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Faust and Fust: A Case of Mistaken Identities

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Abstract

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This thesis explores the confusion of the book-printer Fust with the semi-legendary figure Dr. Johann Faustus. The primary purpose has been to show the development of this confusion prior to the publication of Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger’s novel Fausts Leben, Thaten und Höllenfahrt in 1791.

The evidence presented in this thesis allows the conclusion that this case of mistaken identities goes further back in time than has thus far been recognized. It has been shown that, in the early sixteenth century, Johann Fust was credited with the invention of typography, rather than Johann Gutenberg. At the same time, the merits of printing had become questionable. This was largely due to the fact that it had facilitated the circulation of heresy-inducing reading material.

By an accident of history, there also lived at this time Dr. Johann Faust, reputed to have made a pact with the devil. Because printing was no longer seen as something by which mankind could benefit, but also as something which could be an evil to the world, the reputation of Dr. Faustus was used to demonstrate the negative aspects of the art of printing.
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INTRODUCTION

The spirit of the Renaissance, which dared to challenge the absolute authority of the Roman Catholic Church and demanded secularization, gave rise to great art and sculpture, literature and science. It was an era of discovery and a time for the expansion of knowledge. It was a spirit ripe for the invention of printing. But with the initiation of the first presses subsequent problems arose.

This thesis explores a confusion which resulted from the invention of printing, namely the confusion of Dr. Faustus and the printer Johann Fust.

The first chapter deals with the attitude of the Church and the general public toward printing. Chapter II explores the possibilities which contributed to the confusion of Dr. Faustus and Johann Fust and closes with the actual proof of Fust's identity as a magician. The third chapter is devoted to the Dutch claim to the invention of printing and how the reputation of Dr. Faustus was used to substantiate this claim.

In the final chapter an attempt is made to indicate the possibility that the confusion of Dr. Johann Faustus with Johann Fust was already current at the time when the first Faustbook was written in 1507.
CHAPTER I
THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE INVENTION
AND PRACTICE OF PRINTING

When the art of printing first became known, the Church of Rome greeted the innovation favorably. Feeling secure in its ability to control the thinking of the laymen, the Church actually believed the invention to be instrumental in the perpetuation of its own religious doctrines. In all its enthusiasm, the Church completely overlooked one important aspect of the new creation: the possibility of using the invention to induce heresy.

In accordance with the spirit of the Renaissance, the Popes of the Roman Catholic Church were eager for the revival of scholarly pursuits, which had virtually died out in the Middle Ages. Not only did they favor the use of printing for the distribution of religious works, they also encouraged its use to make available the classics of the pagan Greek and Roman civilizations.

Indeed, religious leaders everywhere hailed the invention as a divine art. Werner Rolewinck, a Carthusian monk, in his Outline History of the World, remarked:
The art of printing which has been discovered in Mayence is the art of arts, the science of sciences, by means of which it will be possible to place in the hands of all men treasures of literature and of knowledge which have heretofore been out of reach.

Johann Rauchler, the first Rector of Tübingen High School, in reference to printing, exclaimed, "this art is a Gift directly from God himself." 1

Ecclesiastical enthusiasm for the invention was so strong that printing presses were put into operation at various monasteries: Strasbourg, St. Ulrich and Afra, and Nuremberg, to mention a few. Printing in religious institutions, however, was not a great success, for the secular printing houses, busy with improvements of the art, were too much competition for the monasteries. Eventually, the publishing of books in these religious places was almost completely abandoned.

At this point the rift between the official Church and the art of printing begins.

The Church which had for such a long time been able to manipulate the beliefs of the masses, found its absolute control thwarted by the fruits of the invention. With an increase in the number of Bibles came


2 Ibid., p. 369.
a larger reading audience. Thus, laymen were no longer dependent on the Church's interpretation of religious works, but could formulate their own ideas. The Church could no longer hide or distort Biblical material and thus contended that the art of printing was being misused, that more rigid eclesiastical supervision of reading was necessary. "Am 12. November 1499, also wenige monate nach dem erscheinen der Chronik [i.e., Chronik von Köln], verbot der kölnner official in besonderem auftrag des erzbischofs Hermann von Hessen, irgend ein buch one seine prüfung zu drucken, weil die so hohe gabe der buchdruckerkunst durch den missbrauch der drucker zum verderben gekert werde." This, indeed, displays a remarkable contrast to what Johann Brunnen wrote in an introduction to the papal decrees of 1473. Propounding the question "Warum beschenkt Gott die welt mit der gabe der buchdruckerkunst?" he answers, "Gott bereitet damit, vor seiner baldigen erscheinung, eine zweite berufung der heiden, christen und juden vor."5


4Ibid., p. 286.

5Ibid., p. 286.
At this time Humanism was creating profound changes in the thinking of people everywhere, and it was far too late for the Church to bar successfully the reading public from the products of printing. Large segments of the European population, so long accustomed to the wide circulation of books and free choice of reading material, were unwilling to submit to the authority of the Church and forgo their long-held privilege. And only in countries such as Italy and France did the Church censorship meet with any degree of success.

Thus, it was the movement of Humanism that remained the stimulus of the printing business, for it created an overwhelming demand for the literature of classical writers. In fact, this demand was so large that it required the maximum resources of printers everywhere.

A generation later, the Reformation was to serve as another stimulus for the printing industry. In fact, the Reformation might have failed, had it not been for printing, which facilitated the circulation of the Reformation's controversial literature. Likewise, had the invention of printing occurred in an era of less active intellectual interest in literature, it too
might have met with disaster.

Both Humanism and Reformation caused a drastic change in the Church's attitude toward the art of printing. How could it any longer be maintained that printing was a gift from God when its practice was actively destroying the Church's doctrines? Printing, at this point, becomes increasingly polemical. What had seemed to be a gift from God, now turned out to be a weapon in the hands of those who spread heresy. Hence, in 1634, Heinrich Heine could say:

Hamburg ist die Vaterstadt des letzteren, des Rauchfleisches, und rühmt sich dessen, wie Mainz sich seines Johann Fausts / of course Heine means Johann Fust and Erleben sich seines Luthers zu rühmen pflegt. Aber was bedeutet die Buchdruckerei und die Reformation in Vergleichung mit Rauchfleisch? Ob beide ersteren genützt oder geschadet, darüber streiten zwei Parteien in Deutschland; aber sogar unsere eifrigsten Jesuiten sind eingeständig, dass das Rauchfleisch eine gute, für den Menschen heilsame Erfindung ist. 60

Hence, it is not difficult to perceive that the invention of printing was not greeted with complete favor. As it was, in a way, opposed to the authority of the Church, it was easily associated with sorcery—the work of the devil.

In addition, it is known that at this time there lived the semi-legendary figure, Dr. Johann Faustus (ca. 1480-1540), the man who allegedly made a pact with the devil. His reputation and the tales which developed about him must have enjoyed a widespread popularity. Henning goes so far as to say, "In Faust sehen die Zeitgenossen einen Ausweg aus ihrer Lage, in die sie gesellschaftlich-geschichtliche Ereignisse wie der Bauernkrieg usw. gebracht haben." And furthermore:

Er, der durch die Lande zog, seinen Namen selbst bekanntgemacht hat, er, der von den Gelehrten der Zeit in ihren Werken immer wieder erwähnt wurde, blieb im Volk lebendig. An sein wirkliches Auftreten knüpften sich vielerorts Anekdoten, ja ganze Geschichten und Erzählungen. Faust galt als ein besonderer Mensch, der geheimnisvolle Kunststücke vollbrachte und seltsame, nicht allgemein erklärbare Kenntnisse und Fertigkeiten besass. Die mündliche Überlieferung vergrößert die Vorstellungen von ihm, bildet seine Gestalt um, übertreibt sie... 8

One of the stories which, in the course of time, was connected with the person of Dr. Faustus attributed the invention of printing to him. In turn, this found its reflection in literature. Thus, Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger's novel Faust's Leben, Thaten und Höllenfahrt (1791), begins with the opening statement:

8Ibid., p. LVIII.
Lange hatte sich Faust, mit den Seifenblasen der Metaphysik, den Irrwiesen der Morale, und den Schatten der Theologie herumgeschlagen, ohne eine feste, haltbare Gestalt, für seinen Sinn herauszukämpfen. Ergrimm war er sich in die dunkeln Gefilde der Magie, und hoffte nun der Natur gewaltsam abzuwenden, was sie uns so eigensinnig verbirgt. Sein erster Gewinn war die merkwürdige Erfindung der Buchdruckerey. . . .

In a footnote to the preceding passage Klinger explains that the identification of Faust with the inventor of printing is based on popular tradition.

Two historical accounts concerning Faust have led earlier researchers to believe that he was a descendant of the bookprinter, Fust. The first account is a letter of Johannes Trithem to Johannes Virdung in 1507:

-The man of whom you wrote me, George Sabellicus, who has presumed to call himself the prince of necromancers, is a vagabond, a babbler and a rogue, who deserves to be thrashed so that he may henceforth rashly venture to profess in public things so execrable and so hostile to the holy church. For what, other than symptoms of a very foolish and insane mind, are the titles assumed by this man, who shows himself to be a fool and not a philosopher? For thus he has formulated the title befitting him: Master George Sabellicus, the younger Faust, the chief of necromancers, astrologer, the second magus, palmist, diviner with earth and fire, second in the art of divination with water. . . .

9Schriftliche philosophische Romane. Neue verbesserte Ausgabe (M.F., 1810), p. 15

The second account is a letter of Conrad Mutianus Rufus to Heinrich Urbanus in 1513, which begins:

-Eight days ago came to Erfurt a certain soothsayer by the name of George Faust, the demi-god of Heidelberg, a mere braggart and fool. . . .

The question was how to interpret the fact that the common name Johann (Faust) was here entered as George. The reference to himself as "the younger Faust" (in the first letter), has led some scholars to speculations concerning the older Faust. This prompted Reichlin-Moldegg to identify an older Faust with the bookprinter, Fust. Today we know that George Sabellius, the younger Faust and George Faust are really the same person: Johann Faust, who studied at the Heidelberg University.

Although we do know that Faust and Fust were two different persons, the question of how and why their identities could be mistaken remains to be answered. To this writer's knowledge there has been no previous detailed investigation of the elements which resulted in this confusion, a confusion which involves historical fact, legend, and even national pride.

11 Palmer and More, p. 87.


13 Ibid., p. 9.
Certain fact has it that Gutenberg implemented the first printing press in Mainz about 1450. At this time he was receiving financial assistance from Johann Fust (ca. 1400-1466). However, because of a disagreement concerning monetary matters, Fust brought suit against the inventor and won his case. As a result of this, by 1515 Fust, not Gutenberg, was acclaimed as the inventor of printing. In addition, the imposter established a printing house in the city of Mainz. Here, then, begins the problem of mistaken identities.

CHAPTER II
THE SETTING FOR THE CONFUSION
OF FAUST AND FUST

Of vital importance in the development of mistaken identities is not only the misrepresentation of Johann Fust as the inventor of printing, but also the fact that the names Faust and Fust all too easily lend themselves to confusion: Fust is merely a German form for the Latin Faustus. 15 Contributing factors are also the intrigue and secrecy which are associated with the invention of typography:

Dass die Buchdruckerkunst einst von einem gewissen Nimbus umgeben war, zeigt die früher allgemeine Verwechslung des Mainzer Buchdruckers Joh. Fust mit Dr. Joh. Faust, wovon sich (neben der Beziehung auf die Buchdruckerschwärze) die schmerzhaften Bezeichnungen Schwarzkünstler und schwarze Kunst für die Buchdrucker und ihre Tätigkeit herleiten dürften. 16

The aspects of secrecy and the close relationship between the names Faust and Fust are evident in what the Bavarian chronicler Aventinius had to say concerning the invention of printing:


Eben so genantes Jahres (1447) ist erfunden worden, die Truckerey zu Mainz von einem genant Hans Faust \[meant is Johann Fust\], hat 2 Jahr daran zugetrich mit Hülff seines Eidams Peter Schäffers, von Garesheim ... dem er seine eigene Tochter Christiana zu der Ehe gab. Die zween haben diese Kunst in Geheim gehalten NB. niemands zusehen lassen. NB. haben alle Gesellen und Knecht zu solcher Arbeit und Kunst nothdürfftig einen Eid schwe- ren müssen. NB. dass sie es niemand offenbahren noch lehren wolten. Doch über 10. Jahr haben jetzt genandtes Fausten und Schäffers Diener diese Kunst geoffenbahret, und öffentlich her-für ans Liecht gebracht: ... 17

More evidence which may have contributed to the ill repute of the bookprinter is expressed in the following passage. It is taken from the reaction which Hermann Witekind, better known as Lercheiner, voiced sometime after the appearance of the Spiess Faustbock (1587):

... das aber ist ein ungebührlich ding und zubeklagen, dass auch unsere buch tückler dörffen ohne schwe und scham solche bücher ausprengen und gemein machen, dadurch ehrliche leute verleumdet, die fürsätzige jugent, die sie zuhanden bekommen, gefüllert und angeführt wird, wie die affen, zu wünschen (dabey sich dann der teufel bald lesst finden) und zu versuchen ob sie dergleichen wunderwerck könne nachthun, unbedacht und ungeachtet was für ein ende es mit Fausten und seinesgleichen geo- nommen habe: dass ich geschweige dass die schöne edle kunst der truckerey die uns von Gott zu gutem gegeben, demassen zum bösen missbraucht wird. Dass sey genug von dem. 18

17 Chronica ad ann. 1447. Quoted from J.G. Schel- horn, Amoenitates litterariae (n.p., 1726), pp. 76-77.

18 Christlich bedencken und erinnerung von Zauberey, 1597. Quoted from Hans Hoenning, p. LXIV.
Thus, when it comes to merit, the invention and practice of printing, its innovator, Fust, altogether must be seen in the light of doubtfulness. Simultaneously, there is an increasing popularity of tales concerning Faust and his incredible accomplishments with the help of the devil. In 1598, Joannes Scultetus wrote in his *Gründlicher Bericht von Zauberey und Zaubern*:

> Diese dess Teuffels eigene Diener sind dreyer-ley: Etliche die alles nur dahin richten dz sie wunderbarliche Spitzfindigkeit und grosse Kunst herfur bringen und hoch dadurch gehalten werden. . . .

Similarly, in the *Explicationes Melanchtoniae*:

> The devil is a marvellous craftman, for he is able by some device to accomplish things which are natural but which we do not understand. For he can do more than man.

It is shown quite clearly that anything which went beyond the power of understanding was labeled as the work of the devil. Therefore, it can not come as a great surprise when the invention of printing was decided to be the work of a servant of the devil. The process of printing with moveable type was, in itself, natural enough, but was not understood.


20 This passage is part of Melanchthon's commentaries on the Scriptures delivered between 1549 and 1560. Palmer and More, p. 99.
That this line of reasoning is justified is evident in the first actual reference to Faust as the inventor of printing. This legend was told in Strasbourg by an aging Dutchman, Hendrik Schoor, who was in that city from 1574 to 1588. He recounted what he had heard from Dutch elders to Johann Walch. Walch, being quite impressed by Schoor's story, had it published in 1609. The following is a brief account of what Hendrik Schoor told Walch:

A man, known as Faust, once journeyed to Paris and in that city sold Bibles. At first this book merchant sold his Bibles for 60 crowns. As his sales increased, however, this man, Faust, reduced the price of his books, first to 50 crowns, then to 40, and finally even lower. The purchasers of Faust's Bibles were so astonished by the remarkable similarity of all the copies that they began an investigation. They soon learned that these books had not been handwritten, rather, they had been produced by some occult means. Angered and fearful, the purchasers demanded a refund of their money and denounced the book vendor as a magician. As a result, after being accused of having made a pact with the devil, Faust was forced to flee.
This legend also found its way to England. To be sure, another flavor is given to the tale by the addition of the name Koster of Haarlem. The latter aspect will be taken up in the next chapter. In 1726, Daniel Defoe wrote in *A Political History of the Devil*:

Johann Faustus was Servant, or Journeyman, or Compositor, or what you please to call it, to Koster of Haarlem, the first inventor of printing, and having printed the Psalter, sold them at Paris as manuscripts, because as such they yielded a better price.

But the learned Doctors not being able to understand how the work was perform'd, concluded ... it was all the Devil, and that the man was a Witch; accordingly they took him up for a Magician and a Conjurer, and one that work'd by the Black Art, that is to say, by the help of the Devil; and, in a Word, they threaten'd to hang him for a Witch, and in order to it commenc'd a Process against him in their criminal courts, which made such a Noise in the World as rais'd the Fame of poor John Faustus to a frightful Height 'till at last he was oblig'd, for fear of the Gallows, to discover the whole secret to them.22

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22Alexander Tille, *Faustsplitter*, No. 214.
CHAPTER III
THE DUTCH CLAIM TO THE INVENTION OF PRINTING

There can be little doubt that the confusion of Faust with the bookprinter Fust was largely due also to the Dutch claim to the invention of printing.

It was not until some years after the supposed date of the invention that the Dutch first laid claim to the discovery of the printing process. The Cologne Chronicle (1499) made the first mention of this new claim. The following is the translation of a passage which appeared in this work:

This right worthy art was invented first of all in Germany, at Mainz on the Rhine. And that is a great honor to the German nation that such ingenious men are found there. This happened in the year of our Lord 1440, and from that time until 1450 the art and all that pertains to it was investigated, and in 1450, which was a Golden Year, men began to print, and the first book that was printed was the Bible in Latin, and this was printed with a letter as large as that now used in missals.

Although this art was invented at Mainz, as far as regards the manner in which it is now commonly used, yet the first prefiguration was invented in Holland from the Donatuses which were printed there before that time. And from and out of these aforesaid art took its beginning, and was invented in a manner much more masterly and subtler than this and the longer it lasted the more full of art it became.23

The Cologne Chronicle continued by stating that a certain Omnibus wrote in a preface and parts of other books that a French Walloon, Nicholas Jenson, was the actual inventor of printing. The Cologne Chronicle, however, disputed this, branding Omnibus's idea a lie by mentioning that the printing craft had reached Venice before Nicholas Jenson had begun his work, and, in conclusion, the chronicle stated that Johannes Gutenberg was the inventor of printing. Hence, in 1499, there was a vague allusion to an earliest prefiguration, although crude, as being the work of the Dutch.

The next Dutch claim to the art of printing, occurring approximately two generations after the Cologne Chronicle, was propounded by Jan van Zuren, a citizen of Haarlem, who, between 1549 and 1561, formulated in Latin a "Dialogue on the first and as yet commonly unreported but still more veritable invention of the art of printing." Much of what Van Zuren wrote has been lost, but a literary figure of the 17th century, Peter Scriverius, has preserved the first pages, which contained the introduction.

24 Douglas C. McMurray, p. 166.
In Jan van Zuren's work Haarlem is named as the place where printing was first done. It also describes vaguely the circumstances under which the invention came about: that it took place in a private home of van Zuren's acquaintance, but the art "attached itself to a foreigner and, leaving the limited circumstances of the paternal home behind it, multiplied its equipment and at last appeared publicly in Mainz." 25

A similar account was given by Dirck Volkertzoon Coornhert, who, in an edition of Cicero's De officiis, wrote a dedication to the governing powers of Haarlem. This work was printed in 1561. Here, again, it is stated that the art of printing "welcke conste namaels van een onghetrouwe knecht ghevoert zynde tot mens . . . al-daer verbetert is. . . .26 (which art was improved in Mainz, after having been brought there by an unfaithful servant).

Once more this despicable unfaithful servant is mentioned by Luigi Guicciardini in his Descrizione di tutti Passi Bassi (1566). This book made such an impact

on readers throughout Europe that it was translated into French (1567), German (1582), English (1593), Dutch (1612) and Latin (1613). This fact has contributed greatly to the spreading of the idea that Fust was guilty of the theft of the invention of bookprinting, that he was an unfaithful servant of L. J. Koster.

It was a Dutch physician and historian, Adrean de Jonghe (also known as Junius), who gave real substance to the Dutch claim in 1568 and for the first time mentioned by name the Dutchman supposedly responsible for the invention of printing. In doing so, he cleverly made use of the bad reputation of Dr. Johann Faustus.

The following is a brief account of the circumstances.

It is fairly common knowledge that a certain Laurence Janszoon Koster (ca. 1370-1440) was born in some part of Holland around 1370 and that he died in the city of Haarlem around 1440. In addition, Koster was an innkeeper, a dealer of wine, oil, candles and soap. Allegedly, in 1426 he began working with movable types of wood construction, changing from wooden types to metal types ten years later. There is nothing in the official records.
of Haarlem, however, to confirm the man's association with the printing process.

According to Junius, Koster's first stage of developing a printing process consisted of carving wooden letters from beechwood, which were then smeared with ink and pressed on paper. The first book the Dutchman produced by this means was the Speculum Humanae Salvationis (1430), and, according to Junius, this work, preceding the Gutenberg Bible by twenty years, was the first example of the printing process in Europe. Furthermore, Junius pointed out that Koster printed and assembled three editions of this work before his death in 1440, the last of these editions being in Dutch rather than Latin. Supposedly, Junius had seen a copy of this third edition.28

Subsequently, Junius described Koster's improvement of printing by use of metal types, from which method was produced the Mirror of our Salvation. This method was so successful that Koster's printing business began to grow rapidly. In fact, the demand for the man's work increased so much that he could no longer

28 For information on the Dutch claim to the invention of printing, see Putnam, Vol. I, pp. 348-353; McMurtrie, pp. 165-181.
depend solely upon his immediate family to carry on the work of the printing business. Thus, Koster found it necessary to hire outsiders, some of whom were foreigners. This, Junius propounded, led to the betrayal of Koster's invention and resulted in the giving of credit for the invention to an imposter.

Among the foreigners working for Koster was a Johann. According to Junius, it was suspected that this Johann's last name was Faustus:

... ik wil niet angstig onderzoeken of het degeen geweest is, die den gelukbelovenden naam Faustus droeg, maar voor zijn meester ontrouw en ongelukkig was, of wel een andere Johannes. Want ik begeer de schim der overledenen niet te verontrusten, daar zij gedurende hun leven, wegens de verwijtingen van hun geweten, genoeg zullen geleden hebben.29

In conclusion, according to Junius's version, this Johann, after having learned the skill of typecasting, made off with all his employer's equipment on Christmas Eve while all good citizens were in the church. There-

29A. v.d. Linde, De Haarlemsche Costerlegende wetenschappelijks onderzocht, p. 146. In English this would read: ... I do not want to examine carefully whether it was the one who carried the fortune-promising name Faustus, but who was unfaithful and unfortunate for his master, or whether it was another Johannes. I do not want to disturb the spirit of the dead, because they must have suffered enough during their lives as a result of bad conscience.
after, he journeyed to Mainz, via Amsterdam and Cologne.

Because there is nothing in the official documents of the city of Haarlem to indicate that a person by the name of Faustus was ever living there, it may be assumed that Junius's tale was a clever attempt to substantiate the Dutch claim to the invention of printing. In so doing, Junius made use of the reputation of Dr. Johann Faustus, a scoundrel who was able to perform such an immoral action.

This explains how Daniel Defoe could think of Johann Faustus as the servant of L. J. Koster. In his Political History of the Devil the tales of Hendrik Schoor and Hadrianus Junius are merged into one fantastic tale.

30 See appended letter, p. 30.
CHAPTER IV
FUST AND THE FAUSTBOOK

Hitherto, only one attempt has been made to indicate a possible influence of the reputation of the bookprinter, Fust, in connection with the Faustbook. This was done by Professor Därr in a letter to Sigismund Führer in 1676. He suspected that Dr. Faustus made Alexander the Great appear to the Emperor because Fust had published the *Doctrinalia Alexandria*.\(^{31}\)

Considering the popularity of tales concerning Fust (or Faust) and the invention of printing around the time when the first Faustbooks were published, Därr’s speculation in terms of an influence of Fust’s reputation would certainly seem justified. And, upon closer examination, one of the tales in the Faustbook shows some characteristics which appear to confirm this speculation. The caption of this chapter is "D. Faustus wil die verlorenen Comedien Terentij und Plauti alle wider ans Liecht bringen."\(^{32}\)


The following is a brief account of the story:
The clergy laments the fact that so many of the Latin comedies have been lost which could serve to teach Latin and convey a knowledge of basic human nature. D. Faustus offers to produce the lost works only for a few hours and suggests to have them copied by students, notaries and scribes. The clergy will only accept the books in such a fashion, "das man sie rechtschaffen und für und für behalten und haben könne" (p. 168). Finally, they do not accept the offer on the grounds that "der böse Geist möchte in die newerfundenen alderley Gifft und ergerliche Exempel mit einschieben, das also mehr schaden denn frommen daraus erwachsen könne" (p. 168).

The three outstanding characteristics of this tale are:

1. The complaint about the loss of classical works.
2. Faust's offer to produce these works (i.e., with the help of the devil!).
3. The rejection of this offer on the grounds that these works, produced with the help of the devil, would spread harmful knowledge.

Concerning the first point, it has already been observed that one of the most important merits of the invention
of printing was the fact that it made the classics available to those who wished to read them. The Bavarian scribe, Aventinius, had said,

> wo die kunst nicht erfunden wer worden, weren die alten Bücher alle verloren worden, man will in den Stifften und Klosterln nichts mehr schreiben, die haben vor Zeiten die Bücher geschrieben, die Schul aufgehalten.33

Similarly, in the Chronik von Köln (1499), the anonymous writer had copied the following passage from Hartmann Schedel's Buch der Chroniken (1493):

> auch sin vil boicher verzuckt und verloren die man nirgens vinden kan, umb dat der so wenich geschreven was, as dat groiste deil die Titus Livius gemacht hait, . . . item die boicher van den striden der Duitschen mit den Romoren . . . die Plinius gemacht hait van den man wenich of gantz niet vint.34

That the invention of printing was directly connected with the loss, lack, or preservation of books is also evident in an eulogy on the invention of printing which Johann Brunnen composed for the edition of the decrees of Pope Gregor IX (1473):

> Der klerus behauptet, unter vorwand des mangels an büchern, seine unwissenheit entschuldigen zu können. . . .
> Beantwortung der ausrede des klerus, lob der buchdruckerkunst. (Diese Dekretalen sind dem

33Chronica ad ann. 1497. Quoted from J. G. Schelhorn, Memoriatitates litterariae (n.p., 1726), p. 77.

desh warlich billig! Dank unserer kunst, wenn nur das manuskript korrekt ist, so sind es auch sämtliche exemplare; eine einzige zusammenstellung genügt für tausend.)

Concerning the second point, the story of Hendrik Schoor needs to be recalled. Here, too, Faust had been accused of having produced books in pact with the devil.

The third point is also intimately connected with the invention of printing. It has been shown that the attitude of the Church of Rome underwent a drastic change toward the new printing method. In this respect the passage under discussion would fit into the general mood of anti-Catholicism which prevails in the Faustbook: the clergy regrets the loss of books, Faust offers to produce them, but the clergy rejects this offer.

Hence, it may be argued that already in the Faustbook the identification of Faust with the inventor of printing is present.
CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose in this thesis to examine the confusion of the bookprinter Fust with the semi-legendary figure Dr. Johann Faustus and to see how far back this confusion can be traced. The evidence presented in this thesis allows the conclusion that this case of mistaken identities goes further back in time than has thus far been recognized. Karl Theens, for example, speaks of the confusion of Faust with Fust as dating back to the first twenty years of the seventeenth century.35

Less careful consideration was given to the problem of mistaken identities by Butler. In a discussion of Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger's novel, Faust's Leben, Thaten und Hölleinfahrt, he sees a similar confusion of Faust with the bookprinter Fust only in the Strassburg puppet-play and continues by saying, "otherwise I have not found the identification in popular sources..."36

It has been shown that, in the early sixteenth century, Johann Fust was credited with the invention of typography, rather than Johann Gutenberg. At the same

35 Karl Theens, Doktor Johann Faust, Geschichte der Faustgestalt vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart (Hildesheim, 1940), p. 35.

time, the merits of the printing process had become questionable, to say the least. This was largely due to the fact that it had facilitated the circulation of heresy inducing reading material. The Church of Rome had lost its absolute control over the masses.

By an accident of history, there also lived Dr. Johann Faust at this time, reputed for having made a pact with the devil. Because printing was no longer unanimously seen as something by which mankind could benefit but also as something which could be an evil in the world, the reputation of Dr. Faustus served to demonstrate this aspect of printing.

The Dutch subsequently made use of the bad reputation of Dr. Faustus and the false premise that he was the inventor of printing in Mainz, all in order to claim the invention of printing as a Dutch merit. The fusion of these two ideas manufactured a nasty Faust who stole the printing equipment from a poor Dutchman, Koster, who was said to be the real inventor of printing.
Dear Sir,

In reply to your abovementioned letter I am sorry to inform you that the existence of a Johann Faustus in Haarlem in the middle of the fifteenth century is probably only due to the story by Adriaen de Jonghe and may be regarded as a legend.

The municipal records of his time do not, as far as they survived the ages, mention his name and modern students do not believe the story of De Jonghe.

Yours truly,

Mrs. J.M. Japikse,
Archivist of Haarlem.
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


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