

Medieval authorship in sixteenth-century Straßburg: Johannes Pauli and his ‘Schimpf und Ernst’ (1522)

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Compiling texts penned by others may be regarded as a quintessentially medieval literary activity.¹ For no matter how great the technical demands it placed on the ‘author’-compiler – from selecting and arranging the texts at his (or her) disposal to translating and/ or reworking them; from supplying commentary to integrating material of their own invention – it encouraged an attitude of authorial self-denial, of humility in the face of the *auctoritas* of venerable predecessors if not also of God as the ultimate Author.² But to disavow one’s own authorship is most certainly not the same thing as to be disinterested in authorship per se; nor does authorial self-effacement necessarily signal a retreat into anonymity. Many ‘author’-compilers still lent their name to their collections, with some going to very considerable lengths to construct and project a particular self-image in their work. The ambiguity at the heart of this stance is not easy to describe: is there not always something authorial about literary practices of self-naming, for instance?³ Nor did such notions of ‘diminished authorship’ simply disappear in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the emergence of the printed book. Indeed, new processes of book production merely seem to have increased the number of ways in which authorship could be denied and asserted at one and the same time. One notable case in point is Brother Johannes Pauli’s ‘Schimpf und Ernst’: a collection of 693 short narratives, exempla and *facetia*-like anecdotes, first printed (in Straßburg) by Johannes Grüninger in 1522.⁴ This work came to exercise considerable influence on

¹ See Partridge, Stephen, *The Makere of this Boke. Chaucer’s Retraction and the Author as Scribe and Compiler*, in: *Author, Reader, Book. Medieval Authorship in Theory and Practice*, Eds. Partridge, Stephen and Kwakkel, Erik, Toronto 2012, pp. 106-153.

² The Germanist discussion of medieval authorship is extensive; for more on issues such as authority and creativity see Cramer, Thomas, *Solus creator est deus. Der Autor auf dem Weg zum Schöpfertum*, in: *Daphnis* 15 (1986), pp. 13-28; Wachinger, Burghart, *Autorschaft und Überlieferung*, in: *Autorentypen*, Eds. Haug, Walter and Wachinger, Burghart (*Fortuna vitrea* 6), Tübingen 1991, pp. 1-28; Jan-Dirk Müller, *Auctor – Actor – Author. Einige Anmerkungen zum Verständnis vom Autor in lateinischen Schriften des frühen und hohen Mittelalters*, in: *Der Autor im Dialog. Beiträge zu Autorität und Autorschaft*, Eds. Ingold, Felix Philipp and Wunderlich, Werner, St Gallen 1995, pp. 17-31; Rüdiger Schnell, *Autor und Werk im deutschen Mittelalter. Forschungskritik und Forschungsperspektiven*, in: *Wolfram-Studien* 15 (1998), pp. 12-73.

³ See de Looze, Laurence, *Signing Off in the Middle Ages. Medieval Textuality and Strategies of Authorial Self-naming*, in: *Vox intexta. Orality and Textuality in the Middle Ages*, Eds. Doane, Alger N. and Pasternack, Carol B., Madison, Wis. 1991, pp. 167-178.

⁴ For more on Pauli’s working relationship with Johannes Grüninger see Schulz-Grobert, Jürgen, *Das Straßburger Eulenspiegelbuch. Studien zu entstehungsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen der ältesten Drucküberlieferung* (Hermaea NF 83), Tübingen 1999, pp. 102f.

subsequent collections of short narratives in German vernacular prose ('Schwankbücher').⁵ Indeed, Pauli was destined to become an *auctor* of sorts for later 'author'-compilers in spite of the Franciscan monk's best efforts never to claim the status of author proper for himself.⁶ Just what the alternatives were for Pauli will be analysed in the following close reading of his text.

I

One very early signal is given by the title-page of the collection which focusses exclusively on matters of content and makes no attempt whatsoever to use the identity of the 'author'-compiler to market the book:

Schimpf vnd ernst heiset das buch mit namen durchlaufft es der welt handlung mit ernstlichen vnd kurtzweiligen exemplen, parabolen vnd hystorien nützlich vnd guot zuo besserung der menschen.⁷

The appeal to readers and prospective buyers is made on the basis of its broad sweep (all the ways of the world are to be found mirrored in the following tales) as well as by promising entertainment and moral improvement. Apart from delivering the title of the work itself – *Schimpf vnd ernst* – these twin functions are then used (by Pauli) to classify the overwhelming majority of the texts that follow even as they are numbered: *Das erst von schimpff* (= S1); *Das ander von ernst* (= E2) etc.⁸

Failure at the very outset to mention any kind of author is, however, mitigated almost immediately by a Preface which elucidates various aspects of the collection with repeated reference to the person responsible for it. In the Preface the work is presented not only as an

⁵ Kipf, Johannes Klaus, Auf dem Weg zum Schwankbuch. Die Bedeutung Frankfurter Drucker und Verleger für die Ausbildung eines Buchtyps im 16. Jahrhundert, in: Frankfurt im Schnittpunkt der Diskurse. Strategien und Institutionen literarischer Kommunikation im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit, Eds. Seidel, Robert and Toepfer, Regina, Frankfurt am Main 2010, pp. 195-220.

⁶ Cf. the nod to Pauli in the Preface of Jakob Frey's 'Gartengesellschaft' (1556): *Ferrers so sind ongeferlich bey zehen fablen under den andern eingefürt, so frater Johannes Pauli in dem Schimpff und ernst auch angeregt* (Ed. Bolte, Johannes [StLV 209], Tübingen 1896, p. 4).

⁷ All quotations are taken from: Johannes Pauli Schimpf und Ernst, Ed. Österley, Hermann (StLV 85), Stuttgart 1866.

⁸ For more on this system of classification and the thematic coherence of the collection as a whole see von Ammon, Frieder and Waltenberger, Michael, Wimmeln und Wuchern. Pluralisierungs-Phänome in Johannes Paulis Schimpf und Ernst und Valentin Schumanns Nachtbüchlein, in: Pluralisierungen. Konzepte zur Erfassung der Frühen Neuzeit, Eds. Müller, Jan-Dirk et alii (Pluralisierung und Autorität 21), Berlin 2010, pp. 1-30, here 1-14.

interim means of dispelling the moral confusion in contemporary society before Christ Himself intervenes,⁹ but also as the product of one individual's labours:

Ist mitler zeit dises buoch suosamen gelesen von dem erwürdigen vatter vnd bruoder Johannes Pauli barfuosser ordens, leszmeister zuo Than in dem selben kloster, so er .xl. iar vff erden gepredigt hat, vnd hat dise exempel zuosamen gelesen vsz allen büchern, wa er es funden hat .dc.lxxx. hystorien vnd parabulen zuo beiden hendlen, geistlich vnd weltlich dienende.

In fact further details concerning the scale of the work and nature of its numerous *exempel* (reflecting both religious and secular interests) follow upon the naming of Johannes Pauli himself who is identified in the first instance as a Franciscan monk and preacher in Thann (south of Colmar) with forty years of experience.¹⁰ In this way any implied claim to authority does not appear primarily as a literary one. If anything, the 'author'-compiler's literary activity is shown to be born of his life as a preacher-monk. Pauli is doing nothing more, he thus claims, than putting into practice an edict found in the Gospels: *Vnd vff das, das wort des heiligen Ewangely erfüllt werd, lesen die brösamlin zuosamen, das sie nit verloren werden.*¹¹

Subsequent reflections on the purpose and reception of the work also lead back to the person who first put it together. Having outlined three categories of recipient (those in monasteries; those in castles; preachers) and three concomitant functions (recreation; moral improvement; to keep a weary congregation interested), Pauli requests that one and all be benevolent in their appraisal of what he has done: *Es bit auch der obgemelt samler dis buochs, das man es lesen wöl in der meinung, als er es gemacht hat, nit verkeren noch verwerffen.* Indeed, readers are encouraged to improve upon and add to the collection, providing they too respect the standards of propriety that he has set: *dan er hat sich gehiit vor schampern vnd vnzüchtigen exemplen, deren im vil entgegen gangen sein, damit er niemans kein ergerung geb.* Once more the benchmark Pauli expressly wishes his efforts to be measured against is a moral not a literary one, although the long list of those to whom he offers his apologies for any offence inadvertently given is not without rhetorical effect: God; Virgin Mary; Saint Francis; Saint Martin; Heavenly Host; all mankind! Such 'authorial' humility is then taken one step further in the last line of the Preface in which recipients are

⁹ Notably, the role of books is emphasized throughout; just as society's waywardness has been brought about by *vil vnd manigfaltige büchlin*, so Christ, it is envisioned, will intervene by rousing *die heilsamen bücher ewiger selikeit vnd fridsamens lebens* from their slumber.

¹⁰ For more on Pauli's life and works see Mühlherr, Anna, Johannes Pauli, in: *Deutsche Dichter der frühen Neuzeit (1450-1600). Ihr Leben und Werk*, Ed. Füssel, Stephan, Berlin 1993, pp. 125-137.

¹¹ Cf. John 6:12. See also Altmann, Stephanie, *Gewitztes Erzählen in der Frühen Neuzeit. Heinrich Bebel's Fazetien und ihre deutsche Überlieferung* (Kölner Germanistische Studien NF 10), Köln 2009, pp. 210f.

reminded of the place and date of the text's composition if not of the agent of that process:
*Vnd ist dis buoch gemacht worden zuo Than in dem selbigen kloster nach der geburt Christi
 vnsers herren. Tausent. cccc. xix. iar.*

II

When it comes to the main body of the collection, Pauli repeatedly draws attention to the authorship of others by specifying his very many sources. Repeated reference is made to the *auctores*, both ancient and modern, of a large number of the 693 'exempla' and anecdotes that follow: from Aristotle to Petrarch, from St Gregory (the Great) to Jean Gerson to name just a few. The reader swiftly becomes accustomed to the formulaic openings to many of the narratives which highlight the *auctoritas* of others:

Also schreibt Ualerius [Valerius Maximus] von einem bild vff einer saul, das sagt wan einer etwz gestolen het [...]. (S58)

Es schreibt Doctor Felix Hem[m]erlin, wie Eusebius schreibt von einem redner, vnd Sophista maximo [...]. (S119)

Aristoteles schreibet von einem der het got gebetten, das alles, das er anrürt, zuo gold würd [...]. (E180)

Authors are also named repeatedly at the conclusion of the narratives, more often than not in the context of Pauli's own moral lesson and/ or commentary; and it is at these points that we find references to Biblical 'authors' (Solomon, David, Isaiah, Paul), Church Fathers (not least Pauli's *heilicher bartman* [E636] St Jerome and St Augustine) and a whole host of saints including of course St Francis¹². The demand for external authority is apparently so great that Pauli can allude to texts without authors (*Ich lisz von einem narren* [E38]; *Wir lesen in fabulis* [S431]) as well as anonymous author-figures (*Ein anderer lerer spricht* [S395]; *Es schreibt ein doctor* [S618]) to reassure his recipients of the validity of what they are reading.¹³

Among the ranks of all of these authors Pauli evidently has several favourites: Valerius Maximus is named on eight separate occasions, Felix Hemmerlin (d. c. 1460) on

¹² Pauli is not averse to listing authorities such as these, creating veritable catalogues of authors to substantiate his discussion of especially tricky topics; cf. S105 and the issue of whether prayer is more beneficial than reading: *Sant Bernhart schreibt von im selber, das er me bei den baumen mit gebet gelert hab, dan vsz den büchern. Deszgleichen sant Augustin, sant Thomas, sant Bonauentura vnd sant Franciscus, [...]*.

¹³ The effect of all of these strategies of authorization is compounded at times by Pauli by means of Latin citation; cf. E348 concerning the damnation of a certain pope: *Spricht doctor Jacobus Cartusiensis der dis beschreit. (Si in virido lingno idest in capite hoc fit in arido quid erit in subdito).*

twelve.¹⁴ Pride of place, however, must go to the Italian humanist and super-author Petrarch (d. 1374) whom Pauli defers to no fewer than thirty-five times.¹⁵ The name of *Franciscus petrarcha* thus becomes a by-word for authorship proper, used both to introduce and conclude numerous exemplary narratives (*Franciscus Petrarcha schreibt von einem, der gieng [...] [E148]; [...] Franciscus petrarcha schreibt dise fabel [S616]*) as well as to support Pauli's reflections on a variety of moral and ethical themes (making a virtue out of necessity [S133]; money [S178]; drunkenness [S240]) and other more extraordinary phenomena (speaking magpies [S669]!)¹⁶.

The presentation of Petrarch's authorship in Pauli's 'Schimpf und Ernst' is a good example of how even brief references can gain in significance as they accumulate. By the same token Pauli as 'author'-compiler also betrays an interest in monastic authors in general (such as Caesarius of Heisterbach or Hugo de Prato) and Franciscan preachers (like himself) in particular: *Es schreibt Rupertus de Licio ein barfuosser in seiner fastenpredigt (E229); Es was ein doctor barfuosser ordens, der hiesz Giraldu de piscariis, der het vff das hochzeit vnser lieben frawen empfenchnis treflich gepredigt (S551).*¹⁷ Even closer to home Pauli repeatedly extols the wisdom and wit of the renowned Straßburg preacher Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg (d. 1510) as well as the latter's authorship: *Lisz doctor Keiserspergs Omeisz darin findestu bericht (S153).*¹⁸ This reference is further testimony to Pauli's habitual self-effacement, for as with many of Geiler von Kaysersberg's published works *Die Emeis* (Straßburg: Johannes Grüninger[!] 1517) was in fact compiled by Pauli himself on the basis of his own transcription of a cycle of Geiler's sermons.¹⁹ Elsewhere, in the title of another of Geiler's works Pauli's role in such textual production is described in metaphorical terms already familiar to us: *Die brösamlin doct[or] Keiserspergs vffgelesen von Frater Johan[nes] Paulin barfuosser orde[n]s* (Straßburg: Johannes Grüninger, 1517); and the image of this literary activity of Pauli's is reinforced in this earlier work by means of a woodcut (VI^v).²⁰ By

¹⁴ Valerius Maximus: S8; S/E120; E241; S250; E440; E537; E635; E660. Felix Hemmerlin: S66; S119; E130; E218; S308; S320; S418; E455; E469; E511; E512; E515.

¹⁵ S22; S27; S105; S108; S133; S143; S144; E148; S164; S178; S189; S204; S206; S217; S240; S250; E254; S264; S308; S319; S407; S415; S417; S429; E443; S470; E472; S478; S504; E518; E544; S616; S622; S669.

¹⁶ *Franciscus petrarcha spricht von der atzlen, das sie so gern ret, wan sie etwas nit finden kan, das man sie gelert hat, vnd sie es vergessen hat, das sie vor leid sterben sol.*

¹⁷ Prominent Franciscans also serve as credible eye-witnesses (or authors of eye-witness accounts): *das hat bruder Bernhardin de Busti gesehen, ee er ein barfuosser ward (S439).*

¹⁸ S97 relates how Geiler once silenced those asking him trick questions (by wittily asking one back), whilst both S460 and S461 present Geiler's (critical) views on overly long sermons concerning Christ's Passion.

¹⁹ For more on Pauli and Geiler see Voltmer, Rita, *Wie der Wächter auf dem Turm. Ein Prediger und seine Stadt. Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg und Straßburg (Beiträge zur Landes- und Kulturgeschichte 4)*, Trier 2005, pp. 99-107.

²⁰ For a reproduction of this woodcut see Voltmer (note 19), p. 104.

the time it came to collecting, composing and publishing his ‘Schimpf und Ernst’ Johannes Pauli, it seems, had had considerable experience in authorial self-subordination.

III

Nevertheless Pauli’s reluctance to be considered an *auctor* in his own right is counter-balanced by a number of other strategies of self-presentation that draw attention to his role as compiler. His organisation of much of the collection in themed sections,²¹ for instance, is reflected upon early on, when one group of texts (entitled *Von der ler vatter vnd muoter* S18-S22) gives way to another:

Ein titel von den narren. So ietz nechst gemelt ist ein nerrischer sun, hat frater Johannes Pauli etlich narren her wöllen setzen, die zu vil laster mögen dem predicanten dienen, so fint man sie sie bei einander.

Unusually, this extended section-title sheds light on the rationale behind the order of the groupings (which is by no means always this coherent), whereby the figure of the foolish son in text S22 is taken as a cue for the compiler to follow it with a much lengthier series of texts concerning fools of one kind or another in texts E23-S48. This decision is explicitly attributed to Pauli in terms which are entirely consistent with the work’s Preface, ie. it is taken with preachers in mind in order to facilitate their use of the ‘Schimpf und Ernst’ as a reservoir of entertaining ‘exempla’ that illustrate a variety of vices. Notably, a similar identification of the compiler can be found in a rubric much later on in the collection at a point when the ‘exempla’ appear in no particular order:

Etliche exempel kurtzweiliche reden von mancherlei dingen, da keins zu dem andern gehört, hat Frater Johannes Pauli hieher wöllen setzen für brösamlin, das sie nit verlorn würden, mag iederman zuo articulen vnd titulen, wie es im gefelt.

Here Pauli’s apparent abdication of responsibility in favour of the works’ readers, who are encouraged to fashion thematic groupings of their own from the mass of material, is combined with what amounts to the signature-metaphor of texts as ‘crumbs’ not to be wasted:

²¹ The range of the themed sections reflects the comprehensive scope of the collection for which nothing is too sacred (*Von vnser lieben frawen vnerfleckten empfencknisz, genant conceptionis Marie* E550-S554) or too mundane (*Von den hunden* S425-S434). The themed sections extend to E563; texts S564-E693 are far less stringently arranged.

another sentiment first expressed in the Preface to the work and one which later on in the collection even finds narrative treatment.²²

Rubrics are not the only means used by Pauli to underline the coherence of his collection. On occasion observations to this end feature in the short texts themselves, justifying the position of a certain thematic section. Thus, it is only logical, the compiler explains, for the section concerning monks (*Von ordenszlüeten vnd guoten brüedern S55-S64*) to be followed by stories involving nuns: *Vf das so wir vil von den münchen gesagt haben, so zimpt sich wol das wir auch etwas von den nunnen schreiben, wan als die lerer sprechen, so gehören münch vnd nunnen zuosammen (S65)*; and sub-groupings within sections are also identified like this, such as when the compiler makes a show of stringing together several anecdotes concerning the Emperor Vespasian (S187, S188, S189) within a broader sequence concerning miserliness (S176-S189): *Noch sein zwen punckten, die wil ich auch ie her setzen, wie wol sie nit von seiner geitikeit sagen, aber so wir on das in dem reden sein, so wöllen wir die zwen punckten auch sagen (S187)*. In this way Pauli the compiler retains a more imminent voice or presence within his collection, although many of the links that are drawn between consecutive texts are more fleeting: *Dem ist gleich wie diser hernach (S304 with reference to S305)*; *Diser meister hat gethon wie der in dem nechsten gesagten exempel (S311 with reference to E312)*.

Elsewhere, the significance of certain themes and moral issues is emphasized by another set of narratorial interventions that play on the material circumstances of textual production:

Es würd wol sein eigen buoch, solt man schreiben von trüwen vnd von vntrüwen fründen. (E424)

Solt man hieher setzen, wie die meineidigen an irem letzten end vnd dort gestrafft werden, vnsz würd bapier vnd dinten gebresten werden. (E488)

[...] mir geprest bapeir zuo beschreiben danckbarkeit vnd vndanckbarkeit, von löwen vnd anderen thieren. (E649)

However formulaic the claims that any particular section in ‘Schimpf und Ernst’ could easily be expanded to fill a book in its own right, they may also be understood to suggest that the

²² S607 tells the story of two students who fare rather differently when singing for bread; the moral significance of the wise student’s success (*ich nim kleine stücklin vnd brösamlin die du verschmachst, darumb so würt mein sack vol*) is then helpfully explained by the narrator as follows: *Also sein vil studenten vnd menschen, die wöllen nur hohe ding hören an der predig, vnd die schuoler in der schuolen vnd varachten kleine ding, darumb so werden sie nimer gelert, sie wöllen fliegen on federn.*

process of compilation is a necessarily selective one. The notion that for certain topics there is never enough paper and ink available is more than just a piece of conventional hyperbole: it evokes an image of Pauli as a copyist and moral teacher at work on his manuscript before printing. If there are limits to what his collection contains, so the ‘author’-compiler implies, then these are not to be put down to the intellectual or moral inadequacies of the individual responsible for its existence.

IV

Not all of all Pauli’s self-references are as fleeting or as formulaic as those listed above. Indeed, it is a striking feature of his self-projection in this work that he goes to much greater lengths to remind his recipients of his standing and experience as a Franciscan monk and preacher. One notable instance of this occurs in text S69, concerning the hatred between priests and monks. When a layman cannot explain this curious state of affairs, a monk (wittily?) explains that it is all to do with eggs *wan die munch essen so vil eyer, so essen die pfaffen so vil hüner so machen die pfaffen den münchen die eyer theiir, so machen die munch den pfafen die hüner theiir*, at which point the narrator intervenes:

Das hat der schreiber dis buochs Frater Johannes Pauli barfuosser beweret, er hat gerechnet das man in dem barfuosser kloster zuo Straszburg zuo gemeinen iaren ein iar .xxii. tausent eyer haben muosz, vnd sein bei .Iv. personen in dem conuent. Wie vil eyer essen erst ander klöster vnd nunnen, besunder die orden die kein fleisch essen, so weit die welt ist.

Pauli is evidently not afraid of presenting himself as an authority when it comes to the more mundane aspects of monastic life. Indeed, as a Franciscan monk with first-hand knowledge of Straßburg, it would seem that he is in a position to make a remarkable calculation concerning the consumption of eggs by other Franciscans in that city! Such an observation is not perhaps without humour (see section V below),²³ although any comic effect it may exert is held in check by the impersonal third-person form of the reference.

As far as the book itself is concerned Pauli assumes the role of scribe or copyist or writer (*schreiber*) in the most limited, technical sense. His self-naming in this context thus

²³ Questions concerning the mock origin of enmities are not uncommon topics for entertaining debate in late medieval vernacular literature; see, for example, ‘Dreier Bauern Frage’ by Hans Folz, in which a number of such enmities are discussed: peasants and priests; peasants and wolves; peasants and thorn-bushes. In principle there is no limit to the number of possible ‘correct’ answers. In Pauli’s S69 the implied reader (a preacher looking for suitable material?) is even encouraged to find an alternative to ‘eggs’ if this answer is not to their liking: *Gib du ein ander vrsach, gefelt dir die nit*.

appears to be more of a statement of fact; and whilst it most certainly does not serve to vaunt his ‘authorship’, it is not exactly governed by the traditional rhetoric of (affected) humility either. Variations on this strategy occur on at least two further occasions:

Da Frater Johannes Pauli dis buoch schreib, da zalt man .M.D.xviii. iar, da er leszmeister was zuo Than, ist ein dorff das heiszt geberschweiler ein meil von Kolmar in dem Elasz vff ein Durnstag so woche merkt ist zuo Kolmar, da het ein frau wöllen zuomerckt gon vmb ires buolen willen [...]. (E230)

Ich Frater Johannes Pauli schreiber disz buochs ein barfuosser, hab ein bauren kent, vnd was ein grober kegel zuo Villingen, da ich leszmeister da was der hiesz Hans Werner, der kunt lesen, vnd kunt schier die gantz bibel vszweindig vnd wa er hin kam, so disputiert er mit den priestern, wa stot dis in der bibel vnd iens [...]. (S325)

In these passages autobiographical snippets are offered as a means to an end, as an incontrovertible method of emphasizing the veracity of the (contemporary) events alluded to (a murder; an improbable debate at the court of the Prince of Württemberg) and the reliability of the respective accounts. At these two points in the collection at least Pauli’s self-presentation is determined by the ‘newsworthiness’ of the material at hand, E230 and S325 being quite different kinds of anecdote to those of a well-established literary ‘pedigree’ in Latin ‘exemplum’-literature.²⁴ That these texts, and consequently Pauli’s signatures, are seemingly dispersed at random throughout the collection simply lends weight to the claims of veracity they contain. The sole indication of an overarching design lies in the increasingly abbreviated form such references take; thus, by S565 (concerning a witty barber who gets the better of a priest) Pauli’s identity is so well-established that his role as guarantor requires no further explanation: *In einer stat was ein pfarrer, der kam in seins scherers husz, vnd wolt den bart scheren. Frater Johannes pauli hat sie beid kent.*

This particular strategy of verification would seem to privilege self-reference and self-naming in the third person. However, there are always exceptions to the rule (S325), and as we have already seen (section III above) Pauli is not averse to deploying a first-person narratorial voice that is most easily understood as being ‘his’. In terms of the work as a whole, then, the several authorial signatures that are dotted around ‘Schimpf und Ernst’ also

²⁴ For more on ‘newsworthy’ texts in collections such as Pauli’s see Emmelius, Caroline, *Verbrechen und Schwank. Überlegungen zum medialen und narrativen Status von Fallgeschichten in Schwanksammlungen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Schwanksammlungen im frühneuzeitlichen Umbruch*, Ed. Plotke, Seraina and Seeber, Stefan [forthcoming].

function as pertinent reminders of the person to whom the reader should be attributing the numerous moral lessons and socially critical observations that conclude many of these texts.

Indeed, the efficacy of a number of these passages depends to no small extent on the identity and experience of Pauli the ‘author’-compiler as a Franciscan monk, father confessor and preacher. Hence, in S143 Pauli enlivens his commentary on envy with reference to himself as a preacher: *wer ein guoter predicant .xl. meilen von mir, so haszt ich in nit, wan aber einer neben mir stünd, in einer stat, der mir für das liecht stünd vnd mir schaden thet an meinen eren, dem wer ich neidig.*²⁵ Similarly, in S210 an ‘exemplum’ concerning a Roman matron’s honesty and her husband’s bad breath(!) leads the narrator to recall an occasion when he was obliged to ask someone not breathe in his face during confession: *Ich hab zuo einem gesprochen, lieber ich hör nit zuo der nassen yn, ich hör zuo den oren yn, red mir zuo den oren, vnd nit zuo der nassen oder zuo dem mund.*²⁶ Elsewhere, in E225 – one of a whole series of texts concerning the punishment of adultery (E223-E232) – Pauli poses his readers a ‘riddle’ in the style of a mini-sermon: *O ir lieben kinder solt man einem ieglichen eebrecher ein hand abhawen, so würd das duoch fast thür werden, warumb, es würden nit vil spinnerin sein.*²⁷ This observation is then followed with a brief account of a scandalous case of adultery from Pauli’s own experience:

Ich schreiber dis buochs bin ein lezmeister gewesen in einer stat, da waren zwen brüder, vnd het ieglicher ein fraw, die hetten zwo metzen vberkumen, man warnet sie oft, dannocht lieffen sie hinweg mit inen, vnd liessen weib vnd kind sitzen, die herren der stat liessen inen nach ylen vnd liessen sie fahen, vnd vnder andern straffen muosten sie schweren, kein andere farb zuotragen, dan lange grawe röck.

This may appear at first sight to be another instance of Pauli referring to himself as a witness of sorts, but it soon turns out to be something else when Pauli goes on to recall an actual sermon he gave on this very subject in that same city:

²⁵ Pauli repeatedly discusses the challenges facing preachers, not least the obligation to speak the truth always (E2: *Darumb sein wenig predicanten me als Johannes der tauffer wz, der Herodii die warheit sagt*) and risk the wrath of those they displease (E457: *etliche fluochen ietz den predicanten auch, die nit nach irem sinn predigen*).

²⁶ Confession is the theme of an entire section later in the collection: *Von der beicht* (S293-E303).

²⁷ On ‘children’ as a typical form of address in sermons see Löser, Freimut, *Predigt über Predigt. Meister Eckhart und Johannes Tauler*, in: *Predigt im Kontext*, Ed. Volker Mertens et alii, Berlin 2013, pp. 155-180, here pp. 172f. In Pauli’s own (surviving) sermons, his listeners are commonly addressed as *Andechtigen kinder Christi Jhesu unsers herren* (sermons I-V, VII), in: *Die Predigten Johannes Paulis*, Ed. Warnock, Robert G. [MTU 26], München 1970.

Da ich vff ein mal predigt in der selben stat in dem münster, da sprach ich, sol es darzuo kumen, das ein ieglicher eebrecher sol ein grawen rock tragen, wa wil dan ich armer münch ein kutten vberkumen, dan es sein wol also vil eebrecher vnd eebrecherin, das das graw duoch also thüer würd werden.

However serious the moral issue of adultery,²⁸ however tangible the link to ‘real’ social incident, this recollection demonstrates Pauli’s proficiency as a preacher who will mock his own material impoverishment if it helps him to drive his moral point home. Pauli may not wish to lay claim to being an author proper but he is evidently quite prepared to lay claim to ‘original’ material if it is drawn from his everyday work as a *leszmeister*. In this case the pointe of the sermon, as summarized here, is revealed as a witty adaptation of the text’s opening riddle to suit a very particular set of circumstances.²⁹

V

Pauli in fact shows two faces in his ‘Schimpf und Ernst’: in the first instance he repeatedly names himself in his capacity as the (mere) *schreiber* of the collection, the compiler who defers to the authority of his *auctores* at almost every opportunity; at the same time, however, he projects an image of himself as a Franciscan monk of many years’ experience who knows the ways of the world and has considerable expertise as a preacher. It is in respect of the latter that Pauli employs his most imaginative strategies of self-presentation, which in turn afford us a glimpse of him at work as a literary author.

This rather unexpected development comes to the fore in a cluster of three texts (S519 – S520 – S521) concerning the occasional need for preachers to ask their congregations for material reward, however reluctant they may be to do so. S519 introduces the theme via an effective if conventional comic narrative about a foolish labourer who misunderstands his wife’s advice (*du müszdest ein mal das mul vff thuon*) but is nevertheless handsomely rewarded by his lord.³⁰ The narrator’s bald conclusion – *Also muosz ein predicant das mul auch vffthuon, besunder ietz zuo den guoten iar* – precludes two altogether more remarkable texts, which appear to show Pauli the preacher ‘in action’, broaching this very subject with

²⁸ The thematic section to which this text belongs is strikingly ‘serious’, eight of the ten texts are denoted as *ernst* (223; 225; 226; 228; 229; 230; 231; 232) and only two (224; 227) as *schimpff*.

²⁹ In this respect too Pauli reveals himself to be influenced by Geiler von Kaysersberg; see Eisenmann, Susanne, *Sed Corde Dicemus. Das volkstümliche Element in den deutschen Predigten des Geiler von Kaysersberg*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, pp. 59-62.

³⁰ Instead of asking for food, the labourer simply gapes open-mouthed at his lord, much to the latter’s hilarity; for evidence that Pauli was quite aware of the comic effect of literal misunderstanding see his reference to the ‘Straßburger Eulenspiegelbuch’ (printed at least three times by Johannes Grüniger by 1519) in S605: *man sol ein ding thuon nach der meinung vnd dem willen des gebieters. Der verirten vnd seltsamen historien findestu in dem Vlenspiegel, der thet was man im hiesz.*

his own congregation by means of humorous anecdotes that culminate in a direct appeal for food and/ or money.³¹ Thus, S520 concerns the mishaps that (supposedly) befall a peasant girl of Kolmar who accidentally smashes the Easter eggs that were meant as a gift for Pauli, obliging him (one Palm Thursday) to ask his listeners for more: *Darumb so stüren vnsz ander eyer*. In S521, on the other hand, Pauli tells of a dream-vision in which he and his congregation are summoned to the gates of heaven, only for Pauli himself to be denied entry by Saint Peter for keeping a book up his sleeve, a book that he has not yet paid for! This then obliges Pauli to ask his listeners to help him settle the debt so he can return to heaven in a week's time: *Darumb lieben kind so helffen vnd stüren alsamen*. In both instances it would seem that Pauli is quite prepared to play with the truth, even from the pulpit, in order to engage with and entertain his listeners in the entirely mundane context of asking for a seasonal payment of sorts.³²

In terms of Pauli's strategies of self-projection, it is notable that whereas S520 is lent a certain specificity by virtue of its title (*Wie frater Johannes Pauli die ostereyer hiesch vff den palmtag zuo Kolmar*), S521 is explicitly presented as a model-text for other preachers to use: *Wie ein predicant im selbs ein peticion oder ein station halten sol*. Nevertheless S521 is the text which confirms that Pauli is never more inventive than when he is laughing at himself. For unlike in S520, where Pauli uses a dialogue between the peasant girl and her mother to sing his own praises,³³ in S521 he tells the tale of a spectacular fall from grace: from his receiving a visitation from *der engel gottes* no less to being exposed as a book-'thief' by Saint Peter. Here too Pauli's use of (fictional) direct speech is very calculated: the greater the initial glory of being named by the angel – *Bruoder Johannes Pauli got der her laszt dich wissen, [...]* – the more humiliating (and amusing) St Peter's subsequent recrimination becomes: *beit bruoder Johannes Pauli, was hastu in dem ermel stecken*. Pauli's characterization of St Peter as obstructive and heavy-handed (*da stiesz mich sant Peter an mein Brust*) reveals a sure literary touch and is entirely in keeping with other narratives, both

³¹ These two texts share the same sermon-like opening: *Ich musz euch sagen lieben kind wie es mir ergangen ist* (S520); *Nun hören lieben kind wie es mir ergangen ist* (S521).

³² This kind of comic turn at this particular time of year offers us slightly more tangible evidence of the nebulous phenomenon of 'Easter laughter' or 'risus paschalis'; see Röcke, Werner, Ostergelächter. Körpersprache und rituelle Komik in Inszenierungen des 'risus paschalis', in: Körperinszenierungen in mittelalterlicher Literatur, Ed. Ridder, Klaus et alii, Berlin 2002, pp. 335-350.

³³ The eggs, it turns out, are a gift from the mother in acknowledgement of all of Pauli's fine work: *Nim die eyer vnd bring sie meinem beichtuater für seine ostereyer, dem leszmeister zuo den barfuossern, ich hab ein predig oder fier von im gehöret, vnd bin wol daruon gebessert worden*.

vernacular and Latin, of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.³⁴ In light of Pauli's self-presentation in 'Schimpf und Ernst' as a whole it is, moreover, quite fitting that in the humorous fiction of S521 it is his fondness for books, or rather a book that he has no money to pay for, that should be his undoing. In other words: in S521 Pauli is not above shedding ironic light on one of his key attributes as an 'author'-compiler.³⁵

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Johannes Pauli's 'Schimpf und Ernst' (1522) is of course just one text, and as such it hardly provides us with the material basis for a (new) theory of pre-modern authorship. However, the strategies of 'authorial' self-presentation that it contains help to put a number of things into perspective. First, even as late as the sixteenth century there seems to have been no straightforward evolutionary process or movement towards creativity as a higher literary value. As a printed book Pauli's 'Schimpf und Ernst' may have been the product of new technology, yet in many ways it is still a very medieval work, being one in which the authority and authorship of others is celebrated. Second, significantly different strategies of 'authorial' self-presentation can be found within one and the same work. Throughout Pauli's compilation not only does the 'grammar' of self-reference vary between third-person and first-person utterances, but so do the roles or attitudes that are thereby conveyed: from that of the competent and trustworthy *schreiber* to that of the humorous and worldly-wise preacher. Finally, absence of authorial (or narratorial) reflection on creativity is patently not the same as a lack of creativity per se. Even here, buried deeply in his 'Schimpf und Ernst', Pauli proves quite capable of telling an imaginative story about himself with as much literary creativity as many another poet or – dare we say it – author of his day.

³⁴ For example: the first volume of Heinrich Bebel's collection of *facetiae*, another work that was first printed by Johannes Grüniger in Strassburg (1508), contains at least three comic anecdotes involving St Peter as a temperamental gatekeeper: nrs 19, 84, 85.

³⁵ It is not impossible that Pauli got his inspiration for S521 from Bebel's *facetiae*; nr I,78 recalls in brief the wit of a certain priest who reproaches his congregation by imagining a dialogue between himself and Christ, in which he is unable to defend their sinful behaviour: "*Cum ego venero in regnum patris caelorum, dicturus est Salvator noster: 'Beneveneritis, domine Ioannes!' Et ego dicam: 'Gnad herr.' (Id est: Gratia domino sit.) Sed cum quaesierit: 'Ubi sunt subditi vestri?' so stand ich hie, als ob mir in die hand geschissen sie. (Id est: nunc stabo ante illum, tamquam mihi in manus cacatum sit.) Hoc est: nescius, quid agam aut quo me vertam, dum nullum ex vobis videro*" (text cited: Heinrich Bebel's *Facetien. Drei Bücher*, Ed. Bebermeyer, Gustav [StLV 276], Leipzig 1931).