is very much in the process of being manipulated by the spirit.<sup>196</sup> Faust does not submit to Mephistopheles. His submission is to the old hellish law, and it is not "Mephistos dominante Machtposition" (Gaier 1999a, p. 236) that is established, but Faust's belief in and readiness to adhere to a set of rules that his namesakes have been adhering to for three centuries.

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<sup>194</sup> "(...) indem dieser [Mephistopheles] fordert: 'Du mußt es dreimal sagen', unterwirft er Faust einen Regel, einem Ritual, mit dem dieser sich schon in unbekannter Weise magisch gebunden fühlen muß. Daher zeigt Fausts 'Herein denn!' die Bereitschaft zur Unterwerfung, wenn sie schon sein muß, und das bewußte Aufsichnehmen des Risikos. Er hat Mephistos dominante Machtposition voll bestätigt und gefällt deshalb dem Dämon (...)". (Gaier 1996a, p. 236)

<sup>195</sup> "Der hypothetische Wunsch (1692-97) ist eigentlich als eine bedingte Erlaubnis zu verstehen (vgl. 1699-1701), und die Bedingung wiederum, an die sie geknüpft ist, bildet den propositionalen Gehalt der Behauptung, die Faust mithilfe der eigentlichen Wette bekräftigt: Er werde sich nie von Mephistopheles manipulieren lassen". (Brüning 2010, p. 35)

<sup>196</sup> This is contrary to how Rüdiger Scholz sums up current consensus regarding the relationship between Faust and Mephistopheles during the pact scene (which again is contrary to, for example, Ulrich Gaier's interpretation, quoted above). Scholz regards Faust as significantly superior to Mephistopheles, manipulating the latter into accepting a wager that it is impossible for Faust to lose in order to ensure the spirit's aid within the realm that the spirit masters. The argument proposed in this current study is that Mephistopheles is in the process of manipulating Faust, using the latter's propensity towards ritual to ensnare him. Scholz, on the other hand, establishes a hierarchy between the Lord, Mephistopheles and Faust, where Mephistopheles is solidly positioned at the bottom: "Mephisto darf mit Gottes Erlaubnis den redlichen Faust auf die Probe stellen, Faust selbst sieht sich gegenüber Mephisto haushoch überlegen, er gibt ein Versprechen zur Kontinuität seines rastlosen, niemals zufriedener zu stellenden Charakters ab und sichert sich dadurch Mephistos praktische Naturüberlegenheit" (Scholz 2011, p. 786). Either Mephistopheles manipulates Faust or Faust manipulates Mephistopheles. This study argues in favour of the first option.

Mephistopheles uses Faust's acceptance of this seemingly pointless ritual as an indication that the two may reach an agreement, both in the sense of reaching a point of mutual understanding and in the sense of entering into a binding pact. The verb "vertragen", when used to describe a relationship between two or more parties, primarily indicates reconciliation between enemies.<sup>197</sup> Line 1532 strongly suggests that this is the case: Mephistopheles does not unconditionally state that he approves of Faust; he ties his approval to Faust's obedience to an outdated hellish ritual, saying "so gefällst du mir" when Faust performs the occult ritual of inviting the Devil three times. Their attitude toward one another is not currently friendly, but Mephistopheles expresses hope that it might become so, building this hope on Faust's adherence to and belief in old hellish rituals. Mephistopheles is gradually probing the character of Faust, and finding in him one trait which the reader has already been made aware of during the scene *Vor dem Tor*, as Faust saw a hellhound where Wagner only saw a lost poodle: He leans strongly towards hellish rituals and magical formulae. Mephistopheles's seduction of Faust, which the former has revealed is his primary undertaking, starts with the establishment of one of Faust's weak points; hellish law becomes a point of entry for the spirit, like Marthe's greed later becomes an entry point for hellish spirits to the pious and otherwise unassailable Gretchen.

The inclination towards ritual offers Mephistopheles an avenue of approach towards Faust. The verb "vertragen" may also be used to describe the act of entering into a contractual agreement with someone,<sup>198</sup> and this type of agreement is precisely what Faust's adherence to hellish rituals will facilitate. Mephistopheles's use of the verb "vertragen" indicates that his purpose in seeking out Faust in the second Studierzimmer scene is to fulfil the latter's wish for a formalised pact, in other words to conform to the old sequence of events that is described in Spies's book: Initial

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<sup>197</sup> Adelung: "Streitige oder feindselige Personen einig, eigentlich einträchtig machen". (vol. IV, 1161, "vertragen")

<sup>198</sup> Adelung: "eine gegenseitige Zusage, ein Versprechen und Gegenversprechen geben, auch ohne vorher gegangenen Streit" (vol. IV, 1161-1162, "vertragen"). Adelung's definition of contract, Vertrag ("ein Versprechen mit einem Gegenversprechen"; vol. IV, 1159-1160, "der Vertrag"), is operative in this definition of "vertragen".

summoning, with “viel Zirkel”, followed by preliminary negotiations, and then the spirit’s return at a later point for a formalisation of reciprocal promises. The word “vertragen” may be taken in this case to have both meanings: Because Faust believes in the old law of Hell and is willing to adhere to its rituals, Mephistopheles can take on the mantle of the old, pact-offering hellish spirit.

Faust is not the only victim of Mephistopheles’s subterfuge regarding hellish law. His seduction is also aimed at the reader or audience, who, in light of the immense body of research into the enigmatic outcome of the wager, have proven to be as easily convinced of the necessity of following old laws as Faust. The ritual of a threefold invitation is in reality meaningless; nothing indicates that Mephistopheles can only enter a room that he has been invited into three times, other than this single instance. For example, he repeatedly enters Gretchen’s room without her express permission, leaving behind jewellery. It is also an inconsistent rule when it comes to Faust’s study; the evil spirit had no trouble entering the room the first time, save for the imperfect pentagram that kept him from leaving. Hellish laws appear to bind him only occasionally – or not at all. Mephistopheles’s subdual by power of the pentagram may also very well only be jugglery intended to fit Faust’s expectations; like the first interaction in Spies’s *Faustbook* between Faustus and the Devil, where the latter pretends to be bound against his will by Faustus’s powerful incantations, Mephistopheles gives Faust the impression that he has managed to bend the spirit to his will. The laws of Hell, which Faust regards as prerequisite for pacts with the Devil, may actually be nothing other than *Gaukelei* intended to appeal to the Renaissance scholar’s expectations. The *Gaukelei*, however, continues after Faust is no longer paying attention; he falls asleep during the first *Studierzimmer* scene, through a magical lullaby sung by a choir of spirits, yet Mephistopheles is still bound by the pentagram, and commands a rat to gnaw through it:

*Mephistopheles.*

Er schläft! So recht, ihr luft’gen zarten Jungen!

Ihr habt ihn treulich eingesungen!

Für dies Konzert bin ich in eurer Schuld.

Du bist noch nicht der Mann, den Teufel festzuhalten!

Umgaukelt ihn mit süßen Traumgestalten,

Versenkt ihn in ein Meer des Wahns;  
Doch dieser Schwelle Zauber zu zerspalten,  
Bedarf ich eines Rattenzahns.  
Nicht lange brauch' ich zu beschwören,  
Schon raschelt eine hier und wird sogleich mich hören.  
(GF, l. 1506-1515)

At this point, the spirit is the only active character on stage, and so the target of his pretence must be the audience or reader. Mephistopheles's adherence to the laws of Hell gives Faust the impression that a binding pact may be entered into with him, and his continued adherence to those same laws after Faust falls asleep leads the audience or reader towards the same conclusion. The magic threshold ("diese Schwelle Zauber") remains as a barrier for the spirit after Faust falls asleep, so either the law of Hell is an active, binding principle in the work, or the reader or audience is deceived by Mephistopheles along with the doctor. When appearing before the Renaissance scholar Faust for the first time, Mephistopheles stages himself as a devil bound by hellish rituals set down in a hellish law. He extends this persona past Faust's perception of it, presenting it to the reader or onlooker, who more likely than not is familiar with the myth of Doctor Faust(us), and who therefore expects a meeting between Mephistopheles and Faust to result in a pact sealed according to the laws of Hell.

Neither Mephistopheles nor Faust, however, seems to place any value on strict sets of rules. When conversing with the student in the second *Studierzimmer* scene, Mephistopheles shows nothing but disdain for the formalities of law:

*Mephistopheles.*  
Ich kann es Euch so sehr nicht übel nehmen,  
Ich weiß, wie es um diese Lehre steht.  
Es erben sich Gesetz' und Rechte  
Wie eine ew'ge Krankheit fort,  
Sie schleppen von Geschlecht sich zum Geschlechte  
Und rücken sacht von Ort zu Ort.  
Vernunft wird Unsinn, Wohltat Plage;  
Weh dir, daß du ein Enkel bist!  
Vom Rechte, das mit uns geboren ist,  
Von dem ist leider! nie die Frage.  
(GF, l. 1970-1979)

In these lines, Mephistopheles gives voice to a view of law that parallels one found in Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. There, Goethe argues that scholars of law rarely concern themselves with the genesis and underlying reason of law,<sup>199</sup> blindly accepting inherited and occasionally anachronistic laws. One such highly misplaced, or severely outdated, set of rules is the law of Hell, which Mephistopheles himself was seen adhering to shortly before this. Mephistopheles, wanting to dissuade the student from juridical studies, presents inherited law as a disease, contrasted to a law that is tied to the individual, born with "us". Laws that were made for a different time, under different circumstances, fit the present poorly. In tying law to the birth of the individual, Mephistopheles turns it into something that is alive and permutable, opposed to the "eternal disease" that is inherited law, tapping into a vein that runs through both parts of *Faust*: The pervading idea that there is a difference between permutable, living words and ideas, and frozen, dead ones.

Faust, also, opines that inherited law holds questionable merit. Very early in the drama, he dismisses the study of law by using the clearly derogative word "Juristerei" to describe his own futile legal studies:

Habe nun, ach! Philosophie,  
Juristerei und Medizin,  
Und leider auch Theologie  
Durchaus studiert, mit heißem Bemühn.  
(GF, l. 354-357)

While the word "Juristerei" seems to have a very sparse history,<sup>200</sup> it is clearly derisive,<sup>201</sup> and it is the only of the four principal scientific disciplines that is

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<sup>199</sup> "[E]s wird nicht nachgefragt, wo und wie ein Gesetz entsprungen, was die innere und äußere Veranlassung dazu gegeben ... Wir fragen nach dem, was gegenwärtig besteht ..." (Goethe quoted in Trunz 2002, p. 546).

<sup>200</sup> Adelung makes no mention of the word, and when turning to Grimm, only two references to its use are found: One to a letter from one of Goethe's contemporaries, legal scholar Ludwig Höpfner, to Johann Heinrich Merck, and one to line 355 in Goethe's *Faust*. (Grimm, vol. 10, 2404, "Juristerei")

<sup>201</sup> Cahn (1949): "(...) Faust tells us how weary he is with the learning of the law, he terms it derisively 'Juristerei'" (p. 905). Cahn, however, performs a rather glaring error of judgment in the same article, as he ascribes Mephistopheles's speech to the student in the second *Studierzimmer* scene to Goethe, stating that Goethe here sets forth a critique of anachronistic law: "Law, Goethe

ridiculed in this manner. Faust's study of theology, by contrast, is "unfortunate", but it is not the discipline itself, rather the fact that Faust studied it which is unfortunate. "Juristereï" bears a certain semblance to the word "Rednerei" (GF, I. 1734), which is the word Mephistopheles uses to describe Faust's lengthy comment on the nature of the written word in lines 1716-1733, and which can designate lengthy rhetoric with little or no purpose. In the word "Juristereï" lies Faust's dismissal of and contempt for scholarly law. Yet he appears delighted when met with the prospect of a hellish law, because the existence of such a law means that he can negotiate a pact with Mephistopheles.

Neither Mephistopheles nor Faust seems to hold inherited law in high esteem. In light of this insight, Mephistopheles' demand for a pact written according to the rituals of the old laws of Hell seems particularly paradoxical: According to his own apparent belief in permutable, situational *Naturrecht*, made evident in his speech to the student, should he not more than anyone know the value of the spoken "Manneswort"? Faust's accusation of pedantry in line 1716, another trait that echoes in the term "Juristereï", seems well-founded, as the hellish custom of signing a pact in blood most certainly is the product of "Gesetz' und Rechte" inherited from a bygone age. The signature in blood is nothing other than "Juristereï" hailing from the Faust tradition.

During the second *Studierzimmer* scene, Mephistopheles emphasises that the laws of Hell stand as guarantor for any contractual agreement: His "Wir werden's nicht vergessen" references the ritualised writing that he is then about to require of Faust. This law is the perfect example of an outdated inherited law, but Georg Müller was undoubtedly correct when he stated in 1912 that Mephistopheles insists that contracts are recognised in the hellish regions also: "Mephistopheles beteuert, daß

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seems to say, should be fit for the subject people and their social order" (Cahn 1949, p. 907). Cahn seemingly mistakes Mephistopheles's view of law for that of Goethe, and attempts to set these lines apart from the "nihilistic contempt" of Christopher Marlowe's Mephistopheles by indicating that Goethe (or, as is actually the case, Mephistopheles) in these lines argues for "the right of every people to renounce inherited norms and to earn its own juristic livelihood" (p. 908).



auch im Höllenbereiche Vertragstreue gelte” (Müller 1912, p. 317). Müller points out that this idea, that contractual law is valid in Hell, is inherited from Spies’ *Historia* – but incorrectly asserts that it is *directly* inherited from this work. It is indirectly inherited from that work, and it is through the law-abiding character of pact-offering devils that it is propagated. This idea is being identified here as a peculiarly stable component in literature featuring the Devil: The Devil is the keeper of pacts *par excellence*, a proponent of legality and ritual. The contrast to Mephistopheles’ dismissal of inherited law during his speech to the student is glaring. Not only is the Hellish law inherited, but the very motif of the pact may be said to be handed down in a similar fashion, at least if one accepts Schöne’s implied notion that this inheritance constitutes a threat to the outcome of the tragedy’s second part.

While Mephistopheles’ speech to the student indicates that he gives little credit to inherited law, and that the formalities of the written confirmation of his agreement with Faust is nothing other than a more or less empty homage to tradition, the old hellish laws are invoked by the spirit as Faust dies. Mephistopheles at that point, just as the doctor has expired, brings forth the material object that Faust produced during the second *Studierzimmer* scene, in order to ensure that the doctor’s soul specifically does not escape his claws. The following lines from the *Grablegung* scene of the second part of the play once again paint a picture of Mephistopheles as a traditional eater of souls and keeper of pacts, who expects the arc of Faust’s life to follow that of “earlier” Fausts. Like Spies’ Mephistophiles, Mephistopheles appears before Faust and “vberantwort ihm seinen Brieff oder Verschreibung” (HDF, p. 118), expecting to snatch Faust’s spirit as it (this time slowly and reluctantly) departs the body:

*Mephistopheles.*

Der Körper liegt, und will der Geist entfliehn,  
 Ich zeig’ ihm rasch den blutgeschriebnen Titel; –  
 Doch leider hat man jetzt so viele Mittel,  
 Dem Teufel Seelen zu entziehn.  
 Auf altem Wege stößt man an,  
 Auf neuem sind wir nicht empfohlen;  
 Sonst hätt’ ich es allein getan,  
 Jetzt muß ich Helfershelfer holen.

Uns geht's in allen Dingen schlecht!  
 Herkömmliche Gewohnheit, altes Recht,  
 Man kann auf gar nichts mehr vertrauen.  
 Sonst mit dem letzten Atem fuhr sie aus,  
 Ich paßt' ihr auf und, wie die schnellste Maus,  
 Schnapps! hielt ich sie in fest verschloßnen Klauen.  
 (GF, l. 11612-11625)

Mephistopheles leans on the right given to him by power of the document that Faust signed in his own blood. Further, he correctly points out that there are so many ways to wrest souls from the Devil's grasp, and this he does in words that are strongly reminiscent of those used by Satan in the story of Theophilus as told by Johannes Wedde.<sup>202</sup> In the latter case the written pact was meant to counteract the traditional act of purloining souls from the Devil at the last minute through the grace of God or a similarly merciful act from a related entity. Here Mephistopheles states that if Faust's spirit attempts escape, he will show him, presumably meaning Faust's *Unsterbliches*, the document written in blood. Mephistopheles still expects to be cheated, and laments the unreliability of "old law", "altes Recht". The law that Mephistopheles invokes at this point is an inherited law, the old law of Hell, that once guaranteed that material promises written according to its rituals would be kept. The spirit's previous rejection of inherited law notwithstanding, he half expects the articles in the document to be honoured, or at least the document to have some effect, and half expects to be tricked, foiled or cheated. There is a clear distinction established between a rightful outcome, in which Faust is condemned according to the laws of Hell, and a wrongful outcome, in which the law is broken. In these lines, the pact motif is reinstated, and the idea of a hellish law to which at least Mephistopheles this time seems to adhere reappears.

These lines are, with the exception of eight lines by the choir of lemurs, the introduction to the scene in which the uncertainty regarding Faust's salvation or damnation is resolved; it is the play's penultimate scene, its crescendo before the

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<sup>202</sup> "Wenn aber der Leib ward alt und krank, | Dann sind sie auf einen Weg gekommen, | Wo uns die Seelen wurden benommen." (Wedde 1888/2013, p. 35)

enigmatic coda in the *Bergschluchten* scene. The uncertainty or conflict which is present at the scene's opening is governed by the "blutgeschriebnen Titel", which has created a strong expectation that the articles that are written on it shall be honored. Mephistopheles gives voice to this expectation, and he does so at this crucial moment. A dash marks the end of a statement in Goethe's contemporary punctuation, so Mephistopheles's first two lines, which is his claim to Faust's *Geist* by virtue of the document from the second *Studierzimmer* scene, constitute his first statement in the scene. The following two lines, however, introduce uncertainty regarding the status of Faust's *Unsterbliches*: Contrasted to the lawful appropriation of Faust's *Geist* according to the tangible evidence of a deal struck are the traditional means through which souls are taken away from the Devil, reflected in the quartet's rhyme scheme, which sets the lawful "Titel" up against unlawful "Mittel". The struggle for Faust's soul is set between these two opposing principles: Lawfulness, according to a hellish law governing material promises, and divine unlawfulness. "Die alte Wette", as Schöne dismissively put it, clearly plays a role here, and not only does it influence the outcome of the play, but it stands at the crux of the conflict that is about to be resolved at this point. There is absolutely no indication that the hellish law and its outdated pact are being brushed aside to make room for a particular outcome for the drama.

Faust's salvation is one of those puzzles that define Goethe's *Faust*'s place in the Western literary canon, in particular posing a challenge to theories of tragedy.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> George Steiner (2004) reflects on the difference between Goethe's designation of his drama as tragedy and the play's final outcome in an article built on his *The Death of Tragedy* (1950), stating that "Goethe's errant Faust is gloriously absolved" (Steiner 2004, p. 7) and that "Goethe's *Faust II* ends by celebrating the Christian contract with hope, its investment in absolution" (p. 13), implicitly contrasting this "contract" with hope to Faust's other "contract", which should ensure a properly tragic outcome. To Steiner, *Faust II* may mark the first departure in occidental literature from a classical tragic form: "The redemptive, profoundly sentimental coda to Goethe's *Faust II* may conveniently date the abstention from, the repudiation of the metaphysics and theology of tragedy as these had been articulated and 'bodied forth' since the fall of Troy" (p. 6). Terry Eagleton must also address the challenge that Goethe's tragedy brings to any attempt at defining tragedy, since the work threatens even Eagleton's humorous pragmatic definition, "very sad" (2003, p. 3), and Eagleton concludes that the end of *Faust II* beyond a doubt is a triumph: "yet by being redeemed, Faust is allowed to outwit the death drive, coupling destruction to the business of creation without falling prey to it himself" (p. 249).

Here, it will suffice to state that Faust is redeemed, and that this result is contrary to Mephistopheles's idea of the outcome that their written agreement was meant to guarantee. On recovering from a confused state instilled by his carnal desire for the cherubs who lift Faust's *Unsterbliches* away, Mephistopheles delivers a lament regarding what he understands to be a cosmic injustice:

*Mephistopheles, sich umsehend.*  
 Doch wie? – wo sind sie hingezogen?  
 Unmündiges Volk, du hast mich überrascht,  
 Sind mit der Beute himmelwärts entfliegen;  
 Drum haben sie an dieser Gruft genascht!  
 Mir ist ein großer, einziger Schatz entwendet:  
 Die hohe Seele, die sich mir verpfändet,  
 Die haben sie mir pffiffig weggepascht.  
 Bei wem soll ich mich nun beklagen?  
 Wer schafft mir mein erworbenes Recht?  
 Du bist getäuscht in deinen alten Tagen,  
 Du hast's verdient, es geht dir grimmig schlecht.  
 Ich habe schimpflich mißgehandelt,  
 Ein großer Aufwand, schmählich! ist vertan;  
 Gemein Gelüst, absurde Liebschaft wandelt  
 Den ausgepichten Teufel an.  
 Und hat mit diesem kindisch-tollen Ding  
 Der Klugerfahne sich beschäftigt,  
 So ist fürwahr die Torheit nicht gering,  
 Die seiner sich am Schluß bemächtigt.  
 (GF, l. 11825-11843)

Mephistopheles again invokes the right he understands to be his due as a direct result of the existence of the material document that Faust signed in his own blood. Faust, after having pledged, “verpfändet”, his soul to Mephistopheles, is still redeemed, or, in the scorned Mephistopheles's words, his soul is not only purloined, “entwendet”, but also “weggepascht”. The word “weggepascht” implies that Faust's soul was stolen from Mephistopheles through vulgar trickery. Heinz Gockel (1988) explains the word as a colloquial Yiddish term meaning “smuggle”:

Es gibt ein eigenartiges Wort in Goethes Faust, das Wort „weggepascht“, ein umgangssprachliches jiddisches Wort mit der Bedeutung schmuggeln. Mephisto benützt es in seinem Ärger darüber, daß ihm Fausts Unsterbliches doch noch genommen wird. (v. 11830) (Gockel 1988, p. 138)

In Mephistopheles's perspective, Faust's spirit was smuggled away while he was dazed by the cherubs' tantalising backsides. Mephistopheles is the victim of an

expected injustice, reinforced throughout this monologue, which is not only the final piece of dialogue in the crucial *Grablegung* scene, but also Mephistopheles's final statement in the play: The cherubs made off with their haul, "Beute", leaving Mephistopheles deceived, "getäuscht". He previously reflected on the means, "Mittel", through which souls could be taken from him, and here he blames his own subjection to lust and carnal desire for the fact that Faust's spirit was taken from him. Mephistopheles had a lawful claim on Faust's *Unsterbliches*, but his real problem is that this law is set aside: It has no guarantor. "Bei wem soll ich mich nun beklagen? Wer schafft mir mein erworbnes Recht?" asks Mephistopheles rhetorically, because the instance that has negated the inherited hellish law that would reinforce Faust's written promise is the Lord.

Mephistopheles may denounce inherited law during his speech to the student in the second *Studierzimmer* scene, but his final monologue in the second part of the tragedy concerns the grave injustice that he has been the victim of according to the old law laid down in the body of literature that comprises the tradition of Faustian literature ("Herkömmliche Gewohnheit, altes Recht"). It is true, then, that the old laws of Hell, along with the written pact, are set aside at the end of Goethe's *Faust II*, but it is not done quietly. It is explicitly recognised as an injustice by Mephistopheles, who introduces the conflict between written pledge and expected treachery at the beginning of the scene, and laments its resolution through trickery at its conclusion.

The grace of the Lord saves Faust, despite Faust's guilt. This is an interpretation that is supported by a strong reader, namely Goethe, who wrote the following in a letter to Schubarth dated November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1820: "Mephistopheles darf seine Wette nur halb gewinnen, und wenn die halbe Schuld auf Faust ruhen bleibt, so tritt das Begnadigungs-Recht des alten Herrn sogleich herein, zum heitersten Schluß des ganzen" (Goethe quoted in Schöne 2013, p. 735). The grace of God is notably unlawful in Goethe's *Faust*, at least from Mephistopheles's perspective: Contrasting a lawful sequence of events, following from the ritualised promise entered into according to an old law, with the breach of contract that takes place during the *Grablegung* scene. In order for this "very serious jest" to be efficacious, one of two

interpretations must go before it: Either one must understand Faust to have lost a wager that made up the core of the agreement, or one must consider the written agreement to be a reciprocal pact. In addition, one must regard the pact motif as a significant part of Goethe's variation on the Faust myth.

The reader is lured into a mode of reading where not the glorious destruction of Faust's hellish promise, but the humorous ignoring of inherited law, "altes Recht", "Juristerei" and "herkömmliche Gewohnheit" constitutes a problem. The mystery of Faust's salvation should be understood not as a juridical mystery, but a vital, situational mystery. Schöne may be correct when he asserts that the wager has no bearing on the play's outcome, but he is incorrect in believing that it doesn't play a role in the *Grablegung* scene; the scene's conflict arises from the written document, which contains promises and ritual actions made and performed according to a species of inherited law that is not recognised. In refusing to engage with the pact's *Juristerei*, the choir of angels lift Faust's immortal remains away from the rules that he and the audience was made to believe would govern his future.

#### 4. **Between Piety and Revolution. Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus. Das Leben des deutschen Tonsetzers Adrian Leverkühn, erzählt von einem Freunde***

Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (1947) invites demons into its cultured, rational discourse through the old pact motif. That misplaced, inverted area of experience that the pact motif has been proven to invite into works of literature is given a name in the book's chronicler Serenus Zeitblom's terminology: He deems it demonic. The particular type of demonism that at certain points break through into the otherwise serene rationality of chronicler Serenus Zeitblom's world view is staged as being historically misplaced before the gaze of the early-to-mid twentieth century bourgeoisie that constitutes the book's readership. An equally antiquated motif forms the basis for this invitation of the demonic. When the pact with the Devil is positively identified as such, it opens the floodgates to demonism in the novel; previously introduced characters and events are retroactively marked as devilish, and that which Zeitblom identifies as demonic becomes an interpretative category that the novel as a whole cannot do without. As devilry is allowed to permeate the membrane separating Zeitblom's rationality from its chaotic opposite, old literary forms and tropes are coupled with the novel's innovation and gain life-like characteristics, in imitation of the life-like behaviour of Jonathan Leverkühn's experiment with osmotic growths.<sup>204</sup> The point of entry is the pact with the Devil; without it, the two domains would remain separated, and no osmosis could occur. Significant voices in recent scholarship on Mann's novel has tended to exclude not only the pact motif, but also the category of demonism from the novel, seeing it as nothing other than a category arising from Serenus Zeitblom's outmoded moral valuations and his will to characterise his friend Adrian Leverkühn as a Faustian character. This misinterpretation arises from an inadequate understanding of the way in which traditional motivic tropes are integrated into Mann's novel: The novel gradually

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<sup>204</sup> MDF, pp. 34-35.

writes itself into, not out of, the Faustian tradition of pact literature, imitating narrative structures found in the Spies-book. The hypothesis that will be explored and tested in the following is that the work gains from the inclusion of the pact motif a compositional boon that mirrors that gained by its protagonist – and that Thomas Mann ensures the formalities of the pact, according to an old law that is brought into the work from outside of it, are honored.

Mann's novel can be said to have been infected with an area of human experience that Serenus Zeitblom, in collusion with certain other characters in Mann's novel, gather under the term demonism. Like the neural syphilis of its protagonist, it is for the most part, and particularly in its early stages, an undetectable disease, but (also similar to Adrian Leverkühn) the immense creative potential inherent in the novel stems from this foreign organism in its figurative bloodstream. Thomas Mann uses the old pact motif to open up a space within the narrative where demonism and devilry displace Zeitblom's rationality and take center stage, creating a nexus of demonic tendencies in the novel, and giving the reader an interpretative key to identifying these trends in Adrian Leverkühn's fictional biography. Demonism as interpretative category will open up avenues of approach to those thematic strands in the novel that tie into the pact motif – which, as will be shown below, are most of the identifiable themes in the work. Following in the footsteps of Serenus Zeitblom, who finds invocations of the prostitute Esmeralda through the tonal structure h-e-a-e-es (Hetaera Esmeralda) throughout Leverkühn's compositions, the following will be an attempt at tracing the effects of the old, inherited pact motif on Mann's novel, formal as well as motivic and thematic.

As fictional biography, the novel follows Adrian Leverkühn's life from his birth in Oberweiler, Weißenfels, and schooling in the mediaeval atmosphere of the fictional Kaisersaschern, through his years as a student of theology in Halle, a student of music and philosophy in Leipzig, and as a composer living first in Munich, then two years in Palestrina, Italy, and lastly with the Schweigestills in the fictional Pfeifferring, until his Nietzschean final years in the care of his mother and his eventual death, both told through a postscript. Leverkühn's biography is narrated from the



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perspective of his diegetically-present friend Serenus Zeitblom, who starts writing in 1943 and writes through the German catastrophe of 1945, adding his observations on macropolitical events to his retelling of and commentary upon Leverkühn's life. Although Adrian Leverkühn's encounter with figures and events explicitly deemed demonic by the chronicler begins in his twentieth and twenty-first years, as he turns toward the study of music, moves to Leipzig, and meets the syphilitic prostitute whom he names Esmeralda, he is faced with demonism throughout his life: The infection is present in its early, almost undetectable, stages from the very first chapter. Demonism is not translatable into conceptual language, as made clear through Zeitblom's circling around the demonic, but Leverkühn consistently reaches into that realm and finds varying modes of expression when conveying these encounters: As a child and student of theology, he laughs; as a musician, he composes; and as a paralysed syphilitic, he oscillates between heated anger and cold docility, mirroring the description of Hell given by the devil in the novel's pivotal twenty-fifth chapter.<sup>205</sup>

The object of study will in the following be the pact motif and its consequences. Primarily three chapters that share some characteristics with one another will be read. These chapters directly present a material which is staged as set apart, and they contain references to and reworkings of the traditional pact motif. These references may be explicit, in the form of direct quotes from Spies's *Historia* and other sources, or they may be implicit, through for example Adrian Leverkühn's use of antiquated forms of expression, or both Zeitblom's and Leverkühn's adoption of the quasi-judicial terminology of the pact motif. Furthermore, these chapters are formally set apart from the main body of Serenus Zeitblom's narrative style in an operation which is similar to the operation of setting apart the *Historia*'s sixth chapter. Another voice and another world view is here allowed to shine through, clearly marked as different, and clearly set apart from the rest of the narrative. Yet in precisely these chapters it is made clear that the principles embodied by this other

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<sup>205</sup> MDF, pp. 357-360.

voice are present throughout the work, consistently threatening to disturb the calm rationality of Zeitblom's narrative, while at the same time fuelling this same narrative. Chapter 16, which is placed at the threshold between Adrian's life as a student of theology in Halle and his life as a student of music in Leipzig, marks his premeditated decision to turn away from theology and promise himself to art and music ("der Kunst Promission zu machen", MDF, p. 195). It is written in the form of a letter from Leverkühn to Zeitblom, and, according to the latter, is presented unedited. This chapter details the composer's first encounter with the prostitute whom he later dubs Esmeralda, and who infects him with syphilis in her home in Bratislava. Chapter 25 is also written in Leverkühn's own hand, as an account of his conversation with a devil who names himself Sammael during his stay in Palestrina, Italy. This is the point in the narrative at which the Devil is encountered, and in which the demonic figure points out that there exists a pact between himself and the composer, engendered in the Leipzig brothel in Chapter 16 and finalised during Leverkühn's subsequent visit to her home in Bratislava. Finally, the notion that there is a pact is reinforced, and the pact itself resolved, during Chapter 47, which contains Leverkühn's planned performance of parts from his final composition, *Doktor Fausti Weheklag*. Although penned by Zeitblom, this last chapter in the novel still incorporates that other voice, representing the inverted content, language and dramaturgy that Zeitblom names demonic, and therefore represents the ultimate amalgamation of demonism and rationality that the pact motif facilitates.

The demonic, invited into the novel through the pact motif, which is developed primarily in these three chapters, is in Mann's novel a concept encompassing traits from different areas of experience. The book contains demonic language, characters, ideas, and narrative structures. The term, which will be defined according to Serenus Zeitblom's use of the word, is thoroughly discussed in 4.3. Preliminarily, it may be understood to encompass the opposition to Zeitblom's own attitude towards his surroundings, which strives towards serenity, social decorum, clearly definable categories and terms, rationality and order. Zeitblom's most systematic definition of the term is perhaps the following, which laments the infiltration of irrational

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philosophy into theological thought, and which explicitly identifies the demonic as untheoretical, vital, encompassing will or desire.<sup>206</sup>

Hier beobachtet man deutlich die Infiltration des theologischen Denkens durch irrationale Strömungen der Philosophie, in deren Bereich ja längst das Untheoretische, das Vitale, der Wille oder Trieb, kurz ebenfalls das Dämonische zum Hauptthema der Theorie geworden war. (MDF, p. 135)

The pact, which is Adrian Leverkühn's willed syphilis infection, is a rupture in the tissue separating demonism from rationality, allowing the former to bleed into the latter. This rupture lends demonic attributes to characters and events that precede and follow the positive identification of a demonic principle in Chapter 25, for example Ehrenfried Kumpf's Renaissance mannerisms, the young Adrian Leverkühn's mocking laughter, the composer Beissel's angelic music, and Leverkühn's travels with Professor Capercailzie – and it makes visible a discordant undertow in Zeitblom's discourse. However, the understanding of demonism that emerges throughout the novel strongly suggests that it is beyond the reach of conceptual language, with the word “demonism” in itself proving inadequate, so the novel's two principal voices – Adrian Leverkühn's and Serenus Zeitblom's – must find some way of approaching or conveying this particular area of human experience outside of conceptual language. Following Thomas Mann's essayistic writings and self commentary, the two opposing concepts of demonism and rationalism will be awarded other epithets, such as barbaric and cultural, archaic and classical, Dionysian and Apollonian, and their respective roles in music, in language, in literature and particularly in the form and structure of Mann's novel will be explored. In each case, it will soon become apparent that demonism is closely linked with nudity, both in the

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<sup>206</sup> Ulrich Karthaus (2013) finds that these are traits that belong to the Devil and to *evil*, thereby taking a step beyond Zeitblom's valuation and making a moral judgment that this study will not make, and that Helmut Koopmann (2013), in the same issue of *Thomas Mann-Studien*, has made problematic through his identification of the undefinable nature of *evil* as it appears in Mann's novel. Karthaus concludes: “So schließt sich der Kreis der Motive, der den Teufel und das Böse definiert und umgibt: die Zweideutigkeit der Musik, Erotik und Sexualität, Versuchung und Verführung, Personen und Figuren in der Gesellschaft einer Endzeit, mit dem Willen zum Durchbruch, die dem Teufel verfallen wird, vor der Kulisse einer anderen Endzeit, die dem Teufel verfallen war und nur scheinbar überwunden ist” (2013, p. 131).

literal sense of the human body's nakedness and figuratively in the sense that the demonic lurks beneath a cover of rationality, culture and Apollonian constructs. The pact motif stands at the heart of these figurations, serving as a point at which "die dialektische verbundenheit des Bösen mit dem Heiligen und Guten" (MDF, p. 152), as Zeitblom observes regarding theologian Schleppfuß's theodicy,<sup>207</sup> is made visible.

Thomas Mann writes in *Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus* (1949), his autobiographical imitation of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, of Arnold Schönberg's feigned conservatism, which he describes as a strange mixture of revolution and pious adherence to tradition:

Desto stärker zog mich sein einzigartiges Lehrbuch [Schönberg's *Harmonielehre*] an, dessen pädagogische Haltung ein Schein-Konservatismus: die seltsame Mischung von Traditionsfrömmigkeit und Revolution ist." (Mann 2009, p. 44)

This mixture of revolution and piety towards tradition is descriptive of Mann's treatment of the pact motif and of the Faust material as a whole; Johann Spies's Faust story is present, but in a barely recognizable form. The author faithfully adopts aspects of the motif, ranging from the theme of the inquisitive scholar (in this case "speculating" the elements of music rather than natural science) via the motifs of the signature in blood and copulation with the Devil, to formalised quasi-legal terminology and a sequencing of events that mirror the first Faustbook. The author reworks these into something not only acceptable to the early twentieth century reader, but also significant enough to carry independent meaning.

Currently, there appears to be a tendency among readers of the novel to ignore or actively deny the presence of a Faustian pact motif. Jürgen H. Petersen (2007) has pointed out that the past three decades have hardly seen any notable contributions to

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<sup>207</sup> Schleppfuß's theodicy states that evil exists in order to provide a contrast to good, allowing good to appear all the more distinctly. This is an idea that is also expressed by Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust* (l. 1349-1354), reinforcing Schleppfuß's affiliation with older devil figures. Helmut Koopmann (2013) argues that while this may be true, the inverse is not true in Mann's novel: good does not provide a comparative path towards identification of what evil is, because the evil that Mann's novel circles around is indescribable.

interpretations of *Doktor Faustus* as “poetic text” (Petersen 2007, p. 13) in its own right – a critique which is very similar to that which this study has sought to provide a response to in the analysis of the Spies-book. His attempt at rectifying the situation is based on the erroneous assumption that there is no operative pact motif in the novel, and for this reason his reading of the poetic text misses the single most defining element in it. The following rundown of the motif’s history of research will identify the motif’s perceived presence in the novel as a point of contention.

## 4.1 Current State of Research

Liselotte Voss, noting in 1975 a growing scholarly interest in Mann’s *Doktor Faustus*, lists the following major areas of inquiry pertaining to the novel which still reflect major lines in a currently highly active area of research: Thomas Mann’s relation to Germany and Germans, the role of music in the novel, the role of Nietzsche, disease, the novel understood as portrait of an artist, and its relation to Spies’s *Historia* and Goethe’s *Faust* (Voss 1975, pp. 2-3). Voss’s study is an elaboration on several of these points, based on material made available through the opening of the Mann archives in Zürich in 1961. She notes that interpretations of the work as a whole tend to regard it as a summary of all themes treated by Thomas Mann in his previous works, with, according to these interpreters, limited success:

In den meisten Gesamtdarstellungen wird der ‘Doktor Faustus’ als eine Zusammenfassung aller Themen des Autors betrachtet, wobei die Geglücktheit des Unternehmens allerdings zuweilen in Zweifel gezogen wird. (Voss 1975, p. 2)

Jürgen H. Petersen (2007) is a more recent example of a scholar who has set out to prove that *Doktor Faustus* is characterised by its failure to adequately express the ideas that Mann attempted to incorporate into it.<sup>208</sup> Regardless of whether it is true

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<sup>208</sup> Mann indicates in his *Entstehung* that the “essential” in his novel’s presentation of Adrian Leverkühn’s oratorio is a criticism of both sanguine barbarism and bloodless intellectualism (Mann 2009, p. 121). Petersen quotes this section, and then uncompromisingly states: “Nein, das ist dem

that the book is a summation of all themes Mann has treated throughout his literary career, and regardless of its merit in this respect, the novel does contain a large number of thematic and motivic strands that tie into Mann's previous works.<sup>209</sup> Regarding *Doktor Faustus* as the culmination of Mann's vast array of themes may serve as an explanation for its seemingly inexhaustible range of interpretative possibilities.

In this study's reading of Spies's *Historia*, it was discovered that the pact motif is the driving force in the narrative. In Mann's novel, this is no less true: The pact motif ties together the thematic and motivic multitude in the work. The pact is fascistic Germany's historical pact,<sup>210</sup> it is the source of Leverkühn's musical inspiration, the cause of his Nietzschean disease, and it is the primary link to the *Historia*. This covers all of Liselotte Voss's identified themes of study, and commentators often cite the pact in their various approaches to the novel. While at first glance it may seem that this study falls securely within the last of Voss's

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Dichter ganz und gar nicht gelungen. Was immer Zeitblom dem Leser als Element des Barbarischen beschreibt, führt nicht dazu, das ganze Oratorium 'dem Vorwurf des blutigen Barbarismus' auszusetzen, und nichts und niemand vermittelt uns den Eindruck, in Leverkühns Oratorium walte zudem 'blutloser Intellektualismus'. Die Diskrepanz zwischen Manns Vorhaben und dessen Ausführung im Roman dringt vielleicht nirgends so nachdrücklich ins Bewusstsein wie hier" (Petersen 2007, p. 43).

<sup>209</sup> A clear line can, for example, be drawn back to one of Mann's earliest publications, the short story "Der Kleine Herr Friedemann" (1897), which chronicles a misshapen man who attempts to seek refuge from carnal desire in art and music, and who ends up drowning himself when he is rejected and ridiculed by the beautiful, and demonically red-haired, Gerda von Rinnlingen. The short story is a brilliantly humorous, and painfully scathing, mockery of the idea that it is possible to subdue the carnal aspects of human existence by recourse to art and social decorum; in other words, one might say that the Dionysian principle breaks through into the Apollonian constructs of little mister Friedemann's world view (cf. 4.3.), and this is indeed precisely what Herbert Lehner (1968) says: He sees the structure of the short story to be commanded by the duality of the Dionysian and the Apollonian, and sees the misshapen man's tragedy to be born of the spirit of music: "Die hauptsächliche strukturelle Beziehung ist beeinflusst von dem Dualismus des Apollinischen und Dionysischen (...). Seine Tragödie wird sozusagen aus dem Geiste der Musik geboren (...)" (Lehner 1968, p. 48). In this sentence from Lehner's article, Friedemann's name could be construed as completely interchangeable with Leverkühn's.

<sup>210</sup> From Zeitblom's *Nachwort*: "Deutschland, die Wangen hektisch gerötet, taumelte dazumal auf der Höhe wüster Triumphfeiern, im Begriffe, die Welt zu gewinnen kraft des einen Vertrages, den es zu halten gesonnen war, und den es mit seinem Blute gezeichnet hatte." (MDF, p. 738)

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overarching categories, the novel's relation to Spies and Goethe, it may in fact encompass all of them. The current object of study is the centre-piece in the book. The pact motif opens up several paths to a researcher with an interest in Thomas Mann: Comparative within Mann's oeuvre; comparative outside of it; any number of thematical approaches; character studies; theories and histories of music, literature and art; political interpretations; and narratological approaches. Far from discouraging a comprehensive study of the pact motif in Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, this insight demonstrates the absolute need for such a study. Researchers and commentators diligently cite the pact motif in their various approaches to these and other research questions, more often than not off-handedly rejecting the presence of any "real" or "plausible" pact,<sup>211</sup> yet it is quite apparent that a much deeper understanding of the pact's form and function in the novel is needed.

The isolation of the pact motif from other motivic and thematic strands is a significantly less tidy operation than it was in Parts Two and Three of this study, but, nonetheless, it may be turned into a manageable problematic by identifying the main points of contention with regard to the pact motif. This means that primarily, this study touches on two histories of Mann research, which certainly intertwine, but which each have their own set of questions and topoi: His novel's relation to tradition, particularly the works of Goethe and the unidentified man from Speyer, from whom he may have adopted the Faust material, and the status of the pact motif in his work. These two areas will be treated separately in the following exposition of the current state of research, eventually being tied together by virtue of certain blind spots that may still be discovered in Mann scholarship.

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<sup>211</sup> Ball (1986), Petersen (2007), Sorvakk-Spratte (2008). These are discussed in detail in 4.1.2.

#### 4.1.1 Which Tradition Does Mann's Faustbook Belong To?

While Goethe wrote his *Faust* during a period in which the Faust material was already being revived, Thomas Mann fished the figure out of the depths of literary history, putting an end to the longest period in German-language literary history without a Faust publication since 1587. In France, Paul Valéry was writing his drama *Mon Faust*, which was never finished, but Mann's plan to write a Faustian novel revolving around a demonic syphilitic artist was engendered as early as 1901,<sup>212</sup> well before Valéry started working on the material. At the time of writing the novel, Mann was highly familiar with the long and firmly-established Faustian tradition in German-language literature. Although the value of Mann's self-commentary has, rightfully, become controversial, it is still safe to assume that Mann very consciously positioned himself within the tradition, explicitly and implicitly addressing his predecessors both in the novel and in his critical and self-critical works. In his lecture on Goethe's *Faust*, held in Princeton in 1939, Mann demonstrates knowledge of the early history of the Faust tradition by discussing Spies's *Historia* as a possible source of inspiration for Goethe.<sup>213</sup> He finds it probable that Spies himself compiled the book, and, presumably, invented his friend from Speyer, and sees the book as part of an ongoing tendency to feed the hungry printing press, quite recently invented, with

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<sup>212</sup> There are in fact two plans, one from 1901, and one from 1904. Some researchers (such as Hasselbach 1988, p. 7) follow Mann's own incorrect assertion from his diary entry of March 14th 1943 that both were written in 1904.

<sup>213</sup> Although Mann's research is relatively thorough, his conclusions differ from those of some more recent researchers. Dietrich Assmann (1975) performs a close reading of Mann's Goethe lecture, testing his hypotheses and proving some of them incorrect or imprecise, particularly assumptions regarding the historical Faustus (pp. 71-76). For instance, Mann assumes that the historical Faustus was born in Helmstadt, while Assmann strongly asserts that he was in fact born in Knittlingen. Three years after Assmann's study, Frank Baron published his *Doktor Faustus. From History to Legend* (1978), where the place of birth is again thought to be Helmstadt, based on Baron's study of matriculation records. This current study will not enter into the discussion of whether the historical Faustus was born in Knittlingen (Assmann 1975, Mahal 1995) or Helmstadt (Baron 1978). However, Mann, in placing himself in the Helmstadt-camp, may well have been closer to the truth than Assmann. The latter may have been unjustified in his harshness towards the majority of Mann scholars who, "ohne Kommentar" (Assmann 1978, p. 76), assume that the historical Faustus was born in Helmstadt.



any written material, regardless of quality.<sup>214</sup> The implied notion that the Spies-book was not particularly good did not stop the author from basing his ingress into the Faust tradition on this work. Goethe's and Spies's are, however, not the only Faustian works of literature that Mann shows familiarity with. In *Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus* (1949), which can be seen as an autobiographical attempt at retracing his own creative process as he was writing the novel, he also mentions in passing that he is familiar with Heinrich Heine's reflections on the Faust tradition, including his *Der Doktor Faust. Ein Tanzpoem* (1846). In the same work, he also mentions basing his research into the early history of Faust on Johann Scheible's 1847 study *Die Sage vom Faust. Volksbücher, Volksbühne, Puppenspiele, Höllenzwang und Zauberbücher*, which traces the early history of Faust, using it as a point of reference for his own reworking of the Faust myth. Helmut Koopmann (2001) has pointed out that Scheible's book does not contain the text of the *Historia*, and that Mann probably used Robert Petsch's 1911 edition of this book (p. 480).<sup>215</sup>

The impact of Goethe on Mann's literary production can hardly be overstated. The assumption that when Mann wrote a Faustian work it would have to have had something to do with Goethe's *Faust* is dictated by Goethe's prominence in three areas: German literary history as such, Mann's literary production and the Faust tradition. However, when Hilde Zaloscer in 1953 sent Mann an essay in which she had inquired into the relation between Goethe's *Faust* and Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, the answer she received in a letter from Mann strongly contradicted this idea. One line from this letter is very diligently quoted in research literature, and a number of studies have been based on it. "Mit Goethes Faust", writes Mann in his letter to

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<sup>214</sup> "Das müßigste Zeug war eben recht, die sensationelle junge Technik zu speisen, und um nur zu produzieren, machte der Drucker oft selbst den Verfasser. So ist das älteste Faust-Buch, vom Jahre 1587, wahrscheinlich vom Buchdrucker Spies in Frankfurt selbst kompiliert." (Mann 1974a, p. 592)

<sup>215</sup> This assumption by Koopmann may have its roots in Dietrich Assmann's (1975) educated guess that the Library of Congress, which sent Mann a copy of Spies's book, would make available to Mann the best edition. From a philological perspective, the best edition at the time was Petsch's (Assmann 1975, p. 69). Furthermore, Herbert Lehnert (1968) has identified some possible quotes from Petsch's foreword in Mann's writings.

Zaloscer of August 24, 1953, “– das will auch gesagt sein – hat mein Roman *nichts* gemein, außer der gemeinsamen Quelle, dem alten Volksbuch.” He then goes on to emphasise that Goethe’s Euphorion was not on his mind as he created the character Nepomuk Schneidewein, at least not to his knowledge: “Ich habe bei Nepomuk-Echo an Euphorion nicht gedacht – nicht dass ich wüsste.” This single reading instruction has spawned an entire branch of Mann research, largely dedicated to disproving it, but some also following in the footsteps of Zaloscer in attempting the very challenging feat of proving the absence of Goethe in Mann’s novel.<sup>216</sup> This is challenging because proving absence bears a much higher burden of evidence than proving presence. Researchers have looked long and hard at both works, more attentively so for the past thirty years, attempting to establish a connection. This approach is warranted not only by Mann’s close proximity to Goethe in several of his works, notably in the work immediately preceding *Doktor Faustus, Lotte in Weimar* (1939), but also by the insight that a willed non-compliance is a type of connection. The questions posed to the two works have sometimes regarded their similarities, and sometimes their dissimilarities, but in both cases, Mann is denied his apparent self-reported desire to forego Goethe. His strategy has mostly either been understood to take the form of active appropriation or active recantation, and the reading instruction implicit in his “nichts gemein” is rarely taken entirely seriously. It would, however, be pertinent to point out that if the group of researchers quoted below had tended to read more than one line from Mann’s letter to Zaloscer, then perhaps they would have realised that Mann, too, understood the risk that he may have been involuntarily quoting Goethe. After all, he emphasises that the creation of his Nepomuk had nothing to do with Euphorion *as far as he knew*. This heavily implies that he suspected he might have been influenced without intending to be.

The relation between Goethe’s *Faust* and Thomas Mann’s *Doktor Faustus* is a theme of discussion that has followed the book for a long time, the first proponent being Hilde Zaloscer, and another early supporter being W. A. Berendsohn (1966).

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<sup>216</sup> Bergsten 1963, Berendsohn 1966, Koopmann 1986, Gockel 1988, Reidy 2014.

The discussion flared when Helmut Koopmann during a Lübeck conference in 1986 presented the idea that Mann decisively broke with Goethe after writing *Lotte in Weimar*. Following this, Mann's seemingly unambiguous assertion that his *Doktor Faustus* had nothing to do with Goethe's *Faust* has spawned a torrent of counterarguments, the (at the time of writing) most recent contribution penned by Julian Reidy (2014) from the Mann archives in Zürich. Heinz Gockel (1988), directly replying to Koopmann's arguments from 1986, has pointed out some kinships between the two works, which belong to three categories: thematic similarities, shared character traits and "open and hidden quotes" ("offene und versteckte Zitate", Gockel 1988, p. 137). Helmut Koopmann (1989) in turn notes a thematic reasoning behind what he understands to be Mann's active recantation of Goethe's *Faust*:

Goethes *Faust* wird zurückgenommen, wie der Roman auch Beethovens Neunte Symphonie zurücknimmt, und mehr als das: Thomas Manns Figuration des Doktor Faustus wird zu einem Widerspiel, ja zum Gegensatz des Goetheschen. (Koopmann 1989, p. 223)

Goethe plays a significant part in the German bourgeoisie's idea of cultural triumph that led to the German downfall of Mann's present time, so the latter must recant *Faust* for the same reason that the novel's protagonist Adrian Leverkühn must recant Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. This conclusion is by no means new when Koopmann reminds Heinz Gockel of it in 1989, nor is he the last to give voice to it; it is stated in an almost identical wording by Gunilla Bergsten in her 1963 study into the sources of the novel, already then presented as a well-established notion:

Einige Forscher meinen, dass Mann Goethes *Faust* absichtlich beiseite gelassen habe, da er ihn schon in einem früheren Roman – im *Zauberberg* – als Vorlage seines Epos benutzt habe, während andere der Auffassung sind, dies Ausweichen sei eine negative oder umgekehrte Form der Anspielung: *Doktor Faustus* wäre demnach eine Zurücknahme von Goethes *Faust*, ebenso wie Adrian Leverkühns Faustoratorium eine Zurücknahme von Beethovens neunter Symphonie ist. (Bergsten 1963, p. 60)

From a certain perspective, Goethe's *Faust* and Beethoven's ninth symphony both end triumphantly – although triumph is tinged with death in both cases – while triumph has no place in the future of German culture after the fall of the Third Reich; on the contrary, works such as these two contributed to the disaster. Koopmann notes

the difference between Goethe's protagonist's triumphant salvation and Leverkühn's miserable downfall, emphasizing the role of the pact in both cases: "Der Teufelspakt wird auch bei Thomas Mann erfüllt, aber er endet in der völligen Zerstörung, im wahrlich trostlosen Untergang" (Koopmann 1989, p. 225). This strengthens the notion that Mann attempts to recant, or at least provide a counterpoint to, Goethe's *Faust*. A recantation, however, is not commensurable with one work having "nothing in common" with the other – perhaps Mann's statement from his letter to Zaloscer has simply been given too much weight in Mann research, or his reservation, "nicht dass ich wüsste", too little? Or perhaps his explicit references to Goethe's *Faust* in *Doktor Faustus* are less significant than often held: Perhaps they in fact do not have anything to do with Mann's Faust – his Faustian figure and Faustian motifs. Mann's Faust story has nothing to do with Goethe's Faust story, although his novel may contain some references to the latter. It is perfectly reasonable to believe that Mann may have quoted and referenced Goethe's *Faust* without having these references influence the development of his own Faustian figure, as will be shown during this analysis of the work.

Julian Reidy, adopting a different reading strategy, but reaching a conclusion somewhat similar to Koopmann's, has recently challenged what he perceives to be Mann's insistence on his turning away from Goethe as literary influence under the heading of "psychology of literature". Inspired by Harold Bloom's concept of anxiety of influence, Reidy regards many scholars' apparent acceptance of Mann's reading instructions, which entail not seeing Goethe as a source of influence, as highly imprecise.<sup>217</sup> Reidy asserts that the absence of Goethe's rendition of the legend in motivic structures in *Doktor Faustus* is meaningful. Mann may himself be incorrect in asserting that his *Doktor Faustus* has "nothing in common with" Goethe's *Faust*, because willed absence most certainly establishes a relation. As mentioned above,

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<sup>217</sup> After this short overview over the various positions in the matter, however, it has become obvious that it is significantly easier to find scholars who challenge Mann's short statement to Zaloscer than those who support it. See also Berendsohn 1965, Wysling 1978, Siefken 1981, Koopmann 1988 for support of the idea that Mann really was influenced by Goethe when he wrote his Faustbook.

Mann allows for this possibility in his letter to Zaloscer. Although this study does not share Reidy's methodology by any stretch of the imagination, his article reinforces an important point regarding the relation between Goethe's *Faust* and Mann's *Doktor Faustus*: The former may be present in the form of absence, or as willed recantation. Reidy bases his argument on a reading of the dialogue with the Devil in Chapter 25 in particular, intending to demonstrate the presence of Goethe in the form of Mann's anxiety of influence:<sup>218</sup>

Im Folgenden ist exemplarisch an einschlägigen Belegstellen und insbesondere am eigentlichen Zentrum des Werks, namentlich am Teufelsgespräch, zu zeigen, dass und wie der Text in Bezug auf den *precursor* Goethe eine Versuchsanordnung aufbaut, welche adäquat mit Blooms Theorem erklärbar ist – dass mithin eine mögliche ‚Zurücknahme‘ des *Faust* durch Mann mit Bloom produktionsästhetisch zu deuten sein könnte. (Reidy 2014, p. 337)

Reidy argues convincingly that an idea resembling Bloom's anxiety of influence is thematically present in the novel as a whole and in the Devil's speeches in the twenty-fifth chapter specifically. His main argument for the relation that exists between the two works – Goethe's and Mann's – is then based on three assertions: first on a psychological analysis of Thomas Mann's subconscious anxiety of influence, which seems incommensurable with his conscious treatment of this theme in the novel, second on Mann's Devil's wilful misreading, or "wilful revisionism" (p. 345), of works by Goethe in the twenty-fifth chapter of the novel, and third on one dissemblance between Adrian Leverkühn's father and Goethe's Faust's murderous alchemist father.

One weakness in Reidy's argumentation is that Goethe's rendition of the Faust tradition is perhaps given too little attention. Reidy's article appears well researched, but the secondary sources quoted in nearly every sentence throughout his article are not in all cases sufficiently strong in themselves to carry his arguments. One major argument of Reidy's – and seemingly the only argument that stems from a reading of

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<sup>218</sup> Mann in *Entstehung* consistently calls the chapter "das Teufelsgespräch" (Mann 2009, pp. 73, 83). Mirroring this, it will be referred to here as the dialogue with the Devil.

passages from both works – is based on the perceived similarities between Adrian’s father Jonathan Leverkühn and Goethe’s Faust’s father. Gunilla Bergsten, who first pointed out this similarity, is referenced, but her argument to this effect is in fact very weak, and based solely on one characteristic of both fathers, presented by her in one sentence: “Beide sind Grübler und lieben es, über die Mysterien der Natur zu spekulieren” (Bergsten 1963, p. 61). Bergsten then goes on to expound at much greater length on the rooting of Jonathan Leverkühn in Spies’s age. Reidy argues that Goethe’s ironic designation of Faust’s father as “Ehrenmann” (line 1034) is actively and wilfully inverted in Mann’s novel, and the figure turned into an actual “Ehrenmann”, and seems to forget that Spies’s Faustus’s parents were “Gottseliche vnnnd Christliche Leut” (HDF, p. 13).<sup>219</sup> The ironical reimagining is performed by Goethe, while Mann simply reaches back to an older version of Faustus’s parents. There is little tying the naïve – and deeply religious – Jonathan Leverkühn to Goethe’s “impudent murderer” (line 1055), besides their shared interest in the natural sciences, while there is more tying him to Spies’s figure. If the word “Ehrenmann” or any other phrase from this section of Goethe’s play was used by Mann, Reidy’s argument would be strengthened, but this is not the case. What the reader in reality is left with, are two characters who share one trait, and who do not share another, while this last character trait is only explicitly present in one of the two works. This is not sufficient proof that Mann has performed a “wilful revisionism” of Goethe’s figure, nor, by extension, that Mann’s relation to Goethe as he writes *Doktor Faustus* is one of active recantation fuelled by a psychologically seated anxiety of influence.

Of the handful places that currently seem to have been positively identified as quotes from or paraphrase of Goethe’s *Faust*, none are directly related to the pact

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<sup>219</sup> Another of Reidy’s sources, used in another part of his argument, actually misquotes this line, seemingly innocently, but to great effect, in her electronically published article “‘Kommt alte Lieb’ und Freundschaft mit herauf’. Goethe’s [sic] Spuren in Thomas Mann’s [sic] *Doktor Faustus*”: “Mein Vater war ein Ehrenmann”, quotes Lucca (2003, p. 14), yet the line is “Mein Vater war ein dunkler Ehrenmann”; the latter, correct, version is not ironical, as Reidy concludes. The adjective modifies the noun “Ehrenmann” and makes its meaning straightforwardly negative. It must be pointed out that Lucca’s article is a weak source, teeming with grammatical and typographical errors from title to bibliography, and quite obviously not edited for publication.

motif. Some of these are quite weak, such as two instances of the name Waltpurgis being used, and Leverkühn's use of the designation "Famulus" when describing his friend Zeitblom in Chapter 47, which is also a word used repeatedly to describe Wagner in Spies's *Historia*. Furthermore, the devilish Leipzig guide from Adrian's letter to Zeitblom in Chapter 16 shows Leverkühn Auerbachs Hof, (MDF, p. 208) which can hardly be identified as a reference to Goethe at all, so much as it fits the list of Renaissance landmarks visited by Leverkühn and his guide. It is much more plausible that the two works again share a common source: a widely circulated story of Doctor Faustus riding through Auerbach's Hof on a barrel – a motif that was captured in the painting "Fausts Fassritt" (dated 1525, but likely painted at least a decade later)<sup>220</sup>, which to this day adorns one wall of Auerbach's Keller in Leipzig. One significantly more convincing parallel between the two works is the identification of the music agent Saul Fitelberg with Mephistopheles – an identification that Saul Fitelberg himself appears to consciously stage. Furthermore, Zeitblom at one point directly quotes Goethe's *Faust*, noting that Schlepffuss's students make notes during lectures, so that they may bring it all "mehr oder weniger getrost nach Hause" (MDF, p. 153; GF, l. 1966-67). This line does not at all concern the Faust myth, but is used rather to identify Serenus Zeitblom as a diligent, yet uncritical, student. Its source is in this case inconsequential; Mann has Serenus Zeitblom use Goethe's *Faust* in a way that every German-language intellectual may, as a source of a well-turned phrase.

While Goethe's position in Mann's novel is a point of contention, there is no doubt that he draws heavily on Spies's Faustbook, and references to this work – and other works from the same period – have been well explored by scholars. There have been two major breakthroughs within this discipline, both due to availability of new material.<sup>221</sup> In 1961, following the opening of the Thomas Mann archives in Zürich,

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<sup>220</sup> Karsten 1905.

<sup>221</sup> Perhaps the opening of the online digital Thomas Mann archives at the end of 2015 may prove to be a third revelation of this kind; it certainly makes already-known material available to a larger audience.

Gunilla Bergsten began studying Mann's personal notes, newspaper articles, letters, and books from the author's own library annotated by hand by their owner, all of which had been made available at that point. This resulted in a monograph entitled *Thomas Manns Doktor Faustus. Untersuchungen zu den Quellen und zur Struktur des Romans* (1963), wherein Bergsten attempts to trace the various influences on Thomas Mann as he was writing the novel. More than a decade later, Liselotte Voss published *Die Entstehung von Thomas Manns Roman 'Doktor Faustus'* (1975), which is a further exploration of the novel's genesis, based on unpublished material made available at the Mann archives, and built on Bergsten's work. Voss at that time had access to one significant source unavailable to Bergsten, namely a large envelope filled with Mann's personal work notes for the novel, which is mentioned in the *Entstehung*, and which Bergsten by her own account attempted to reconstruct. Furthermore, Voss also found some methodical shortcomings in Bergsten's "mechanical" ("mechanistisch-punktuell", Voss 1975, p. 4) tracing of influences, and sought instead to shed light on the creative process of the novel's author. Mann's diaries concerning the years during which he wrote *Doktor Faustus* were published in 1989, marking the second major emergence of new material pertaining to the genesis of the novel. Harald Wehrmann (1993) viewed this as a sign that research into Mann's works is continuously being influenced by the author himself: "Wenn man so will, 'diktiert' uns Thomas Mann also auch nach seinem Tod hin und wieder eine neue Forschungsbasis" (p. 9). Mann's word has mostly been taken seriously by Mann scholars, but, as pointed out below, this may no longer be the case. Although this study is not a genetic or archival study, Mann's self-commentary will play a minor role, but this material will be treated as particularly insightful commentary, not as absolute points of reference. This too is not without its dangers: Mann is unreliable, possibly unaware of some of the finer points of his own poetic production, occasionally vague, and often humorous and ironic.

The pact motif is hardly explored in either of the two major studies by Bergsten and Voss mentioned here; Bergsten's six pages on the "Stoff der Faustsage" appear surprisingly hurried and unfinished, and are dominated by her chronological



list of events from Leverkühn's life compared with the Renaissance doctor's life, as well as some examples of quotes or paraphrases from the *Historia* and a very short note on Goethe. Liselotte Voss has one thorough subchapter detailing the presence of sixteenth century literature and history, as well as a list of Mann's work notes related to the dialogue with the Devil in Chapter 25, but the pact motif plays only a minor role in both, being off-handedly mentioned as one of Mann's initial ideas behind the work.<sup>222</sup> The most thorough comparative reading of Mann's novel and Spies's *Historia* is found in Dietrich Assmann's *Thomas Manns Roman 'Doktor Faustus' und seine Beziehungen zur Faust-Tradition* (1975). Assmann notes in 1975 what he calls an astounding lack of interest in the relations between the sixteenth-century book and Mann's novel, and notices that many scholars refer their readers to Bergsten's six pages, which he rightfully finds lacking, rather than perform any analysis of their own (Assmann 1975, pp. 99, 100).<sup>223</sup> Assmann implicitly agrees with Barbara Könniker (1967) that one reason for this lack of interest in the *Historia* is a disregard for its literary quality; the work is hardly taken seriously. Assmann's chapter on the pact motif, while limited to a brief discussion of devilish figures in Mann's novel as well as a short explication of the role of syphilis, will be a most useful tool in the following discussion of the presence of remnants from Spies's pact in Mann's work. However, Assmann does not adequately demonstrate that the pact motif has much to do with the *Historia*, focusing rather on the believability, or lack thereof, of Mann's presentation of a pact with the Devil in 1947. This is a different problem, tying into a different history of research, which is explored in further detail in 4.1.2.

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<sup>222</sup> "Wieder in seiner ersten Gestalt, spricht der Teufel vom Vertrag und spricht das Liebesverbot aus. Daß er den Bund in dieser Gestalt schließt oder doch bekräftigt, bestätigt aufs neue die Verbindung von Teufelspakt und Geschlechtskrankheit, die gleich am Beginn der Konzeption gestanden hatte" (Voss 1975, p. 183). This is even slightly imprecise; the first Faust plan, from 1901, made no mention of the pact, while the second, from 1904, did indirectly, by describing the protagonist as "dem Teufel Verschriebener".

<sup>223</sup> Since Julian Reidy does precisely this in his previously discussed article, Assmann's criticism seems to have hit the proverbial nail on its head.

These three comparative studies, which are used by current researchers to provide their comparative backdrop, insufficiently account for Mann's transformations of the traditional pact motif, and they have no doubt contributed to a misunderstanding concerning the pact motif that afflicts current Mann scholarship. These studies, while being well executed and diligently researched, allow the pact motif to remain a blind spot. There seems to be a tendency to avoid explicit discussion of this motif, on the wrongful assumption that Gunilla Bergsten already has explored it satisfactorily.

It seems plausible that Mann's novel has something to do with Goethe's *Faust*, and it most certainly has quite a lot in common with Spies's *Faustbook*. Rather than contribute directly to this discussion for-or-against the presence of Goethe in the novel, another reading strategy will be employed in the following. This is in part inspired by Ruprecht Wimmer's (1991) understanding of what he, mirroring Adrian Leverkühn, calls the archaic in Mann's novel, and is in part adapted to the overall goal of this present study. Wimmer finds in Adrian Leverkühn's musical compositions a model for understanding the relation between current artistic form and "archaic", that is, mythical, legendary or traditional, material in the novel. What Wimmer says of the archaic in Adrian's compositions emblematically expresses a tension present in the book between Mann's archaic, meaning inherited from a particular period of German history, motivic adoptions, and the novel's present time, which is also more or less Mann's present time. This tension is in the last instance a tension between demonism and rationality, and, as is the case with every figuration of Zeitblom's category of the demonic in Mann's novel, the pact motif is the prerequisite for the inclusion of this material.

Wimmer emphasises the confrontation between, rather than appropriation or recantation of, old and new in Adrian's final composition, *Doktor Fausti Weheklag*:

Dieses Archaische wird in Adrians Werk nicht neu und begeistert aufgelegt unter Darangabe des Intellekts, sondern mit anderen Traditionen konfrontiert, kombiniert, an ihnen so gespiegelt, daß sich das Konfrontierte wechselseitig ironisiert und infragestellt. (Wimmer 1991, p. 280)

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Similarly, Mann's novel ironises over and questions the pact motif by incorporating into his novel various references, rather than directly appropriating or creating an antithesis to or continuation of one version. This is not to say that the traditional material is not taken seriously; the same profound seriousness rests in Mann's sometimes ironic, sometimes questioning transformation of traditional Faustian material, as in the young Adrian Leverkühn's hellishly mocking laughter and in Goethe's "very serious jests". Consequently, the pact motif, with its remnants of and variations on previous renditions of it, must be understood neither as recantation of Goethe nor as appropriation of sixteenth-century literature, but as a conflict arising from the tempestuous confrontation between present, introduced through the pact motif, and various pasts. Traditional Faustian material is part of that underlying, threatening vein of demonism that fuels Mann's book and lends it qualities similar to Jonathan Leverkühn's osmotic growths. This exploration of the current state of research has, to this point, indicated that this archaic material is denied a new, vital, form because the archaic material is actively excluded from interpretations of his work. This material, however, is the *elementary* in Mann's novel: it is the building blocks that lend the work life-like characteristics. The following exploration of a different, yet related, vein in Mann research will demonstrate that this exclusion of traditional material appears to be the norm rather than the exception. Once again, this study returns to the area between Faustian works, Lachmann's permutable architecture, when trying to shed light on refigurations of the old pact motif.

#### **4.1.2 Pact and Implausibility**

While the pact is the primary driving force of the *Historia*'s narrative, commentators have tended to marginalise its importance to Mann's novel, declaring it inconsequential or even non-existent. Karlheinz Hasselbach (1988) points out that, immediately upon the book's publication, Werner Milch claimed that the book could

not be called a Faustian novel due to its revaluation of the pact motif.<sup>224</sup> Attempts at excluding Mann's novel from a tradition that its author places it within is partly a result of the novel's form. The oscillation between the chronicler Serenus Zeitblom's healthy, enlightened and cultured – yet unreliable – discourse and the composer Adrian Leverkühn's diseased, barbaric, and archaic form of expression creates a perceived difference in accountability between the two. Since the latter is the medium through which the Faustian material, and in particular the pact, is presented, it is perhaps more easily disregarded, although both voices are quite obviously unreliable. When Zeitblom is denying occult agency in Leverkühn's life, he is understood to be more "plausible" (Ball 1986, p. 54) than his counterpart, who incorporates magical or superstitious elements into his oral and written accounts, and whose disease allows for a medically-grounded reading of his hallucinations. Among these implausible superstitions, inherited from Spies's present time, is the pact with the Devil, albeit in a barely recognisable form. The inclusion of a version of the pact motif in Mann's novel has the function of expanding his narrative space while simultaneously placing some demands on the structure of the novel, an exchange similar to one that has been uncovered in two other Faustian works. The pact opens up a supernatural, demonic, realm, while introducing into the work the old law that governs pacts with the Devil. Despite the author's radical transformation of the motif, he retains a measure of piety in his obedience towards traditional imperatives: The underlying set of rules that accompany the pact, identified through this study's analysis of Goethe's two Faust plays, is not lost on Mann.

There is not necessarily an easily identifiable single pact scene in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, and there is certainly not an agreement finalised by a written document in the sense of a piece of paper with writing on it. The incident that Adrian Leverkühn, while in the throes of third-stage neurosyphilis, refers to as his "Versprechung und Bündnis" (MDF, p. 720) and "Pakt" (MDF, p. 721) contains no

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<sup>224</sup> "Werner Milch schließlich bestreitet, daß der Roman ein Faustroman sei; das Dostojewskijs *Karamasows* nachgebildete Teufelsgespräch deute den Pakt um und bringe das Kernstück der Fausttradition um seinen Sinn (...)" (Hasselbach 1988, p. 10)

explicit promises with counter-promises, nor any Devil or evil spirit. The composer's consent to the Devil's terms, which are unknown to him at the time, takes the form of a willed syphilis infection through the "touch" of an infected prostitute. The scenes in question are described in Leverkühn's letter to Serenus Zeitblom in Chapter 16, and continued by Zeitblom in Chapter 19: Leverkühn's first meeting with the syphilitic prostitute, whom he names Esmeralda, and his later erotic encounter with her in her home in Bratislava. David J. T. Ball dismissively states that this latter event, Leverkühn's willed infection, "scarcely [can] be termed a pact" (Ball 1986, p. 54). Furthermore, he leans on Kaete Hamburger (1969) and seconds her opinion that the pact with the Devil, positioned by Ball as the defining characteristic of Faustian literature, "is not essential to the novel", and that "Leverkühn and his story are perfectly plausible without recourse to either devil or pact." (Ball 1986, p. 54) Jürgen H. Petersen (2007) voices a similar opinion, as he places every bit of implausible superstition in Serenus Zeitblom's world view.<sup>225</sup> This point of contention rests on a significant misinterpretation of the work, and a serious misunderstanding of its structure. Not only is there a pact in Mann's novel; it is also absolutely essential to it.

By stating that there is no pact, and no Devil, these interpreters miss one of the most fundamental statements made by Mann through his novel's form: Strict adherence to a particular tradition may open up a sphere of inspiration and enthusiasm otherwise inaccessible.<sup>226</sup> These interpreters fail to realise that the form of

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<sup>225</sup> "Das Irrationale, Unterweltliche, Geisterhafte kommt mithin allein durch die Vorliebe des Erzählers für diese Gegenstände in den Roman, und keineswegs durch irgendwelche Ereignisse, an deren Faktizität man nicht zweifeln kann" (Petersen 2007, p. 51). See also Marianneli Sorvakko-Spratte's dismissal of the pact motif: "Als Teufelspakt wird jedoch der Geschlechtsverkehr mit der Hure Esmeralda zunächst nicht gesehen. Sie, die sie Leverkühn sogar vor ihrem Körper gewarnt hat, wird in keiner Weise mit dem Teufel in Verbindung gebracht – abgesehen von der Tendenz der christlichen Lehre, alle außerehelichen Kontakte als 'des Teufels' zu bezeichnen. Zu einem Teufelspakt im eigentlichen Sinne des Wortes degradiert sich dieser Akt erst im Teufelsgespräch im Kapitel XXV" (Sorkavko-Spratte 2007, p. 156).

<sup>226</sup> This point is paraphrased from Serenus Zeitblom's description of Adrian Leverkühn's composition *Doktor Fausti Wehklag*: "Nur daß der dialektische Prozess, durch welchen auf der Entwicklungsstufe, die dieses Werk einnimmt, der Umschlag von strengster Gebundenheit zur freien Sprache des Affekts, die Geburt der Freiheit aus der Gebundenheit, sich vollzieht, unendlich komplizierter, unendlich bestürzender und wunderbarer in seiner Logik erscheint als zur Zeit der Madrigalisten" (MDF, p. 704).

the novel, significantly influenced by the laws of Hell, is the answer to Adrian Leverkühn's Adorno-like Devil's question: "Das Komponieren selbst ist zu schwer geworden, verzweifelt schwer. Wo Werk sich nicht mehr mit Echtheit verträgt, wie will einer arbeiten?" (MDF, p. 349). Technical subtleties of the art of musical composition prohibit truly inspired endeavors, unless these techniques themselves open a door to barbaric, demonic, enthusiastic undercurrents. Mann reaches into what Serenus Zeitblom deems an archaic age, and by introducing the material that he finds there – primarily the old Faustian material – he lends its uncanny, demonic force to his own work's form. Ball and similarly inclined interpreters greatly undervalue Mann's reworking of central motivic aspects of the Faustian pact, and give the author too little credit for his transformation of the sixteenth-century motif into horizons of his own version of the myth: medical, political, musical, and so on.<sup>227</sup>

Even Helmut Koopmann holds that in the novel there is "[v]om alten Teufelspakt, vom Unterzeichnen mit einem Tropfen Blut keine Rede", and that Chapter 25 in its entirety is Adrian Leverkühn's "Erkenntnismonolog" (2008/2009, p. 11), wherein the protagonist reaches the conclusion that his syphilis infection has something to do with his artistic elation. Koopman seems not to have realised the extent to which the old pact is present in Mann's novel as a whole, and particularly in Chapter 25, which is the locus of the colouring of the narrative that the pact motif effects: There certainly is talk of the old pact with the Devil, and there is undeniably talk of a signature written in blood.

Attempting to remove the Devil and even the demonic entirely from Mann's novel is a time-honoured tradition that also has carried over into the twenty-first century with Karin L. Crawford's "Exorcising the Devil from Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*" (2003). Here, the exorcism is performed with all the gusto of new

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<sup>227</sup> Thomas Mann summarizes the motivic multitude of *Doktor Faustus* in his *Entstehung* by retracing the contents of an envelope he filled with notes written on half-quarter paper while working on the novel, on which "ein buntes Zubehör aus vielen Gebieten, dem sprachlichen, geographischen, politisch-gesellschaftlichen, theologischen, medizinischen, biologischen, historischen, musikalischen, sich drängte" (Mann 2009, p. 25).

and unheard-of academic discovery: “But it is time”, writes Crawford, “we exorcise the devil from Mann’s *Doktor Faustus* because there is no devil in the novel” (p. 168). Crawford is wrong: There are several devils in the novel, and they are positively identified as such – although this positive identification takes place in those parts of the novel that rely on Adrian’s disease to gain plausibility. The defiant desire for definitive solutions that fuels Crawford’s undertaking is also almost certainly misplaced. One of these is her inexplicable notion that “Adrian’s life is not an allegory for a nation in league with the devil on its descent into barbarism” (p. 168), and another is the belief that “Serenus represents the Romantic, demonic tradition that Mann seems to reject” (p. 168). In these two sentences, Crawford manages to contend the very presence of those principles that form the basis of the novel’s impact: Serenus Zeitblom’s barbarism and demonism.

Crawford’s assertions are at best simple solutions to complex problems. It is not reasonable to claim that Thomas Mann straightforwardly “rejects” the demonic in art.<sup>228</sup> Crawford goes on to suggest that Adrian inherited syphilis from his father (p. 175), which seems highly unlikely as an interpretation. There exists a theoretical possibility that Mann may have made the mistake of believing this to be medically possible, but it would be surprising given his research on the matter, evident in the Devil’s insight into the particulars of syphilis infection in Chapter 25. The lines from Chapter 25 used by Crawford in her argument for this claim explicitly concern Adrian’s inherited curiosity, and not an inherited physical malady. It is repeated time and again by Leverkühn, Zeitblom and the Devil – who together make up all the voices that comment on Leverkühn’s disease in the novel – that “Esmeralda” infected the composer, the Strizzi-devil naming the syphilis spirochete his *esmeraldus*.

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<sup>228</sup> His implied love for romanticism in “Deutschland und die Deutschen”, despite the period’s inherent sickliness, expresses his ambiguity towards its artistic expressions: “Goethe hat die lakonische Definition gegeben, das Klassische sei das Gesunde und das Romantische das Kranke. Eine schmerzliche Aufstellung für den, der die Romantik liebt bis in ihre Sünden und Lasten hinein. Aber es ist nicht zu leugnen, daß sie noch in ihren holdesten, ätherischsten, zugleich volkstümlichen und sublimen Erscheinungen den Krankheitskeim in sich trägt, wie die Rose den Wurm, daß sie ihrem innersten Wesen nach Verführung ist, und zwar Verführung zum Tode” (Mann 1974a, p. 1145).

Crawford seems to want to uncover a truth so well hidden that it is, in fact, not present at all in the novel, and does not bring to light a single counterargument to her own hypothesis, despite the endless wellspring of possible counterarguments offered by the novel, its reception and its paratext. By the end of her paper, the erroneous interpretation that Adrian inherits syphilis from his father is taken as a given, and the author makes the connection to a playwright who may indeed have mistaken syphilis for a disease that is transmissible from a male parent, namely Henrik Ibsen:<sup>229</sup> “Like Adrian, Ibsen’s Oswald [in *Ghosts*] inherits syphilis from his father” (p. 176).

Ultimately, Crawford makes this highly inaccurate statement an argument against the idea that Adrian’s story is a Faustian one, and against the presence of any demonic figure or principle in the novel. Adrian is more of an Oswald than a doctor Faustus, opines Crawford.

Besides being an extreme example of a type of reading that may be symptomatic of current Mann scholarship, Crawford brings up a good point: It may in fact be in Zeitblom’s interest to paint Leverkühn as a Doktor Faustus, because larger lines in Zeitblom’s own life to a degree resemble those in the legendary doctor’s narrative as told by Goethe. Crawford points out that Zeitblom is a doctor, a humanist, “has an affair with a lower class woman”, and ultimately “marries Helen” (p. 168). From this perspective, the demonic principle to contrast Zeitblom’s Faustian striving is Leverkühn, and the former intentionally paints Adrian as a Faustian character: “Serenus’s intention in setting Adrian’s suffering in a Faustian context is to compel us to a condemnation of Adrian” (p. 169). The chronicler is seen to be shrewdly unreliable, not only in the presentation of his own words, but also in the copying of Adrian’s. This is a productive perspective: Even where Adrian Leverkühn

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<sup>229</sup> Although this, too, is a point of contention in Ibsen studies that receives no attention from Crawford. In his recapitulation of the various standpoints in the matter of Oswald’s syphilis, Jørgen Dines Johansen for example points out that the inheritance from Oswald’s father may be a set of inclinations, not a medical condition: “The inheritance from his father is, thus, not his congenital syphilis but a particular individual character [sic]” (Johansen 2005, p. 100). Johansen’s article is more recent than Crawford’s, but the debate stretches back to 1926, with medical doctor K. Andersen’s article «Gengangere» (Andersen 1926), and has received attention from literati, psychologists and clinical medical professionals at rather regular intervals since then.



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is allowed to speak, what he says may still be coloured by Serenus Zeitblom, who copies his words, arranges events in a particular order and presents them to the reader.

Birgit S. Nielsen (1965) finds in Mann's Freud reception an ontological model of explanation for the presence of the Devil and the ability of Leverkühn to enter into a pact with him. Because perceived reality is dictated by the subconscious, not imposed on the conscious mind from without, gods and devils may be not only subjectively real, but even "objectively" so:

Hiermit ist eine psychologische Theologie geschaffen, und somit ist es möglich für Thomas Mann, religiöse Persönlichkeiten darzustellen, die aus der Tiefe ihrer Seele heraus imstande sind, eine Gottheit – und konsequenterweise auch ihr Gegenstück, den Bösen – ‚hervorzudenken‘, und zwar so, dass das hervorgedachte Wesen gleichzeitig eine objektive Existenz hat, die es ermöglicht, einen Bund mit ihm zu schliessen.  
(Nielsen 1965, p. 130)

This statement by Nielsen can only be a reasonable interpretative operation if the concept of "objective existence", when applied to the book's twenty-fifth chapter, is paired with the insight that the reality being conveyed is one that is "aufmontiert".<sup>230</sup> An amalgamation of the historically real, fictitious historical material and Adrian's conveyed subjective reality. "Objective existence" is not a category that reasonably can be applied to a novel's diegetic entities. Nielsen must be understood to argue that the entity in question – the Devil – has a presence in the novel that allows him to have an effect on the narrative beyond the pages that concern Adrian Leverkühn's fevered conversation with him. In other words, Nielsen may be arguing the same point that the Devil also argues during the chapter that she is commenting on, delivered as a sarcastic answer to Adrian Leverkühn's accusation that the Devil does not exist: "Du siehst mich, also bin ich dir. Lohnt es zu fragen, ob ich wirklich bin? Ist wirklich nicht, was wirkt, und Wahrheit nicht Erlebnis und Gefühl?" (MDF, p. 354). "Objective existence" is a term used to describe appearances that appear at the same

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<sup>230</sup> The term "Montagetechnik" is discussed in 4.2.3.

diegetic level as those appearances that Serenus Zeitblom describes. This study will strongly disagree with Nielsen's implied difference between "objective existence", represented in Serenus Zeitblom's narration, and non-objective non-existence, or unreliable accounts of events delivered by Adrian Leverkühn.

By the twenty-fifth chapter, Mann has gone to great lengths in establishing a scene wherein a barbaric reality – a late mediaeval and Renaissance reality – can be directly presented, without recourse to parody. "Thomas Mann fordert von seinem Leser psychologisches Verständnis, aber keinen wirklichen Teufelsglauben" (Nielsen 1965, p. 145), writes Nielsen. Chapter 25 does not in from perspective require actual belief in the "objective" existence of a pact-offering Devil – something that Mann, like Goethe, could hardly expect from his readers.

Traditional material has been tentatively identified as archaic figurations, and this is not only a category encompassing content, but also epic form, as pointed out by Mann in his 1939 Princeton lecture on the form of the novel, "Die Kunst des Romans". The archaic consists of a certain measure of magic in the world view expressed in a work, but the archaic form also has some specific traits, one of which is its musicality:

Es ist möglich und vielleicht geboten, Roman und Epos in einem solchen<sup>231</sup> Verhältnis zu sehen. Das eine ist moderne, das andere archaische Welt. Das Vers-Epos trägt für uns archaisches Gepräge – wie der Vers selbst das Archaische in sich trägt und eigentlich noch Zubehör eines magischen Weltgefühls ist. Die Epen der Urzeit sind ja nicht gelesen oder erzählt worden; sie waren gewiß ein von Saitenspiel begleiteteter Sing-Sang (...). (Mann 1974b, p. 355)

The sharp difference between Serenus Zeitblom's cultured discourse and Adrian Leverkühn's increasingly magical world view as his disease progresses is a difference between present and archaic, and between the novel and tradition. Those parts of the novel in which the Faustian material is most prominent are also parts that formally

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<sup>231</sup> This refers to an ironical relation, wherein incommensurable opposites are made visible. Mann's irony is briefly discussed and defined in subsection 4.3.1.

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differ from the chronicler's discourse: Leverkühn's letter in Chapter 16, his dramatized dialogue in Chapter 25, and his monologue in Chapter 47. While Mann held the novel to be the form most typical of his present time, he gives these chapters alternate forms; particularly noteworthy are the reminiscences of theatrical staging in Leverkühn's dialogue in Chapter 25, which formally point towards at least three stages in the history of the Faustus material in German-language literature: its mediaeval prehistory, its popular stage adaptations following Marlowe, and Goethe's rendition. It will also be pointed out that Leverkühn's account of his dialogue with the Devil in Chapter 25 is written by the composer on music paper, indicating an affinity with the musical aspect of archaic literature.

While Karen L. Crawford's reading can hardly be taken seriously, a significantly more well-founded argument against understanding Adrian Leverkühn as a Faustian figure comes from a much more renowned voice in Mann research, Jürgen H. Petersen, who in his *Faustus lesen. Eine Streitschrift über Thomas Manns späten Roman* (2007) adamantly insists that readers have placed a pact motif in the novel based not on textual interpretations, but rather on Thomas Mann's reading instructions or expressed poetic visions, which may have been sincerely meant to reflect his work, but which he more often than not fails to incorporate properly into *Doktor Faustus*. Petersen calls for a type of study that the past thirty years of research into Mann's Faust work have not been able to produce: One that lets "den poetischen Text selbst" (Petersen 2007, p. 13) dictate the direction and contents of the interpretation, rather than various intertextual approaches or Thomas Mann's own commentaries. Petersen opens his study by attempting to demonstrate that Mann is in fact a very bad reader, and an even worse literary theorist.<sup>232</sup> Petersen's idea that an interpretation of Mann's *Doktor Faustus* should not be hampered by Mann's own commentary is convincing, but the thoroughness of his treatment of the Faustian material in the novel, specifically the pact motif, leaves something to be desired. When he concludes that there is no Faustian pact in the

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<sup>232</sup> See Petersen (2007), pp. 13-20.

novel's twenty-fifth chapter, this is a categorical interpretation that excludes one central aspect of the work. His reading of "the poetic text itself" is at this particular point not thorough enough, and he fails to spot Mann's careful inclusion of the pact motif.

The goal in the following is not simply to prove that there is a Faustian pact motif in the novel. But when even Petersen fails to spot the pact, his interpretation is clearly limited by his blindness to a significant structural and structuring component in the work. The fact that the pact motif in Mann's novel is as operational and effectful as it was in the *Historia* creates a necessity for including an understanding of this tradition into the novel, no matter how autonomous one desires one's reading to be. As an example, the order of events described in Chapters 15 through to 19 in the novel, as well as 25 to 27, will be shown to be significant precisely because they represent various stages in Adrian Leverkühn's pact. The placement of Leverkühn's travels with Professor Capercailzie after the twenty-fifth chapter, which is an integral part of the extended pact motif, has consequences for how one understands Leverkühn's musical composition "Die Wunder des Alls", which is his first production after the pact is expressly confirmed in Chapter 25, and which seems to be decidedly different from his previous works. Petersen misses this point, and concludes that there is nothing demonic in Adrian's musical compositions: "an keiner Stelle wird das angebliche illuminierende Wirken des Satans bei Abfassung der genialen Werke Adrians auch nur andeutungsweise geschildert" (Petersen 2007, p. 27). The suggestion of demonic inspiration that Petersen misses is present in the book's structures, its sequencing of events that represent key points in the development of a Faustian character's story arc.

This misunderstanding brings to light the fact that the poetic text itself dictates a comparative approach, and that an isolation of Mann's book from the tradition that it is written into takes away important elements of signification from it. The major point of disagreement between this study and Petersen's is formulated by the latter in one single sentence: "Alles Diabolische bleibt dann zweifelhaft und allenfalls im Status der Anspielung" (Petersen 2007, p. 28). Petersen does not see, or polemically

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chooses to deny, that the diabolic undercurrents in Mann's novel and in Leverkühn's works are dependent on the pact motif, that they are occasionally alluded to or even directly present in the narrative without being mediated by Zeitblom, and that they are highly productive. Petersen's complete dismissal of the pact motif will not be accepted, being not only unreasonable, but also constituting an underlying weakness in his entire endeavour to prove that Mann has poorly realised his own poetic visions.<sup>233</sup> One is left with the impression that it is not Mann who has failed to allow the old pact motif to drive his novel, but rather Petersen who has failed to notice the mode of its presence, which is structural as much as thematic.

## 4.2 The Pact

### 4.2.1 Adrian's Negotiations: Chapter 15

A glance at the current state of research has shown that a study into the pact motif must begin with a simple assertion: There is a pact motif in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, it is modelled after other Faustian pacts, and it is closely tied to the form of the narrative. Adrian Leverkühn's pact with the Devil follows the same structure of a staged negotiation that is present in Spies's *Historia*: First he makes a conscious decision to make the fatal agreement, then he discusses its terms with a devilish figure, and finally he effects it through a ritual act that leaves a physical trace, very similar to a signature both in form and function, that at later points in the narrative serves as a reference back to the moment he made a promise. These events take place relatively early in the narrative, and well before the infamous twenty-fifth chapter,

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<sup>233</sup> Petersen polemically repeats this invitation to discussion, leaving no room for doubt that he believes that there is no pact in the novel, unlike in the Spies-book and Goethe's *Faust*: "Freilich liegen die Sachverhalte meist nicht so klar und eindeutig zutage wie bei der Frage nach dem Teufelspakt, der im Gegensatz zum Volksbuch und zu Goethes *Faust* in Thomas Manns Roman ganz eindeutig nicht geschlossen wird" (Petersen 2007, p. 47).

which Mann has referred to as Adrian's "Teufelsgespräch" (Mann 2009, pp. 73, 83). However, the twenty-fifth chapter is the single and singular instance in the book that legitimises an interpretation of the earlier defining events in Leverkühn's life in the perspective of hellish law, pact with the Devil and Faust tradition. The twenty-fifth chapter brings the Faust tradition into the work; it is a chapter that structurally invokes both Spies's book, by virtue of being carefully isolated from the rest of the narrative as was the sixth chapter in the *Historia*, and Goethe's *Faust* alongside other instalments in the Faust tradition, by containing reminiscences of theatrical staging. Mirroring the argument sequence in Chapters Two and Three in this study, the following explication of Mann's pact motif will treat Leverkühn's pact chronologically, meaning that the interpretation of Chapters 15, 16 and 19 will construct a hypothesis regarding the outline of the motif, and that this hypothetical motivic shape will be brought to the test by recourse to the inception of a demonic principle in the book in its twenty-fifth chapter.

Adrian Leverkühn's pact with the Devil is put into effect when he is 20 years old, just after he has turned from the study of theology to music. As he arrives in Leipzig, he asks a guide to show him a good restaurant, but is instead ushered into a brothel, where the prostitute whom he names Esmeralda after Jonathan Leverkühn's transparent moth Hetaera Esmeralda touches his cheek. One year later, he returns to the brothel to find Esmeralda gone, and follows her to her home in Bratislava, there to be touched by her again. This time the touch takes the form of sexual intercourse, with a neurosyphilis infection as consequence. Although Esmeralda's first touch in the brothel engenders some inclinations in Adrian Leverkühn that he arguably may not himself be responsible for, and will be regarded as an integral part of the signature in Mann's reworking of the pact motif, his turn from theology towards music takes place before this, both within the novel's structure and in Leverkühn's life, and the signing of the pact, the facilitation of a future avenue of return to the agreement, a *recessus*, takes place later. Leverkühn's first meeting with Esmeralda is described in Chapter 16, while the idea of a pact is introduced in the preceding fifteenth chapter. The former is prefigured in the latter; the pact motif is gradually

introduced through several stages, starting with Serenus Zeitblom's interpretation of Adrian Leverkühn's letter to Wendell Kretschmar in Chapter 15. Not only is this how the pact is introduced into Adrian's biography, but also how the narrator carefully and gradually introduces the dated pact motif to the readers of the fictional biography.

In a letter addressed to Adrian's music teacher Wendell Kretschmar, Leverkühn debates whether or not he should abort his theological studies and become a student of music instead, mirroring the old Faustus's turn from a righteous path, Goethe's Faust's exasperation with the conventional sciences in the *Nacht* scene, and, for that matter, Marlowe's Faustus's conscious decision to turn from scientific endeavours to the dark arts. Birgit S. Nielsen (1965), who believes that Leverkühn is consciously imitating Spies's Faustus, finds in Adrian's letter to Kretschmar strong indications that music has taken the place of magic in the composer's imitation of the Renaissance doctor. She infers this from the relation between music and alchemy that is established in Chapter 15:

Dass die Musik für Adrian ganz den Platz der Magie einnimmt, sehen wir deutlich aus seinen Erwägungen in den erwähnten Briefen, in denen er wiederholt der Musik alchemistische Characterzüge beilegt. (Nielsen 1965, p. 142)

It should be kept in mind that Chapter 15 is written by Serenus Zeitblom, who has read a draft of the letter and chosen which passages to include, and which to reject, quoting from memory. The chronicler himself works hard to reinforce the identification of Leverkühn with Faustus. Even where Zeitblom directly quotes Leverkühn's letter to Kretschmar, it is not Leverkühn's voice that speaks to the reader; the chronicler is quoting and paraphrasing from memory after reading through a draft of the letter once. He admits to this in defence of his own memory just as he has repeated a particularly long passage from one of Leverkühn's letters, regarding the latter's Lutheranism and apostasy:

Meine Anführungen sind nahezu wörtlich, wo sie es nicht ganz sind. Ich kann mich auf mein Gedächtnis recht wohl verlassen und habe außerdem mehreres gleich nach der Lesung des Konzeptes für mich zu Papier gebracht, in Sonderheit die Stelle von der Abtrünnigkeit. (MDF, p. 193)

Zeitblom does not doubt his own ability to correctly convey the contents of his friend's letter, or at least wants the reader to believe that he is able and willing to accomplish this. When the notion of a pact is first mentioned, it is Serenus Zeitblom who does so, during an indirect recapitulation of one part of Leverkühn's letter. The first invocation of the pact motif is made in the midst of a torrent of references to magic and alchemy, stemming from either Zeitblom or Leverkühn, or both, depending on how the chronicler's memory and honesty hold up. In the particular part of the letter that is being quoted from, writes Zeitblom, Leverkühn is debating which branch of music he shall enter into, given that he has a measure of shyness before the world, "Weltscheu", which is defined as the expression of his lack of heat, sympathy and love, and which prohibits a performing discipline.<sup>234</sup>

‘Weltscheu’ nannte er sich und wollte damit nichts zu seinem Lobe gesagt haben. Diese Eigenschaft, urteilte er, sei der Ausdruck des Mangels an Wärme, an Sympathie, an Liebe, – und es frage sich allzu sehr, ob man mit ihr überhaupt zum Künstler, das heiße denn doch wohl immer: zum Liebhaber und zum Geliebten der Welt taue. – Falle dies beides denn aber weg, das Solisten-, das Dirigentenspiel, was bleibe? Nun, allerdings, die Musik als solche, die Versprechung und Verlobung mit ihr, das hermetische Laboratorium, die Goldküche, die Komposition. (MDF, p. 194)

To Adrian Leverkühn, composing music is tying bonds with music itself, and entering the "hermetical laboratory" or "alchemical kitchen" of composition. These are two of the alchemical traits given to music that Birgit Nielsen discusses, but there is also another indication of the relation between music and magic: the pleonasm "Versprechung und Verlobung" is not only paraphrased from Spies's *Historia*, but it also taps into the quasi-judicial language that surrounds Faustus's written document in that work. Furthermore, it is appropriated from the chapter that stems directly from

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<sup>234</sup> Adrian Leverkühn shares his "Weltscheu" not only with Thomas Mann himself, but also with the psychology of the German people, according to "Deutschland und die Deutschen". His probing attempts at identifying reasons for what he calls the German disaster starts with the duality inherent to German psychology between an outward seeking cosmopolitanism and a defensive, shy provincialism: "Schon bin ich, ohne recht zu wissen wie, in die komplexe Welt deutscher Psychologie hineingeglitten mit der bemerkung über die Vereinigung von Weltbedürftigkeit und Weltscheu, von Kosmopolitanismus und Provinzialismus im deutschen Wesen" (Mann 1974a, p. 1129).



the heart of the matter, namely the sixth chapter, Faustus's pact: "Dagegen aber ich mich hinwider gegen ihme verspiche vnd verlobe" (HDF, p. 23) is Faustus's formulation of his dedication of body, soul and possessions to the Devil in Spies's book. The hint at marriage and *Teufelsbuhlschaft* implicit in "Verlobung" is not lost on Adrian Leverkühn, who at another point in the letter quoted by Zeitblom states that his study of theology marks the time during which he has stopped bounding from subject to subject and has become "mit einem Beruf [verheiratet]" (MDF, p. 192). It is not lost on Zeitblom, either, who shares a certain animosity towards the "Werber" (MDF, p. 188) Wendell Kretschmar with Adrian's mother Elsbeth, as Kretschmar tries to convince Leverkühn that he is well suited for studying music. Elsbeth's and Serenus's shared jealousy indicates that they perceive the music teacher as "Werber" in the sense of suitor as much as recruiter. This is reinforced as Kretschmar – still according to Zeitblom's memory – writes in his answer to Leverkühn that it is high time the latter moves on from the spinsterhood of theology: "Genug des theologischen Jungfernstandes!" (MDF, p. 199). It is Adrian Leverkühn who is being wooed by Kretschmar, the ambassador of music, as Elsbeth and Zeitblom see it; already here, Zeitblom is beginning to paint his friend as a victim of vicious seduction rather than the ambitious apostate that is embedded in the literary figure doctor Faustus. The chronicler is not in the process of characterising his friend as a Faustian character, but rather as an innocent victim of demonic possession. If this is the first step towards Leverkühn's pact with the Devil, then the pact is something that is done to him, and not a willed act.

Kretschmar gives Leverkühn the female role of spinster, rather than the masculine role of bachelor, by quoting Angelus Silesius's *Cherubinischer Wandersmann* (1657), indicating that it is high time the young student becomes a mother: "Die Jungfrauschaft ist wert, doch muß sie Mutter werden, / Sonst ist sie wie ein Plan von unbefruchteter Erden" (MDF, p. 199). These lines have an obvious meaning: Kretschmar thinks his student should produce something (become a mother) rather than regurgitate theological theorems, or get his headaches from "der

Widerlegung der Kant'schen Widerlegung der Gottesbeweise" (MDF, p. 199).<sup>235</sup> In 1905, Adrian Leverkühn stands at the cusp of betrothing himself to the demonically-fuelled discipline of musical composition, according to Zeitblom and Kretschmar, who discuss his change of area of study in terms of matrimony, and who all give him a feminine role. The pact is the formalisation and consummation of his marriage. The protagonist himself is not entirely in disagreement with this interpretation of his turn from theology to music. During his speech in the novel's final chapter, Leverkühn states that he has been married to Satan since the age of twenty-one ("daß ich allbereit seit meinem einundzwanzigsten Jahr mit dem Satan verheirat bin", MDF, p. 720). The composer's twenty-first year is the year in which he visited Esmeralda for the second time, copulated with her, and contracted syphilis.

Following the above discussed quote from the sixth chapter of the *Historia*, which identifies Leverkühn's betrothal as the first step towards a Faustian pact, the number of references to older Faustian material increase significantly, both on a larger scale, in the novel as a whole, as well as on a smaller scale, in the remainder of the chapter. This point can be quantitatively proven: Of Dietrich Assmann's 105 identified quotations from Spies's *Historia*, "Versprechung und Verlobung" is the fifteenth, although it appears in the fifteenth of 47 chapters, leaving the bulk of direct quotes in the chapters following this.<sup>236</sup> It is at the first mention of a pact that the Spies-book truly gains a foothold in Mann's work. The words "Versprechung und

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<sup>235</sup> There is also a measure of feminine passivity in the formalities of Leverkühn's pact with the Devil that reinforces his femininity. Leverkühn's signature, discussed in detail below, may be seen as something that is done to him rather than something he himself does. This is a critical point that touches on the matter of free will and validity of a pact. A signature, as sign pointing back to the moment of entering into an agreement, must be produced by the person to whom it refers, or whose intention it embodies; if Leverkühn is a passive recipient of signature, he would not be responsible for the promises that the signature attests to.

<sup>236</sup> Of the fourteen preceding quotes, three relate to Adrian's father Jonathan, two to the place names "Pfeiffering" and "Rohmbühel", three to the very young Leverkühn's exceptional intellectual faculties, one is the word "Losament" ("place of residence"), four are uttered by the theology teacher and Luther-caricature Ehrenfried Kumpf, and the final one can also be found in Adrian's letter in Chapter 15. The latter is a reference to the apostasy enacted in his turn towards music: "(...) wollen Sie verstehen, daß ein geheimer Schrecken mich abmahnt, die H. Schrift unter die Bank zu legen und in die Kunst zu entlaufen" (MDF, p. 192).

Verlobung” mark the first explicit engendering of the idea of a Faustian pact in the novel – although the name on the title page of course already has promised this turn of events. Following it is what Zeitblom introduces as a longer direct quotation from the same letter, in which Adrian Leverkühn makes two further references to the pact motif in the *Historia*:

Und dennoch, warum warnt eine inwendige Stimme mich: ‘O homo fuge’?  
 Ich kann die Frage nicht vollständig artikuliert beantworten. Nur soviel kann ich sagen: Ich fürchte mich davor, der Kunst Promission zu machen, weil ich zweifle, ob meine Natur – ganz abseits von der Behabungsfrage – geschaffen ist, ihr Genüge zu tun, weil ich mir die robuste Naivität absprechen muß, die, soviel ich sehe, unter anderem, und nicht zuletzt, zum Künstlertum gehört.  
 (MDF, p. 195)

Thomas Mann has found the bastardised form of the Latin “Promissio” in Spies’s fifth chapter, where it, repeated twice, refers to the final stage of Faustus’s oral negotiations with Mephostophiles, in other words his promise before his written document is created: In the chapter heading to Chapter 5 in the *Historia* (“Das dritte Colloquium D. Fausti mit dem Geist von seiner Promission”), as well as in the first sentence of this chapter (“Nach dem D. Faustus dise Promission gethan”, HDF, p. 21), it refers to Faustus’s oral promise in the preceding chapter to abide by the six “articles” that Mephostophiles has set forth. One of these requirements is that Faustus shall produce a written confirmation of the agreement.

Adrian Leverkühn’s promise is again comparable to a betrothal; his turn from theology towards music is indicative of his future complete dedication to it, yet this “Promission” or “Verlobung” is not yet finalised as a ritually attested agreement. Adrian Leverkühn’s letter to Kretschmar is strongly associated with Spies’s doctor’s preliminary negotiations, which mark his decision to pledge himself to the study of music. This narrative structure that is about to take shape indicates that Adrian Leverkühn’s pact will be formalised in writing at a later point in time, assuming that Mann’s work indeed is a Faustian work drawing on the Spies-book. Furthermore, this sequence of events, as it is sketched by Zeitblom and Leverkühn, is similar to that which is found during the pact scene in Goethe’s *Faust*: A suitor brings a proposal that heavily implies marriage to the protagonist, desiring the latter to bind himself,

and the agreement is later confirmed through a symbolic action that leaves a mark that in the future may serve as point of reference back to the moment of making a promise.

One important aspect of the pact motif in the *Historia* is its confirmation of Faustus's guilt through the emphasis placed on his three-stage negotiation, which contains very clear statements regarding the effects of the pact. Doctor Faustus is not tricked, lured or tempted when he signs his written pledge, at least not by any other entity than his own conceited flesh and blood. He actively seeks out the Devil's emissary, at first trying to command the Devil himself, and he is fully aware of the pact's consequences. The other reference to Spies's book in the above quoted section of Leverkühn's letter invokes the *homo fuge* motif: This refers to that moment of visceral horror at the end of Spies's fifth chapter when engraved, bloody letters appear on the hand from which Faustus extracted the blood required for writing the pact, spelling "O homo fuge", which, in the Speyer author's words, means "O mensch fleuhe vor ihme vnd thue recht / etc" (HDF, p. 22). In the *Historia*, it marks Faustus's last opportunity to repent, while removing any lingering doubt the reader may have had as to whether the apostate was aware of the gravity of his sin. This latter function is the one given to the *homo fuge* motif in Leverkühn's letter: The turn towards music is done despite Adrian being acutely aware of its inherent demonic dangers. This is vital: The apostate understands that he is given an unambiguous warning, but actively chooses to ignore it. When Leverkühn half-jokingly points out his inner voice warning him against what he is about to do, he is emphasising his agency in what follows. Blame cannot be placed on Kretschmar, as the suspicious mothering figures Elsbeth and Zeitblom do.

The form given to the *homo fuge* motif in Mann's novel is telling of the form that inherited material is given. It is an element of the Faustian pact motif, yet it is given a form very different from the form it has in the Spies-book: First, the fact that Adrian overtly quotes a secondary source makes it a reference rather than a direct presentation. Second, it is internalised: No bloody letters appear on Adrian's arm. Both are dictated by the fact that the pact has not yet been finalised. At this point in

the narrative, bloody letters could not have appeared on the future composer's forearm, because the syphilis spirochetes have not yet taken a hold of his mind or of the novel's narrative, so the external warning from the *Historia* is internalised as "eine inwendige Stimme", and also staged as a humorous reference. At later stages in the novel, as Leverkühn's disease progresses, the presentation of tropes from older Faustian works change drastically from reference to narrative presence. To illustrate this change that takes place through the novel, one could easily conceive that the Adrian Leverkühn who converses with three metamorphoses of the Devil in Chapter 25 also could have hallucinated bloody letters appearing on his arm, but at this time, the engraving could not have been given any measure of narrative presence.

So far, three separate forms of agreement that are invoked in Zeitblom's recapitulation of Leverkühn's debate with Kretschmar and with himself concerning whether or not he should turn to the study of music have been disentangled: "Versprechung", promise as pact, which still lies in the future, "Verlobung", promise of matrimonial union, and "Promission", reflecting Faustus's oral list of promises, amongst which is the promise to bind himself with a written pact. These three are all tied to aspects of the Faustian pact: Oral promise, written confirmation of that promise, and carnal union with the Devil. Adrian Leverkühn, as presented by Serenus Zeitblom, at this stage jokingly intends to enter into a pact. Frustrated with theology, he turns to the dark arts, the study of music, in 1905 at the age of twenty. Chapter 16, wherein the future composer first encounters the prostitute Esmeralda, immediately follows Zeitblom's recapitulation of this decision.

One major challenge to the idea that Adrian Leverkühn's pact is a Faustian pact has been brought to light: The unreliable chronicler may be actively trying to turn his friend into a Faustian character, and when he does so, he may wish to retain Adrian's innocence, pushing the motif in the direction of possession or witchery by denying Leverkühn active agency in his pact. The following discussion will demonstrate that Adrian Leverkühn's pact is the result of an imperative that is present throughout the character's fictional biography: His decision to enter the alchemical laboratory of musical composition is prefaced by one character trait that follows

Leverkühn throughout his life, and that is exempt from the unreliable narrator's manipulations of the narrative, because the unreliable narrator repeatedly misinterprets and misunderstands it. This character trait is Adrian Leverkühn's laughter. Following this, a cursory overview over those parts of the novel that directly pertain to and together make up the pact motif will be presented: Adrian Leverkühn's own description of his involuntary Leipzig brothel visit in Chapter 16, Serenus Zeitblom's recapitulation of events in Bratislava in Chapter 19, Leverkühn's account of his conversation with the Devil in Chapter 25, and his monologues in Chapter 47.

#### **4.2.2 Adrian Leverkühn and his Demonic Laugh**

Spies's Johann Faustus possesses character traits that make him a viable candidate for participation in a pact with the Devil: He is proud and curious – more so than his fellow man – and he possesses the ability to negotiate with devils, unlike his famulus Wagner. Johann Faustus is exceptional. Goethe's Faust is also extraordinary: He is an extraordinarily gifted scientist, and his ambition and striving have turned him into an iconic character in Western cultural history. Both of these characters have, or believe that they have, reached their potential within the limitations of time-bound human existence, and their desire to transcend these limits motivates their pacts. Their childhoods are barely present in the two works, and the reader meets both of them at a time when they have already reached that limit that initiates their turn towards magic, unlike the reader of Thomas Mann's novel, who is introduced to Adrian Leverkühn well before a pact with the Devil is initiated. When Adrian Leverkühn gets to the point described in his letter to Kretschmar, his turn towards the demonic discipline of musical composition has been prepared for a long time. Leverkühn's tendency towards apostasy is evident throughout his fictional biography, and the pact is as much a necessity here as in the other two works – perhaps more so, as he is consistently forced to react to some appearances that only his pact will allow him a meaningful mode of expression for. The gifted man – and child – is consistently put face-to-face with impressions that fall under the category that Zeitblom identifies as

demonic, as is Zeitblom himself, but while the latter manages to subsume these appearances under his rationality and conceptually-sound world view, they elicit from Leverkühn a response which is more sympathetic to the subject matter. This is why Adrian Leverkühn specifically is a well-suited candidate for being a Faustian figure; not necessarily because he has reached the limits of artistic expression, but because he has not found a mode of expression that can give voice to the demonic appearances that plague him throughout his life.

Demonism, as identified by Serenus Zeitblom, is non-conceptual; this point will be elaborated on throughout the following analysis of Mann's novel, but it must be posited before Adrian's pact can be understood. The demonism that appears in the work cannot be grasped through conceptual language, because conceptual language does nothing better than hide the demonic. The book can be read as a recounting of Adrian Leverkühn's pull towards demonism and his curiosity in the face of this particular form of otherness: This curiosity motivates his pact with the Devil. Music provides a means to communicate demonism, because music is inherently demonic, but Adrian Leverkühn is faced with, forced to react to, and sometimes attempts to escape from, demonic events and phenomena throughout his life. His insights into, visions of or experiences within a demonic realm cannot be conceptually mediated. Zeitblom understood this at an early age, by his own report, as he recalls Jonathan Leverkühn's observations of sign-like erosion on the shells of mussels, which the latter unsuccessfully tries to interpret as some sort of language capable of communicating with a human observer. This endeavour is futile, opines Zeitblom, because clearly, nature does not communicate with Jonathan Leverkühn:

Schon damals aber, als Knabe, begriff ich sehr deutlich, daß die außerhumane Natur von Grund aus illiterat ist, was in meinen Augen eben gerade ihre Unheimlichkeit ausmacht. (MDF, p. 31)

Zeitblom not only believes that non-human nature is "illiterate", that is, unable to write, speak or communicate with a human observer in any way, but he also finds its eerie sinisteress to be born out of this quality. Zeitblom finds non-human nature ominous because it is silent. The silence of nature is its inability to actively make sense to a human beholder – it offers itself up only as an object that may be regarded,

but which is pushed into obscurity by the human gaze, because the human gaze is conceptually constituted. When natural phenomena are conceptualised, their otherness is obscured, subsumed under conceptual language: The phenomenon itself is dressed in conceptual garments. The chronicler's response when met with raw, non-human nature is either to hide from it or to hide it beneath conceptual constructs: "Im würdigen Reiche der Humaniora ist man sicher vor solchem Spuk" (MDF, p. 36), says he, echoing Goethe's Wagner, who uses the same adjective in praise of conventional science and philosophy: "Und ach! entrollst du gar ein würdig Pergamen, / So steigt der ganze Himmel zu dir nieder" (GF, l. 1108-1109). Zeitblom perhaps feels safe from scientific apparitions in his humanistic studies, but they still haunt his attempts at retaining a calm rationality in the face of demonism. The chronicler's strategy when met with that which he deems demonic is simple: Actively subsume it under the worthy, dignified realm of the humanities.

The composer Leverkühn, after his turn towards music and his devilish pact, finds an expression for demonism in the inherently demonic art of musical composition. But the ability to compose demonically hinges on his pact, and he is faced with demonism well before his first encounter with the prostitute Esmeralda at the age of twenty. The child Leverkühn, who witnesses his father's ill-conceived experiments, has not yet mastered a demonic form of expression, and he does not have his friend's inclination towards subsumption of demonism under the worthy realm of the humanities; in Lutheran terms, he is born to damnation, while Zeitblom is born to salvation. Adrian Leverkühn, before his theology studies and his turn towards the study of music, is gripped by barely controllable laughing fits in the face of the demonic. This is how Zeitblom describes his friend's reaction to Jonathan's experiments:

Ich kann nicht behaupten, daß ich das gerne sah, aber ich gebe zu, daß ich gebannt davon war, und das war wohl auch Adrian, obgleich er immer bei solchen Vorführungen sehr stark zum Lachen versucht war und es allein aus Rücksicht auf den väterlichen Ernst unterdrückte. (MDF, p. 35)

The two children are both "spellbound" ("gebannt") by the spectres of Jonathan's experiments, but they react differently. The child Leverkühn is plagued by a barely



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controllable imperative to laugh. To Mark W. Roche (1986), Adrian Leverkühn's laughter mirrors Nietzsche's philosophy of laughter in that it voices an abandoning of one-sided perspectives in favor of an ambiguous relativity.<sup>237</sup> His laughter is mentioned more often in the novel than any other character trait of his.<sup>238</sup> Serenus Zeitblom's observation that nature is illiterate is prompted by Jonathan Leverkühn's observation of a particular ambiguity in the non-communicative writing he finds on sea shells: "Sage mir keiner," says the older Leverkühn, "hier werde nicht etwas mitgeteilt! Daß es eine unzugängliche Mitteilung ist, in diesen Widerspruch sich zu versenken, ist auch ein Genuß" (MDF, p. 31). The older Leverkühn is convinced that something is being communicated, but that this communication is inaccessible. He enjoys the ambiguity, while Serenus Zeitblom tries to intellectualise it, and Adrian Leverkühn laughs. This means that there is a similarity between the older and younger Leverkühn's reactions to this manifestation of nature's silent communication, or loud non-communication, but while Jonathan notes that there is an ambiguity, Adrian himself expresses this ambiguity through a form of expression that to a degree conforms to the phenomenon that instigated it. Jonathan uses conceptual language to express that he has found something outside of conceptual language, and Adrian non-conceptually, and involuntarily, reacts to this same phenomenon. Both Roche and Zeitblom may of course put too much into Leverkühn's laughter; perhaps he laughs because the pathos and seriousness with which Jonathan Leverkühn conducts his experiments simply is ridiculous. Thomas Mann, however, provides some insight into the nature of Adrian's laughter, as he draws the line between it and demonism in the *Entstehung*. Thomas Mann praises Franz Werfel's attention to detail as the latter is presented with the first three chapters of *Doktor Faustus*:

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<sup>237</sup> "Nietzsche's inclination to abandon his attachment to a particular perspective through laughter makes its way into Adrian Leverkühn's 'Sinn für das Komische, sein Verlangen danach und seine Neigung zum Lachen, ja zum Tränen-Lachen'. (...) This laughing figure Leverkühn treats individual values and perspectives as relative." (Roche 1986, p. 311)

<sup>238</sup> Roche's diligence allows for precision: Adrian's laughter is mentioned fifty-three times (Roche 1986, p. 312).

Auf dem Sofa liegend hörte er sich meine ersten drei Kapitel an, und ich vergesse nicht, wie betroffen, oder soll ich sagen: ahnungsvoll beunruhigt, er sich zeigte durch Adrians *Lachen*, in dem er augenscheinlich sofort etwas Nichtgeheueres, Religiös-Dämonisches spürte, und nach dem er sich immer wieder erkundigte. “Das Lachen!”, sagte er, “Was ist es damit”? O, ich weiß schon ... Wir werden sehen.” – Kundig und divinatorisch griff er da eines der kleinen Motive des Buches auf, mit denen zu arbeiten mich immer am meisten freute, wie etwa das erotische der blauen und schwarzen Augen, das Mutter-Motiv, der Parallelismus der Landschaften oder das freilich schon ins Große und Wesentliche reichende, alles durchziehende und vielfach abgewandelte Motiv der “Kälte”, das mit dem des Lachens verwandt ist.

Schon in diesem ist der Teufel, als hintergründiger Held des Buches, gestaltlos anwesend, wie auch in den “Versuchen” Vater Leverkühns (...). (Mann 2009, pp. 57-58)

Thomas Mann appears at this point at least to be an apt reader of his own work:

*Already* the Devil is present, still formless, in the first three chapters of the novel, in Adrian’s laughter, in Jonathan’s experiments and in the motivic coldness. Mann is aware that it is too early for those manifestations that Zeitblom describes as demonic to break through into the narrative that he is here seen to be interpreting. Adrian Leverkühn has no mode of expression that may convey demonism, other than his laughter, and such a demonic mode of expression does not exist in the novel yet, either. A novel has no recourse to laughter or music – it is made up of conceptual language, which denies the non-conceptual entry into it. The motivic device that does allow Zeitblom’s non-conceptual demonism to permeate the membrane separating it from rationality has not yet been introduced, yet there is still devilry at play in this part of Leverkühn’s biography. It is, however, untouchable, unreachable and uncommunicable: It hides from the conceptually-constituted mind that reaches for it. Jonathan Leverkühn works very hard at decoding the message he thinks raw nature is sending his way through the means of writing on sea shells, but translating these signs proves impossible, and he can only revel in the paradox that something incomprehensible is being communicated.<sup>239</sup> Adrian Leverkühn, the child, laughs.

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<sup>239</sup> A proper geologist could of course demystify these markings, which really can be made to speak to the observer: Of water, sediment, climate, and ocean currents.

Adrian Leverkühn, the student of theology in Halle, also laughs in the face of demonic and devilish spectacles, but at this point, he expresses that he is troubled by the tickling sensation that brings forth his bouts of laughter, and it becomes apparent that his laughter is not voluntary, and not inspired by the actual humour in a situation, such as the ridiculous sincerity of his father. He reasons in his letter to Kretschmar in Chapter 15 that he fled towards theology because he expected to find refuge there from his own exaggerated sense of comedy:

(...) ich habe verdammt Weise von jeher bei den geheimnisvoll-eindruckvollsten Erscheinungen lachen müssen und bin vor diesem übertriebenen Sinn für das Komische in die Theologie geflohen, in der Hoffnung, daß sie dem Kitzel Ruhe gebieten werde – um dann eine Menge entsetzlicher Komik in ihr zu finden. (MDF, p. 197)

Adrian Leverkühn here claims that he is not driven to laughter by ridiculous events, but rather by certain secretive, impressively forceful manifestations that he vainly hoped to find none of in theology. The tickle or titillating sensation described here (“Kitzel”) has an obvious parallel in an “Erkenntniskitzel” (MDF, p. 390) that he experiences during his improbable voyages with Professor Capercailzie.<sup>240</sup> The latter results in his first demonic musical composition, entitled “Die Wunder des Alls”, while the first results in his realisation that he will be unable to flee from the source of his laughter, and needs to find another avenue of approach towards it. Comedy is by no means delightful to Adrian: It is described here as appalling.

Demonism may be a purely Zeitblomian term, and its effects on Adrian Leverkühn may be found to be purely a result of the chronicler’s desire to convey the innocence of his friend. Zeitblom is even less versed in the particulars of the natural sciences than Jonathan Leverkühn, and sees a threatening mystery in the sea shells’ markings, which really are just effects of natural phenomena, and not an active

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<sup>240</sup> “Adrian sprach von dem Erkenntniskitzel, den es bereitete, das Unerschaute, nicht zu Erschauende, des Geschautwerdens nicht sich Versehende dem Blicke bloßzustellen. Das damit verbundene Gefühl der Indiskretion, ja der Sündhaftigkeit wurde nicht ganz beschwichtigt und ausgeglichen durch das Pathos der Wissenschaft, der erlaubt sein muß, so weit vorzudringen, wie es ihrem Witz eben gegeben ist.” (MDF, p. 390)

attempt at communicating anything. However, there are strong counterindications to the idea that the area of experience that is designated demonic remains purely a Zeitblomian concept. There is one point in the novel where Adrian Leverkühn's laughter is misunderstood and explicitly misinterpreted by Zeitblom, who at that point cannot be said to stage his friend's demonic inclination.

The chapters concerning the student years in Halle are far more centered on Zeitblom than Leverkühn, which is somewhat paradoxical, given that the former chooses to sit in on theology lectures only in order to keep an eye on his friend and subject, and given that his decision to move to Halle was in part prompted by his friend's presence there. Throughout Zeitblom's description of the burly professor Ehrenfried Kumpf, who quotes the *Historia* during his lectures and forcefully imitates Luther's *Tischreden* in language and dramaturgy during a dinner with his family and the two friends from Kaisersaschern, Adrian Leverkühn is only mentioned once. After the dinner, which culminates as Kumpf throws a chair into a corner, at the Devil, once again in imitation of Luther, an outraged Serenus Zeitblom deems the spectacle a "horror", and is sure Adrian agrees:

Dies alles war ja ein Schrecknis, und ich muß als sicher annehmen, daß auch Adrian es so empfand, obgleich sein Stolz ihm nicht erlaubte, seinen Lehrer preiszugeben. Immerhin hatte er nach jenem Teufelsgefecht auf der Straße einen Lachanfall, der sich nur langsam, unter ablenkenden Gesprächen beruhigte. (MDF, p. 146)

As was the case with Jonathan's experiments, Adrian has an obvious incentive to laugh: To a reader of the novel, Kumpf's antics during the dinner, and during his lectures, are humorous. This imperative to laugh is reinforced by Zeitblom's seriousness and ridiculously misplaced concern for the professor's dignity – as if Kumpf was not aware that he put on a comic spectacle. However, there is again a more serious undertone to Adrian Leverkühn's laughter. It is not just a mocking laughter, although it certainly must be this too. It is an uncontrollable result of an encounter with one of his "geheimnisvoll-eindruckvollsten Erscheinungen", which in this case really is appallingly comical. During the dinner at the Kumpfs', the spectacle that forces Adrian Leverkühn's mirthful response is literally that of a

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hidden presence of the demonic. The theatrical Kumpf believes, or eccentrically pretends to believe, that the Devil is hiding in a dark corner. Demonic appearances force a reaction from Adrian, which at this point can be nothing other than his Nietzschean laughter, representing the commensuration of incommensurable opposites. Adrian laughs compulsively when he is faced with something that lays bare a measure of that which is normally hidden, and Serenus misunderstands. This misunderstanding is a strong indication that appearances conforming to Zeitblom's category of demonism are present throughout the narrative, regardless of the narrator's staging of them. It has been established that Adrian's laughter is not an expression of mirth and joy, but that it is a painful Nietzschean laughter that comes as a response to spectacles that can be identified as inherently demonic; Zeitblom, however, understands his laughter differently at this point, seeing in it pure mockery of Kumpf's ridiculous behaviour.

Serenus Zeitblom is not observant enough to see the demonism at work in Ehrenfried Kumpf's antics – he sees only the worrisome lack of social decorum, while his friend does perceive the presence of something demonic both in Kumpf's language and behaviour. Understanding demonic impulses to be the driving force of the narrative is both more productive and more reasonable than placing this category entirely within the humanist narrator's banal system of morals. How could Serenus Zeitblom have staged a string of appearances in the novel that he so obviously misunderstands? The pact that Adrian Leverkühn does enter into – and that his friend at some key points also misrepresents – results from the imperative to react to demonic appearances, which so far has been limited to painful bouts of laughter. That is about to change after Adrian Leverkühn has made a conscious decision to turn his back on theology and study music instead. His study of music is immediately prefaced by several references to the Faustian pact motif, and it is initiated by the formalisation of his pact, which takes place as he moves to Leipzig.

### 4.2.3 Promise and Betrothal: Chapter 16

The sixteenth chapter for the first time offers to the reader what is presumably a direct line of access to Adrian Leverkühn's own voice, unedited by the chronicler, from the composer's own hand. This could have been grounds for establishing, using C. S. Peirce's terms, an indexical relation between the account and Adrian Leverkühn, similar to how a fictive indexical relation exists in the Spies-book between the pact and the doctor, were it not for the fact that Zeitblom emphasises that he has copied his friend's words into his own manuscript. Of course the editor or author of the *Historia* has done the same, or at least the typesetter has done so, but Zeitblom makes a point of this fact, and therefore creates distance between Adrian's proverbial hand and the letter that is presented to the reader. Unlike the preceding chapter, the reader nevertheless seems to be given direct access to Leverkühn's unedited words as Zeitblom includes into his novel a letter that his friend sent him from his first year as a student of music under Wendell Kretschmar in Leipzig. This time, the chronicler is not quoting from memory, but copies Adrian's written words.

One abiding thesis of this study is reinforced by this point: The pact is often in some way set apart from the narrative. The pact may be presented as a document written by someone other than the author or author-editor and carefully isolated from the narrative (Spies's *Historia*), or it may be identified as a symbolic action that is inherited from a misplaced set of rules. In Mann's novel, the relation between sections presenting the pact motif and the primary mode of narration is more complex than in the *Historia*, because the pact material is spread out and seems at first glance to be not easily identifiable. The pact is not simply presented as "found material", stemming from another's hand, but emerges through a series of indices that are spread throughout the work. However, the following analysis will show that not only is the pact motif quite clearly localised after all, but the sections where it is presented are also carefully set apart from the surrounding narrative. The difference between Zeitblom's discourse and Leverkühn's is profound: Chapter 16 is the first chapter in the novel where the otherness of Adrian's mind starts to seep into Zeitblom's

narrative, and it is a figurative wound left by the prostitute Esmeralda on Adrian's cheek during events described in this same chapter that allows this to happen.

The letter from Adrian to Serenus contains brief descriptions of Leverkühn's studies, supervised by Wendell Kretschmar, into some aspects of musical history and compositional techniques. Moreover, it describes Leverkühn's first encounter with the city of Leipzig and his tour of historical sites at the hands of a guide whose similarity to his liberal theology professor in Halle, Schleppfuss, paired with a generous beer-belly, prompts the student to name him "Gose-Schleppfuss". Adrian's retelling of the last leg of his guided tour of the city, which takes him to a brothel, is ominously introduced as the tale of "was zwischen mir und dem Satan vorgeht" (MDF, p. 207), and Gose-Schleppfuss's Leipzig dialect is twice mockingly described with the adjective "teuflich", as is the Leipzig dialect in general.<sup>241</sup> When the student asks the guide to show him a restaurant, he is led to a building off the main road:

Führt er mich vor ein Haus in einer Gasse hinter der Hauptstraße, – war ein  
Geländer aus Messing an den Stufen zur Thür, just so blitzend wie sein  
Mützenschild, und eine Laterne über der Thür, just so rot wie die Mütze des  
Kerls. (MDF, p. 208)

The relation established between Gose-Schleppfuss and the exterior of the building is not without meaning; when Adrian later discovers that the devilish guide has led him into a brothel, he calls it a "Lusthölle" (MDF, p. 209), indicating that the figure has led him into a hellish scene. Adrian's first entry into this hellish scene is described as follows, in a language which is a precursor to Leverkühn's later imitation of mediaeval and Renaissance language:

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<sup>241</sup> Adrian Leverkühn's snobbishness in his parody of the Leipzig dialect is vaguely reminiscent of the picture that Rüdiger Safranski paints of the young Goethe in Leipzig, based on Goethe's letters to his friends, and his friends' letters to one another regarding the flamboyant young man, in *Goethe. Kunstwerk des Lebens* (Safranski 2013, pp. 41-43). Goethe also moved to Leipzig to study, and he lived across from Auerbachs Hof, which Leverkühn visits during his guided tour of the city. The parallel may be accidental, because an identification of Leverkühn with Goethe functions exceedingly poorly, but it might still be a thought worth entertaining.

Ich schelle, die Thür geht von selber auf, und auf dem Flur kommt mir eine geputzte Madam entgegen, mit ronsifarbenen Backen, einen Rosenkranz wachsfarbener Perlen auf ihrem Speck, und begrüßt mich fast züchtiger berden, hocherfreut flötend und scharmutzierend, wie einen Langerwarteten, komplimentiert mich danach durch Portièren in ein schimmernd Gemach mit eingefasster Bespannung, einem Kristall-Lüster, Wandleuchtern vor Spiegeln, und seidnen Gautschen, darauf sitzen dir Nymphen und Töchter der Wüste, sechs oder sieben, wie soll ich sagen, Morphos, Glasflügler, Esmeralden, wenig gekleidet, durchsichtig gekleidet, in Tüll, Gaze und Glitzerwerk, das Haar lang offen, kurzlockig das Haar, gepuderte Halbkugeln, Arme mit Spangen, und sehen dich mit erwartungsvollen, vom Lüster gleißenden Augen an.

Mich sehen sie an, nicht dich. Hat mich der Kerl, der Gose-Schleppfuß, in eine Schlupfbude geführt! (MDF, p. 208-209)

Leverkühn's description is vibrating with carnal desire. One quite glaring feature that Serenus Zeitblom misses as he later comments on the letter is that the repetitions in Adrian's description linger on the prostitutes' visual traits: their hair and transparent clothes are both mentioned twice. His invocation of Jonathan Leverkühn's moths with transparent wings, the Hetaera Esmeralda and the biological family of *Glasflügler* (clearwing moths), also emphasises their nudity and their visual characteristics, as does his mention of another genus of butterflies, the colourful *Morpho*. The bodies of the "daughters of the desert" are bared, uncovered, and being uncovered is certainly something other than being nude: When something is uncovered, it is in the process of revealing itself. Transparent clothes, like transparent wings, are still covers, but covers that allow the gaze to penetrate through to the naked flesh. Adrian's eyes gravitate towards nudity, but never reach it, because it is still half hidden behind transparent cloth. Furthermore, Leverkühn's eroticised gaze is absolutely crucial to the following interpretation of the pact that he is about to enter into: Demonic desire is not something that is merely given to him, or forced upon him, but is already an inclination inherent in his character. The young student hides his agitation, and spots a piano, "an old friend", to which he walks:



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Ich stand und verbarg meine Affekten, sehe mir gegenüber ein offen Klavier, einen Freund, geh über den Teppich drauf los und schlage im Stehen zwei, drei Akkorde an, weiß noch, was es war, weil mir das Klangphänomen gerade im Sinne lag. Modulation von H- nach C-dur, aufhellender Halbton-Abstand wie im Gebet des Eremiten im Freischütz-Finale, bei dem Eintritt von Pauke, Trompeten und Oboen auf dem Quartsextakkord von C. Weiß es im Nachher, wußte es aber damals nicht, sondern schlug eben nur an. Neben mich stellt sich dabei eine Bräunliche, in spanischem Jäckchen, mit großem Mund, Stumpfnase und Mandelaugen, Esmeralda, die streichelt mir mit dem Arm die Wange. Kehr ich mich um, stoß mit dem Knie die Sitzbank bei Seite und schlage mich über den Teppich zurück durch die Lusthölle, an der schwadronierenden Zatzemutter vorbei, durch den Flur und die Stufen hinab auf die Straße, ohne das Messinggeländer nur anzufassen. (MDF, p. 209)

The student of music plays a few chords from Carl Maria von Weber's opera *Der Freischütz* (1821), and at that – “dabei” – the prostitute whom he at this point names Esmeralda moves over to him and touches his cheek. One immediately apparent strong indication that this event is pertinent to the pact motif is the particular part of the work that is musically quoted by Leverkühn. He plays parts of the hermit's lament from the finale, wherein conditions for the protagonist's release from his unholy pact with the demonic Samiel are discussed. Perhaps Leverkühn plays these particular notes in an attempt to lift the demonic spell that is being cast on him, but their effect is the opposite. Esmeralda seems drawn to the piano, and touches the student's cheek. This touch, according to Zeitblom's later interpretation of it, effects a radical change in Adrian Leverkühn, who, according to his chronicler, entered the brothel an innocent man, and left contaminated with demonic desire.

Another interpretative key to this event is given through a secondary source which is quite overtly present in this description. The report Adrian gives of his brothel visit closely mirrors Mann's retelling of an account Nietzsche gave to his friend Paul Deussen concerning a guide who deceived him by leading him into a brothel rather than a restaurant.<sup>242</sup> Mann's outline of this episode from Nietzsche's life in the article “Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung” (1947), published immediately after *Doktor Faustus*, resembles Leverkühn's description of

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<sup>242</sup> For a short comparative reading of the episode with Chapter 16 in *Doktor Faustus*, see Blankenagel 1948. Nietzsche's presence in the novel as a whole is explored in Joseph 1998.

his brothel visit so closely that the two are almost identical, both motivically and, seemingly, thematically: A young man asks a hired guide to show him a good restaurant, and is instead shown into a brothel, where his intellectual world view is confronted with carnal lust. The man seeks refuge at a piano, and, having struck a few chords, manages to tear himself away and flee. The chief difference between the two depictions of a similar event lies, aside from one's localisation in Cologne and the other's in Leipzig, in the narrator's distance to the scene described. Adrian Leverkühn is allowed to word his experience himself, while Mann analyses and reflects on Nietzsche's visit in his 1947 article, emphasising the young man's carnal innocence and complete immersion in the intellectual realm:

Der Jüngling, rein wie ein Mädchen, ganz Geist, ganz Gelehrsamkeit, ganz fromme Scheu, sieht sich, so sagt er, plötzlich umgeben von einem halben Dutzend Erscheinungen in Flitter und Gaze, die ihn erwartungsvoll ansehen. (Mann 1974a, p. 679)

Mann's article on Nietzsche is written after the novel, and is no doubt heavily influenced by his own novel, as can be inferred from similar words and expressions used in both descriptions. It is therefore quite tempting to read its clear-cut conclusion regarding the young man's carnal innocence as an interpretation of Leverkühn's brothel scene, or at least as an interpretation that will fit this scene as well. Zeitblom's understanding of the change that takes place in Adrian Leverkühn after he has been touched by Esmeralda is almost identical to Mann's understanding of the brothel visit's effects on Nietzsche: The innocent intellectual student is confronted with carnal desire. What this means to the present understanding of the character Leverkühn understood as Faustian figure is that the desire that drives him to figurative apostasy is given to him from outside, after he has been through his "negotiations" with Wendell Kretschmar and with himself in Chapter 15. The two chapters become disjointed as Adrian is led towards his pact, rather than actively seeking it out as Faust figures before him have done. The pact is not invited, but forced upon him. The events that follow are neither a result of his conscious decision to ignore the old warning to flee and do what is right, nor his choice to turn from

theology to the alchemical laboratory of musical composition, in Serenus Zeitblom's perspective.

It is quite obvious that Zeitblom misunderstands and misrepresents his friend in his interpretation of the letter, as he, for instance, imagines the student wandering "blindly" ("sah ich ihn blind hindurchgehen", MDF, p. 217) through the brothel to the piano. As pointed out, Leverkühn's description of the prostitutes and their surroundings is highly visual, and the reader is not given the impression that he is blind to their uncoveredness, nor that he is unaware of their effect on him, which he actively makes an effort to hide. The chronicler removes any agency Leverkühn might have had in this encounter, and to a lesser degree in the following encounter with Esmeralda in Bratislava, by giving him the role of an utterly innocent victim of "seelenlose Triebe" (MDF, p. 217), soulless lust, and giving Esmeralda the role of "Hexe", witch (MDF, p. 217). The adjective "seelenlos" directly corresponds to a section from Nietzsche's own account, quoted in "Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung" by Mann, who quotes Deussen quoting Nietzsche. The latter, on seeing a piano in the room, is reported through this chain of retelling to have called it "das einzige seelenhafte Wesen in der Gesellschaft" (Mann 1974a, p. 679). The instrument, however, does not lift the spell in Adrian's case as it does in Mann's interpretation of Nietzsche's, where Mann writes: "[Er] schlägt einige Akkorde an. Das löst seinen Bann, seine Erstarrung, und er gewinnt das Freie, er vermag zu fliehen" (Mann 1974a, p. 679). On the contrary in Adrian's case: it seems to invite Esmeralda's touch across his cheek, which is later interpreted by Zeitblom as the first involuntary step on the young man's road to demonic infection. Immediately following the touch, Leverkühn is allowed by his author finally to flee – but it is not the piano that seems to lift the spell: Esmeralda touches him first.

In his letter, Leverkühn turns from the description of the brothel to musical theory after describing Esmeralda's touch. This is not a change of subject, but rather an elaboration on one point that Adrian has understood, but his chronicler not: The close intertwining of demonism and music. Music does not work as protection against demonic spells in Mann's novel; music is inherently demonic, and in fact summons

Esmeralda to Adrian's side, in contrast to its effect in Nietzsche's brothel experience. Her caressing Adrian's cheek is the first stage of the formal confirmation of Adrian Leverkühn's agreement with the Devil, which in Mann's novel takes the form of willed syphilis infection, effected through Leverkühn's copulation with this same prostitute in her home in Bratislava approximately one year later. Although it is tempting to base an interpretation of the brothel scene on Mann's interpretation of Nietzsche's involuntary brothel visit, two very significant differences between them, that are too well incorporated into the novel's thematic complex to be ascribed to Mann's ineptitude in realising his own poetic vision have emerged: Adrian Leverkühn is not blindly innocent, and there is no opposition between soulless lust and music. If lust is indeed soulless, then music is correspondingly soulless: They are made of the same demonic elementary building blocks.

The challenges arising from the similarities between Mann's pre-interpreted Nietzsche brothel scene and Adrian's brothel scene, erroneously interpreted by Zeitblom, is part of a wider methodological question of how one should approach the various secondary sources that are embedded in the novel – not only Mann's own direct or indirect commentaries found in material relating to the work, but also the large number of other works of fiction, biographies, architecture and so on that are implanted by Mann in Adrian Leverkühn's fictional biography. In the brothel scene alone, several sources are cited, besides the historically-real Nietzsche and the fictive hermit from *Der Freischütz*. Liselotte Voss (1975) has brought another historical person onto the scene, further expanding the multitude of references present in the character of Leverkühn: She finds it plausible that the unusual adjective "rosinfarbene", used by Leverkühn in his description of the brothel's "Madam", is adopted from Wilhelm Waetzoldt's book on Dürer, wherein it describes the monstrous animal that serves as the whore of Babylon's mount, depicted in the woodcut "Die babylonische Buhlerin" (Voss 1975, p. 139). Dürer is also present in the biography of Leverkühn elsewhere in the novel: His study in Pfeiffering is as accurately modelled on Albrecht Dürer's study as his uncle's house in Kaisersaschern is modelled on the Dürerhaus in Nürnberg. There are, perhaps surprisingly, no direct

references to the Spies-book in Adrian's letter, but the philologist Zeitblom points out that it is filled with linguistic reminiscences of Professor Ehrenfried Kumpf's speech, which belongs to the sixteenth century. This creates an indirect reference in Adrian's language to Martin Luther, as Kumpf is an obvious Luther caricature. Still other characters, real and fictional, make up the foundation of Adrian Leverkühn's character.

Arnold Schönberg, to whom Mann's descriptions of twelve-tone music is obviously greatly indebted, went so far as to express his dismay at the similarities between himself and Adrian Leverkühn following the publication of the Wiener edition of the novel in 1948 in a letter signed with the pseudonym Hugo Tribsamen, and Mann, in turn, amended a second 1948 edition, published at Suhrkamp Verlag, with a clarification explaining the relation between the novel's musical theory and Schönberg, while emphasizing in his *Entstehung* that Leverkühn is not modelled on any particular composer, but rather that he has attempted to invent him freely, encountering the difficulty of the historical placement of a fictive composer amongst real ones:

Nach einer abendlichen Vorlesung fragte mich Leonhard Frank, ob mir bei Adrian selbst irgendein Modell vorgeschwebt habe. Ich verneinte und fügte hinzu, daß die Schwierigkeit gerade darin bestehe, eine Musiker-Existenz frei zu erfinden, die ihren glaubhaften Platz zwischen den realen Besetzungen des modernen Musiklebens habe. (Mann 2009, p. 71)

This assertion, that anything in Mann's *Doktor Faustus* should be considered *purely* fictional, is difficult to support. Aside from living inspirations, Mann, by his own report, diligently made use of theoretical works on music and on the history of the literary tradition concerning Faustus when he constructed the subject of his fictive biography, including Schönberg's *Harmonielehre*. Furthermore, his work is teeming with direct quotes from Luther, Shakespeare, Nietzsche, the Bible and the Spies-book. All of these indirect and direct references may influence a reading of the novel, as the brothel-scene from Nietzsche's biography may influence the reader's understanding of Leverkühn's character before and after he is "touched" by Esmeralda.

Adrian Leverkühn is obviously partly modelled on Arnold Schönberg, despite Mann's insistence that he is freely invented, and Mann's interpretation of Nietzsche's brothel visit, while quite similar to Zeitblom's interpretation of Adrian's, does not apply as well to his own fictive brothel scene. How, then, should one read this scene in Chapter 16 of the novel, which is suspended between a number of external references? And by extension, how should a reader approach Mann's adopted or quoted material? This problem stems from the heart of this study's subject matter, as the pact and the Faustian material are also foreign elements which are brought into the work from the outside, and which are clearly marked as misplaced in the work. The Nietzsche brothel scene does not mean the same within the book as it does within Mann's interpretation of Nietzsche; in fact, it has the opposite implication. The pact motif, then, if there is one, is subject to this same uncertainty.

So far three horizons that intersect in Mann's novel have been identified, specifically in the sixteenth chapter: Contemporary real persons, historical real persons, and fictional characters and motifs, all of which are presented in the novel through direct quotes, paraphrases or descriptions. The author names this style of writing his "Montagetechnik", and describes it as an assembling ("Aufmontieren") of factual, historical, personal and literary realities. The intended effect of this style of writing is a merging of the real with the illusionary:

Aufmontieren von faktischen, historischen, persönlichen, ja literarischen Gegebenheiten, so daß, kaum anders als in den 'Panoramen', die man in meiner Kindheit zeigte, das handgreiflich Reale ins perspektivisch Gemalte und Illusionäre schwer unterscheidbar übergeht. (Mann 2009, p. 29)

Adrian's visit to the brothel where he meets the syphilitic prostitute in Chapter 16 is an origo of various horizons, and serves as an excellent example of Mann's compositional technique. The motif of the Leipzig brothel is plausible, yet the pairing of this scene with elements from Nietzsche's biography, and with the Faustian tradition and literature featuring the Devil, achieved through various devices such as Adrian's antiquated language and the figure of the devilish guide, emphasises that the scene is a literary construct. One consequence of Mann's *Montagetechnik*, as opposed to a series of direct references, is that context is effectively indistinguishable from

text, because context is inscribed in it. Adrian Leverkühn at this point is Nietzsche, Dürer, Faustus and Schönberg, and he is none of them; he is “frei erfunden”. The contexts inscribed in the scene do to some degree dictate a mode of reading or interpreting.

Four historical figures and one legendary, Nietzsche, Dürer, Schönberg, Luther and Doctor Faustus, are present in Chapter 16 of the novel through Adrian Leverkühn, while the composer retains his believability as independent fictional character; this is the effect of Mann’s ability to balance biography with fiction, and fictional biography with literary tradition.<sup>243</sup> Gunilla Bergsten (1963) divides Mann’s Montagetechnik into two categories, both of which come together in Leverkühn’s character in Chapter 16: elements adopted from reality (such as the biographies of contemporary and historical persons), and quotes from literary sources. The latter is defined by Bergsten as verbatim or near-verbatim quotes: “Die zweite Hauptgruppe enthält Zitate im gewöhnlichen Sinne des Wortes, d.h. wörtliche oder nahezu wörtliche Wiederholungen eines sprachlich schon geformten Materials” (Bergsten 1963, p. 15). In this preliminary definition of Mann’s Montagetechnik, Bergsten misses a third category, vital to understanding the importance of the sixteenth chapter in the narrative, and the reasoning behind the above inclusion of Doctor Faustus in the list of persons present in Leverkühn’s character, which is that of structural and motivic adoptions. These exist in the novel on a large scale: Leverkühn’s biography, which in part follows that of the sixteenth-century doctor, and the pact motif, which is decidedly different from the pact in older Faustian works, but which is still modelled on them. This study has so far indicated that the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters invite a reader to regard them in light of traditional pacts with the Devil. This invitation takes place on two levels: Through direct quotations from the *Historia*’s pact chapters, which would be covered by Bergsten’s categories, and also through a

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<sup>243</sup> The scene in chapter sixteen is one example amongst several. Leverkühn’s fictional biography alludes to the biographies of other historical geniuses, including Beethoven, Schumann and Tchaikovsky (see Bergsten 1969), and, of course, the allusion to Schönberg implicit in Leverkühn’s twelve-tone music.

structure of hellish negotiation followed by an embedded document purportedly written by the protagonist.<sup>244</sup> Bergsten is not unaware of structures such as these; her schematic comparison of major events in the Renaissance doctor's life and the corresponding events in Leverkühn's (Bergsten 1963, pp. 57-58) is meticulously executed, yet her model does not account for the fact that this is a separate form of quotation or appropriation of material. Admittedly, Dietrich Assman (1975) is not impressed by this list, repeatedly quoting, in parody, her assertion that these are "verblüffenden Übereinstimmungen" (Bergsten 1963, p. 58). Assmann indicates that the facts are contorted in favour of Bergsten's conclusion.

The term *Montagetechnik* stages Thomas Mann as editor rather than author, seemingly not at all dissimilar to the role of the unnamed author of the *Historia*. However, there is a pronounced difference between Thomas Mann's method of composition and that which underlies the creation of the *Historia*. To the Leipzig brothel scene, Mann has attached at least two additional horizons that add some meaning to it: Nietzsche's biography, reinforcing Leverkühn's role as a Nietzschean figure while at the same time instating a subversive difference between them, and sixteenth-century literature featuring the Devil, positioning Leverkühn's biography within German literary history. These three elements coexist in the scene, folded over

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<sup>244</sup> One could of course also point out Mann's chapter numbering, which has received its fair share of attention in other contexts: Chapters 15 and 16 correspond with 5 and 6 in the *Historia*. The lack of numerical consistency in Mann's chapter divisions, or the apparently frustrating almost-adherence to an elegant overall structure, has incited several readers to construct more or less elaborate systems of counting that mend one particular shortcoming of the novel: 47 is, to some, a painfully asymmetrical number, given the novel's tendency towards magic numbers. The demonic Schlepffuss appears in the ominously numbered chapter 13, the pivotal pact scene is placed almost at the numerical center, the number of chapters almost equals the 48 possible combinations in Leverkühn's twelve-tone scale, and an overall Faustian theme strongly present in the novel is expressed in twelve syllables: "Denn ich sterbe als ein guter und böser Christ". This, along with the prominent placement of the magic square above Leverkühn's piano, incited David Ball (1986) to count 48 chapters, while translator H. T. Lowe-Porter as early as 1947 wanted to make 50 chapters of the forty-seven in her English version of the book. Thomas Mann directly replied to the latter, stating dismissively in a letter of November 7<sup>th</sup> that year that she could certainly count 50 chapters if she wanted to do so: "Ich habe nichts dagegen, wenn Sie es übersichtlicher und schöner finden, 50 aus den 47 Kapiteln zu machen. Das ist eine Äusserlichkeit, auf die nicht viel ankommt." David Ball (1986) quotes these lines in his study (p. 62), oddly enough finding in them "support" for counting fifty chapters, while Mann's dismissal of the importance of chapter numbering in fact contradicts the entire endeavor of identifying "magical" numerical structures in the work.



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one another: It is a believable account of the composer's brothel visit, it is a scene from Nietzsche's biography, and it is an element in the novel's take on the old Faust myth. While the Spies-book borrows heavily from contemporary works of fiction, science and religion, this coexistence of various layers is never achieved (or sought); each scene is a part of the morally-educational and entertaining tale of Doktor Faustus, and nothing else. The source is not meaningful in the sense of adding layers of meaning to the narrative, and while its discovery sheds light on the book's genesis, it says little of its intended or perceived meaning. If Mann were simply an editor, his novel would be written according to the compositional principles of the *Historia*; but Mann's *Montagetechnik* is the invocation of known material within a new composition, not the mere appropriation of known material. This means that a reader should take care to avoid projecting the meaning found by Mann and others in the secondary sources onto the novel, as the presence of these sources in *Doktor Faustus* evidently makes them take on a new meaning which, as is the case with the Nietzsche-scene in Chapter 16, may be completely contrary to that which has been ascribed to the scene outside of the novel's framework. In this case, the misunderstanding is written into the novel, voiced by Serenus Zeitblom, and Mann's commentary on Nietzsche's experiences reinforces it: Adrian Leverkühn's experiences in the Leipzig brothel are well-obscured, and the reader given ample grounds for misinterpreting it. Mann's joke in this is having his readers adopt the occasionally block-headed Serenus Zeitblom's perspective; it is not the only section in the book where a mode of interpretation is offered by the book's chronicler or by other diegetic characters, and subtly ridiculed. Noting the differences between Mann's Nietzsche-episode from "Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung" and his Esmeralda-scene from *Doktor Faustus* is crucial to a reading of the novel that attempts to relate it to a line of Faustian works of literature.

#### 4.2.4 Esmeralda's Touch: Involuntary *Einteufung*?

Chapter 16 is a pivotal point in the novel. As pointed out above, the Adrian figure's indebtedness to historical and fictive characters is made apparent here. It also marks a profound change in Adrian Leverkühn's character, and, consequently, in the narrative. The student is here "touched" for the first time, according to his chronicler. "Berührung" is a term frequently used by Zeitblom in the context of Adrian's first brothel visit. As the chronicler prepares to retell the events in Bratislava in Chapter 19, he repeatedly draws attention to the fact that Adrian carries the prostitute's touch, each time through an extended epithet tied to Esmeralda. She is in these cases introduced as the woman who has touched Adrian: she is "derjenige[], deren Berührung auf seiner Wange brannte" (MDF, p. 224), Zeitblom mentions Adrian's "Erliegen vor dem nackten Triebe, der ihn hämisch berührt hatte" (MDF, p. 224), identifying Esmeralda as the embodiment of naked lust, she is the woman "das ihn berührt hatte" (MDF, p. 224) and "deren Berührung er trug" (MDF, p. 225). Thus he emphasises beyond doubt that he believes she has effected a profound change in Adrian that is a direct cause of the slow disaster that follows. An infection has taken place before Leverkühn revisits Esmeralda in Bratislava: Not a medical infection, but rather the ingraining of an imperative to act in a certain manner, or the awakening of a particular form of desire.

Despite Leverkühn's sudden turn in the letter from short, incomplete, staccato sentences in an antiquated language regarding the brothel, to well-articulated reflections on Romantic music (Schumann, Chopin and Beethoven) – seemingly a change of subject as well as a change in tone – it is not coincidental that he chooses to make particular mention of one line from one of Eugène Delacroix's letters to Chopin (dated 1 January 1841):<sup>245</sup> "J'espère vous voir ce soir, mais ce moment est capable de me faire devenir fou" (MDF, p. 210). This overtly erotic fearful hope of a nightly

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<sup>245</sup> The letters from Delacroix to Chopin were printed in "La Revue Musicale" in 1903, which is available in a digital format through Princeton's Blue Mountain Project (La Revue Musicale 1903, p. 493).

visit that might drive the visitor mad certainly foreshadows Leverkühn's future journey to Bratislava, and his reference to it strongly indicates that Esmeralda's infecting touch has engendered desire in him, although Zeitblom reads the quote in the context of his own erotically-charged friendship with Adrian. The chronicler disregards Leverkühn's order that he destroy the letter, and defends his decision by invoking the homoerotic friendship apparent in Delacroix's letter:

Der kategorischen Weisung, diesen Brief zu vernichten, bin ich nicht gefolgt – wer will es einer Freundschaft verargen, welche das darin auf Delacroix' Freundschaft mit Chopin gemünzte Beiwort "tief aufmerksam" für sich in Anspruch nehmen darf? (MDF, p. 211)

Zeitblom paints himself as a "deeply attentive" friend, while seemingly missing the erotic overtones obviously present in the quoted lines from Delacroix's letter. Leverkühn's letter in Chapter 16 is sandwiched between Serenus Zeitblom's attempts at interpreting it "stilkkritisch und psychologisch" (MDF, p. 211), and particularly in the chapter following the letter, as well as in Chapter 19, his outrage at the prostitute's sully of his carnally-innocent friend, which gives particular attention to her touch, is expressed. "Touch" at one point euphemistically denotes carnal union, even though Esmeralda's arm across Leverkühn's cheek hardly qualifies: "Daß er bis dato kein Weib 'berührt' hatte, war und ist mir eine unumstößliche Gewißheit. Nun hatte das Weib ihn berührt – und er war geflohen" (MDF, p. 217). "Touch" in quotations marks is here a euphemism, while touch without them is not, yet both are seen as antitheses to innocence. The chronicler angrily regards the touch as an "indescribable desecration", agitatedly trying to come to terms with the "unbeschreiblich Schändende, das höhnisch Erniedrigende und das Gefährliche dieser Berührung" (MDF, p. 217). The touch not only defiles and debases Adrian Leverkühn, but it is also dangerous, opines Zeitblom. It introduces Adrian Leverkühn to a form of carnal lust that he, according to Zeitblom, up to that point has been spared, and in Zeitblom's eyes, this ingraining of carnal desire directly leads to Leverkühn's syphilis infection and inevitable downfall. So far, the topos of the sullied "innocent young man" from Mann's interpretation of Nietzsche's involuntary brothel is still strongly present in Zeitblom's psychological and "style-critical" interpretation.

Leverkühn passively receives the dangerous touch, argues Zeitblom, who points out that he strongly believes Leverkühn has not actively “touched” a woman before. Adrian, however, although perhaps unknowingly, does have an active role in inviting Esmeralda’s touch through the chords from *Der Freischütz* that he plays at the piano. Furthermore, the understanding that he certainly is not the blind, innocent young man that Zeitblom paints him as before Esmeralda touches him is imperative. A Faustian pact cannot be imposed on an unknowing victim, but requires active agency from the party that makes a promise in it. If the pact is imposed on someone, it is not a Faustian pact, as pointed out by Karl-Heinz Hücke (1992). If Zeitblom’s interpretation of his friend’s innocence was held to be reasonable, it would push the motif in the direction of witch trials and demonic possession, and away from the Faust myth. The primary function of the *homo fuge* motif is to emphasise the apostate doctor’s agency, as previously discussed, and in Adrian’s letter from Leipzig, it is Zeitblom’s blindness that strips it of its inherent eroticism, not Leverkühn’s. Adrian Leverkühn actively chooses to study music, and his gaze is drawn towards the barely-covered female bodies in the brothel, yet Serenus Zeitblom places blame on Wendell Kretschmar and Esmeralda respectively.

This first touch, however, is not the pact. It is one step in a gradual initiation of Adrian Leverkühn into a demonic realm. It is parallel to the gradual *Einteufung* of both Spies’s Faustus and Goethe’s Faust. Still, if Leverkühn’s second visit to the brothel approximately one year later, and subsequent visit to Esmeralda’s home, is purely dictated by the touch that keeps burning on his cheek, his decision to willingly contract syphilis is not truly an independent decision. Through this imperative to act, he *must* consummate his demonic marriage, and he must sign the pact – the damage is already done the moment he is inadvertently and innocently wounded by Esmeralda. In all of this it is hard to avoid drawing some additional lines to Spies’s *Historia*, where the ungodly doctor’s fall from grace takes place before his written document is signed, in the intervening time between oral promise and written pledge, as he learns the name of his future servant and companion. Once again, the ritualised promise is seen to be required in further confirmation of what has already been put in effect:

Mann's Devil states in the twenty-fifth chapter that he has come to visit Leverkühn "zur ausdrücklichen Bekräftigung" and "zum festen Rezeß über Leistung und Zahlung" (MDF, p. 337). But what becomes of Adrian Leverkühn's agency in it if he is a passive victim of soulless lust, as Serenus Zeitblom seems to paint him? The following will argue on the one hand that Zeitblom continues to reinforce Leverkühn's lack of agency in his interactions with Esmeralda, but will on the other hand indicate that Leverkühn himself appears to not only fully know what he is doing, but also to actively invite the prostitute's demonic touch.

#### 4.2.5 Signature and Consummation: Chapter 19

The pact scene, the description of which is in part located in Chapter 19 of the novel, is indirectly relayed to the reader by Zeitblom, and the circumstances around it pushes the moment of signature off stage, as is the case in Goethe's *Faust* also. However, like in Goethe's *Faust*, the ritualisation of the protagonist's promises leaves material evidence behind that later serves to prove that the signature really did take place. If Adrian Leverkühn is understood as the subject matter of his fictive biography, two modes of narration have been established in the book: one which is mediated through Serenus Zeitblom, and therefore denotes distance to the subject, and one which is delivered by Leverkühn and copied by Zeitblom, and which therefore to a degree denotes proximity between expression and subject. The event in Bratislava not only belongs to the former category, but its form of narration also instates a more pronounced space between the event and its actors and the narration. Approximately one year after Leverkühn wrote his letter to Zeitblom detailing his first visit to the brothel, the young student returns there in an attempt to find his object of desire. During this entire ordeal, the chronicler himself is tied up in his military service in Naumburg. As Leverkühn moves to Leipzig, Zeitblom is removed from his vicinity, and he returns to his friend's side just after the event in Bratislava. In other words, the chronicler is far removed from the subject of his biography during

the most defining event in the latter's life. This is hardly an inconsequential detail.

Zeitblom points out this challenge that the reader may direct at him:

Bei meiner Darstellung, meinen Berichten möge der Leser nicht fragen, woher denn das Einzelne mir so genau bekannt ist, da ich ja nicht immer dabei, dem verewigten Helden dieser Biographie nicht immer zur Seite war. (MDF, p. 218)

The question is asked, but not answered. He goes on to point out that during certain periods in Leverkühn's life, they were separated, while during other periods, they were not, before turning to an analysis of his subject's musical development under Wendell Kretschmar. Leverkühn's visit to Esmeralda's home in Bratislava is one of those events that Zeitblom did not witness, yet he insists that what he is about to describe is not guesswork. He is going to say what he knows: "mit stillen, gefaßten Worten werde ich sagen, was ich weiß" (MDF, p. 225), yet his description is anything but measured and objective. Rather, it is riddled with passionate and contradictory interpretations of the involved characters' thoughts and motivations.<sup>246</sup>

At this point in the narrative, the pact motif is still quite well obscured, once again only briefly invoked, and this time exclusively identified as a demonic incident by Serenus Zeitblom. Only one detail from the account, regarding the prostitute's warning, is explicitly attributed to something Adrian has told Zeitblom, while the rest is purely the chronicler's retelling of an event that the reader may rightfully doubt his insight into. It is through Leverkühn's later identification of this event as his point of entry into a demonic realm, in Chapters 25 and 47, that the pact motif gains interpretative plausibility beyond Zeitblom's fabrications, and it is through these references back to the moment of infection that syphilis infection can be rightfully interpreted as a variation on the Faustian pact motif. Another reference back to the events in Bratislava throughout the novel – and in particular to the moment of figuratively signing the pact – is the material mark that it leaves: The signature. In

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<sup>246</sup> "Nichts davon kann der Erzähler wissen, und der Leser, der dies übersieht, wird – ohne es zu merken – nicht zum Rezipienten einer fiktiven Biographie, sondern zum Leser von Erzähler-Phantasien." (Petersen 2007, p. 78)

Goethe's *Faust*, the reader or audience cannot conclusively know whether any signature took place until the material mark is reinvoked at two points in the second part of the tragedy. There, as in Mann's *Faustbook*, an event that in some sense takes place off stage leaves material evidence of it having taken place.

The event which is very briefly described in Chapter 19, but which nonetheless is the most defining moment in Adrian's biography, truly is a pact scene. The question should not be whether or not there is a pact in Mann's novel, but rather what kind of pact it is. This study proposes that it is a Faustian pact, but Serenus Zeitblom produces a strong counterargument to that notion in his recapitulation of Adrian's interactions with Esmeralda: Leverkühn's free will at the moment of signing the formal completion of the pact is put into question. One of the chronicler's first observations in Chapter 19 regards the matter of free will and choice in relation to the touch that Adrian Leverkühn already carries, as Zeitblom prepares the description of the student's second visit to the brothel. He seems intent on excusing what he sees as Leverkühn's compulsory return, and admitting the latter's "naked lust" a measure of "mental veiling" and "human refinement":

Ich sagte, daß Adrian an den Ort, wohin ein frecher Sendbote ihn verschleppt, zurückkehrte. Man sieht nun, daß das nicht so bald geschah: Ein ganzes Jahr lang behauptete sich der Stolz des Geistes gegen die empfangene Verwundung, und eine Art von Trost war es immer für mich, daß sein Erliegen vor dem nackten Triebe, der ihn hämisch berührt hatte, denn doch nicht all und jeder seelischen Verhüllung und menschlichen Veredelung entbehrte. Eine solche nämlich sehe ich in jeder, wenn auch nicht so kruden *Fixierung* der Begierde auf ein bestimmtes und individuelles Ziel; ich sehe in dem Moment der *Wahl*, sei diese auch unfreiwillig und von ihrem Gegenstande dreist provoziert. (MDF, p. 224)

The mental veiling and human refinement Zeitblom sees in the moment of choice is a reference to that moment when Esmeralda warns Leverkühn of her syphilis, and the student of music nonetheless chooses to risk infection in what Zeitblom then describes as possibly an act of love. However, the chronicler disagrees with himself in this last respect. He has spent much effort in painting his friend as an innocent victim of a malicious touch, and allowing for Leverkühn's agency in the matter contradicts this. Adrian Leverkühn's choice is not really a choice, because it is

“unfreiwillig und von ihrem Gegenstande dreist provoziert”. An involuntary choice is certainly not truly a choice, and a choice which is brazenly provoked by the subject of an agreement cannot be the basis for a Faustian pact. Even an inclination to act wickedly, which the born sinner has in Lutheran theology, can be countered by man’s free will, and even in the matter of the second pact in the *Historia*, which is signed under threat of violence, Faustus can be seen to make a choice – out of cowardice and concern for his earthly being, perhaps, but with refusal still an option. This is decidedly different from an imperative to act wickedly “unfreiwillig”. Zeitblom’s previous discussion of Esmeralda’s touch here reveals itself as an externalisation of the demonic imperative within Leverkühn that prompts him to seek out Esmeralda, and to disregard her warning, placing agency in Adrian’s pact outside of Adrian himself: Esmeralda’s touch, and the poison that it has distributed, is the hand in the puppet. Zeitblom seems to try to combine an image of his friend as humanly refined, but still innocent, in his contradictory account of the crucial moment of infection:

Es hat ganz den Anschein, als habe in dem armen Gemüt der Dirne etwas den Gefühlen geantwortet, die ihr der Jüngling entgegenbrachte. Kein Zweifel, sie erinnerte sich des flüchtigen Besuchers von damals. Ihre Annäherung, dies Streicheln seiner Wange mit dem nackten Arm, mochte der niedrig-zärtliche Ausdruck ihrer Empfänglichkeit gewesen sein für alles, was ihn von der üblichen Klientele unterschied. Sie erfuhr auch aus seinem Munde, daß er die Reise hierher um ihretwillen zurückgelegt habe, – und sie dankte es ihm, *indem sie ihn vor ihrem Körper warnte*. Ich weiß es von Adrian: sie warnte ihn; und kommt nicht dies einer wohlthuenden Unterscheidung gleich zwischen der höheren Menschlichkeit des Geschöpfes und ihrem der Gosse verfallenen, zum elenden Gebrauchsgegenstand herabgesunkenen physischen Teil? Die Unglückliche warnte den Verlangenden vor “sich”, das bedeutete einen Akt freier seelischer Erhebung über ihre erbarmungswürdige physische Existenz, einen Akt menschlicher Abstandnahme davon, einen Akt der Rührung, – das Wort sei mir gewährt, – einen Akt der Liebe. Und, gütiger Himmel, war es nicht Liebe auch, oder was war es, welche Versessenheit, welcher Wille zum Gottversuchenden Wagnis, welcher Trieb, die Strafe in die Sünde einzubeziehen, endlich: welches tief geheimste Verlangen nach dämonischer Empfängnis, nach einer tödlich entfesselnden chymischen Veränderung seiner Natur wirkte dahin, daß der Gewarnte die Warnung verschmähte und auf dem Besitz dieses Fleisches bestand? (MDF, p. 226)

Serenus Zeitblom offers several interpretations of Adrian’s disregard for the prostitute’s warning and the nature of his “obsession”, and thus for the finalisation of his demonic pact. First, he indicates that it is an act of love. Second, that it may have



been some sort of secret desire to tempt God, and third, that it could have been an urge to incorporate the punishment, syphilis, into the sin. The fourth and final option is the one that strikes at the heart of Mann's version of the pact motif: That Leverkühn entertained a desire for demonic conception, and for chemical changes in his nature – implicitly, these chemical changes would be those that later allow Adrian to free himself of certain constraints and compose music that approaches the demonic and barbaric realm. Furthermore, it would allow the future composer into the company of that long line of syphilitic geniuses that his character as fictional creation draws upon.

The effect of the inclusion of the syphilitic whore, and her syphilis spirochete, into the novel has an effect similar to this: The transformation of the old motif effects changes in the book's narration, opening a narrative space in which those appearances that Zeitblom names demonic and barbaric can find a form of expression. At this point in the narrative, as was the case with the internalisation of Leverkühn's *homo fuge* warning, demonism is only present as an underlying principle which is referred to by the chronicler. It still cannot make an appearance. At this point, the only form of demonism in the novel is whatever Serenus Zeitblom deems demonic, which more often than not is eroticism, sexual desire and lust. That, however, is about to change as the syphilis spirochete takes a hold of Adrian's mind and, at some points, of the narrative. The area of experience that the word "demonic" points to is about to change its role in the novel, and by far exceed Zeitblom's use of the category.

Serenus Zeitblom interprets Adrian Leverkühn's visit to Bratislava in terms of a demonic pact. The last of the four above-described interpretations of the reasoning behind the sexual act is presented in words that turn it into the direct answer to Kretschmar's challenge that Leverkühn should become a mother: The chronicler speculates that a desire for "demonic conception" may be Adrian's motivation, indicating that the student wishes to mother a demonic creation, and also that this moment represents the consummation of Adrian's marriage, in other words the fulfillment of the promise inherent in his betrothal. Zeitblom has previously

emphasised that this desire for demonic conception has been externally imposed on Leverkühn, but, if the chronicler can be trusted to have at least partly relegated the contents of Adrian's letters in Chapter 15 correctly, Leverkühn is here fulfilling a promise that he made himself as he turned from theology to music.

Adrian's desire for demonic conception results in the closing of a demonic pact through copulation, inscribing Adrian Leverkühn into a long line of practitioners of *Teufelsbuhlschaft*. Jürgen Petersen points out that when Serenus Zeitblom very briefly and only indirectly describes the act itself, he does so in the brutal language of a butcher eyeing his wares: Zeitblom states that Adrian ignores Esmeralda's warning in order to possess her flesh. Petersen observes: "Wieder der maniert umschreibende Stil Zeitbloms, der hier aus der sexuellen Beziehung Leverkühns zu Esmeralda den Umgang eines Metzgers mit seiner Ware macht (...)" (Petersen 2007, p. 53). The implied brutality in Zeitblom's description reflects the chronicler's own disdain for the prostitute, not Adrian Leverkühn's, and his tendency to describe all forms of carnal desire and sexuality in terms of demonism may be conceived to have various causes, ranging from jealousy to bourgeois morality, so Serenus Zeitblom's interpretation of Leverkühn's motivation as demonic is not particularly trustworthy on its own. However, paired with the positioning of this event in Leverkühn's life, after the turn from theology to the study of musical composition, and after the confrontation with a scene described by Zeitblom and Leverkühn as demonic or hellish, this is a preliminary indication that the most reasonable interpretation of this event is to regard it as a pact scene.

Adrian's syphilis infection was referred to above as a form of signature. His second encounter with Esmeralda is not only consummation of his marriage to the demonic art of composition, not only *Teufelsbuhlschaft*, but also signing his demonic, Faustian pact. Mann's idea of pairing the pact motif with a syphilis infection, which has accompanied the novel since its earliest conceptions between 1901 and 1904, proves to be extremely apt, as the disease ties together several strands in the fabric of Mann's pact motif. Not only did the malady emerge in Europe at the end of the fifteenth century, which belongs to the period that is invited into the novel through

Adrian's disease, and not only is it the disease of artistic and philosophical geniuses, but the shape of the bacterium that causes it also resembles Leverkühn's florid handwriting. The following will be an explication of the motif of the syphilis spirochete, while its full role in Leverkühn's biography and in shaping the novel's form will emerge more slowly throughout the following discussion of demonism and barbarism in the novel. The hypothesis regarding syphilis is that the spirochete that causes the disease is the material evidence that symbolically attests to Adrian Leverkühn's pact.

#### 4.2.6 Signature and Syphilis

If Leverkühn's story is understood to follow the significant waystations found in Faustian pact literature, his intercourse with Esmeralda has taken the place of the act of signing a document as an attestation to an agreement that has gone before it. As derived from analyses of Spies's *Historia* and Goethe's *Faust*, the function of a signature is to remain an indisputable, unchanging placeholder for the signer's intention at one particular point in time, localised to one particular place. In Mann's novel, this sign is embedded in the composer's blood rather than made up by his congealed blood on paper, but it still serves the same function, and it still exhibits a similar form.

Mann's choice of syphilis as a variation on older Faustian pacts appears to be anything but arbitrary. His idea to write a Faustian book, which at its conception looked very different from the finished work, started with the motif of a syphilitic artist who fell in love with a "pure, young maiden", was betrothed to her, and shot himself before the wedding. In 1901, he wrote the following lines in his notebook:

Zum Roman.<sup>247</sup> Der syphilitische Künstler nähert sich von Sehnsucht getrieben  
einem reinen, süßen jungen Mädchen, betreibt die Verlobung mit der  
Ahnungslosen und erschießt sich dicht vor der Hochzeit.

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<sup>247</sup> The *Maja-complex* is the designation given to a large number of work notes by Mann which were parts of a sketch for a novel that he never wrote, but that fills most of his notebook 7 from 1901

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(Wysling & Schmidlin (eds.) 1992, p. 107)

Syphilis is the disease of geniuses, and the syphilitic artist is by no means an unknown figure in the history of great artists. In a letter to his son Klaus Mann on 27 April 1943, Thomas Mann indicated that his brilliant protagonist would share the destinies of Maupassant, Nietzsche, Hugo Wolf and others. A few other syphilitics and suspected syphilitics could undoubtedly have been added to this list, all of them occupying places in the novel's complex of references, or in the extension of these references: Mozart, Beethoven, Paganini, who was also famously reputed to have made a deal with the Devil at a crossroads, Schubert and Schumann.<sup>248</sup> Helmut Koopmann demonstrated during a Goethe-Gesellschaft München lecture in 2008 that through the transformations that Mann's plans for the novel underwent from 1901 to the final publication, syphilis was the one stable component:<sup>249</sup> "Die syphilitische Erkrankung bleibt jedoch durch alle Metamorphosen hindurch Asugangspunkt" (Koopmann 2008/2009, p. 2). It even seems to predate the association with Faust, which is implied in another work note three years after the first, in 1904, when Mann wrote in his notebooks:

*Novelle* oder zu *Maja*: Figur des syphilitischen Künstlers: als Dr. Faust und dem Teufel verschriebener. Das Gift wirkt als Rausch, Stimulans, Inspiration; er darf in entzückter Begeisterung geniale, wunderbare Werke schaffen, der Teufel führt ihm die Hand. Schließlich aber *holt ihn der Teufel*: Paralyse. Die Sache mit dem reinen jungen Mädchen, mit dem er es bis zur Hochzeit treibt, geht vorher. (Wysling & Schmidlin (eds.) 1992, p. 43)

Already in this early note, the relation between syphilis, pact and Devil is established. Syphilis is the benefit that the protagonist gains from the Devil, because it inspires,

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(pages 46-120 of 159). Several of the ideas first ascribed to *Maja* were later included in other works, notably *Doktor Faustus*, where, for example, the Institoris couple are reminiscent of characters from these pages. Hans Wysling provides a brief overview over the *Maja* material in Wysling & Schmidlin (eds.) 1992, pp. 41-43.

<sup>248</sup> Not all of them were confirmed syphilitics, but medical professionals have accepted the challenge of posthumously diagnosing them. There seems to be the most uncertainty surrounding Mozart and Beethoven. See Franzen 2008.

<sup>249</sup> Koopmann has generously made these lecture notes available to the public through the Mann archives in Zürich. See Koopmann 2008/2009.

intoxicates and stimulates the artist so that he may produce brilliant, wonderful works. But syphilis is also in itself the payment that the artist ultimately has to make: The Devil does not literally bring him to Hell, but he is instead paralysed during the third and final stage of neurosyphilis infection. Thus, the punishment is embedded in the sin, as Zeitblom previously put it, at least if one adds to this early sketch the idea that the artist's artistic output is in some way sinful or transgressive, deserving of punishment. This means that syphilis is the entirety of the agreement between Leverkühn and his demonic contrahent: both reward and payment or punishment. But more than that, it is also the written confirmation of it: It is a set of stable signs clearly pointing to a particular time and place, during which a significant agreement was reached. This idea is reflected in Mann's early conception, as the then-unnamed artist is one who has consigned himself to the Devil in writing: He is "dem Teufel verschriebener." In Mann's finished *Faustbook*, too, the material cause of the disease is the sign pointing to its conception, and to the establishment of the artist's pact.

Syphilis was a well-established literary theme by the time Mann wrote his *Doktor Faustus*. Koopmann has pointed out that syphilis appeared in literature exclusively as a comical and farcical disease until Henrik Ibsen turned it into a societally-relevant one with his *Gengangere* (*Ghosts*) in 1881, and that, following this, one syphilis-infected work of literature after another appeared in Europe. Koopmann mentions Joris-Karl Huysmans's *À rebours* (1884), Oskar Panizza's *Das Liebeskonzil* (1894), Hermann Bahr's *Die Liebe* (1891), Gustav Sack's fragment *Paralyse* (1913/1914), Egon Erwin Kisch's *Der Mädchenhirt* (1914) and Gottfried Benn's poem *Ball* (1917) – without establishing or demonstrating any direct lines of influence, merely insinuating continuity by pointing out that Ibsen's play was the first. One important addition to this list comes from the French historian Claude Quétel, who in *Le mal de Naples* (1986) sketches a history not only of syphilis in literature, but of the archetypal syphilitic prostitute. Quétel awards much attention to Charles-Louis Philippe's *Bubu de Montparnasse* (1901), which was published the same year that Mann first penned his idea of writing a Faustian story with a syphilitic protagonist. In this novel, the pimp Bubu is devastated when he learns that one of his prostitutes, Berthe, has caught syphilis, and he knowingly (and nobly) decides to

make love to her despite this, catching syphilis in what Quetel dubs an “infernally communion”.<sup>250</sup> Syphilis, at least according to the account given by Mann’s Devil in the novel’s twenty-fifth chapter, emerged from West India in that same general historical period that, allowing for a sweeping historical perspective similar to one that Mann’s Devil adopts, gave birth to Martin Luther and the historical Faustus. The Devil feels right at home in this period. That is understandable, given the prominence of the Devil in literature and theology throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Mann’s Devil calls it “a good time, a bedeviled German time”:

Gute Zeit, verteufelt Deutsche Zeit! Wird dir nicht herzlich wohllich zu Sinn beim Gedenken? Da traten die rechten Planeten im Zeichen des Skorpions zusammen, wie Meister Dürer es gar wohlbelehrt gezeichnet hat im medizinischen Flugblatt, da kamen die zarten Kleinen, das Volk der Lebeschraubchen, die lieben Gäste aus Westindien ins deutsche Land, die Geißelswärmer, – gelt, da horchst du auf? Als ob ich von der ziehenden Büsserzunft, den Flagellanten, redete, die sich für ihre und aller Sünden den Rücken walkten. Ich meine aber die Flagellaten, die untersichtig Winzigen von der Sorte, die Geißeln haben, wie unsre bleiche Venus, die *spirochaeta pallida*, das ist die rechte Sorte. (MDF, p. 338)

The *spirochaeta pallida*, or *treponema pallida*, is the cause of syphilis. *Treponema pallida* was the name given to the spirochete upon its discovery in 1905 – the year that Leverkühn made the conscious decision to turn to the study of music – and is descriptive of its two main visual characteristics: *treponema* signifies its shape, twisted like twine, and *pallida* its pallor.<sup>251</sup> Mann’s Devil establishes a connection between the syphilis spirochete, which due to its whip-like appearance can be classified as a Flagellate, and the similarly named group of pious practitioners of mortification of the flesh, active during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Adrian’s pact, which is finalised through his intercourse with Esmeralda, has the form of a historically-tinged infectious disease, which, through the Devil’s reference to the near-homonymical flagellants, is further coloured by the relation between strict

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<sup>250</sup> “Alors Bubu, dans une infernale communion, va faire l’amour avec Berthe qui est en pleine contagion.” (Quetel 1986, p. 275)

<sup>251</sup> “Après diverses propositions, on le baptise *Treponema* (de sa forme de fil tordu) *pallidum* (de sa coloration pâle)”. (Quetel 1986, p. 176)

religiosity and hereticism; the flagellants were deemed heretical by the Catholic Church, despite, or because of, their radical pious practice. The *spirochaeta pallida* emerge from the same age as Adrian's increasingly antiquated language – a bedeviled German time. Through his disease, this age is also invited into the novel's narration; although the Luther caricature Ehrenfried Kumpf has already thrown a chair at the Devil in Chapter Twelve, in obvious imitation of the doctor from Wittenberg, this remains pure parody until the pact is put in effect, and until the outdated material later gains narrative presence. Adrian's pact binds him to a particular central European past, and it is the infamous flagellate that provides Mann's narrative with an entry point into this same historical period and its mythical horizons.

The *treponema pallida* functions as signature in Mann's reworking of the pact motif. This idea can be reinforced first by taking a closer look at the spirochete as it appears under a microscope. Claude Quétel points out that when a zoologist by the name of Schaudinn finally positively identified the microbe in 1905 he immediately noted its spiral shape (Quétel 1986, p. 176). Mann's Devil, too, makes a point of their similar shapes to (living) corkscrews: "Lebeschräubchen" (MDF, p. 338). Further, the Devil emphasises their whip-like visual qualities, reflected in their classification, Flagellate. The syphilis spirochete physically resembles Adrian Leverkühn's handwriting.

Adrian's handwriting is given significant attention by Serenus Zeitblom at two points in the novel. First as he prepares to reiterate the contents of Adrian's letter to Wendell Kretschmar in Chapter 15, and then as part of his introduction to the note written by Adrian Leverkühn on music paper during his time in Palestrina, Italy, which makes up the bulk of Chapter 25. Before the draft of his letter to the music teacher is presented in Chapter 15, the following qualities are attributed to his handwriting: It is even, slightly old-fashioned, florid ("schnörkelhaft"), and appears to have been written with a feather pen:

Zu Beginn des nächsten Jahres verließ Wendell dann Kaisersaschern, um seine neue Stellung anzutreten, und von da an ging denn also jener Briefwechsel zwischen Halle und Leipzig hin und her: Kretzschmars einseitig beschriebene, mit großen, steifen, gekratzten und spritzenden Buchstaben bedeckte Blätter und Adrians auf rauhem, gelblichem Papier in seiner ebenmäßigen und leicht altertümlich gestalteten, etwas schnörkelhaften Handschrift ausgeführten Botschaften, denen man ansah, daß sie mit der Rundschriftfeder hergestellt waren. (MDF, p. 189)

Leverkühn's old-fashioned handwriting may be an effect of his early schooling in the mediaeval atmosphere of Kaisersaschern, but the relation between personality and handwriting is here established through the contrast to Kretschmar's "spritzenden" letters. To a degree, handwriting seems in Mann's book to uniquely mirror personality traits, as in Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*.<sup>252</sup> At least it seems that Kretschmar speaks the way he writes: Stiffly, in bursts due to his stammer, and abruptly. Leverkühn, however, writes and speaks in an old-fashioned, yet elegant and elaborately constructed manner. Before Zeitblom reproduces the note Leverkühn wrote in Palestrina concerning his conversation with the Devil five years after his journey to Bratislava, the description of Leverkühn's handwriting is repeated and slightly expanded:

Es versteht sich von selbst, daß ich Adrians Handschrift nicht dem Drucker zu überantworten gedenke. Mit dem eigenen Kiel übertrage ich sie Wort für Wort von dem Notenpapier, das mit seinen schon früher charakterisierten, kleinen und altertümlich schnörkelhaften, tiefschwarzen Rundschriftfederzügen, einer Mönchsschrift, möchte man sagen, bedeckt ist, in mein Manuskript. (MDF, pp. 323-324)

His handwriting is this time small, florid in an old-fashioned way, deeply black and written in Roundhand, once again with a feather, and it is a monk's handwriting. The florid shape of the syphilis spirochete under a microscope mirrors the primary attribute of Adrian's handwriting: That it is "schnörkelhaft". The Faustian signature in blood on a written pact has been transformed into the prostitute's mark left in Adrian's bloodstream.

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<sup>252</sup> See 2.2.1.



A challenge to this idea that the syphilis spirochete functions as signature is found in the interlacing of active and passive roles in this exchange. Adrian Leverkühn does not himself perform the signature, but instead allows Esmeralda to infect him and leave her mark in his bloodstream, effecting a radical change in his cognition. When Serenus Zeitblom discusses Esmeralda's warning, he euphemistically formulates Leverkühn's lust as a desire to "possess" her "flesh", yet here it is seen that Leverkühn submits to Esmeralda, rather than the other way around. Signing a document which only has one signature on it is an act of submission to another's will. Spies's doctor actively allows himself to be *eingeteufelt*, Goethe's protagonist subjects himself to Mephistopheles's empty rituals, and Leverkühn invites the *spirochaeta pallida* into his bloodstream. When Leverkühn himself mentions Esmeralda's warning during his fevered monologues in the final Chapter 47, he calls the sexual act a promise ("Promission" and "Versprechung") and states that it was the setting up of the pact ("Errichtung des Pakts"), but at the same time he reiterates three times that the effectuation of his promise is something that Esmeralda did to him:

Glaubt nicht, liebe Brüder und Schwestern, daß ich zur Promission und Errichtung des Pakts eines Wegschieds im Walde und viel Zirkel und grobe Beschwörung bedurft hätte, da ja schon Sankt Thomas lehrt, daß es zum Abfall nicht Worte braucht, mit denen Anrufung stattfindet, sondern irgend eine Tat ist genug, auch ohne ausdrückliche Huldigung. Denn es war nur eine Schmetterling und eine bunte Butterfliege, Hetaera Esmeralda, die hatt es mir angetan durch Berührung, die Milchhexe, und folgte ihr nach in den dämmernden Laubschatten, den ihre durchsichtige Nacktheit liebt, und wo ich sie haschte, die im Flug einem windgeführten Blütenblatt gleicht, haschte sie und koste mit ihr, ihrer Warnung zum Trotz, so war es geschehen. Denn wie sie mir angetan, so tat sie mir an und vergab mir in der Liebe, - da war ich eingeweiht und die Versprechung geschlossen. (MDF, p. 721)

These lines invoke two incidents: They concern the composer's visit in Esmeralda's home in Bratislava, but Esmeralda's touch takes place before this, according to Zeitblom, and in this first interaction in the brothel, Adrian seemingly has no agency, although here he claims to be the one to have "caught" Esmeralda. The act of copulating with the prostitute is in Mann's novel equated with signing the pact, and the presence of the syphilis spirochete at later points in the narrative functions as signature in that it serves as a reminder of the pact that was entered into, but the

signature, despite its similarity to Leverkühn's handwriting, does not stem from Adrian's own hand. In Adrian's pact, no words were needed, only an act – this follows from the nature of the pact, the embedding of the punishment into the sin – but the act was not done by Adrian Leverkühn.

However, the written element of the pact, while in this case effecting itself as consecutively inspiring and paralysing infection, is always needed in further confirmation of an agreement that was reached at another point. Adrian Leverkühn's pact is not an exception to this general observation: Mann's Devil, quoting the *Historia*, states in Chapter 25 that he has visited Leverkühn in order to “expressly confirm” what has been put in effect: He is there “zur ausdrücklichen Bekräftigung” and “zum festen Rezeß über Leistung und Zahlung” (MDF, p. 337). “Rezeß”, derived from the latin noun *recessus* (return), has a range of meanings related to the act of returning to some disputable matter: It may describe a dispute or confrontation, a comparison, or a written account of the results of a negotiation.<sup>253</sup> The adjective preceding the word in the Devil's speech indicates that he intends the latter meaning. The written pact – in this case the twisted syphilis spirochete in Adrian's bloodstream – is a ritualised repetition of some agreement, and functions as a point of reference back to the moment at which the agreement was reached. In Leverkühn's case, his decision to turn towards music, to bind himself to or marry music, is not placed just before Esmeralda's first touch by accident – it is this demonic agreement that the syphilis infection both attests to and puts into effect.

The choice of infectious disease as functional signature has been shown to be extremely apt; disease provides an ever-present *recessus* to the moment of infection, while there is a close relation between sign, visible under a microscope, and what the sign points to, infectious disease. The spirochaeta pallida, flroid in shape like Adrian's handwriting, functions as leitmotif, invoking the first touch of the prostitute in the brothel and Adrian's intercourse with Esmeralda in Bratislava at those crucial

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<sup>253</sup> From the Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch (2000): “Auseinandersetzung; Vergleich; schriftlich fixiertes Verhandlungsergebnis.” (1051, “Rezeß”)

points in the novel when Adrian expresses his demonic insights, notably in Chapters 25 and 47, while the disease itself effects the Devil's promise of creative liberation. Leverkühn's syphilis infection and consequential insanity also opens up the demonic realm both to Leverkühn and to the reader of the novel. The brothel is the entry point into the barbaric German past and into the barbaric undercurrents of cultured discourse, similar to how the pact scene in Spies's book is the entry point into the realm of magic and forbidden knowledge, and the second *Studierzimmer* scene in Goethe's *Faust* constitutes the beginning of the ageing protagonist's journey into realms otherwise inaccessible to him. The disease hails from that same age that is invited into Mann's novel through it, and every statement from Adrian's pen or lips inspired by the pale flagellate draws on the events in the brothel and in Esmeralda's home. The latter event may, for this reason, plausibly be referred to as the novel's pact scene, since the disease is a Faustian pact in narrative function as well as in thematic impact.

Leverkühn's pact is carnally completed, and it is repeatedly referred to as a particular type of pact, namely marriage. *Teufelsbuhlschaft* is a motif that is not, as some would have it,<sup>254</sup> an intrinsic part of the Faustian pact motif, although it is often encountered in witch trials. This does not mean that there are no devilishly-facilitated sexual encounters in Faustian literature, but these encounters are effects of the pact and separate acts of apostasy rather than parts of its ritual: Renate Zelger (1996) has shown that a major difference between the Devil of witches' pacts and the Devil of Faustian pacts lies in the former's enticement to "Teufelsbuhlschaft, Teilnahme am Hexensabbat, Schadenzauber und in jedem Fall zu deliktischem Handeln" (Zelger 1996, p. 121), while the latter provides a service. Adrian Leverkühn announces to the gathered audience in Pfeiffering in Chapter 47 that in his twenty-first year, which would be 1906, the year he revisited Esmeralda, he was "married" to Satan:

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<sup>254</sup> Uhrmacher (2009), Williams & Schwarz (2003).

(...) daß ich allbereit seit meinem einundzwanzigsten Jahr mit dem Satan verheirat bin und habe mit Wissen der Fahr, aus wohlbedachtem Mut, Stolz und Verwegenheit, weil ich in dieser Welt einen Ruhm erlangen wollen, eine Versprechung und Bündnis mit ihm aufgerichtet, also daß alles, was ich während der Frist von vierundzwanzig Jahren vor mich gebracht, und was die Menschen mit Recht mißtrauisch betrachtet, nur mit seiner Hilf zustand gekommen, und ist Teufelswerk, eingegossen vom Engel des Giftes. Denn ich dachte wohl: Wer da kegeln will, muß aufsetzen, und muß heute Einer der Teufel zu Huld nehmen, weil man zu großem Führnehmen und Werk niemands sonsten kann brauchen und haben, denn ihn. (MDF, p. 720)

Marriage is once again invoked when Leverkühn's syphilis infection is discussed, and it ties the disease unequivocally to music through his discussion with Kretschmar in Chapter 15. Syphilis infection is the formal attestation to Adrian Leverkühn's marriage to the demonic art of musical composition, and it is not only the prudish or jealous Serenus Zeitblom who claims so, nor is it only the disease-ridden Adrian Leverkühn, nor only the eccentric Wendell Kretschmar, but all of them. If one wanted to rid the novel of its pact motif, one would have to go beyond the voices that present the narrative, looking for some truth behind and beyond what is explicitly said. All three of these voices may be untrustworthy, and the fictive editor who put together these voices for the reader is the least trustworthy of all, but there is no diegetic counterindicator to the notion that there is a pact motif in the novel, and consequently a demonic principle beyond Zeitblom's valuations. Adrian Leverkühn really does enter into a demonic marriage in the novel, and the consummation of his marriage takes the form of a pact that contains elements of the sixteenth century pact with the Devil found in Spies's *Historia*. This pact is, however, also new, "frei erfunden". Thomas Mann has assembled his pact motif as he has assembled his protagonist, and it would be as unreasonable to assume that there is no demonic pact as it would be to assume that there are no Schönberg, Nietzsche or Dürer figures in the novel.

Marriage and demonic pact are closely intertwined in Leverkühn's fictive biography. In Thomas Mann's earliest work note regarding his Faustbook, he posits a "pure, young maiden" who is engaged to a syphilitic artist. In *Doktor Faustus*, the artist's object of desire is painted as the antithesis to a pure, young maiden: Rather than pure, she is poisonous. Esmeralda is now the dangerous body, while the artist is the one threatened by infection. In the novel, Adrian Leverkühn has been given both

of the roles from Mann's sketch from 1901: He certainly is the syphilitic artist, but he is also the "pure, young maiden", and Zeitblom, who insists on his innocence, believes he has been sullied by the prostitute's touch. Esmeralda, by virtue of her infection, becomes in Adrian's eyes an instrument of the "poison angel" who appears before him in Palestrina. However, the marriage is still voluntary: Leverkühn is not assaulted, and he is not coerced or driven by some mechanical imperative when he consummates his marriage and at the same moment signs the pact. Leverkühn himself, even if understood as the pure young maiden, and thus a victim, invites the poison into his bloodstream. He may be predisposed for demonic infection, but he still has agency in its inception.

Adrian Leverkühn actively invites the infection. If he did not do so, then the infection could not function as signature. Neurosyphilis is the disease of geniuses, yet syphilis as such is a disease noted for its propagation among the working classes; particularly among those whose profession involves solicitation of sexual services, and those who avail themselves of these services. The Devil claims in Chapter 25 that the syphilis spirochete is invited into the brains of those already predisposed to contract this form of the disease. Some are born to Heaven and some to Hell, and amongst the latter are some who are born to be artistic geniuses. The Devil states that he is quoting from Aristotle's *De Anima (On the Soul)*, although the line from this work is also quoted in *Malleus Maleficarum*, which the Devil goes on to reference, and the subject is predisposition to witchcraft:

Der Philosoph, *De anima*: 'Die Handlungen der handelnden geschehen an den vorher disponierten Leidenden.' Da siehst du's, auf die Disponiertheit, die Bereitschaft, die Einladung kommt alles an. Daß einige Menschen zur Vollbringung von Hexentaten mehr beanlagt sind, als die anderen, und wir sie wohl zu ersehen wissen, daß gedenken ja schon die würdigen Autoren des *Malleus*. (MDF, p. 341)

Neurosyphilis – like the pact in Faustian literature – is reserved for those already predisposed to it, but, more importantly, everything hinges on the invitation. While a predisposition may be involuntary, an invitation is voluntary. A Faustian pact does not accidentally or unavoidably happen to the predisposed, nor does it necessarily follow from predisposition. It is invited and wanted. Jörg Tenckhoff (1998), who

performs a juridical analysis of Adrian's responsibility for his syphilis infection, makes a point of the old juridical adage *volenti non fit iniuria*, "to a willing person, injury is not done", and goes on to refine this by stating that Esmeralda's act of infecting Adrian would hypothetically only be considered criminal in a current court of law if Esmeralda realised that Adrian did not have a full overview of the consequences of his decision:

So besteht heute weitestgehend Einigkeit, daß eine Strafbarkeit des Veranlassers oder Förderers einer Selbstgefährdung erst dort beginnt, wo er erkennt, daß das Opfer die Tragweite seines Entschlusses nicht überblickt. (Tenckhoff 1998, p. 344)

Although this study is less occupied with the legal specifics of Adrian's pact in mundane law, Tenckhoff points out that Adrian by juridical definition is not a victim of "seelenlose Triebe", and that his pact therefore must be a Faustian one, contrary to the implications of an interpretation that accepted Serenus Zeitblom's account of the matter. Leverkühn does know what he is about to do. As he ignores Esmeralda's warning, he is about to enter into a pact which consists of a syphilis infection that allows him to free himself of some constraints that would otherwise hinder his musical production, but which will also lead to his eventual paralysis. His conscious move in this direction takes place as he, at the age of twenty, decides to give up the study of theology and turn towards music. Everything else – Esmeralda's touch, his return to her, his infection – follows from this decision. This line of thought hinges on the presence of a pact motif in the novel: Only by reading the consummation of Leverkühn's turn towards the study of music as a demonic pact, and by extension bringing an old narrative schematic into the novel, can these events be related to one another in this manner. The student's debate with Kretschmar and with himself that Zeitblom presents in Chapter 15 corresponds with Spies's doctor's preliminary negotiations, and the event in Bratislava corresponds with signing the pact. Birgit Nielsen (1965) believes that Adrian's preparation for the turn towards music and the demonic starts even earlier, as she claims Leverkühn studies theology only in conscious anticipation of his turning away from it: "Er fühlt den Gegensatz zwischen Musik-Magie und Theologie, und wählt wie Doktor Faustus zunächst die Theologie"

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(Nielsen 1965, p. 139). Adrian Leverkühn carries the responsibility for his syphilis infection, and his pact with the Devil.

Leverkühn, spurred on by a demonic type of desire which his first brothel visit made him aware of, actively chooses to let Esmeralda infect him with neurosyphilis as a part of his premeditated turn towards the demonic discipline of musical composition. Although he is given a passive role in his interactions with Esmeralda, both by Serenus Zeitblom and by Wendell Kretschmar, the signature left in his bloodstream marks his own intention to enter into a demonic pact where music has taken the place of magic. The infection marks a turning point not only in Adrian Leverkühn's biography, but also in the presentation of the area of experience named demonism by Zeitblom within the novel. From now on, the membrane separating demonism from rationality has been ruptured, allowing the former to leak into the latter at certain points; the plausible inclusion of old motifs and tropes without recourse to parody is effectuated by virtue of Adrian Leverkühn's demonic, Faustian pact. It is telling that not long after Adrian's infection, the Devil appears on stage for the first and only time, during Adrian's stay in Palestrina, Italy, described in Chapter 25. Thomas Mann has retained the signature in blood in his reworking of the Faust legend: The syphilis spirochete is a living material sign pointing to the moment of infection, at which Adrian Leverkühn, well aware of the consequences, actively chose to allow the infection to take place, which means that it has both the function and the form of signature. It is also quite literally in Leverkühn's blood. The author has retained the narrative structure of negotiation followed by pact scene: Leverkühn's letter to Kretschmar contains the first of many invocations of the traditional pact motif. Adrian Leverkühn's pact instates a difference between his own and the chronicler's world view, creating a conflict in the book that mirrors the conflict uncovered in the second part of this study between the *Historia's* narrator and Faustus's written pledge. This conflict will be discussed in the following.

### 4.3 Demonic Figurations

The following concluding remarks regarding Thomas Mann's Faustbook will mark a necessary departure from the form given to the respective final stages of this study's analyses of Goethe's *Faust* and Spies's *Historia*. The pact motif in Mann's *Doktor Faustus* invokes a complex of formal and thematic traits and terms that demand explication if an adequate understanding of the motif's mode of operation in this work is to be achieved. A consequence is that the following analysis of the formal and, to a lesser degree, thematic implications of the presence of a pact motif in *Doktor Faustus* will quantitatively overshadow the parallel discussions in Parts Two and Three of this study. This necessary formal deviance is dictated by a trait of the novel that is rarely recognised, and more often actively denied, as pointed out: The close intertwining of pact motif with literary form and narrative style in this particular work.

The old contractual laws of Hell are brought into and made operative in Thomas Mann's work. There are enough indices in the above-discussed sections of the book to conclude that a Faustian pact motif is present, and there is enough discussion in the book's reception history regarding the presence or absence of a pact to conclude that the pact contains a narrative imperative that interpreters must account for. Furthermore, the pact's position relative to the main body of text is similar first and foremost to the Spies-book, because it is actively staged by the chronicler as set apart from his own diegesis, but also to Goethe's play, because its exact contents are undecided. In this case, however, the contents are not undecided because the pact is denied stage presence as in Goethe's second *Studierzimmer* scene, but because the principles that the pact concerns lies beyond the reach of Serenus Zeitblom's language. The otherness of Zeitblom's rationality is in fact put on display and theatrically staged rather than hidden away: It is given stage presence within a narrative that bases its presentation on absence, on retrospective storytelling filtered through Zeitblom's highly self-conscious interpreting mind. The old material, which in the following will be named archaic, barbaric and demonic, in accordance with Zeitblom's terminology, is occasionally presented to the reader in a form that better



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corresponds to its nature than Zeitblom's narrative style does. The twenty-fifth chapter, around which the following discussion will revolve, formally mimics the *Historia's* sixth chapter, and diligently quotes the Spies-book. It also brings into the work those old rules and rituals that guide interpretations of it, and the book ends with a presentation of various modes of interpretation that mirror the treatment of the pact motif not only in Mann's book's reception history, but also in that of Goethe's *Faust*. Thomas Mann draws caricatures during the book's forty-seventh chapter of various archetypal interpreters, and has Serenus Zeitblom describe their reactions to precisely that which the pact motif brings into the book: The outdated, archaic material that Adrian Leverkühn voices, as well as the pact motif itself.

The following reading will appropriate, from the second chapter of this study, the idea that a carefully isolated piece of text written by a different hand than the work's main body of text nevertheless influences the voice that attempts to set itself apart from it; in this case, Serenus Zeitblom's narration is by no means unaffected by Adrian Leverkühn's voice. Following the third chapter's discussion, one byproduct of the inclusion of a pact with the Devil will be identified as an influence on ways in which the book is read: The literary law that governs Faustian pacts reinforces Adrian Leverkühn's pact as well, leading interpretations in directions that are dictated by the literary history that Mann writes his book into, and that, ultimately, are satirised during the book's final chapter.

Mann's *Faust* story is driven by an oscillation between rationality and its opposite, which, if one follows Zeitblom's terminology, can be identified as demonic in nature, or as barbarism. The category of rationality encompasses conceptual language, while demonism is placed outside of conceptual language. Serenus Zeitblom masters only one form of expression, while Adrian Leverkühn, when his florid handwriting is allowed to reach the reader more or less unfiltered, presents a material which Zeitblom only can subsume under terms that point towards that which lies outside of rationality. Serenus Zeitblom presents to his readers a clear definition of the areas of human experience and thought that he deems demonic: Demonism is philosophically untheoretical, and it is found in vitality, in will and in desire. This he

claims as he, with dismay, notes that theological thought has been “infiltrated” with certain “irrational trends” in philosophy that would be hard to identify as anything other than late nineteenth-century continental philosophy, strongly represented by Friedrich Nietzsche in Zeitblom’s following statement:

Hier beobachtet man deutlich die Infiltration des theologischen Denkens durch irrationale Strömungen der Philosophie, in deren Bereich ja längst das Untheoretische, das Vitale, der Wille oder Trieb, kurz ebenfalls das Dämonische zum Hauptthema der Theorie geworden war. (MDF, p. 135)

Serenus Zeitblom is the voice that positions demonism in Mann’s novel, and he does so from the vantage point of its opposite, which is conceptual rationality – a predominantly theoretical world view. The chronicler takes care to keep his distance from demonism, but eagerly describes it. His previously discussed wording when he describes incomprehensible or silent natural phenomena during his retelling of Jonathan Leverkühn’s experiments invokes this same fear of magic or demonic appearances.

Jürgen H. Petersen argues that this Zeitblomian category is the only manifestation of anything demonic in the novel, and that this category of appearances has no discernible effect, in particular not on Adrian Leverkühn’s artistic production.<sup>255</sup> However, the book contains one formal trait adopted from the *Historia* that brings what Serenus Zeitblom can only define as his rationality’s otherness into the reader’s field of view: The book’s twenty-fifth chapter, undeniably a product of Adrian Leverkühn’s pact, is carefully isolated from Zeitblom’s narrative, set apart from it through a series of formal markers that will be discussed in the following, and contains a direct – in several senses of the word – presentation of the otherness of Zeitblom’s rationality, in other words of that which the narrator names demonism, which then becomes identifiable as an operative principle in the novel. These names – barbarism, demonism or the archaic – are indeed Zeitblom’s, as Petersen has pointed

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<sup>255</sup> “Es zeigt sich mithin, dass es keine objektiven Zusammenhänge in diesem Roman gibt, die das Diabolische, das Himmlische, das Dämonische faktisch wirksam werden lassen, sondern dass alle derartigen Phänomene sich den Eingriffen und erzählerischen Einfärbungen durch den Berichtstatter verdanken.” (p. 57)

out, but that does not mean that what they designate is not a discernible, effectful force throughout the book. Zeitblom simply has no better words that he can use to describe the particular form of otherness that he sees emanating from his friend Adrian's form of expression, and, since Petersen himself resorts to the same words, there are indications that Zeitblom's categories are as good as any.

The category of the demonic is defined by Serenus Zeitblom, although he does have at least one accomplice within the book's narrative: The liberal theology professor Schleppfuß places demonism in human sexuality during the "classical century of belief", which encompasses the (within Zeitblom's narrative relatively unclearly defined) age of Spies, Luther, syphilis, Reformation and Counter-Reformation: "Denn die Macht der Dämonen lag in den Lenden des Menschen" (MDF, p. 155). Zeitblom reveals that he is uncertain whether Schleppfuß really holds the opinions that he expresses during his lectures, or if he impersonates a representative of the classical century of belief in order to make his students familiar with the psychology of this age:

Niemals wurde ganz klar, ob es eigentlich Schleppfußens eigene Lehrmeinungen waren, die er uns vortrug, oder ob es ihm nur darum ging, uns mit der Psychologie der klassischen Jahrhunderte des Glaubens vertraut zu machen. Gewiß hätte er nicht Theolog sein dürfen, um sich nicht zu dieser Psychologie bis zum Einklange sympathisch verhalten. Der Grund aber, weshalb ich mich wunderte, daß nicht mehr junge Leute von seiner Vorlesung angezogen wurden, war der, daß, wann nur immer von der Macht der Dämonen über das Menschenleben darin die Rede war, das Geschlechtliche eine hervorstechende Rolle spielte. (MDF, p. 154)

The two modes of invoking the classical century of belief embodied in Schleppfuß and described by Zeitblom is emblematic of the two modes of narration that Mann's book employs. There is one referential mode, where certain outdated figures are pointed towards: Schleppfuß is a prime example, since he not only appears to either refer to or embody a particular *Zeitgeist*, but since his name also refers to a traditional trait of the Devil, namely the cloven hoof that gives him a limp. Lucie Pfaff (1975) pointedly misreads his character, stating that "Schleppfuss (...) is none other than the Devil himself" (Pfaff 1975, p. 29). The point is that Schleppfuß most certainly is another: He is Schleppfuß, whose name carries a reference to Devil figures. The

Devil “himself” could not make an appearance in this part of the book, which is narrated by the rational Zeitblom. However, within the other mode of narration, which is not referential, but built on direct presentation, on presence, the Devil “himself” does appear, as does the “classical century of belief”. In this latter mode of presentation, which is Adrian Leverkühn’s, Schleppfuß reappears, but this time he really is “none other than the Devil himself”, and he unambiguously embodies the beliefs that Zeitblom wonders whether the theology professor really holds. Schleppfuß is present as Devil figure in both of Adrian Leverkühn’s embedded documents; first as “Gose-Schleppfuß”, the satanic guide, in his letter from Leipzig, then as manifestation of the Devil in his work note from Chapter 25. Pfaff is prompted to identify Schleppfuß as none other than the Devil himself not only by his limp or his liberal theology, but also by his positive identification as Devil in Leverkühn’s letters. Schleppfuß in retrospect gains character traits that he is given in those isolated parts of the book: His character is infiltrated by the classical century of belief in more than one sense, given that the classical century of belief is that which is put on display during the Leverkühn-chapters.<sup>256</sup>

In adopting Schleppfuß’s terminology, Serenus Zeitblom’s own language is also “infiltrated” by ideologies of that age just as much as theology in his eyes has been infiltrated by continental philosophy; while Schleppfuß explicitly regards human sexuality as the origin for the power of demons, Zeitblom’s persistent association of sexuality and desire with the demonic is the sixteenth-century theologian Schleppfuß’s echo in Zeitblom’s terminology. The following will demonstrate a close affiliation between that area of experience that Zeitblom actively

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<sup>256</sup> In Mann’s novel, demonic figures share several other character traits. They tend to have facial hair, and they are tied to laughter and coldness. The colour red is also identifiable as a demonic trait because two of the three metamorphoses of the Devil in Chapter 25 are described by this colour: the “strizzi” has red hair, red eyelashes and reddened eyes that in his final appearance have become red eyes; the second figure, resembling Theodor Adorno, also has reddened eyes. Furthermore, the devilish guide from Adrian’s letter in Chapter 16, explicitly named Satan by Leverkühn, wears a red cap. The colour of the guide’s cap is likened to the colour of the lantern outside the brothel where Adrian first meets the prostitute that he names Esmeralda, described by him as “eine Lusthölle” (MDF, p. 209).

attempts to ward his own discourse against and the language of the “classical century of belief”; the very category of the demonic belongs to the sphere that Zeitblom wishes to distance his narration from. The chronicler himself creates a tension between what he regards to be his untainted rationality and some terms that he uses in order to delimit this rationality’s otherness. These terms themselves betray an anchoring in that which they denote. The classical century of belief and its “psychology” and terminology is an undercurrent in Mann’s book, and this terminology has a clear point of origin which is the twenty-fifth chapter, where, for example, the character Schleppfuß retrospectively gains some demonic character traits, and from which sixteenth-century language and valuations seep into Zeitblom’s narrative.

The following will be an explication of the difference between Serenus Zeitblom’s rational language and Adrian Leverkühn’s other form of expression. However, the infiltration of, or, in a narratological term previously applied to an aspect of Spies’s *Historia*, interference between Zeitblom’s narration and the book’s demonic or barbaric undercurrent will be seen to leave every aspect of the book very clearly influenced by Zeitblom’s demons, contrary to Petersen’s claim that the demonic leaves no discernible trace beyond Zeitblom’s outraged morality, and certainly contrary to Crawford’s (2003) exorcism. If the latter attempts to exorcise the Devil from Mann’s *Doktor Faustus*, this study will instead ensure that the book’s demonic possession is recognised, and that this undercurrent is understood as a function of Mann’s inherited pact motif.

#### **4.3.1 Rational Language and Demonic Music: The Apollonian and the Dionysian**

Intellectualism is bloodless; barbarism is sanguine. Thomas Mann is explicit in his presentation of this binary opposition in *Entstehung*, where he commends Adorno for finding in the novel’s description of Leverkühn’s oratorio the “essential”. The essential is a clarification of the work’s critique of both bloodless intellectualism and

sanguine barbarism.<sup>257</sup> This opposition to a certain degree invokes Goethe's sanguine Faust and his bloodless famulus, Wagner. *Doktor Faustus* contains a wealth of indications that it, too, is driven by an oscillation between these two oppositional poles, and that the roles are similar to those in Goethe's drama. The striving of the diseased genius Adrian Leverkühn is contrasted to the less ambitious humanist Serenus Zeitblom. As shown, the latter puts as much trust "im würdigen Reiche der Humaniora" (MDF, p. 36) as Wagner does in "ein würdig Pergamen" (GF, I. 1108). The brilliant composer enters into the realm of barbarism through his pact with the Devil, while his chronicler, whom he describes as his famulus during the gathering in Pfeiffering in Chapter 47, strives to remain within the realm of intellectual equilibrium. But what is barbarism in Mann's sense, and what is intellectualism? And, more importantly: How do these two categories relate to the pact and to the demonism that it introduces into the work? The form of the novel gives this question significant weight: Its discourse varies between Zeitblom's and Leverkühn's, although the latter voice is heard significantly less frequently, and always in some way mediated by Zeitblom: Either as direct quotes or as handwritten material copied by the chronicler. The bulk of the novel is narrated by the intellectualist Zeitblom, and so it is seemingly anchored in an intellectual realm from which barbarism is actively banished, while occasionally, Leverkühn's barbaric discourse takes over. It is in the latter's language that the classical century of belief – and the pact – is directly encountered.

The difference between Zeitblom's and Leverkühn's presentations of material pertaining to the Faust tradition as it has been sketched here can be quantitatively proven: More than half of the 105 direct quotes from the *Historia* identified by Dietrich Assmann (1975) are uttered by Leverkühn, while the rest are chiefly divided between Zeitblom and Adrian's teachers. Zeitblom's quotes are used in reference to a

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<sup>257</sup> "Vollkommen vertraut mit den Absichten des Ganzen und denen dieses besonderen Stückes, zielte er [Adorno] mit seinen Anregungen und Vorschlägen genau auf das Wesentliche, nämlich: das Werk dem Vorwurf des blutigen Barbarismus sowohl wie dem des blutlosen Intellektualismus bloßzustellen." (Mann 2009, p. 121)

historical past, to Adrian's mannerisms or explicitly to the *Historia* (Assmann 1975, p. 122), placing them within that mode of referential narration that was preliminarily sketched above. Adrian Leverkühn, on the other hand, speaks in imitation of the *Historia*: In him, the period from which these quotes are adopted is present rather than referred to. There is a significant difference between Zeitblom's presentation of demonism, which is distanced and conceptual, and Leverkühn's, which is immersed in and conforms to the subject matter. Adrian Leverkühn's diseased mind, influenced by his pact, produces the majority of the appearances in the book that belong to the categories of demonism and barbarism, while Serenus Zeitblom's rational mind attempts to hide everything belonging to these categories.

The terms intellectualism and barbarism could be understood according to a pair of terms that has been found to be an effect of the pact motif in Spies's *Faustbook: Morality and amorality*. They could also be read, as briefly indicated above, as a nod towards the two types of curiosity present in Goethe's *Vor dem Tor* scene: Wagner's conventional humanistic scientific endeavour finds a parallel in Zeitblom's stubborn intellectualism, while Faust's transcending curiosity is present in Leverkühn's striving towards the hidden sphere of barbarism. However, the categories of intellectualism and barbarism, while also encompassing those concepts from the Faustian tradition, are given a particular meaning in Mann's book, and they are explicitly related to narrative form. Friedrich Nietzsche is strongly present in the novel, and the philosopher has also supplied some theoretical foundations that are clearly reflected in the oscillation between Zeitblom's and Leverkühn's respective discourses. The concepts of the Dionysian and the Apollonian, adopted and developed from the philosophy of F. W. J. Schelling in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, guide this oscillation.<sup>258</sup> The name Nietzsche is not used at any point in the novel, but this strengthens rather than weakens his presence, particularly if it is seen in light of

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<sup>258</sup> The first edition, entitled *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, was published in 1872. Nietzsche republished the work in 1886 with a "self-critical" foreword and a new title: *Die Geburt der Tragödie. Oder: Griechentum und Pessimismus*. Reclam's 1993 publication of the latter is used here.

Mann's own comment on the relation between Nietzsche and Leverkühn in *Entstehung*. The author there states that Nietzsche is absent by name because Leverkühn has been set in his place. Leverkühn is not Nietzsche, but in thought and life he so resembles the philosopher that there would be no place in the narrative for another character with the same function:

Da ist die Verflechtung der Tragödie Leverkühns mit derjenigen Nietzsches, dessen Name wohlweislich in dem ganzen Buch nicht erscheint, eben weil der euphorische Musiker an seine Stelle gesetzt ist, so daß es ihn nun nicht mehr geben darf. (Mann 2009, p. 29)

Even given Mann's compositional technique, which incorporates into events and characterisations a wealth of fictional and historical references, Nietzsche occupies an exceptional position. Mann makes a note of a tendency in his novel's reception to name it his "Nietzsche-Roman", and expresses some support for this view (Mann 2009, p. 30).<sup>259</sup> If it does nothing else, Nietzsche's presence in the book pulls his philosophy into it; it is a "Nietzsche-Roman" not only because its protagonist carries similarities to the figure, but also because it can be read as a demonstration of Nietzsche's philosophy of artistic form; it is a Nietzsche-novel not only in the sense that it is a novel concerning Nietzsche, but also in the sense that the form the novel is given is Nietzschean.

In his previously quoted lecture "Die Kunst des Romans", Mann uses the term "Apollonian" to describe the attitude of the *Genius* of epic literature. Nietzsche ascribes the term primarily to pictorial or visual arts, and contrasts it with music.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> In addition to the brothel-scene's invocation of Nietzsche's reported experiences, discussed in 4.2.4., Blankenagel (1948) adds the following external parallels between Nietzsche's biography and Leverkühn's life: They both studied in Leipzig, they were lonely and unmarried, they did not receive "wide recognition at a time when such recognition might have served as a heightened stimulus to achievement" (Blankenagel 1948, p. 389), their mothers cared for them after they fell ill, and they died on the same date (August 25th), at the same age (55). To this list should certainly be added Adrian's Nietzschean laughter and their shared illness: they both suffered from syphilis. The Devil's monologue on inspiration in chapter 25 is also teeming with quotes from and paraphrases of Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*.

<sup>260</sup> "An ihre [the ancient Greeks'] beiden Kunstgottheiten, Apollo und Dionysus, knüpft sich unsere Erkenntnis, dass in der griechischen Welt ein ungeheurer Gegensatz, nach Ursprung und Zielen,



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The latter is an inherently Dionysian art form, says Nietzsche in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, because despite its appearance as structured and ordered, Apollonian, it is built on a “pounding wave of rhythm” (“Wellenschlag des Rhythmus”, Nietzsche 1993, p. 27), and through this trait it invokes the intoxication that defines the Dionysian aspect of art. Music is seen in Mann’s novel to consist of two aspects: Mathematical tonal constructs which can be described through formalised expressions, and which are Apollonian in nature, and an underlying, non-conceptual driving force, which is the elementary. It seems the more strictly the rules of the first category are adhered to, the more forcefully the second pushes through. This is, at least, Serenus Zeitblom’s understanding of the paradoxical freedom and release that he finds in Adrian’s final composition, *Doktor Fausti Weheklag*:

Nur das der dialektische Prozeß, durch welchen auf der Entwicklungsstufe, die dieses Werk einnimmt, der Umschlag von strengster Gebundenheit zur freien Sprache des Affekts, die Geburt der Freiheit aus der Gebundenheit, sich vollzieht, unendlich komplizierter, unendlich bestürzender und wunderbarer in seiner Logik erscheint als zur Zeit der Madrigalisten.  
(MDF, p. 704)

The very strict form of Adrian’s compositional method, which leaves no such thing as free notes (“es gäbe keine freie Note mehr”, MDF, p. 704) because every single tone has a particular function in relation to the composition’s themes, paves the way for the free language of emotion. Adrian’s strict musical form enables the elementary, the “freien Sprache des Affekts”, to push through. Wendell Kretschmar, Adrian’s music teacher, gives a lecture which Zeitblom remembers as having a title invoking this elementary principle in music:

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zwischen der Kunst des Bildners, der apollinischen, und der unbildlichen Kunst der Musik, als der des Dionysus, besteht.” (Nietzsche 1993, p. 19)

Ich kann mich ihres Titels nicht mehr mit voller Genauigkeit entsinnen. Sie hieß ‘Das Elementare in der Musik’ oder ‘Die Musik und das Elementare’ oder ‘Die musikalischen Elemente’ oder noch etwas anders. Auf jeden Fall spielte die Idee des Elementaren, des Primitiven, des Uranfänglichen die entscheidende Rolle darin, sowie der Gedanke, daß unter allen Künsten gerade die Musik, zu einem wie hochkomplizierten, reich und fein entwickelten Wunderbau von historischer Creation sie im Lauf der Jahrhunderte emporgewachsen sei, niemals sich einer frommen Neigung entschlagen habe, ihrer anfänglichsten Zustände pietätvoll zu gedenken und sie feierlich beschwörend heraufzurufen, kurz, ihre Elemente zu zelebrieren. Sie feiere damit, sagte er, ihre kosmische Gleichnishaftigkeit; denn jene Elemente seien gleichsam die ersten und einfachsten Bausteine der Welt (...). (MDF, pp. 95-96)

All three proposed titles rest on the above-described duality inherent in music between its form and matter, and that is also the theme of Kretschmar’s lecture. Music in particular, amongst all other art forms, is one where its primitive roots are invoked precisely where it is at its most elaborately mathematical and technically complex. The “Wunderbau von historischer Creation” from which compositional art has arisen takes on two stances opposite its elementary components: Pious, “pietätvoll”, and conjuring, “beschwörend”. One of these implies religiosity, the other sorcery. Piously the composer commemorates the primitive in music, and solemnly he invokes it, thus celebrating music’s elementary matter, which is here explicitly tied to the *Elementa* that Spies’s Faustus investigates or “speculates”, through artful constructs. Wendell Kretschmar, in Zeitblom’s above quoted recapitulation, appears to be paraphrasing Nietzsche, who writes in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*:

Behutsam ist gerade das Element, als unapollinisch, ferngehalten, das den Charakter der dionysischen Musik und damit der Musik überhaupt ausmacht, die erschütternde Gewalt des Tones, der einheitliche Strom des Melos und die durchaus unvergleichliche Welt der Harmonie. Im dionysischen Dithyrambus wird der Mensch zur höchsten Steigerung aller seiner symbolischen Fähigkeiten gereizt; etwas Nieempfundenes drängt sich zur Äusserung, die Vernichtung des Schleiers der Maja, das Einssein als Genius der Gattung, ja der Natur. (Nietzsche 1993, p. 27)

The effect of Dionysian music, or of the Dionysian element in music, on the listener is, according to Nietzsche, a temporary destruction of the Apollonian veil that covers the world, a momentary opening through habitual perception into nature itself. The symbolism that Nietzsche discusses here is one that breaks the limits of lingual symbolism, and demands of the listener a different form of symbolic expression – one

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that involves the entire body, and that perhaps can be described as disordered dance. This form of expression is not translatable back into lingual symbolism, writes Nietzsche, but can only be decoded by other entranced servants of Dionysus. This non-conceptual “Wellenschlag des Rhythmus” is the elementary component in music, and the ordered tonal structures of musical composition are dependent on it.

When Adrian Leverkühn is faced with appearances that Zeitblom would deem demonic, they are described as being disrobed and uncovered, as the see-through butterfly Hetaera Esmeralda or the “daughters of the desert” in the Leipzig brothel. So too with music: If music could be stripped of compositional constructs, it would reveal its primary characteristic. But since music cannot be stripped of compositional constructs – there are structures in place within musical composition that account for every conceivable variation in tone and sequence – Adrian Leverkühn instead composes in a very strict, highly constructed, highly Apollonian manner. Such a cultivation of strict form may invoke and lay bare the Dionysian aspect of music. This concept is reflected in the form that Mann has given his narrative through the inclusion of the Apollonian narrator Serenus Zeitblom. The chronicler tries very hard to produce an Apollonian narrative, although the subject matter is Dionysian.

The elementary matter of music may only be conveyed through music, to entranced listeners, yet Mann’s novel is largely concerned with this elementary matter. While music may elementarily be Dionysian, narratives are Apollonian. As Mann expresses in “Die Kunst des Romans”, the term “Apollonian” implies objectivity and a certain distance to that which is described, while coming face to face with the Dionysian implies being immersed in it, lacking the ability to describe something that one takes part in to those that do not take part in it – a state of immersedness that Adrian Leverkühn’s laughter is a lucid image of. Mann states that Apollo shoots his arrows from afar, and is therefore the God of distance and objectivity, and claims the following concerning the *Genius* of epic style:

Aber seine Größe ist mild, geruhig, heiter, weise, – ‘objektiv’. Sie nimmt Abstand von den Dingen, sie *hat* Abstand von ihnen ihrer Natur nach, sie schwebt darüber und lächelt auf sie herab, so sehr sie zugleich den Lauschenden oder Lesenden in sie verwickelt, in sie einspinnt. Die Kunst der Epik ist ‚apollinische‘ Kunst, wie der ästhetische Terminus lautet; denn Apollo, der Fernhinterfende, ist der Gott der Ferne, der Gott der Distanz, der Objektivität, der Gott der Ironie. Objektivität ist Ironie, und der epische Kunstgeist ist der Geist der Ironie. (Mann 1974b, p. 353)

Up until the caesura in the concluding line in this passage, the traits ascribed to the epic *Genius* are certainly traits that the chronicler Serenus Zeitblom possesses, or at least professes to possess: He appears mild, calm, serene, and, to a certain extent, wise. As Zeitblom is about to narrate Leverkühn’s second visit to the prostitute that the latter has named “Esmeralda” in her home in Bratislava in Chapter 19, a chapter teeming with sexuality and Zeitblom’s jealousy, he invokes Apollo and the muses to help him find considerate, gentle words that may protect the “sensitive reader” as well as the chronicler himself from the unsettling reality of the matter:

Mir ist, als sollte ich Apollon und die Musen anrufen, daß sie mir bei der Mitteilung jenes Geschehnisses die lautersten, schonendsten Worte eingeben mögen: schonend für den feinfühligsten Leser, schonend für das Andenken des verewigten Freundes, schonend zuletzt für mich selbst (...). (MDF, p. 223)

Zeitblom is grasping for words that are “pure”, presumably to counteract what he regards as the impurity of the scene, and “sparing”, to avoid directly exposing the perceived depravity of the scene to the reader. As Zeitblom is about to describe the composer’s carnal union with the prostitute, he interrupts his narrative to once again describe his own words, this time as “quiet” and “composed” or “calm”; oral categories meant to suppress the chronicler’s agitation: “Wohl zittert die Hand mir beim Schreiben, aber mit stillen, gefaßten Worten werde ich sagen, was ich weiß”. (MDF, p. 225) He feels that he should invoke Apollo, because he is aware of his agitation and lack of serenity. Zeitblom strives to be an Apollonian chronicler, which, following Mann’s interpretation of Nietzsche, means being an objective and enlightened chronicler unburdened by emotions, and he stages himself as such.

However, the serene objectivity of the chronicler invoking the epic *Genius* is, like Nietzsche’s Apollonian principle, continuously threatened by the underlying barbarism that it attempts to cover and that makes up its foundation. The irony of the

epic *Genius* that Mann emphasises in the above quoted passage from “Die Kunst des Romans” arises from its indiscriminate, all-encompassing objectivity. In its distanced serenity, unclouded by morality, it contains immense sensibility: Zeitblom is not distanced, calm and composed. He uses these words to underline the opposite, his emotional agitation which requires him to compose himself and to invoke Apollo. This is similar to Nietzsche’s “Wellenschlag des Rhythmus” underlying Apollonian constructs in music; the relation between the forces of Apollo and Dionysus in art seems to be an ironic one, where the Apollonian operation of covering the underlying Dionysian principle is also a betrayal of, or an uncovering of, the Dionysian. Support for this interpretation is found in the Leipzig brothel scene. Adrian Leverkühn, faced with the threat of intoxication from carnal lust, immediately turns towards the piano and plays two or three notes from Carl Maria von Weber’s *Der Freischütz*. This invocation of the hermit’s lament, which in the opera releases the protagonist from his unholy pact, has the effect of drawing the prostitute that Adrian at that point names Esmeralda towards himself and the piano.<sup>261</sup> “Neben mich stellt sich dabei

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<sup>261</sup> This reference to *Der Freischütz* also reinforces a point relating to the political overtones of the novel: The play is set just after the Thirty Years’ War, which is a period that, to Thomas Mann in “Deutschland und die Deutschen”, marks the unfortunate – and devilish – divisive consequences of Luther’s reformation: “Daß aber der Teufel dabei seine Hand im Spiel hatte, ist offensichtlich. Die Reformation brachte die religiöse Spaltung des Abendlandes, ein ausgemachtes Unglück, und sie brachte für Deutschland den Dreißigjährigen Krieg, der es entvölkerte, es verhängnisvoll in der Kultur zurückwarf und durch Unzucht und Seuchen aus dem deutschen Blut wahrscheinlich etwas anderes und Schlechteres gemacht hat, als es im Mittelalter gewesen sein mag” (Mann 1974a, p. 1142). The second period brought onto the stage through Weber’s opera is Weber’s own romanticism, which Mann regards as a period characterised by the same principle as Luther’s reformation, which also played a role in the rise of National Socialism: German “Innerlichkeit”. Romanticism is, according to Mann, driven by a species of demonism that corresponds well with Serenus Zeitblom’s definition of it, and which, crucially, is a period during which music displaces literature: “Es ist vielleicht mehr eine gewisse dunkle Mächtigkeit und Frömmigkeit, man könnte sagen: Altertümlichkeit der Seele, welche sich den chthonischen, irrationalen und dämonischen Kräften des Lebens, das will sagen: den eigentlichen Quellen des Lebens nahe fühlt und einer nur vernünftigen Weltbetrachtung und Weltbehandlung die Widersetzlichkeit tieferen Wissens, tieferer Verbundenheit mit dem Heiligen bietet. Die Deutschen sind ein Volk der romantischen Gegenrevolution gegen den philosophischen Intellektualismus und Rationalismus der Aufklärung – eines Aufstandes der Musik gegen die Literatur, der Mystik gegen die Klarheit” (Mann 1974a, p. 1143). If the novel is read as an artistic expression of this view that Mann delivers in his lecture on Germany and the German people, Adrian Leverkühn’s musical invocation of two periods of German “Innerlichkeit” invites the touch that engenders historically tinged demonic “Innerlichkeit” in his own artistic production.

eine Bräunliche, in spanischem Jäckchen, mit großem Mund, Stumpfnase und Mandelaugen, Esmeralda, die streichelt mir mit dem Arm die Wange" (MDF, p. 209). Adrian may at this point not be aware that music cannot invoke Apollonian serenity, only the demonic disorder of its rhythmical foundations, or he may be staging an invitation directed at the brothel's "daughters of the desert". It is the two or three notes from the romantic opera *Der Freischütz* that brings Esmeralda over to Leverkühn, like a moth to a candle. The piano, which Adrian refers to as his "friend" (MDF, p. 209), does not have the effect of lifting the spell, as it does in Mann's description of the Nietzsche-episode, nor does the invocation of Weber's hermit bring release. The music rather prompts the prostitute's touch, which is later revealed to be the engendering of a demonic desire in Leverkühn. Mann speaks in the *Entstehung* of "[d]ie Musik als dämonische Sphäre" (Mann 2009, p. 82), and one aspect of this relation between music and the demonic is now clear, assuming the demonic is a subcategory of Dionysian barbarism. Nietzsche points out that carefully constructed musical tropes are dependent on, and constituted by, the barbaric appeal of rhythm, and as long as barbaric rhythmical violence is present in, and a prerequisite for, Apollonian musical constructs, the relation between the two is an ironic relation, according to a definition of irony that follows Mann's "Die Kunst des Romans": Momentary commensuration of incommensurable opposites.

Defining irony in this manner is, however, a perilous activity when the definition concerns Mann's use of the term. Helmut Koopmann (2001) has pointed out that irony hardly has a discernibly stable definition throughout Mann's literary production, and that it tends to be used synonymously with *humour*. On the other hand, Helmut Koopmann (2001) finds a definition that supports this understanding of irony in Zeitblom's narrative in *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918), where irony is presented as the temporary commensuration of incommensurable opposites: "Ironie ist der Standpunkt der Standpunktlosigkeit, was nicht zu verwechseln ist mit Gewissenlosigkeit oder Charakterlosigkeit; Ironie ist vielmehr die Fähigkeit zum Ausgleich zwischen unvereinbaren Kräften" (Koopmann 2001, p. 846). Irony is the substitution of "both-and" for "either-or": a substitution which also takes place in

Adrian Leverkühn's laughter, given that it is indeed a Nietzschean laughter. In Zeitblom's attempts at achieving serenity and purity in describing the scene in Bratislava in chapter 19, he lays bare his own agitation and what he perceives to be the scene's depravity, and Adrian, when he seeks refuge by the piano, invariably reaches into a demonic sphere. The novel lays bare both extreme bloodless intellectualism and extreme sanguine barbarism, as Mann states in his praise of Adorno in *Entstehung*, but they are not presented one after the other and set against one another. They are both simultaneously present, in stark opposition to one another, but with one pole unable to negate the other.

The line between pact, barbarism and Nietzsche's Dionysian principle in Mann's novel has been drawn before. Susan von Rohr Scaff (1995) has pointed out that the function of the pact is to free Leverkühn from the constraints of intellectualism and allow him to reach into the Dionysian realm: "The pact proffers the demonic ecstasy or 'illumination' that Nietzsche calls Dionysian, the power to revitalize an overintellectualized civilization" (p. 156). This revitalisation takes place through a recourse to barbarism; barbarism offers a sanguine alternative to bloodless intellectualism. This is part of the Devil's promise to Leverkühn in Chapter 25: "die Epoche der Kultur und ihres Kultus wirst du durchbrechen und dich der Barbarei erdreisten (...)" (MDF, p. 355). Culture is an Apollonian construct that covers – or dresses – Dionysian barbarism. Leverkühn's encounter in the Leipzig brothel could easily be interpreted as a staging of the abject moment described by Nietzsche in *Die Geburt der Tragödie* when the Greek realises that his Apollonian consciousness is a veil covering a Dionysian world:

Mit welchem Erstaunen musste der apollinische Grieche auf [die dithyrambische Dionysusdiener] blicken! Mit einem Erstaunen, das um so grösser war, als sich ihm das Grausen beimischte, dass ihm jenes Alles doch eigentlich so fremd nicht sei, ja dass sein apollinisches Bewusstsein nur wie ein Schleier diese dionysische Welt vor ihm verdecke.  
(Nietzsche 1993, pp. 27-28)

Nietzsche historically situates this moment of revelation in ancient Greece, because Apollo, according to his account, is a Greek construct – obviously the god Apollo is, but also the concept that Apollo personifies in his own philosophy. There is an

“immense chasm” (“ungeheure Kluft”, Nietzsche 1993, p. 25) separating Dionysian Greeks from Dionysian barbarians (meaning non-Greeks), and this chasm consists of the Greek operation of separating the Apollonian from the Dionysian. Barbarians are immersed in the Dionysian, while Greeks have ordained a certain distance between the two. Like Mann’s Devil in Chapter 25, Nietzsche uses the word “Cultus” to designate the society that has separated these two principles, and, also like Mann’s Devil, he contrasts the cultic to the barbaric.

Serenus Zeitblom, too, indicates that barbarism is historically situated, but he does not place it on the outskirts of ancient Greece. The chronicler finds barbarism in the grammatical inconsistencies of Adrian Leverkühn’s language, which the latter has appropriated from the era that Spies’s *Faustbook* belongs to. Early on in Chapter 47, which contains the description of the gathering in Pfeifferring where Leverkühn plans to perform parts of his final composition, the grammatical and syntactical inconsistencies of the composer’s language are identified by Zeitblom as the hallmarks of a “barbaric” language, as opposed to a cultured language. Adrian’s speech is similar to Luther’s language, and also to the text of Spies’s *Historia*, from which he diligently quotes; it is ungrammatical and antiquated, in Zeitblom’s account, barbaric:

(...) er bediente sich beim Reden, wie er es ja auch schriftlich immer gern getan, zum Teil einer Art von älterem Deutsch, und dabei hat es mit Mängeln und ungeschlossenem Satzbau immer eine fragliche und läßliche Bewandnis, denn wie lange ist es her, daß unsere Sprache dem Barbarischen entwachsen und grammatisch wie nach der Rechtschreibung leidlich geordnet ist! (MDF, p. 717)

The barbaric can be discovered in a particular form of grammatically inconsistent language that belongs to the age from which the Faustian material is appropriated by Mann. Barbaric language is contrasted to “Rechtschreibung”. The Devil’s favourite language is also the same “old” German, because it is straightforward, naked language without pretence: “Sprich nur Deutsch! Nur fein altdeutsch mit der Sprache heraus, ohn’ einzige Bemäntelung und Gleißnerei. Ich versteh es. Ist gerad recht meine Liebblingssprache. Manchmal versteh ich überhaupt nur deutsch” (MDF, p. 326). The Devil is here quoting Adrian’s and Serenus’s teacher of systematic



theology from Halle, Ehrenfried Kumpf. Zeitblom believes that when Kumpf uses the expression “ohn’ einige Bemäntelung und Gleißnerei” (MDF, p. 142), he means that one should speak “deutlich und geradeaus” (MDF, p. 142). In this, Zeitblom is only partly right: When Kumpf leaves the pages of the books that he reads aloud from as he teaches in order to speak freely, he does indeed wish to express himself clearly and straightforwardly, and he does so in the language of Luther and Spies, which is without hypocrisy, and without “Bemäntelung”. However, much more can be inferred from this expression than Zeitblom does. Language that is “bemäntelt” is dressed up or covered up, a language where appearance is something other than reality. Language that is not “coated” is hereby related to the other disrobed figures in the novel: Hetaera Esmeralda the butterfly, Esmeralda the prostitute, and her colleagues. Not only does this indicate that Leverkühn’s antiquated language is closer to an underlying Dionysian barbarism, but also that Zeitblom’s highly sophisticated and grammatically impeccable language covers up something else. The chronicler’s profession – linguist – is hardly inconsequential: He fully masters dressed up language.

The classical and the barbaric are historical categories, but in Mann’s novel, they are moved from a Greek to a German context, as is a third historical category: the archaic. The Devil’s offer to Leverkühn, which he presents in Chapter 25, consists of a reinvocation of the archaic, contrasted to the classical, but the two historical terms are used to describe periods in German, not Greek, history:

Und wir bieten Bessres, wir bieten erst das Rechte und Wahre, – das ist schon nicht mehr das Klassische, mein Lieber, was wir erfahren lassen, das ist das Archaische, das Urfrühe, das längst nicht mehr Erprobte. Wer weiß heute noch, wer wußte auch nur in klassischen Zeiten, was Inspiration, was echte, alte urtümliche Begeisterung ist, von Kritik, lahmer Besonnenheit, tötender Verstandskontrolle ganz unangekränkelte Begeisterung, die heilige Verzückung? (MDF, p. 346)

Two intellectual principles, both traits of artists, are set against one another in this paragraph, as well as two historical ages. On the one hand, there is intellectual control, restraint, deliberation and level-headedness. These principles are “lame”, and they inhibit creative work. On the other hand, there is “real, old, primeval

enthusiasm”, and inspiration. The Devil makes a comparison between Leverkühn’s present time and classical Greece, ascribing to them the same Apollonian lameness arising from restraint, while his offer to Leverkühn consists of a return to an archaic uninhibited creativeness and enthusiasm. The intellectual control exerted by the Apollonian mind on Dionysian inspiration is here described as “murderous”. The Apollonian principle belongs to two historically situated cultures: one that is classical Greek, and one that is bourgeois German. In relation to these, the Dionysian principle is a primary trait of archaic Greece and the German Middle Ages and Neuzeit. However, the Dionysian of course remains as the basis for Apollonian constructs beyond the period of its uncovered presence. Dietrich Assmann (1975) gives voice to a similar opinion, as he sees the devilish aspect of Christian culture to be Dionysian: “Bei Thomas Mann verschmelzen auch das Dionysische und das Christlich-Teuflische” (Assmann 1975, p. 41). It must be added that this Christian-devilish aspect, which is intertwined with the Greek-Dionysian, is a particular, historically situated, version of the devilish, inherited from the ages of Spies, Luther and Dürer.

By drawing on Serenus Zeitblom’s reflections on barbaric German language, barbarism can be situated historically, and Spies’s *Historia* can be identified as a singularly barbaric work of art. In Chapter 2 of this study, a very strong amoral, sensual undertow and motivation was uncovered in that work, despite the unnamed author-editor’s self-professed and often repeated intention to educate his readers in Christian morality. This undertow flows into Thomas Mann’s novel through his employment of the pact motif; Spies’s work is not present as a Christian morality tale, but rather as demonic, Dionysian inheritance. Adrian Leverkühn’s syphilis infection invites this work into Mann’s novel; one work is allowed to infect the other.

For the most part, the symptoms of this infection are obscured by Serenus Zeitblom, and the novel is weighted towards the Apollonian principle, but in the following those parts of the novel where the old, outdated material – “das Archaische, das Urfrühe, das längst nicht mehr erprobte” – are given centre stage will be examined, in an attempt at discovering the formal consequences of Mann’s pact motif. The opposition between Nietzsche’s Dionysian and Apollonian principles

clearly reverberates in Mann's theory of the novel as explicated above, and is a most useful analytical tool when attempting to describe the relation between Zeitblom and Leverkühn, between their respective discourses in the novel, and in turn between the intellectual and the barbaric. Ultimately, this concerns the relation that lies at the core of this study: That between work and tradition or between Thomas Mann's Faustian narrative and the inherited motifs that he employs through direct quotes and more obscure references. These references point towards a material that can be called barbaric, or archaic, or Dionysian, or, following Serenus Zeitblom, demonic.

#### **4.3.2 Adrian Leverkühn's Work Note: A Change of Perspective**

Serenus Zeitblom, by attempting to hide appearances belonging to the categories that he designates as demonic, refers to these appearances in a style of narration that is clearly Apollonian; Zeitblom not only invokes, but also imitates Apollo, "der Fernhinterfende" (Mann 1974b, p. 353), in his narration. The careful isolation of the Spies-book's sixth chapter is mimicked in the twenty-fifth chapter of Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, where Zeitblom employs not religious, but intellectualist incantations in order to distance his own narration from Leverkühn's barbarism. The document that he attempts to isolate in this manner contains an inversion of Zeitblomian discourse; demonism and barbarism is put on stage in the work note that Adrian Leverkühn has written on music paper in Palestrina. There are two narrative forms present in the twenty-fifth chapter, both recalling various stages in the history of Faustian literature: Zeitblom's prosaic narrative, drawing on Spies's narrator, and Leverkühn's impure alloy of narration and theatrical staging, reminding the reader of Faust(us) as he has appeared on stage and in Goethe's two closet plays. The written document in Spies's book is the moment at which Faustus himself explains both the nature of and reason for his apostasy. The document is given quasi-judicial validity, and its effects on the narrator's discourse and on the development of the narrative follow from this trait. The presence of barbarism and demonism in Adrian Leverkühn's work note, which also refers back to a hellish agreement that is already in effect at that point in time,

and without which barbarism and demonism could not have been approached at all, has a similar effect on Zeitblom's narrative. The following section will argue that a shift takes place in the twenty-fifth chapter from a discourse dominated by Apollonian attempts at hiding or dressing up a Dionysian material to a discourse dominated by attempts at approaching and directly presenting manifestations that belong to Zeitblom's category of demonism. This latter category encompasses barbarism, desire, archaic material and Dionysian immersedness; in other words, those manifestations that at first make Adrian Leverkühn laugh, and later make him compose music. These are put in a dominating position in the twenty-fifth chapter relative to the rationality that normally dominates and subdues them.

Adrian Leverkühn's discourse in the novel is substantially different from Serenus Zeitblom's. On the surface, this is reflected in two physical properties of the document that Zeitblom claims he is copying the text from in Chapter 25, both emphasised by the chronicler: the composer's handwriting and the paper on which it is written. Zeitblom's previously discussed descriptions of Leverkühn's florid handwriting preface Chapters 16 and 25, which respectively contain Adrian's visit to the brothel in Leipzig and his dialogue with the Devil during his second year in Palestrina. In these chapters, written in Leverkühn's Roundhand, which invokes his syphilis spirochetes, Zeitblom appears as merely an instrument for conveying Leverkühn's own words, despite his extensive commentary both before and after each of these sections.

These two chapters, along with the book's final chapter, are the locations of the bulk of tropes connected to the pact motif and also most of the quotes and paraphrases from the Spies-book. Chapters 16 and 25 diverge formally from the rest of the novel, and they are purposefully set apart from those chapters that the chronicler pens himself, although Zeitblom is still in a certain measure present both as editor and as commentator. His introductions to these sections of the novel, however, serve to distance Adrian Leverkühn's discourse from his own. During the opening paragraphs of Chapter 25, before yielding his discourse to that of Leverkühn,

Zeitblom employs the, at the time, antiquated quill as a metonymy for his work as copier:

Es versteht sich von selbst, daß ich Adrians Handschrift nicht dem Drucker zu überantworten gedenke. Mit dem eigenen Kiel übertrage ich sie Wort für Wort von dem Notenpapier, das mit seinen schon früher charakterisierten, kleinen und altertümlich schnörkelhaften, tiefschwarzen Rundschriftfederzügen, einer Mönchschrift, möchte man sagen, bedeckt ist, in mein Manuskript. Des Notenpapiers hat er sich bedient, offenbar weil ihm im Augenblick kein anderes zur hand war, oder weil der Kramladen drunten am Kirchplatz des hl. Agapitus ihm kein genehmes Schreibpapier bot. Es fallen immer zwei Zeilen auf das obere Fünfliniensystem und zwei auf das Baß-System; aber auch der weiße Raum dazwischen ist durchweg mit je zwei Schreibzeilen ausgefüllt. (MDF, p. 323-324)

The antiquated writing instrument does emphasise the presence of Zeitblom in everything presented to the reader: it is Zeitblom's own quill that has reproduced Adrian's words. However, Zeitblom's role is that of reader or copier. He does not speak for Adrian, as he does elsewhere in the novel. Rather, Adrian's handwriting dictates the movement of his own quill. Even the writing instrument conforms to the horizon that Zeitblom represents when he copies his friend's words: The quill aids in setting Adrian's discourse apart from the rest of the book by introducing a writing instrument misplaced in the twentieth century, but at home in the sixteenth. The writing that is presented to the reader in Chapter 25 belongs to an age different from Zeitblom's present time. Adrian Leverkühn's infernal pact is also immediately present in the florid shape of the handwriting that is copied by the chronicler.

The second physical trait that sets the document apart is that it is written on music paper. The elements, in the sense of elementary building blocks, of music are Dionysian, and in this a relationship between Leverkühn's narration and music is established. Music paper invokes the musicality of archaic literature, which in this case is both Greek archaic literature and German quasi-archaic literature, the former being the "von Saitenspiel begleiteter Sing-Sang" (Mann 1974b, p. 355) that Mann explicates in "Die Kunst des Romans", and it also points to the role given to music elsewhere in the novel, which is that of a medium built on a demonic, Dionysian foundation. This association with music creates a contrast between Leverkühn's account of his conversation with the Devil in Chapter 25 and Serenus Zeitblom's

conceptual, cultured language: Leverkühn's language is somehow closer to non-conceptual musical expression. As in the *Historia*, the contents of the pact are not reiterated by the narrator, but rather put on display, and there are some clear markers that identify the body of text that contains this information as different from the chapters surrounding it.

The frame of reference invoked by the description of Adrian's handwriting must be attributed, at least in part, to Zeitblom's valuation of Leverkühn's character; "altertümlich" is the chronicler's word, and Zeitblom is the one to associate Leverkühn's handwriting with that of a monk. The choice of music paper, on the other hand, is not within the chronicler's control. Zeitblom interprets this as simply the most conveniently available paper for the composer Leverkühn. However, Adrian puts some weight behind his choice of writing material by referring to his act of describing the conversation with the Devil in writing as "silencing everything down on music paper" during the opening lines of his note:

Weistu was so schweig. Werde schon schweigen, wenn auch schamhalben bloß um die Menschen zu schonen, ei, aus sozialer Rücksicht. Habe es willens steif und fest, daß mir die Anstandskontrolle der Vernunft bis aufs letzte nicht locker werde. Aber gesehen hab ich Ihn doch, endlich, endlich; war bei mir hier im Saal, hat mich visitiert, unerwartet und doch längst erwartet, bin recht ausgiebig mit Ihm zusprach kommen und hab den einen Ärger nur hinterdrein, nicht gewiß zu sein, wovon ich zitterte die ganze Zeit, ob nur vor Kälte oder vor Ihm. Macht ich mir irgend wohl vor, machte Er mir vor, daß es kalt war, damit ich zittern und mich daran vergewissern möcht, daß Er da war, ernstlich, Einer für sich? Denn doch männiglich weiß, daß kein Narr vor dem eigenen Hirngespinst zittert, sondern ein solches ist ihm gemütlich, und ohne Verlegenheit noch Beben läßt er sich damit ein. Hielt Er mich wohl zum Narren, da Er kein Hirngespinst, denn ich in Furcht und Blödigkeit vor Ihm zitterte? Er ist durchtrieben.

Weistu was so schweig. Schweige so vor mich hin. Schweige es alles hier aufs Musikpapier nieder, während mein Kumpan in eremo, mit dem ich lache, weit weg von mir im Saal, sich mit translation des lieben Fremden ins heimisch Verhaßte plackt. Denkt, ich komponiere, und wenn er säh, daß ich Worte schreib, würd er denken, daß auch Beethoven das wohl tat.  
(MDF, p. 324-325)

Leverkühn's first sentence in Chapter 25 is a quote with a double Renaissance reference: "Weistu was so schweig", repeated a further two times during the

chapter,<sup>262</sup> are the four first words in Mephostophiles's first of many proverbs in Chapter 65 of Spies's *Historia*. The verses from which this line is quoted, whose source ultimately is Martin Luther,<sup>263</sup> indicate in the *Historia* a point of no return, referencing Doktor Faustus's irredeemable written pact:

Weistu was so schweig /  
 Ist dir wol so bleib.  
 Hastu was / so behalt  
 Vnglück kompt bald.  
 Drumb schweig / leyd / meyd vnd vertrag /  
 Dein Vnglück keinem Menschen klag.  
 Es ist zu spat / an Gott verzag /  
 Dein Vnglück läufft herein all tag.  
 (HDF, p. 115)

The tone is set with this first sentence in the note that Leverkühn wrote during his stay in Palestrina, Italy: Zeitblom's highly-cultured discourse gives way to Leverkühn's outdated mannerisms, good, old-fashioned German, and good, old-fashioned superstition, and not merely the Faustian tradition, but also the pact motif specifically are immediately summoned onto the stage.<sup>264</sup> This stage is set by Zeitblom, who identifies both writing paraphernalia and handwriting as decidedly belonging to a different age and a different sphere of experience; Zeitblom creates a textual location that is isolated from his own narration, and this location immediately opens with a quote that further removes it from his own discourse.

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<sup>262</sup> Once in the above quotation, and later by the Devil as a response to Adrian's refusal to answer when the Devil asks what the name Sammael means.

<sup>263</sup> Füssel & Kreutzer / HDF, p. 208.

<sup>264</sup> Adrian's antiquated language also has a political dimension, as pointed out by Ruprecht Wimmer (1991): "für die 'altdeutschen' gilt jedenfalls, daß sie gelegentlich ins Bewußtsein des Lesers gerückt werden, um die Kollektivschuld des deutschen Geistes an der katastrophalen Gegenwart zu demonstrieren" (p. 275). The *Historia* is present as a representative of a formative period in German cultural history – a history which has spawned the collective German *Geist*, guilty of leading up to the German disaster in Mann's own present time. Adrian does appear to function as a meeting point between Germany's history and Mann's present time. At three points during his speech in Chapter 47, the composer seems undecided as to which age he belongs in, trying out an archaized version of a word before correcting himself to a modern pronunciation, and finally reverting to the first. The words are "excuse", "God" and "rest": "entschuldigen/entschuldigen" (MDF, p. 718), "Got/Gott" (MDF, p. 719) and "geruget/geruht" (MDF, p. 726).

Adrian's opening sentence also marks a more profound difference between his own writing and Zeitblom's. Leverkühn first muses that he must keep quiet out of social concerns or general consideration for his fellow man; the dialogue he is about to put to paper may offend. This is a Zeitblomian sentiment, an Apollonian apology for an impending transgression. Adrian wishes to hang on to reason, and so he should quiet down that which lies beyond reason. Rational language can only quiet down the irrational, or position it as its other. The act of writing is, to Adrian, an act of quieting down what he knows, as he states the second time he quotes the same sentence from the *Historia*: "Weistu was so schweig. Schweige so vor mich hin. Schweige es alles hier aufs Musikpapier nieder", he writes, substituting "quiet" for "write", instructing himself to "quiet it all down on music paper". Zeitblom expresses the opposite view on writing as he, with "shaking hand", prepares to describe Leverkühn's visit in Esmeralda's home in Bratislava in Chapter 19: "Wohl zittert die Hand mir beim Schreiben, aber mit stillen, gefaßten Worten werde ich sagen, was ich weiß" (MDF, p. 225). What Zeitblom "knows", however, in this case he has no apparent way of knowing, as previously discussed. He speaks on behalf of Leverkühn on a matter that he hardly has any knowledge of. To Zeitblom, writing something down is an act of saying or vocalising, regardless of his intimacy with that which he describes, while to Leverkühn, writing something down is silencing a material that he is not only intimately familiar with, but even immersed in.<sup>265</sup>

A sharp difference between conceptual language and music is gleaned in this difference between vocalising and quieting down. One possible source for the distinction between these two is easily identifiable in the novel: Leverkühn states in Chapter 25 that he has been reading Søren Kierkegaard's discussion of Mozart's *Don*

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<sup>265</sup> This has some relation to Leverkühn's chosen profession. He chooses not to perform music when deciding on a music career in his letters to Kretzschmar in Chapter 15, primarily due to his "Weltscheu", shyness before the world, which he, according to Zeitblom, defines as a lack of warmth, empathy and love (MDF, p. 194). His interest is in the quiet aspect of music, its hermetic, esoteric, laboratorial side, which is expressed on paper rather than in the music hall. His own performance of the book's titular piece, *Doktor Fausti Weheklag*, to which the entirety of Chapter 47 builds up, is entirely unrelated to the oratorio's score: It is nothing other than a few chords, made dissonant by the piano's wetness from the composer's tears, and a doleful wail.



*Giovanni* from *Enten – eller [Either – or]*, wherein the Danish philosopher draws a line of demarcation between conceptual language and music.<sup>266</sup> While language communicates concrete ideas, music communicates abstract notions – and the most abstract theme is sensual genius:

Den abstrakteste Idee, der lader sig tænke, er den sandselige Genialitet. Men igjennem hvilket Medium lader den sig fremstille? Ene og alene ved Musik. [The most abstract idea that can be thought of is sensual genius. But through which medium can it be produced? None other than music.] (Kierkegaard 1997, p. 61)

The sensual, which the Danish philosopher calls demonic in the same text, can only be expressed through music.<sup>267</sup> Kierkegaard emphasises that this is communicable through music and no other medium.<sup>268</sup> Zeitblom’s efforts to achieve concrete conceptual clarity, “clarity” being an Apollonian term, are contrasted to Leverkühn’s sensual genius. Within the logic of conceptual clarity, its opposite, sensual genius, is silent, as it is something that can neither be subsumed under the former, nor encompassed by it. Leverkühn’s “niederschweigen” serves to place the composer’s account of his dialogue with the Devil even more firmly within the realm that Zeitblom calls demonic. The quiet, yet perhaps somehow communicative, markings on sea shells, the half-hidden nudity of the daughters of the desert in Leipzig, the vastness of space, the Devil in a dark corner of Ehrenfried Kumpf’s living room, or Leverkühn’s sensual genius are unfathomable within the constraints of conceptual language, and, outside of conceptual language, there is the act of laughing or of

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<sup>266</sup> Ulrich Karthaus (2013) traces the discovery of *Enten – eller* as the inspiration for a motivic complex in the novel tied to seduction and temptation to Hans-Joachim Sandberg (1978).

<sup>267</sup> Mann echoes and explicates this point in “Deutschland und die Deutschen”, identifying music as demonic, as Christian art in the negative, and ordered, mathematical construct tending towards chaos: “Die Musik ist dämonisches Gebiet, – Sören Kierkegaard, ein großer Christ, hat das am überzeugendsten ausgeführt in seinem schmerzlich-enthusiastischen Aufsatz über Mozarts ‘Don Juan’. Sie ist christliche Kunst mit negativem Vorzeichen. Sie ist berechnete Ordnung und chaosträchtige Wider-Vernunft zugleich, an beschwörenden, inkantativen Gesten reich, Zahlenzauber, die der Wirklichkeit fernste und zugleich die passionierteste der Künste, abstrakt und mystisch.” (Mann 1974a, p. 1131)

<sup>268</sup> The Danish expression “ene og alene” means that music is the “one and only” medium for communicating this area of human experience.

consigning to silence. Mann expresses some surprise in *Entstehung* when he realises how much his novel has in common with Kierkegaard's philosophy: "Die Verwandtschaft des Romans mit der Ideenwelt Kierkegaards, ohne jede Kenntnis davon, ist äußerst merkwürdig" (Mann 2009, p. 82). This is said specifically of one of Kierkegaard's points from the essay in *Enten – eller*, namely the philosopher's establishment of a relation between music and what he calls the demonic or sensual. The mention of Kierkegaard's *Enten – eller* in Leverkühn's note from Palestrina perhaps makes this compliance seem less accidental, and much less "merkwürdig", than the author would have it in his *Entstehung*.

Words are mercilessly honest, believes the Apollonian chronicler Serenus Zeitblom, while music hides its own signification behind an absolute ambiguity, saying "nothing and everything". During the gathering in Pfeiffering in Chapter 47, Zeitblom wishes that the diseased composer would stop using words, and instead perform his music, so that the embarrassment of his insanity would be less apparent to the onlookers: "Nie hätte ich stärker den Vorteil der Musik, die nichts und alles sagt, vor der Eindeutigkeit des Wortes empfunden" (MDF, p. 720). This unambiguity of conceptual language, as opposed to the complete ambiguity of music, which says nothing and everything, is reversed in Adrian's account of his conversation with the Devil. To Leverkühn, producing words is quieting down the subject matter, while producing music is vocalisation. The reason lies in the subject matter that the two characters are trying to convey: Serenus Zeitblom is expressing insights from his worthy kingdom of *humaniora*, while Adrian Leverkühn is trying to give his experiences face-to-face with demonic appearances some form of expression. The composer wants to communicate what the linguist has called illiterate nature, and what the Devil calls superstition, or *Aberwitz* in good old German.

Adrian Leverkühn's note in Chapter 25 is an attempt at direct presentation of demonic appearances and ideas, whereas Serenus Zeitblom indirectly touches on this illiterate area through the ambiguity of all language, which betrays that which it attempts to hide. In the twenty-fifth chapter, a literary form that more easily lends itself to direct presentation is employed, namely theatrical drama. This conclusion

can be reached by way of Peter Szondi's theory of the modern drama, *Theorie des modernen Dramas* (1956), wherein he states that drama, in his terminology meaning a particular type of drama of which Elizabethan stage plays are exemplary, is primary. This means that what it depicts does not point to something else, which would be the function of the secondary form of narrating, but rather presents itself directly to the audience.<sup>269</sup> The same conclusion could be reached by turning to Mann's own literary theory. In the author's theory of the novel as it is presented in "Die Kunst des Romans" (1939), he states that while the epic is the medium of absence, "this is how it was", the drama is the medium of presence, "here it is":

Die erzählenden Veden der Inder hießen auch "Itihasa-Hymnen", nach dem Worte "Iti ha asa", "So war es". Vielleicht ist dieses "So war es" eine weihvollere<sup>270</sup> dichterische Haltung als das "Hier ist es" des Dramas. (Mann 1974b, p. 349)

A dramatic form allows direct presentation of a Faustian material, which is good old-fashioned superstition, to the reader. Here it is: the Devil, the pact, the heretic doctor and demonic inspiration, otherwise misplaced in Serenus Zeitblom's conceptual seriousness. A complex narrative process leads to a point in Mann's novel where a Faustian scene can be played out, and where the Devil, along with other superstitions, may appear on stage.

Large portions of the twenty-fifth chapter are given a dialogical form, which has the double effect of gradually plunging the reader further into the traditional material and making this same material current: Zeitblom prepares the scene through his description of physical document, old-fashioned handwriting and antiquated writing instrument; Leverkühn presents his account on music paper in a language

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<sup>269</sup> "Das Drama ist primär. Es ist nicht die (sekundäre) Darstellung von etwas (Primärem), sondern stellt sich selber dar, ist es selbst. Seine Handlung wie auch jede seiner Repliken ist 'ursprünglich', wird in ihrem Entspringen realisiert" (Szondi 1969, p. 16). Szondi's argument is a historical argument, and he provides analyses of dramatic works that challenge the primary mode of presentation, such as Henrik Ibsen's works, where the retrospective mode pushes the primary off stage.

<sup>270</sup> Mann's overall purpose in this section is disproving the notion that some genres are of a higher inherent artistic merit than others.

reminiscent of and riddled with quotes from Renaissance sources, and the Devil's speech, particularly when appearing in his first and last metamorphoses as *strizzi*, is a direct presentation of tropes and quotes from the *Historia*. While both Leverkühn and Zeitblom invite the reader to regard the entire dialogue as disease-ridden hallucinations, the Faust legend is real and present in the *strizzi*'s dialogue. The discourse changes from indirect to direct presentation and back between each of the Devil's metamorphoses, but the first time it changes, theatrical staging is clearly called on:

‘Ihr seid noch da’, sage ich, indem ich den Mantelkragen hochschlage und mir das Plaid um die Kniee schlinge, ‘selbst nachdem ich gegangen und wiedergekommen? Das wundert mich. Denn nach meiner starken Vermutung seid ihr nicht da.’

‘Nicht?’ Fragt er wie geschult, mit Nasenresonanz. ‘Wie denn nicht?’

*Ich*: ‘Weil es höchst unwahrscheinlich ist, daß einer sich hier am Abend zu mir setzt, deutsch redend und Kälte lassend, angeblich, um Geschäfte mit mir zu erörtern, von denen ich nichts weiß und nichts wissen will. Viel wahrscheinlicher ist, daß eine Krankheit bei mir im Ausbruch ist und ich den Fieberfrost, gegen den ich mich einhülle, in meiner Benommenheit hinausverlege auf eure Person und euch sehe, nur um in euch seine Quelle zu sehen.’

*Er*, ruhig und überzeugend wie ein Schauspieler lachend: ‘Was für ein Unsinn! Was für einen intelligenten Unsinn du redest! Es ist recht, was auf gut altdeutsch Aberwitz heißt. (MDF, p. 328)

One of this particular Devil's most prominent features, repeated three times, is that he behaves and vocalises like a stage actor. When he is first introduced, he is “Ein Strizzi. Ein Ludewig. Und mit der Stimme, der Artikulation eines Schauspielers” (MDF, p. 327). As he is reintroduced in his final metamorphosis, his voice is a “Schauspielerstimme” (MDF, p. 362). Finally, when he in his first appearance is accused by Leverkühn of not existing outside of the latter's imagination, he laughs like an actor, “wie ein Schauspieler” (MDF, p. 328), and coinciding with this characterisation, the form of the chapter turns into more or less pure dialogue, interspersed with indications of mood, gestures and expressions. The discourse at this point turns from an indirect form (“‘Ihr seid noch da,’” sage ich (...). ‘Nicht?’ fragt er wie geschult (...)”) to a direct form (“‘Ich: Weil es höchst (...)”). The theme of discussion between Leverkühn and the Devil at this point is twofold: First, they are having the ironic argument over whether one of them has an objective existence.

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Second, they are discussing the purpose of the Devil's presence there, which he has announced to be discussion of business. The Devil appears, as he does in Goethe's play and in the Spies-book, in the shape of a business-minded Devil, there to iron out the formal details of a pact. The dramatic form emphasises the immediacy of the Faustian material in this part of the novel. It is hardly accidental that the narrative mode changes as the strizzi-devil sets the pact motif as the defining factor in the entire event. Adrian Leverkühn greets the figure by demanding that he identify himself, and the Devil in turn immediately states that he has come in order to discuss business, which is repeated in the first line uttered by Leverkühn in the above-quoted lines delivered in dramatic form. Leverkühn's presentation of demonic appearances begins with the prerequisite for this presentation, which is the pact.

Through Adrian Leverkühn's words, the reader is put into contact with a demonic area of experience that has so far and elsewhere been tamed, subsumed and contained under Serenus Zeitblom's worthy humanistic endeavours, but Adrian's pact releases this principle not only in his musical production, but also in Mann's novel. The Devil, in his first metamorphosis in Leverkühn's dialogue, closely links demonic inspiration with neurosyphilis, and regards his own appearance as the personification of those demonic presences that Adrian Leverkühn has been faced with throughout his life:

Ich: "Es steht euch, wie ihr sprecht. Der Ludewig scheint medicinam studiert zu haben."

Er: "Nicht mehr, als du theologiam, will sagen: fragmentarisch und spezialistisch. Willst du leugnen, daß du die beste der Künste und Wissenschaften auch nur als Spezialist und Liebhaber studiert hast? Dein Interesse galt – mir. Ich bin dir sehr verbunden. Wie sollte aber ich, Esmeraldas Freund und Zuhalt, als den du mich vor dir siehst, nicht ein besonderes Interesse haben an dem betreffenden, dem anzüglichen, dem nächstliegenden Gebiet der Medizin und spezialistisch darin zu Hause sein? Tatsächlich verfolge ich auf diesem Gebiet beständig mit größter Aufmerksamkeit die letzten Forschungsergebnisse. Item, einige doctores wollen wahrhaben und schwören Stein und Bein, es müsse Hirnspezialisten unter den Kleinen geben, Liebhaber der zerebralen Sphäre, kurz, ein virus nerveux. Sie wohnen aber in der bekannten Halde. Es ist umgekehrt. Es ist das Gehirn, das nach ihrem Besuche lüstern ist ind ihm erwartungsvoll entgegenseht, wie du dem meinen; das sie zu sich einlädt, sie an sich zieht, als ob es sie gar nicht erwarten könnte. Weißt du noch? Der Philosoph, De anima: 'Die Handlungen der Handelnden geschehen an den vorher disponierten Leidenden.' Da siehst du's, auf die Disponiertheit, die Bereitschaft, die Einladung kommt alles an. Daß einige Menschen zur Vollbringung von Hexentaten mehr beanlagt sind, als die anderen, und wir sie wohl zu ersehen wissen, daß gedenken ja schon die würdigen Autoren des Malleus." (MDF, p. 341)

Adrian Leverkühn mockingly addresses the Devil as a Ludewig, a bum, and his appearance does stand in pronounced contrast to his role and function. The Devil's appearance as stage actor has a function besides reinforcing the shift in form between Zeitblom's chapters and Leverkühn's chapters: In all works discussed here, the demonic figure that functions as Faust's contractual partner appears in a disguise, or in a costume, that corresponds to the protagonist's expectations. In the *Historia*, Doktor Faustus requires that Mephostophiles should appear invisible or, on his command, in a form chosen by himself. Goethe's Mephistopheles has taken on the mantle of the old pact-offering Devil. Thomas Mann, too, has his Devil conform to requirements of the times, giving him the form of an unimpressive, badly dressed bum. While the Devil's function as contractual partner in Faustian literature appears transhistorical, his aesthetic form is historical.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> An excellent example of this same trait of the Devil's comes from a work which is less known, but nonetheless a highly captivating attempt at renewing the pact motif in recent years. In Swedish author Carl-Johan Vallgren's *Dokument rörande spelaren Rubashov* [*Documents concerning Rubashov the Gambler*], the Devil appears as a rather anally-retentive small-town bookkeeper who presents the gambler Rubashov with a pre-printed, standardised contract. This can be seen as a continuation of a trend in late twentieth century literature, where the Devil appears in some mundane,

Everything hinges on the pact, and on the spiral bacterium that has effected it, and which is present in the form of Adrian's florid handwriting. Were it not for Adrian Leverkühn's disease, the scene could not be given any measure of plausibility. The Devil, in his first manifestation, explains this to Adrian as the latter attempts to rationalise the Devil's appearance:

*Er:* "Du liebe Logik! Närrchen, umgekehrt wird ein Schuh daraus. Ich bin nicht das Erzeugnis deines pialen Herdes dort oben, sondern der Herd befähigt dich, verstehst du? mich wahrzunehmen, und ohne ihn, freilich, sähest du mich nicht. Ist darum meine Existenz an deinen inzipienten Schwips gebunden? Gehör ich darum in dein Subjekt? Da möchte ich bitten! Nur Geduld, was sich da tut und progredierte, das wird dich noch zu ganz anderem befähigen, ganz andere Hindernisse noch niederlegen und sich mit dir über Lahmheit und Hemmung schwingen. Warte bis Charfreitag, so wird bald Ostern werden! Warte ein, zehn, zwölf Jahre, bis die Illuminierung, der hellichte Ausfall aller lahmen Skrupel und Zweifel auf seine Höhe kommt, und du wirst wissen, wofür du zahlst, weswegen du uns Leib und Seele vermacht. Da werden dir sine pudore aus der Apothekensaat osmotische Gewächse sprießen ..." (MDF, pp. 342-343)

The *spirocheta pallida* does not create the feverish delusion of a devil, says the devilish figure. It is the fever, which he calls the hearth in Adrian's *pia mater*, that allows Leverkühn to see him, regardless of his objective existence. The heat of Adrian's fever does not counteract his coldness, which he retains, but it provides a productive discord between heat and coldness. The Schlepffuss-like Devil's description of what awaits Adrian in Hell describes an eternal impossible oscillation between intolerable cold and intolerable heat. Adrian's coldness alone is not productive, but when it is paired with the fire of demonic inspiration, it promises musical works similar to life-like osmotic growths.

The infection has a comparable effect on the narrative as on Adrian Leverkühn's cognition, partly identifiable through a structural trait, namely the

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unimpressive guise. The following is part of the description of Vallgren's Devil, who is slightly bored with the tedium of signing contracts: "But the guest was not frightening in the slightest. Apart from that light, peculiar smell he rather seemed like some bookkeeper from a provincial governorate (...)" (my translation); "Men gästen var inte det minsta skrämmande. Frånsett den där lätte egendomliga lukten påminde han snarare om någon bokhållare på ett landsortsguvernemnt (...)" (Vallgren 1996, p. 21).

placement of the chapter relative to the rest of the text. *Pia mater*, meaning “loving mother”, is the medical designation for the innermost layer of membrane surrounding the brain, the other layers being the *dura mater* and *arachnoid mater*. Thomas Mann’s Devil locates Adrian Leverkühn’s heat-supplying infection here, which incidentally identifies the infection as meningovascular neurosyphilis,<sup>272</sup> and medically explains his headaches as well as his collapse before the gathered audience in Pfeiffering in the book’s forty-seventh chapter. The twenty-fifth chapter, placed almost at the centre of the work, is the localisation of the infection: Adrian Leverkühn’s feverish warmth inserted into the *pia mater* of Serenus Zeitblom’s intellectual body of text is a sixteenth century disease that spreads throughout the work. After the chapter, Adrian Leverkühn starts to compose music that Serenus Zeitblom describes in terms that relate it to demonism, and he bases his compositions on impossible natural phenomena as much as on sixteenth-century literature. However, demonic appearances and characters are, as discussed, present before this point as well. Those phenomena that elicit Adrian Leverkühn’s strong injunction to laugh are described and misunderstood by Serenus Zeitblom, while the revelation of their nature takes place during the twenty-fifth chapter. Neurosyphilis is asymptomatic three to ten years after infection, but that does not mean that it is undetectable or ineffectual. Demonic appearances in the novel predate Adrian Leverkühn’s infection.

A profound shift in perspective takes place in Chapters 16 and 25, and this shift is dependent on the pact motif. Every piece of text which is staged by the chronicler as written in Adrian Leverkühn’s florid hand is a return to the written confirmation of his pact with the Devil, and a reminder of the syphilis spirochete in his bloodstream

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<sup>272</sup> Thomas Mann’s medical research is impeccable; the latest edition of Mary Louise Turgeon’s *Immunology and Serology in Laboratory Medicine* (2013) describes the symptoms of this type of syphilis as follows: “Meningeal neurosyphilis involves the brain or spinal cord. Patients can suffer from headaches and a stiff neck. Meningovascular syphilis involves inflammation of the pia mater and arachnoid space, with focal arteritis. A stroke syndrome involving middle cerebral artery is common in young adults” (Turgeon 2013, pp. 236-237). From Adrian Leverkühn’s headaches to his collapse in Pfeiffering, his neurosyphilis infection remains a textbook case – although Turgeon admittedly says nothing of demonic artistic inspiration.



that fuels these increasingly barbaric sections. These are not only anomalous to the Zeitblomian discourse that dominates the work, but also overtly demonic, Dionysian and barbaric. The violent clash between this demonic world view and rationality has been staged not only by recent commentators on Mann's novel, who are very eagerly engaged in exorcising or banishing the Devil and the devilish from it, but such a confrontation is also present as a theme of discussion in the novel, emerging in full during Leverkühn's announced performance of *Doktor Fausti Weheklag* in the final chapter. In the novel's final chapter, three different rational modes of interpretation that may be, and have been, applied to those places in the work that depend on Adrian Leverkühn's disease, his pact, are given representatives, put on display, and finally ridiculed; yet in the following, concluding section of this study's analysis of Mann's novel a fourth will be proposed, also explicitly encountered within Mann's book. This mode of interpretation, built on an understanding of the place the pact motif is given in Mann's novel, will acknowledge the effectual presence of some strands of thought that prove to be unacceptable to Adrian's circle of acquaintances. The following conclusion rests on four assumptions: There is a Faustian pact motif in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, it is strictly modelled on pact motifs from Faust's literary history, it is closely linked with central thematic lines in the novel, and it influences the form the narrative is given.

#### 4.4 The Interpreter's Role: Returning from Adrian's Madness

Beneath Apollonian art, language, science, societal constructions and moral valuations lie barbarism, raw sensibility, and pounding waves of rhythm. These are the building blocks, *elementa*, of Apollonian constructs, artfully hidden in the technical finesse of music and strict grammatical structure of cultured language. This undercurrent in culture is deemed both barbaric and demonic by Serenus Zeitblom, who historically locates its cultural subsumption during the sixteenth century, as the German territories start moving towards the age of the bourgeoisie. This undertow is

present in Mann's book, and, as Zeitblom observes of Leverkühn's final composition, it emanates like rings on water from one particular figure: the signature, the pale spirochete, which points not only to the character Esmeralda, but also to the moment when Adrian Leverkühn signed his pact, and which is present in the latter's florid handwriting. The reader is not given access to the composer's final work, so trust must be put in Serenus Zeitblom's powers of observation when he proudly remarks that he was the first to discover that the tonal figure *h e a e es*, which calls on the butterfly *Hetaera Esmeralda* as well as on the infectious prostitute, is present in all those parts of *Doktor Fausti Weheklag* that concern the "Verschreibung", the written pact with the Devil:

Längst vorhergesagt ist in diesen Blättern, daß im „Faustus“ auch jenes Buchstabensymbol, die von mir zuerst wahrgenommene *Hetaera-Esmeralda*-Figur, das *h e a e es*, sehr oft Melodik und Harmonik beherrscht: überall da nämlich, wo von der Verschreibung und Versprechung, dem Blut-Rezeß, nur immer die Rede ist. (MDF, p. 708)

A similar reappearing structure can be noticed in the work itself: Not only do the book's demonic scenes call on the clearwing moth and on the prostitute Esmeralda through the spirochete present in Leverkühn's blood, but they also call on the moment of infection, the time at which archaic material was given a point of entry into the novel, through the florid handwriting that conveys it. However, this is superstition; there is no pact, no Devil, nothing demonic or heavenly, nothing extraordinarily meaningful in Esmeralda's or the moth's uncoveredness, and the writing on sea shells is in fact quite obviously erosion, not hermetic communication. In order to find in the latter an act of communication, one would have to take part in Jonathan Leverkühn's ridiculous enthusiasm and limited scientific insight, and in order to see a demon in the prostitute Esmeralda, one would have to put oneself in the position of the diseased Adrian Leverkühn. In other words, one would have to take part in the ecstasy described by Nietzsche that is shared by servants of Dionysus, but not translatable to those who stand outside of it. This is neither allowed, nor celebrated, nor desirable "im würdigen Reiche der Humaniora": Serenus Zeitblom can only point out to the reader that something is being communicated in these structures of *h e a e es*, and never approach this area. As for Adrian Leverkühn's own

immersedness, facilitated by his pact which itself is only plausible within the demonic realm that he inhabits, the reader is given several, more specifically four, modes of interpretation that retain the separation of Dionysian and Apollonian perspectives.

Dionysian undercurrents can only be presented through their opposite, which is cultured language and, in music, technical strictness. The pact motif, however, opens a space within the novel where this material can find another form of presentation. The Devil and the demonic are allowed on stage, after a stage on which such a spectacle can appear has been carefully prepared. This stage is facilitated by the disease of Adrian Leverkühn, and the narrative distance that the inclusion of a material from another's hand affords the narrator. The demonism of Adrian Leverkühn's discourse, however, is not allowed to stand unchallenged – neither in the novel, nor in its reception history. The final chapter, not counting the epilogue, introduces several avenues of approach to the anomalous form of expression that emanates from Leverkühn's infected brain, that all have one thing in common: They provide interpretations that in various ways resolve the conflict between Apollo and Dionysus, rationality and barbarism, conceptual language and non-conceptual silence, leaving Apollo victorious. In the forty-seventh chapter, Adrian Leverkühn's demonically-inspired reality is forcefully confronted with an Apollonian world view, or an Apollonian world view is forcefully confronted with his demons, and the result is a handful of interpretations that quiet down or silence the influence of the pact on the novel. The audience in Pfeiffering is forced to react to a display that does not immediately yield to Apollonian interpretation.

In the novel's final chapter, Adrian Leverkühn's voice is strongly present, and to a certain degree, another superstitious scene is set, but everything is filtered through Serenus Zeitblom's eyes and pen. The first paragraph illustrates this relation perfectly. Like the first line in Adrian's note in the twenty-fifth chapter, the opening paragraph of the forty-seventh contains a quote from Spies's *Historia*, but here, the difference between the two modes of presentation that the Faustian – archaic –

material is given is made apparent. Serenus Zeitblom quotes Christ at Gethsemane as well as the *Historia*, and immediately offers an interpretation:

‘Wachet mit mir!’ Adrian mochte im Werke wohl das Wort gottmenschlicher Not ins Einsam-Männlichere und Stolze, in das ‘Schlafet ruhig und laßt euch nichts anfechten!’ seines Faustus wenden, – es bleibt das Menschliche doch, das triebhafte Verlangen, wenn nicht nach Beistand, so doch nach mitmenschlichem Beisein, die Bitte: ‘Verlaßt mich nicht! Seid um mich zu meiner Stunde!’ (MDF, p. 712)

While Adrian Leverkühn’s “weistu was so schweig” from his work note in the twenty-fifth chapter comes from a position of immersedness in the archaic material, the forty-seventh chapter starts with Serenus Zeitblom quoting Adrian Leverkühn quoting the Spies-book, and the chronicler not only comments on what he perceives to be its meaning, but also references its source, true to his academic education and inclination. Although the chapter immediately introduces the *Historia* during its opening, mirroring Adrian’s work note and indicating that the reader is again about to be shown a barbaric spectacle, the perspective is the Apollonian chronicler’s, and archaic material is present in the same manner as an old Devil figure is present in the figure of Schlepffuss during the two friends’ years in Halle: Through reference. First and foremost, this means that the scene that is about to be presented is filtered through the mind of Serenus Zeitblom, eagerly interpreting – and eagerly misinterpreting. A clear example of the chronicler’s tendency – familiar, by this point – to misunderstand his friend is seen in the above quoted. Zeitblom deifies his friend through a comparison with Christ at Gethsemane,<sup>273</sup> and speculates that it is pride and *manliness* that has the composer choose the sentiment of the *Historia*’s “Schlafet ruhig und laßt euch nicht anfechten” in his final composition over Christ’s “bleibet hier und wachet mit mir!” (Matthew 26:38). The chronicler regards these as diametrical opposites, as he has explained during his explication of the oratorio

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<sup>273</sup> Zeitblom has also previously noted that he thinks his friend’s face is visually somewhat Christ-like as he enters his final productive years. The chronicler states, regarding Adrian’s new facial hair and attitude: “Die Verfremdung, die diese partielle Bedeckung der Züge bewirkte, nahm man in den Kauf, weil der Bart es war, der, wohl zusammen mit einer wachsenden Neigung, den Kopf zur Schulter geneigt zu tragen, dem Antlitz etwas Vergeistigt-Leidendes, ja Christushaftes verlieh” (MDF, pp. 699-700).

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*Doktor Fausti Weheklag* in Chapter 46.<sup>274</sup> Pride is indeed a Faustian transgression, but while the Spies-book cites pride and curiosity as its protagonist's chief character flaws, Zeitblom here regards his friend's pride as an expression of masculinity, indicating that the composer's pride stems from a desire to appear strong and unaffected. Leverkühn, however, is not a particularly masculine figure in this sense of the term; he is a spinster-turned-mother, and the feminine half of an unholy marriage, as he is about to explain to a baffled audience. The composer also has left behind every consideration towards social decorum; he is immersed in his demonic, barbaric world, which is characterised by an abandoning of cultural inhibitions. During his speech to the audience, he takes no heed of reactions from the onlookers, which oscillate between silent shock, outrage, and mirth: Adrian Leverkühn does nothing out of manly pride and social decorum. The chapter, then, is coloured by the poor interpretations of Serenus Zeitblom; the first archaic quote is set in a context that does not do it justice.

However, the scene that is about to unfold in the Nike-hall in Pfeiffering is also set apart from the Zeitblomian discourse in an operation that finds a parallel in that which takes place in the twenty-fifth chapter. The worrisome distance between the train station and the Schweigestills' home, which is cause of great concern for a large portion of the guests, because the host did not think to arrange transportation, is only one barrier that separates the physical location from its surroundings; another is the threatening thunderstorm on the horizon, which emphasises the difficulty of returning to the train station, and yet another the barking guard dog Suso, or Kaschperl, or Prästigiär. From Zeitblom's perspective, all of these facts are delivered with exclusive concern for practical matters:

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<sup>274</sup> "Schwerlich wird man umhinkommen, im Rahmen der Kantate, diese Weisung als den bewußten und gewollten Revers zu dem 'Wachet mit mir!' von Gethsemane zu erkennen." (MDF, p. 710)

Und so begab ich mich denn an jenem Samstag nachmittag mit Helene nach München, wo wir den Waldshut-Garmischer Personenzug nahmen. Wir teilten das Coupé mit Schildknapp, Jeanette Scheurl und Kunigunde Rosenstiel. Über andere Wagen hin war die übrige Gesellschaft verteilt, ausgenommen nur das Ehepaar Schlaginhauen, der Schwäbelnde alte Rentner und die geborene von Plausig, die zusammen mit ihren Sängerefreunden die Fahrt in ihrem Auto machten. Dieses, schon vor uns eingetroffen, leistete bei der Ankunft in Pfeifferring gute Dienste, indem es zwischen der kleinen Station und Hof Schweigestill mehrmals hin und her fuhr und die Gäste, die es nicht etwa vorzogen, zu Fuße zu gehen (das Wetter hielt sich, obgleich ein Gewitter leise grollend am Horizonte stand) gruppenweise dorthin brachte. Denn für Beförderung vom Bahnhof zum Hause war nicht gesorgt, Frau Schweigestill, die Helene und ich in der Küche aufsuchten, wo sie mit Hilfe Clementines in aller Eile einen Imbiß für so viele, Kaffee, in Streifen geschnittene Butterbrote und kühlen Apfelsaft vorbereitete, erklärte uns, in nicht geringer Bestürzung, daß Adrian sie auf die Invasion mit keinem Wort vorbereitet habe.

Unterdessen wollte das wütende Gebell des alten Suso oder Kaschperl draußen, der kettenklirrend vor seiner Hütte herumsprang, kein Ende nehmen und beruhigte sich erst, als keine neuen Gäste mehr anlangten und alles sich im Nike-Saal versammelt hatte, dessen Sitzgelegenheiten Magd und Knecht durch Stühle vermehrten, die sie aus dem Familienwohnzimmer und sogar aus oberen Schlafzimmern hereinschleppten. (MDF, pp. 713-714)

The dog referred to in these paragraphs has two identities, and three names. In Serenus Zeitblom's perspective, he is an annoyance, with his raging barking without end and his chain-clattering running in front of his doghouse. However, Adrian Leverkühn transforms these same character traits, or reinterprets them from his fevered perspective: Not only has he named the dog Prästigiär, after Faustus's canine companion in the Spies-book, but he also describes the barking as a hellish yowling and barking:

‘Muß mich’, fuhr er fort, ‘zuvörderst auch für euch entschuldigen’ (er verbesserte sich und sagte: ‘entschuldigen’, wiederholte dann aber: ‘entschuldigen’) ‘und euch bitten, daß nicht Beschwerde zu tragen, daß unser Hund Prästigiär, er wird wohl Suso genannt, heißt aber in Wahrheit Prästigiär, sich so übel gehube und euch ein so hellisch Gekleff und Geplerr vor den Ohren gemacht, da ihr euch doch um meinetwillen habt solcher Mühe und Beschwer unterwunden.’ (MDF, pp. 718-719)

There are two dogs. Suso or Kaschperl, the Schweigestills' guard dog, is from Adrian Leverkühn's demonically inspired point of view sometimes called Suso, while his name *in truth*, “in Wahrheit”, is Prästigiär. From within the inverted order of the pact that Adrian Leverkühn inhabits, he can observe and grasp that those around him call

the dog Suso, so he is not unaware of the discord between others' perception and his own. However, he is at this point immersed in that world that houses the dialogue in the twenty-fifth chapter, so he knows that this world also houses the truth, while those around him are superstitious and incorrectly believe the dog's name to be Suso. From Leverkühn's viewpoint, the dog is a demonic companion who spouts "hellisch Gekleff und Geplerr" at his visitors. There are indeed two dogs: One that exists within the rationality of Zeitblom's twentieth century mode of interpretation, and one that exists in Adrian Leverkühn's sixteenth-century archaic world view inspired by his pact. The following will propose that although Adrian's speech in the forty-seventh chapter elicits various responses from the onlookers that parenthesise it, make it out to be insane or in some other manner regard it as anomalous to the correct, reasonable world view, the demonic is not negated, and the conflict between Apollo and Dionysus is not resolved. There remain two perspectives, with each regarding the other as anomalous, in contrast with, for example, one premise of Ulrich Karthaus's recent exploration of *evil* in Mann's novel, which is the separation of two levels of believability, one of which is more reasonable, or closer to the *truth*, than the other:

Zeitblom und Leverkühn könnten ordentliche Personalpapiere vorweisen – wären sie nicht fiktive Figuren – beim Teufel ist das ganz anders, so dass man bezweifeln muss, ob er eine wahre Gestalt hat. (Karthaus 2013, p. 112)

The gathering in Pfeiffering is formally theatrical, in Peter Szondi's sense both primary and dialectical: Different actors build the scene on stage, and there is no identifiable truth that transcends these two perspectives; no characters in Mann's novel would be able to show the reader their personal identification cards.

The scene in Pfeiffering is physically isolated: By the long road from the train station, by the hellish guard dog at its entrance, and by chapter division. There are, however, also some other markers external to Leverkühn's pact-influenced mind that place the scene in the same complex of scenes that the twenty-fifth chapter belongs to. Adrian Leverkühn's final composition, the oratorio *Doktor Fausti Weheklag*, is the centrepiece of the final chapter, and as in Chapters 16 and 25, the piano occupies a prominent place in the scene. This brings music onto the stage, invoking the

demonism inherent in music. While the composition in question by all appearances takes its title from Chapter 66 in the *Historia*, entitled “Doktor Fausti Weheklag von der Hellen / vnd irer vnaußsprechlichen Pein vnd Qual”, Adrian’s monologues in Chapter 47 quite closely follow the contents of Spies’s chapter 68, “Oratio Fausti ad Studiosus”. The chapter is narrated by Zeitblom, but nevertheless it is, like Chapter 25, set on the archaic stage of the classical century of belief – the piano is one indication that this is the case, as it puts music within the chapter’s frame.

Leverkühn has invited friends and acquaintances to a recital where he will present parts of his grand *Faustus* composition. True to his legendary heritage, he invites not only the living, but also the dead, in a humorous act of necromancy. The invitation that goes out to Baptist Spengler is hand-written by Leverkühn, who, according to Zeitblom, must have known that the man had been dead for a month and a half:

Darum, als das Jahr 1930 fast auf seine Hälfte gekommen war, im Monat Mai, lädt Leverkühn auf verschiedenen Wegen eine Gesellschaft zu sich nach Pfeiffering, all seine Freunde und Bekannten, auch sogar solche, mit denen er wenig oder gar nicht bekannt, eine Menge Leute, an die dreißig: teils durch geschriebene Karten, teils durch mich, wobei wieder einzelne Geladene ersucht wurden, die Aufforderung an andere weiterzugeben, wieder andere aber aus sachlicher Neugier sich selbst einluden, d. h. durch mich oder sonst ein Mitglied des engeren Kreises um Zulassung baten. Denn es hatte ja Adrian auf seinen Karten wissen lassen, er wüschte, einer günstigen Freundesversammlung von seinem neuen, eben vollendeten chorisch-symphonischen Werk ein Bild zu geben durch den Klaviervortrag einiger charakteristischer Partien daraus; und dafür interessierten sich auch manche Personen, die er nicht zu laden beabsichtigt hatte, wie z. B. die Heroine Tanja Orlanda und der Tenor Herr Kjöjelund, die sich durch Schlaginhaufens einföhrung ließen, und etwa der Verleger Radbruch nebst seiner Frau, die sich hinter Schildknapp gesteckt hatten. Handschriftlich eingeladen hatte er übrigens auch Baptist Spengler, obgleich dieser, wie Adrian eigentlich hätte wissen müssen, schon seit anderthalb Monaten nicht mehr unter den Lebenden weilte. Der geistreiche Mann war, erst mitte der Vierziger, bedauerlicherweise seinem Herzleiden erlegen. (MDF, p. 712)

The chronicler emphasises that the invitation to Baptist Spengler is “hand-written”, as opposed to the invitations received by a large portion of the guests, who either invited themselves to the event, or were invited by other guests through word-of-mouth.

Documents written by hand indicate proximity between sender and message, as well



as a sincere intention; attendance of the dead Baptist Spengler was meaningful to Adrian. Furthermore, a document written in Adrian's florid hand reinvokes his pact, and once again reminds the reader that the event in Bratislava is a prerequisite for these old motifs. So far, music, along with an explicit reference to the *Historia* and an act of necromancy, all tied to Adrian's pact with the Devil, has indicated that the forty-seventh chapter is located between Zeitblom's and Leverkühn's respective discourses.

The most prominent archaic aspect of the chapter, however, is Adrian Leverkühn's language. In Mann's transformation of the old motif in the forty-seventh chapter, the antiquated language of Spies's book is overtly present in Adrian's speech to the gathered audience, even when the composer does not directly quote the work. For example, Mann has his protagonist speak in redundant phrases well past the point of satire:

“Erstlich”, sagte er, “will ich mich gegen euch bedanken, beide der Gunst und Freundschaft, von mir unverdient, so ihr mir erweisen wollen durch euer Hereinkommen zu Fuß und Wagen, da ich euch aus der Einöde dieses Schlupfwinckels geschrieben und gerufen, auch rufen und laden lassen durch meinen herzlich getreuen Famulus und special Freund, welches mich noch zu erinnern weiß unsers Schulgangs von Jugend auf, da wir zu Hallen mit einander studierten, doch davon, und wie Hochmut und Greuel schon anhuben bei diesem Studieren, weiter herab in meinem Sermoni.”  
(MDF, p 718)

This distinguishing mark of legal documents, described in Part 2 of this study, is most dense in Adrian's recapitulation of his invitations: He has not merely invited the guests, he has “written to” and “called upon” them, and also let others “call upon” and “invite” them. In addition to this extremely convoluted sentence, which evokes grins and parody among the present listeners, he awards Zeitblom the dubious honour of being his “Famulus und special Freund”. In Leverkühn's lingual reconstruction of the Faust myth, Zeitblom is given the role of Wagner, who is painted as Faustus's less-talented assistant both in the *Historia* and in Goethe's play.<sup>275</sup> Crucially, this is

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<sup>275</sup> The power structure is even more pronounced in Tolet's *Wagnerbuch*, as previously noted.

his role in Mann's *Doktor Faustus* also, not only when seen through the eyes of the infected Adrian Leverkühn; the two identities of the dog so closely resemble the two identities of the black poodle in Goethe's *Vor dem Tor*-scene that the parallel must be regarded as meaningful. The humanist Zeitblom, and the conventional scientist Wagner, see only "Dressur"; the curious Faust, and the diseased Adrian Leverkühn, see a hellish beast. One perspective cannot be prioritised in an interpretation of Mann's novel, although it is plausible that most actors on the book's diegetic plane would agree with Zeitblom. There are two narrators in this final chapter, and two substantially different perspectives, but both can be regarded as equally unreliable. A tangible effect of the category of the demonic on Mann's book is the dual identity of the dog Suso, Kaschperl or Prästigiär. Some interpreters have agreed that "im würdigen Reiche der Humaniora ist man sicher vor solchem Spuk" (MDF, p. 36),<sup>276</sup> but Mann's book points its readers towards the outside of this worthy kingdom. Both perspectives are equally ridiculed during the forty-seventh chapter, and neither of them is privileged.

Adrian Leverkühn's perspective is entirely rooted in the "classical century of belief". In Chapter 16, Adrian's Faustus imitation is parodical and deliberate, but in Chapter 47, Serenus Zeitblom judges that this is no longer the case; the composer's claim that he has been "married" to the Devil is delivered "in bleichem Ernst" (MDF, p. 720). Karlheinz Hasselbach (1988) points out that Leverkühn's final composition is earnest: "Sein letztes Werk, 'Dr. Fausti Weheklag', ist ungebändigt ernstes Pathos ohne jede Ironie" (p. 51).<sup>277</sup> Earnest also is the composer's speech to the gathered audience, which is clearly rooted in the same archaic, barbaric material as he describes his pact with the Devil, which is coming to an end:

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<sup>276</sup> Petersen (2007), Ball (1986), Crawford (2003), Nielsen (1965), Koopmann (2008/2009).

<sup>277</sup> Perhaps the word "parody" would have been better suited than "irony". Following Mann's use of the word irony, as the commensuration of incommensurable opposites, nothing is entirely without irony in his novel, neither sanguine barbarism nor bloodless intellectualism.

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(...) da mir das Stundglas vor den Augen steht, daß ich gewärtig sein muß, wenn es ausläuft die letzten Körnchen durch die Enge und er mich holen wird, gegen den ich mich mit meinem eigenen Blut so teuer verschrieben,<sup>278</sup> daß ich mit Leib und Seele ewig sein gehören wollen und in sein Hände und Gewaltsam fallen wann das Glas ausgeronnen und die Zeit, so seine Ware ist, zum Ende gelaufen. (MDF, p. 719)

The gathered audience reacts to this outdated insanity with laughter, interspersed with shock over “eine Taktlosigkeit” (MDF, p. 719), thus reinforcing the difference present in the novel between Adrian Leverkühn’s superstition and Serenus Zeitblom’s cultured, but equally unreliable, world view, which he to a degree shares with the representatives of the German bourgeoisie who are present at Pfeifferring. Up until Adrian’s explicit identification of his pact with the Devil, the onlookers have generally reacted with laughter, but at this point, bewilderment sets in as they are faced with the earnest otherness of Adrian’s speech:

Hier wurde noch einmal da und dort durch die Nase gelacht, aber es gab auch einiges Zungenschmalzen am Gaumen nebst Kopfschütteln, wie über eine Taktlosigkeit, und einige begannen, finster forschend zu blicken. (MDF, p. 719)

This is a decisive moment, because it is the moment at which the audience starts taking Leverkühn’s antiquated ramblings seriously. The next bout of confession, which concerns his marriage to Satan, completes the audience’s shift from mirth to outrage. The onlookers are forced to react to Adrian Leverkühn’s demonic display: “Wo will das hinaus, und wie steht es hier?” (MDF, p. 720) Up until this point, the general mode of understanding Adrian’s speech has consisted in subsuming it under the category “Künstlerymystifikation”, (MDF, p. 720) which is pretense and parody, but as they seem to realise that it is all delivered in “pale seriousness” (MDF, p. 720), their interpretations start to diverge.

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<sup>278</sup> The quoted section reads as follows in the *Historia*: “Nu sind solche Jar biß auff diese Nacht zum Ende gelauffen / vnd stehet mir das Stundglas vor den Augen / daß ich gewertig seyn muß / wann es außläufft / vnd er mich diese Nacht holen wirt / dieweil ich im Leib vnd Seel zum zweytenmal so thewr mit meinem eigen Blut verschrieben habe (...).” (HDF, p. 120)

The first mode of interpretation that is delivered, after “Künstlerymystifikation” has proven inadequate, is presented by the poet Daniel Zur Höhe, who subsumes the entire display under a well known and well established aesthetic category: It is all poetry:

Ich zuckte zusammen, denn hier gab es eine Zwischenstimme aus dem Auditorium, – die des Dichters Daniel Zur Höhe in seinem Priesterkleide, der mit dem Fuße aufschlug und hämmernd urteilte:

“Es ist schön. Es hat Schönheit. Recht wohl, recht wohl, man kann es sagen!” (MDF, p. 721)

The poet makes his aesthetic judgment just as Leverkühn has described his copulation with the syphilitic prostitute, in other words the book’s pact scene. This description ends with Adrian identifying the event as his initiation and the closing of his promise: “da war ich eingeweiht und die Versprechung geschlossen” (MDF, p. 721). It is descriptions of events directly pertaining to the pact motif that prompts attempts among the listeners at interpreting Leverkühn’s speech; these sections are staged as unacceptably foreign, and create a conflict demanding immediate resolution. The rest of the gathered audience, including Zeitblom, reacts to Zur Höhe’s proposal with relief. The wife of the publisher Radbruch delightedly exclaims: “Man glaubt, Poesie zu hören!” (MDF, p. 722). Adrian Leverkühn introduces a problem to the rational audience when he, “in pale seriousness”, claims to have entered into an unholy union, a devilish pact. This is the heart of the conflict that this study has circled in on: The motif is staged as being misplaced, and if its delivery is taken seriously, some form of interpretative model that can account for this anomaly must be proposed. The onlookers are here given the option of aesthetising Adrian’s speech and simultaneously defusing it by Daniel Zur Höhe, who, dressed like a priest, delivers his “hammering judgment”. The audience is reassured as an authoritative figure brings the scene back to a recognisable, relatable form, namely an artistic one. Once subsumed under the heading of art, by this high priest of art, no expression is shocking to a crowd recently delivered from the central European avant-garde following World War I.

The second mode of interpretation is delivered by Zeitblom himself immediately after Zur Höhe's attempt at defusing the bewildering material has failed to gain traction amongst the listeners. Zeitblom is sadly sympathetic towards his friend's sorry subjective state, which finds its expression as meek confession, a plea for aid and sympathy:

Ach, man glaubte das nicht lange, die schönselige Auffassung, so bequem sie sich anbot, war nicht haltbar, dies hatte nichts zu tun mit Dichter Zur Höhes steilem Jux von Gehorsam, Gewalt, Blut und Plünderung der Welt, es war stiller und bleicher Ernst, war Bekenntnis und Wahrheit, die zu vernehmen ein Mensch in letzter Seelennot seine Mitmenschen zusammengerufen hatte, – eine Handlung unsinnigen Vertrauens allerdings; denn Mitmenschen sind nicht gemeint und gemacht, solcher Wahrheit anders zu begegnen, als mit kaltem Grauen und mit der Entscheidung, die sie sehr bald, als es nicht mehr anging, sie als Poesie zu betrachten, einhellig darüber aussprachen.  
(MDF, p. 722)

The chronicler greets the diseased ramblings with sympathy and saddened compassion. The speaker is tormented, and delivers the final confession of an, admittedly brilliant, madman. There is some emotional subjective truth to Leverkühn's speech, but it does not reflect any objective reality, opines Zeitblom, who has entertained this opinion since the chapter's opening. He sees a suffering Christ, and not a godless apostate; and he is of course absolutely convinced that his perspective is the correct one, since he throughout the novel has regarded himself as having a unique insight into his friend. What he does not see, is that he is strongly reminiscent of the *Wagnerbuch*'s titular character, who tries to master the demons that Faustus commands, but is unable to do so. His certainty that he has privileged access to Leverkühn appears all the more ridiculous in light of his repeated misinterpretations of the composer's character.

A third, non-verbal mode of interpretation is offered by the first couple who decide to quietly take their leave – to the other guests' chagrin, as they own the only means of transportation back to the train station:

Eine Unruhe geschah nach diesen Worten im Auditorium und ein Aufbruch. Die alten Herrschaften Schlaginhauen nämlich erhoben sich von unserem Tisch, und, ohne nach rechts oder links zu blicken, auf leisen Sohlen, führte der Gatte die Gattin am Ellbogen zwischen den Sitzen hindurch und zur Tür hinaus. Es vergingen auch nicht zwei Minuten, bis man auf dem Hof mit viel Lärmen und Rattern den Motor ihres Autos anspringen hörte und verstand, sie führen davon. (MDF, p. 724)

This third option can hardly be deemed an interpretation of Leverkühn's archaic ramblings at all, but is rather a refusal to engage with the material. They tip-toe out of the room without looking to their left or right: They give up in the face of the conflict between their own world view and Adrian Leverkühn's, and their example is followed by several other guests.

The fourth and final mode of interpretation that seeks to defuse the conflict between conceptual rationality and archaic demonism seems to be wide-spread amongst interpreters of the novel. It is voiced by Dr. Kranich,<sup>279</sup> and it pathologises Leverkühn's archaic confession:

“Dieser Mann”, ließ sich da in der Stille die klar artikulierende, wenn auch asthmatische Stimme des Dr. Kranich vernehmen, “dieser Mann ist wahnsinnig. Daran kann längst kein Zweifel bestehen, und es ist sehr zu bedauern, daß in unserem Kreise die irrenärztliche Wissenschaft nicht vertreten ist. Ich, als Numismatiker, fühle mich hier gänzlich unzuständig. Damit ging auch er hinaus. (MDF, 728)

Dr. Kranich, based on his expertise in economic currency, feels entirely unqualified to properly diagnose the madman, and doubts that anyone else in the room possesses the necessary expertise to do so. Nevertheless, the numismatist is absolutely certain that he is witnessing the empty ramblings of a madman. His conclusion is followed by his pronounced exit from the scene, the simple description of which is given a paragraph of its own. The insanity that he has been witnessing is not only shockingly inappropriate, but it is also uninteresting; it is not worth hearing out. This is a truly Apollonian point of view, expressing complete denial of the area of experience that

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<sup>279</sup> The name Kranich appears briefly in Goethe's *Faust* as well, during the *Walpurgisnachtstraum* scene, and the character is given four lines of dialogue: “In dem Klaren mag ich gern | Und auch im Trüben fischen; Darum seht ihr den frommen Herrn | Sich auch mit Teufeln mischen” (GF, l. 4323-4326).

Adrian Leverkühn is immersed in; the doctor mirrors Zeitblom's aggressive denunciation of the *Teufelsjux* of planetary movements. Both of them are angry, offended by the audacious presentation of something that to their conceptually constituted intellect only can be irrationality.

The reader can side with the priest of poetry, Daniel zur Höhe, whose only contribution is the repeated empty aesthetic valuation "it has beauty". And, given that he would prefer to stay and listen to Leverkühn rather than leave in a huff of outrage, the reader (who may also be a doctor in some discipline other than a medical one) can agree with the numismatist that the speech along with the account on music paper of the events in Palestrina are results of Leverkühn's disease, or he can side with Zeitblom in melancholically witnessing the miserable downfall of a brilliant mind. What other possibilities, besides these four, is an interpreter who does not believe in the living Devil left with? Daniel zur Höhe is absolutely correct: Adrian's speech is beautifully constructed artistic expression, although the agency in this construction must be moved from the composer to the author. This is because Zeitblom and Dr. Kranich are also right: the composer's speech is to a degree the insane ramblings of a diseased artist. However, these interpretative options suffer from the same shortcoming: They attempt to isolate the pact motif from another narrative reality, which is more reliable and believable, more "plausible" (Ball 1986, p. 54). The novel does not reliably yield to this sharp distinction between Adrian's artfulness or insanity and Zeitblom's believable reality.<sup>280</sup> In other words: These two pathologising

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<sup>280</sup> Jürgen H. Petersen points out that the only source for demonic appearances in the novel is the unreliable Zeitblom, and that for this reason, the "facticity" of these appearances can always be doubted. His hypothesis that demonism has been brought into the work only by Mann's paratextual reading instructions should actually be weakened by this insight, if it is paired with the insight that neither of the book's two narrators deliver a mimetically "plausible" narrative, and that an apollonian narrative futilely attempting to distance itself from irrational undercurrents is not an attempt at mimicking reality or presenting the "facticity" of a sequence of events, but is rather one half of a dialectical, or ironic, narrative style. Petersen argues: "Das Irrationale, Unterweltliche, Geisterhafte kommt mithin allein durch die Vorliebe des Erzählers für diese Gegenstände in den Roman, und keineswegs durch irgendwelche Ereignisse, an deren Faktizität man nicht zweifeln kann. (...) Denn nur auf diese Weise lässt sich zeigen, wie im Leser der Eindruck von einer durch und durch dämonisch bestimmten Welt entsteht, der allein ja den Titel des Romans rechtfertigt" (Petersen 2007, p. 51).

interpretations privilege the Apollonian over the Dionysian, subordinating the latter as parenthetical, anomalous expression. This is neither the case in Mann's novel, nor in the system of thought that these two vital terms are adopted from: The Dionysian is always present, and so too is the old pact motif in the book. The pact colours the work thematically and formally. In fact, the presence of the pact with the Devil has the function of allowing the Dionysian, barbarian "Wellenschlag des Rhythmus" of Adrian's speech to be presented directly rather than indirectly through the ironical presence of barbarism in Zeitblom's numerous attempts at remaining calm. Zeitblom states as he introduces Leverkühn's work note in the twenty-fifth chapter that he would have to be insane in order to accept the premises on which the narrative given in this work note is built: "Ein Dialog? Ist es in Wahrheit ein solcher? Ich müßte wahnsinnig sein, es zu glauben" (MDF, p. 323). This is entirely true; one must be "wahnsinnig" in order to believe in Leverkühn's Dionysian experiences, but Mann's novel may demand a certain measure of historically-tinged insanity from its readers.

Mann's novel contains one interpretative key, already quoted in this study, but warranting another reminder. The following section, which is part of Serenus Zeitblom's interpretation of Adrian Leverkühn's composition *Doktor Fausti Weheklag*, accounts for the function of old, inherited material in Mann's novel also; by adhering to the old laws of Hell in creating a pact motif that is staged as outdated and misplaced, something infinitely complex and infinitely bewildering may appear:

Nur das der dialektische Prozeß, durch welchen auf der Entwicklungsstufe, die dieses Werk einnimmt, der Umschlag von strengster gebundenheit zur freien Sprache des Affekts, die Geburt der Freiheit aus der Gebundenheit, sich vollzieht, unendlich komplizierter, unendlich bestürzender und wunderbarer in seiner Logik erscheint als zur Zeit der Madrigalisten.  
(MDF, p. 704)

In this lies the key to understanding Mann's employment of the old pact motif: By strict adherence to an old set of rules, infinitely bewildering conflicts do indeed arise. Like Mann's observation regarding Schönberg's *Harmonielehre*, his own Faustian novel stands somewhere between revolution and pious adherence to tradition (Mann 2009, p. 44). The exchange between these two areas – between creative novelty and archaic motifs – is a driving force in the novel; through osmosis, the work gains vital,



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lifelike properties, like Jonathan Leverkühn's mechanical flowers, indistinguishable from biological flowers. Against this insight stands Jürgen H. Petersen's argument:

Es zeigt sich mithin, dass es keine objektiven Zusammenhänge in diesem Roman gibt, die das Diabolische, das Himmlische, das Dämonische faktisch wirksam werden lassen, sondern dass alle derartigen Phänomene sich den Eingriffen und erzählerischen Einfärbungen durch den Berichterstatter verdanken. (Petersen 2007, p. 57)

Jürgen H. Petersen believes there is only one narrator in the novel, and herein lies the source of his oversight regarding the presence of an effective pact and its narrative consequences, which he shares with other scholars looking for "objective" truths in Mann's novel. There are two figure-narrators, two discourses, two perspectives, and, vitally, there are two species of truth, "Wahrheit", that each positions the other's truth as superstition, and that lack an epistemological mooring point in a third, authoritative voice. Petersen places himself safely in the crowded car of the Schlaginhaufens when he accuses the author of having poorly realised his own poetic visions: The novel treats the oscillation between demonism and rationality, between old and new, and between tradition and work, in an effective manner, employing the old pact motif as a locus of and catalyst for this conflict, which can be ignored, but not resolved.

## 5. Conclusions: The Ambiguity of Pacts with the Devil

The three works that have been analysed here are all teeming with references, allusions, and identified and unidentified quotes: In short, material that is brought into the work and integrated into its discourse. A scholar can identify the source of these sections through varying degrees of academic acumen; Albrecht Dürer can be found in the character of Adrian Leverkühn, or Hamlet in Goethe's Mephistopheles, or sections from Hartmann Schedel's *Buch der Chroniken* can be revealed in the *Historia*'s lengthy descriptions of foreign lands. However, no great academic ingenuity is required to identify the pact motif as a narrative motif that has an outside source in any of the three works: In the cases of the *Historia* and Mann's Faustbook, a narrator explicitly and elaborately identifies the material as quoted and as something that has been brought into the work from the outside, while Goethe's *Faust* forcefully tears itself free of the old motif's *Juristerei*, which is also marked as discordant with other perspectives within the work.

The contents of the elaborately bracketed pact motif are positioned as incommensurable with values that are expressed through other means in each work. The narrator, author, publisher, and editor in the *Historia*, Mephistopheles, Faust, the Lord, and the choir of angels in Goethe's *Faust*, and Serenus Zeitblom, Daniel Zur Höhe, the Schlaginhaufens, and the numismatist doctor Kranich in Mann's book all distance themselves from the contents of the pact, from its consequences, and, in the case of Goethe's *Faust*, from its formal aspects and quasi-legal foundation. However, several of these figures also incorporate into their own voices elements that are brought into the work through the pact motif. The voice of the narrator in the *Historia* is interfered with by Mephistopheles's voice, and the narrator also identifies the demon Auerhahn and the apostate Wagner as significant influences on his narration, while the devilish excesses described in the book are fulfilments of promises given in the pact. Goethe's Mephistopheles ends up putting his trust in the old laws that he previously rejected, while demonism and barbarism can be gleaned in Serenus

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Zeitblom's furious attempts at hiding these principles within the serenity of conceptual language.

Although parts of the pact motif are carefully isolated from these other voices, the pact motif is not contained to the chapters or scenes in which it appears. Mann's medical metaphor has been proven to be very astute; the pact can be compared to an infectious cyst that releases its messengers throughout the work, leading to appearances in the *Historia* that are perplexingly immoral, given its explicit didactic intention, leading Goethe scholars, along with Mephistopheles, into a futile debate concerning the outcome of the play, and forcing a confrontation between two areas of experience that Zeitblom and his companions would prefer remain separated. This ambiguity is a formal trait of all three works: What Erich Trunz in the case of Goethe's *Faust* called a "strange formalism" adopted from the "old books" (Trunz 2002, p. 537) leads to works of literature that can be said to be diseased: Works that are infected with a demonic strain, the symptoms of which are intermittent confrontations between incommensurable world views or value systems. Although Trunz regards the *Historia* as the source of the motif, this study has demonstrated that the written component of the pact is also carefully identified within that work as something that has come to it from the outside.

This study has systematically identified the particulars of the "strange formalism" of the pact with the Devil as it appears in these three works, creating the outline of a model for understanding and comparing Faustian pacts. At its core, the pact with the Devil appears to be an exchange of an equal number of promises, given orally after a negotiation and deliberation has taken place, and followed by a ritualised pledge – which the Devil requires – that produces a material mark that makes the agreement present and operative in the narrative or on stage whenever it reappears. Spies's Faustus first attempts to command the Devil, but is then required to formulate his wishes in a more careful manner, and in return to agree to abide by an equal number of counter-demands. One of these counter-demands is that Faust must write and sign a document to attest to his pledging of body and soul to the Devil. Goethe's Faust insists on being offered a similar, symmetrical and reciprocal,

agreement, and Mephistopheles acquiesces, presenting a proposal that is symmetrical both in contents and in rhyme scheme. This proposal is then modified through Faust's addition of a wager, marking a departure from the form of the pact with the Devil in Spies's *Historia*, but the old formalism is returned to when Mephistopheles requires an attestation to their agreement written in Faust's blood. Mann's novel closely follows this same narrative schematic, from Adrian's negotiations with Wendell Kretschmar and with himself in the novel's fifteenth chapter to the ritualized attestation in Bratislava that leaves a material mark that aesthetically and functionally resembles a signature in blood.

Time has been given significant attention in this study's establishment of a model for the Faustian pact with the Devil. "Symbolic actions" serve to localize agreements in time and space, and they also allow for a reliable identification of the contents of the three Faustian characters' respective agreements. One persistent aesthetic aspect of the pact with the Devil facilitates this temporal pinpointing of the moment during which something was agreed upon: Coagulated blood points to the exact moment at which it left the body of the person whose earnest intention at that point in time was metonymically present in the fluid. The *Historia*'s inclusion of the written pledge in its entirety makes the challenge of identifying its contents trivial, but this is not true in the other two works; when Goethe's Mephistopheles muses over the pen with which Faust wrote himself away to the Devil during the second act of *Faust II*, the little drop of blood still lingering in its calamus points to a particular moment during the second *Studierzimmer* scene in the first part – a moment which is markedly distanced from Faust's proposal of a wager, meaning that their formalized agreement can plausibly be identified as an agreement that encompasses all three stages of their negotiations in that scene. Thomas Mann's signature "in blood" points to one moment which has a very uncertain status, since it is delivered by a narrator who confesses to have no real insight into the event, but it does attest to the fact that an infection has taken place, and this infection is in and of itself Adrian Leverkühn's pact with the Devil: His years of demonic inspiration followed by paralysis is denoted by the syphilis spirochete, which resembles his handwriting.

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Furthermore, this study has brought the above described two overall hypotheses regarding the form and function of the pact motif to each of the three works: First, that it is staged as foreign to the work, and second, that this containment fails, meaning that the motif still is formally and thematically integrated into the work. It is a quoted material, meaning a material that is elaborately identified as quoted, that has great consequences. However, in the creation of a model for understanding the Faustian pact motif lies one shortcoming of this current study, which has sacrificed breadth for meticulousness. Only three Faustian works have been analysed, and this study can therefore not be said to even have come close to fully accounting for the development of the motif through the four centuries that lie between Spies's and Mann's Faustbooks, and has rather presented a hypothesis that may be brought to other works, and that undoubtedly would change if it was brought into contact with the larger Faustian tradition, in particular the British branch of this tradition, as implied previously. By narrowing the selection in this manner, some problematic assumptions regarding the pact motif that have been proven to persist to this day have been avoided, and the study has provided new insights into all three objects of analysis in addition to its identification of overarching tendencies, but some of the above-mentioned traits of the pact motif would stand stronger if a larger number of works were shown to exhibit the same tendencies (or would be changed if other Faustian works should turn out to contain a differently arranged pact motif). Another shortcoming of this study is that there remains a level of uncertainty concerning the pact motif in Goethe's *Faust* which arguably is no higher or lower than before this study was conducted; the interpretation offered here does not preclude or disqualify other interpretations that were discussed in Chapter 3. A reader may very well understand the agreement to be a wager, or may regard Mephistopheles as a projection of an aspect of Faust, and their agreement as nothing other than a strongly formulated personal intention never to cease striving. Goethe's *Faust* remains as ambiguous as it was perceived to be almost 100 years ago, and a reader must still resort to choosing between equally defensible interpretations, as Ada Klett concluded as early as in her 1939 overview over Goethe studies. However, the continually expanding selection of possible interpretations and, with them, possible

points of comparison with other works of literature legitimize continued investigation into the pact motif in that work.

Some secondary conclusions have been drawn, building on this study's identification of what the Faustian pact motif is and does. An erotic component to the pact motif has been found in at least two of the three works, where the pact is discussed in terms of betrothal and marriage. Adrian Leverkühn prefaces the ritual finalization of his pact with his realization that it is time for him to settle on one area of study and become "married to a profession" (MDF, p. 192), while Goethe's Mephistopheles wishes to become "united" with Faust in a clearly erotically charged first proposal (GF, l. 1642). In the *Historia*, however, erotic unification with the Devil has been identified as a separate act of apostasy rather than an integrated part of the doctor's pact ritual, and that work therefore cannot be said to contain this component.

Furthermore, the separation of initial demands and oral pact from written pledge in this study's analysis of the *Historia* has uncovered a rarely recognized difference between Faustus's initial desires, the details of his reciprocal agreement with Mephistopheles, and his written pledge. These three are not the same, or interchangeable, and they are not different due to an oversight by the author-editor, but because they belong to the spirit's seduction, *Verführung*, of Faustus, who is gradually stripped of his Promethean yearning for insight and led towards empty hellish delights. The same separation of oral agreement from written, ritualised attestation has shed light on the plausible contents of the agreement in Goethe's *Faust* as well, although this latter work, in contrast to the *Historia*, does not allow for an unambiguous identification of what the written document contains. The close adherence of Mann's *Faustbook* to the sequencing of events in the *Historia* and the revival of familiar aspects of the Faustian pact motif in a different form has also revealed that *Doktor Faustus* contains a material manifestation of a promise that has a function directly comparable to the function of the written pledge in the *Historia*, if this function is understood to be the creation of a physical mark that may serve as an avenue of return to the time and place at which a particular agreement was reached, and that therefore may aid in the identification of what this agreement entails.

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The most important conclusion that can be drawn after the three preceding analyses is that all three works contain different voices, representing different world views, that are confronted with one another, but that nonetheless cannot be mediated between. Within the perspective developed here, the works give the reader no good reasons to privilege one voice over another. There is morality and amorality in the *Historia*, in Goethe's *Faust* there are old laws and rituals as well as the dissolution of these, and in Mann's *Doktor Faustus* there are two types of superstition, two forms of *Aberwitz*, that are confronted with one another. The Schweigestills' guard dog is both Suso and Prästigiari, while Goethe's Faust's hellish beast from the scene *Vor dem Tor* remains separated from Wagner's playful poodle, without the reader being given sufficient reason in either case to privilege one appearance over the other. There is delight in the use of black magic, the conjuration of delicious foods and copulation with beautiful women in the *Historia*, but there is also strict condemnation of these same pleasures. Faustus is tempted and lured both by the Devil and by the Church. The pact motif brings this undecidedness into the three works: The quoted pact, and the old laws that govern it, create ambiguous appearances. This study was born out of a hypothesis that posited an "unsolvable, persistent conflict" as an effect of the pact motif in three Faustian works of literature, and such a conflict has been found in these three works.

The method of reading employed in this study has demonstrated that a systematic revitalization of works that are frequently read comparatively is desirable and productive. Treating Spies's *Historia* as a work of art in its own right, rather than positing some truisms regarding its protagonist, its quality and its message, has revealed a hitherto unnoticed and unexplored complexity that in turn has shed light on structures in Thomas Mann's novel, and that has established a motivic figure in the space between these works. The particulars of the latter author's treatment of a central motif in the Spies-book have in some instances been unfairly treated, due in part to an insufficient appreciation of the older work's inherent sophistication. The refusal to allow the ridicule of Rüdiger Scholz and a daunting reception history to discourage continued questioning of the pact motif in Goethe's *Faust* has also led to a better understanding of the motif's function within both parts of the play. Recent

analyses of the character Faust as he appears in Goethe's work, coupled with an understanding of the ambiguous tendency of Faustian works of literature and the dialectical structure of stage plays, has provided insights into the elaborate positioning of the pact and its implied set of rules, not only in Goethe's *Faust*, but also in two other Faustian works. Comparative reading, which is a suitable basis for approaching the pact motif in any of these three works, has here been coupled with an equally thorough treatment of each object that is used in the comparison; if it had not been, the transformative effort made by Thomas Mann would be lost in an inadequate appreciation for the material that he is adopting and recontextualizing. The same holds true for Goethe's *Faust*; the idea that Goethe's appropriation of the pact motif is "mechanical" is only reasonable in light of a poorly grounded idea of what the pact motif is. The old pact motif has not exhausted its potential for signification, and it should be further scrutinized and questioned.



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