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The rejected maxim:

Images of Fénelon in Rome 1699 and by Catholic Reformers around 1800

Bernward Schmidt, Aachen

“The similarly witty and ingenious as well as loving Explication des maximes des saints (1697) from Fenelon are a tenderly astute attempt to probe the fine line between mysticism and its excess.”¹ This statement by Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg from 1835 already points to one of the areas that repeatedly became problematic during church history and that also plays an important role in the theological reception of Fénelon: the line drawn between real mysticism and pious excess, mystification.

Theological reflection on mysticism² will always have to take serious the fact that God might be experienced in ways that significantly transcend the experiences of “normal” Christians. On the other hand, however, it is theologically not possible to introduce a significantly different “intermediate state” in between (worldly) faith and (heavenly) glory that transcends the redemptive acts of grace possible on earth and that at the same time is not yet participation in the contemplation of God in heaven.³ Likewise, with its necessarily inherent individualism, mysticism as such always also challenges a structurally organized church and a conceptually ordered religious doctrine, or is in danger of positioning itself outside of the ecclesiastical order.⁴

This contribution will focus on two Catholic theologians from around 1800 who strove to take up Fénelon’s concern in the above-cited sense: Johann Michael Sailer (1751-1832)

1 IGNAZ HEINRICH VON WESSENBERG, Ueber Schwärmerei. Historisch-philosophische Betrachtungen mit Rücksicht auf die jetzige Zeit, Heilbronn 1835, p. 291: “Des ebenso geist- und sinnreichen als liebevollen Fenelon Explication des maximes des saints (1697) sind ein mit zartem Scharfsinn ausgeführter Versuch, die feine Grenzlinie zwischen der Mystik und ihren Ausschweifungen auszumitteln.”

2 The definition of mysticism has been much debated and remains difficult. For the positions of all the authors dealt with here, the broad conception of medieval authors seems to be applicable: “cognitio Dei experimentalis” (a knowledge of God based on experience). Cf. ULRICH KÖPF, Art. Erfahrung III. Theologiegeschichte III.1 Mittelalter und Reformationszeit, in: Theologische Realenzyklopädie 10 (1982), p. 109-116; HANS GEYBELS, Cognitio Dei experimentalis. A Theological Genealogy of Christian Religious Experience, Leuven 2007.

3 Cf. KARL RAHNER, Art. Mystik – VI. Theologisch, in: Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, vol. ##, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1962, col. 744.

4 On this individualist aspect cf. the classic work by BERNARD MCGINN, Die Mystik im Abendland, vol. 1: Ursprünge, Freiburg 1994, p. 11-20.

and Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg (1774-1860). At the center will be Fénelon's image as conveyed in their publications, an image that cannot be separated from their fundamental interest in a renewal of theology and of ecclesiastical life.⁵ Initially, however, Fénelon's trial in Rome will be briefly described as it is of general importance for the discussion of Fénelon around 1800.

The trial of Fénelon's "Explication des maximes des saints" (1697-1699)

At the beginning of the proceedings against Fénelon, which were to take place between Paris, Cambrai, Meaux, and Rome,⁶ was a lady: Jeanne Marie Guyon du Chesnoy, née Bouvier de la Motte, who, as a young widow, studied mystic literature under the guidance of her spiritual director, the Barnabite François La Combe. In 1685 and 1688, Mme Guyon herself eventually published two mystic works that the Roman Inquisition put on the Index of prohibited books in 1685.⁷ Mme Guyon's works, however, faced criticism not only in Rome but also in France, where the Roman Index was recognized with reservations at best. In 1693, probably on the advice of Fénelon, she thus took the initiative and asked the arguably most influential French theologian of her time, Jacques-

5 On the reception of Fénelon in Germany in the 18th and 19th century: LEO JUST, Fénelons Wirkung in Deutschland. Umriss und Beiträge, in: Johannes Kraus / Joseph Calvet (eds.), Fénelon. Persönlichkeit und Werk, Baden-Baden 1953, p. 35-62; LUDWIG LENHART, Fénelons Geisteseinfluß auf zwei rheinische Bischofsgestalten des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts, in: *ibid.*, p. 63-114; HANSJÖRG BRÄUMER, August von Arnswaldt 1798-1855. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Erweckungsbewegung und des Neuluthertums in Hannover, Göttingen 1972, p. 66-68; ROBERT SPAEMANN, Reflexion und Spontaneität. Studien über Fénelon, 2nd, expanded ed., Stuttgart 1990, p. 16-33.

6 Due to the extensive correspondence between Rome and France, the proceedings were already well-known to the contemporaries and are very well documented in: JEAN ORCIBAL (ed.), Correspondance de Fénelon, vol. VII, Geneva-Paris 1987, p. 249-286 and vol. IX, Geneva-Paris 1987, p. 295-383. On this also: YVES POUTET, La querelle du „quiétisme“. A propos de la „Correspondance de Fénelon“, in: *Divus Thomas* 89/90 (1986), p. 373-382. Older, yet focusing especially on the Roman proceedings: FRANZ HEINRICH REUSCH, Der Index der verbotenen Bücher. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchen- und Literaturgeschichte, vol. II,1, Bonn 1885, p. 628-643.

7 This concerned the following works: *Moyen court et très-facile de faire oraison que tous peuvent pratiquer très-aisément et arriver par là dans peu de temps à une haute perfection*, Grenoble 1685 (banned by decree of the Holy Office from May 3, 1689); *Règle des associés à l'enfance de Jésus, modèle de perfection, pour tous les estats, tirée de la Sainte Ecriture et des Pères*, Lyon 1685 (banned by decree of the Holy Office from November 29, 1689). Cf. JESÚS MARTINEZ DE BUJANDA, *Index librorum prohibitorum 1600-1966 (Index des livres interdits; 11)*, Sherbrooke 2002, p. 419. As Reusch, *Index*, II,1, p. 630, correctly remarks, Mme Guyon's later writings were not banned. However, a reprint of the works put on the index in 1689 by the Tübingen theologian Johann Wolfgang Jäger was banned (Decree of the Congregation of the Index from January 21, 1721), cf. HUBERT WOLF (ed.), *Systematisches Repertorium zur Buchzensur 1701-1813*, vol. 2: *Indexkongregation (Römische Inquisition und Indexkongregation; Grundlagenforschung 1701-1813; 2)* Paderborn 2009, p. 887.

Bénigne Bossuet, for his opinion. As a result of his reading, Bossuet advised Mme Guyon to withdraw herself and remain silent – an obvious sign of his negative evaluation.

One year later, however, Mme Guyon demanded a renewed investigation which was undertaken in the conferences of Issy between the fall of 1694 and the spring of 1695, involving Bossuet, the Bishop of Chalons, Louis Antoine de Noailles,⁸ and the superior of the Congregation of Saint-Sulpice, Louis Tronson.⁹ As Mme Guyon's spiritual director, Fénelon became engaged with the conference of Issy as well and submitted some of his own writings. Like Mme Guyon, he also agreed to accept the judgment of the three men. These proceedings resulted in 34 articles, which, among others, prohibited the writings of Molinos, La Combe, and Mme Guyon and which were signed by the representatives of Bossuet, Noailles, and Tronson, as well as by Fénelon and Mme Guyon.

This conflict could have been resolved, had not Fénelon, due to its verdict on Mme Guyon, rejected Bossuet's request to approve of, together with Noailles, an explanatory document on the 34 articles Bossuet had written. Instead, Fénelon published his own work which appeared even one month earlier than Bossuet's paper, the famous "Explication des maximes des saints sur la vie intérieure". The controversy between the two bishops caused a sensation in the country and at the court, to which both were connected in various capacities. It became obvious that Fénelon's work, which was less intended to defend Mme Guyon than the creed of "pur amour", was at least partly in opposition to the 34 articles of Issy. Not only the bishops but also the court subsequently turned away from Fénelon so that he had to retreat to his Bishopric of Cambrai. On April 18, 1697, Fénelon thus contacted Pope Innocent XII and requested the examination of his book – an unusual procedure in the history of the Roman censorship of books. At the same time, Louis XIV, not willing to tolerate theological pluralism in this form, also demanded a papal doctrinal decision in the matter. Mme Guyon, in spite of her signing the 34 articles of Issy, had already been taken into custody in 1695, first in Vincennes and later in the Bastille (until 1703).

8 On Noailles: JOSEF JOHANNES SCHMID, Art. Noailles, Louis Antoine de, in: BBKL 6 (1993), col. 960-963.

9 On Tronson and his congregation, cf. MAX HEIMBUCHER, Die Orden und Kongregationen der katholischen Kirche, vol. 3, Paderborn 1908, p. 445.

The doctrine of “amour pur”, as discussed in detail by Fénelon in the “Explication des maximes des saints”, can be summarized in the following way:¹⁰ The unconditional love of God expects everything from God’s grace and nothing from one’s own accomplishment. This love of God, however, should be inspired only by itself and not by the desire for divine rewards. By liberating itself from any external desires and aspirations in order to practice the pure love of God, the soul does ultimately not aim at being delivered from sin in the classical sense of the theology of grace or justification, but aims at being delivered from itself.¹¹ For Fénelon, this is achieved through contemplation, by which a state of utter passivity is to be attained in which man is so completely focused on God that he does not desire anything else than the love of God. Even though this might be regarded as a “theologically masked ... death drive”,¹² it primarily evinces a fundamental feature of mysticism insofar as it seeks the union of the soul with God.

The proceedings of the Roman trial are comprehensively documented in the archives of the Inquisition.¹³ They show that the Holy Office did not deal with the “Explication des maximes des saints” immediately after the book was received, having arrived there via the papal nuncio and the Secretariate of State. As late as July 1697, it was decided to await the further development in France, and only in October a commission for the evaluation of Fénelon’s work was established.¹⁴ This commission proceeded in the way customary for larger theological disputes, which had, among others, already been followed in the case of

10 For a description and a discussion of Fénelon’s teachings in the context of the conflict with Bossuet and of the Roman trial: Spaemann, *Reflexion und Spontaneität*, S. 34-57; YVES POUTET, *La querelle du “quiétisme”: à propos de la “Correspondance de Fénelon”*, in: *Divus Thomas* 89/90 (1986), p. 373-382; ROBERT LEUENBERGER, *Die Verurteilung Fénelons durch Rom. Darstellung eines Gewissenskonflikts*, in: *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 86 (1989), p. 157-178; DIETER HATTRUP, *Fénelon 1699-1999* (1), in: *Theologie und Glaube* 89 (1999), p. 78-94; FRANÇOIS TRÉMOLIÈRES, *l’„Explication“ de Fénelon: „Marquer précisément ce qui est bon et de l’expérience des saints, en le réduisant à un langage correct“*, in: *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 38 (2002), p. 79-99; GEORGES DOLE, *La querelle quiétiste et l’exil de Fénelon*, in: *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 129 (2007), p. 87-93.

11 Cf. JEANNE-LYDIE GORÉ, *Un aspect de l’éthique fénelonienne: l’annéantissement du moi*, in: *XVII^e siècle* 12-14 (1951), p. 254-268; JOHANNES KRAUS, *Fénelons moraltheologisches Leitbild der Seelenführung nach den Lettres Spirituelles*, in: id. / Joseph Calvet (eds.), *Fénelon. Persönlichkeit und Werk*, Baden-Baden 1953, p. 155-233.

12 Leuenberger, *Verurteilung*, p. 164.

13 Today held by the Archive of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (ACDF). There, see the series *Decreta SO* for the years 1697-1699 as well as numerous documents in *ACDF SO St.St. N 1-i,l,m,n,o* and *St.St. 2 a-o* (a total of 18 volumes). These papers still require an intensive theological documentation.

14 Cf. *ACDF Decreta SO* 1697, fol. 209v (July 10) and 316r (October 8).

Cornelis Jansen's "Augustinus", and compiled a list of 38 sentences.¹⁵ These so-called propositions might be direct quotations from the work under examination or might summarize its contents in the form of assertions.¹⁶

In the examination of the "Exposition des maximes des saints", the individual propositions covered all thematic issues in the field of "amour pur": Initially the term itself (1-2) and its definition (3-6), the indifference of the soul towards its salvation (7-10), and then the annihilation ("anéantissement") of the self before God (11-15). This was followed by instructions for the spiritual guide on the guidance of his protégés (16-18), the theory of the separation of the soul in the perfect state of the "amour pur" (19-21), the contemplation as a path to attain the perfect state (22-27), and finally its description as utter passivity (28-33), as well as theses on the "status transformationis" prior to attaining the perfect state (34-35). This sequence of propositions is concluded by Fénelon's appeal to tradition (36-37) and a conclusion to the "amour pur" (38). The proceedings subsequently consisted of an examination and discussion of each proposition by qualifiers of the Holy Office. Their title hints at their function: Each proposition had to be provided with a qualification, for which the censors used terminological tools used at least since Melchior Cano.¹⁷ The censorship of the "Explication des maximes des saints" was undoubtedly one of the most complicated proceedings in the history of the Roman Inquisition, as documented already by the number, length, and thoroughness of the individual opinions. For the staff of the Holy Office, the censorship of Fénelon's work was part of a larger sequence of proceedings on the issue of "misticismo" between ca. 1680 and 1700.¹⁸ Among these were cases like the one of "Pelagini" or of Francesca Fabbroni who denied the salvatory significance of religious practices and the necessary dependence of the individual on the authority of the church. These cases, however, centrally included

15 Cf. ACDF SO St.St. N 1-o (without any numbering). The list with the 38 propositions can be found under the date of May 24, 1698. The procedural similarities were already pointed out by JEAN ORCIBAL, *Fénelon et le Quiétisme. III. - La soumission de Fénelon et son cardinalat manqué*, in: *XVIIe siècle 12-14* (1951), p. 246; cf. also HENK HILLENAAR, *L'Augustinisme de Fénelon face à l'Augustinisme des Jansénistes*, in: Hartmut Lehmann et al. (eds.), *Jansenismus, Quietismus, Pietismus*, Göttingen 2002, p. 40-53.

16 For the procedures of Roman censors see BERNWARD SCHMIDT, *Virtuelle Büchersäle. Lektüre und Zensur gelehrter Zeitschriften an der römischen Kurie 1665-1765*, 291-299 und 351-357; idem, *Critica legitima ed efficace. Benedetto XIV, Sollicita ac provida e i significati della censura*, in: *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 33 (2012) [in print].

17 Cf. Schmidt, *Virtuelle Büchersäle*, p. 294f.

18 Cf. ANDREA DEL COL, *L'inquisizione in Italia. Dal XII al XXI secolo*, Milan 2006, p. 666-680.

disputes around quietism to which also the trial of Fénelon belonged.¹⁹ The condemnation of 68 propositions from the writings of Miguel de Molinos and of 54 propositions from the work of Cardinal Pier Matteo Petrucci in 1687 had already marked a peak of anti-quietist politics. As Fénelon had used several of de Molinos' ideas (such as the annihilation of the self, the passivity of the will before God, or the indifference toward eternal salvation), the Inquisition was also able to refer to these proceedings. And in the refutation of religious practices, the Roman censors might well have seen similarities between quietist movements and Protestantism.²⁰

Against this background, the verdict that was rendered cannot come as a complete surprise.²¹ During the proceedings, through concentration on the core theses and the elimination of doubles, the 38 propositions had become 23. Contrary to Louis' XIV request, the remaining propositions were not condemned in the form of a bull but of a papal brief.²² Most propositions were taken literally from the working text, some also in abridged or pointed form.²³ Apart from the mode of publication as a papal brief, the qualifications accompanying the condemned propositions are significant as well: they are *temerariae, scandalosae, male sonantes, piarum auribus offensivae, in praxi perniciosae, and erroneae*. This was an explicit condemnation, yet in a far less severe form as e.g. in the case of Miguel de Molinos whose propositions were also considered to be *haereticae, suspectae, haeresim sapientes, blasphemae, and seditiosae*.²⁴

As he had previously announced, Fénelon immediately submitted himself to the Roman verdict and even went so far as to ban his own book in his diocese with a *mandement*. In this, he followed the example of other French bishops who had drawn the same

19 Generally on this: JEAN-ROBERT ARMOGATHE, *Le Quiétisme*, 1973.

20 The differentiation made by Leuenberger, *Verurteilung*, p. 169, according to which "Fénelon's teachings were rooted in pastoral care ... and not in the doctrine of God" has to be regarded as an anachronism or as confessionally motivated: Discrepancies between pastoral care and doctrine were not acceptable to the Inquisition of the confessional age as also in pastoral care, the doctrine was supposed to remain pure and was to be purely expressed.

21 The specific proceedings of the trial, which also had to take the journalistic controversy in France as well as numerous petitions into account, cannot be dealt with in detail here. For more, see the chronology in the *Correspondance de Fénelon* (cf. note 3).

22 Papal brief "Cum alias ad apostolatus", March 12, 1699 (DH 2351-2374). On these publications cf. for example Poutet, *Querelle*, p. 380.

23 The propositions nos. 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 17, 21 and 23 of "Cum alias" were affected by these changes.

24 Cf. Heinrich Denzinger / Peter Hünermann, *Kompendium* **DH 2269**.

conclusion from the papal brief. Yet, Fénelon seems to have only accepted the Roman sentence with some reservations: In his view, it had stated that only his choice of words had been wrong and that this had been justly condemned by the ecclesiastical authority, but that the underlying idea could not be found guilty.²⁵ Fénelon might be assumed to have indeed followed his conscience in this: He held on to the idea of the “amour pur” and its consequences, but accepted Rome’s verdict with regard to the idea’s verbalization. This position was certainly in accordance with his self-conception as theologian and bishop.²⁶

Mysticism and Nobleness of the Heart: Fénelon as guarantor of Christian values

Johann Michael Sailer’s first engagement with Fénelon can be dated to his time as Professor of Pastoral Theology in Dillingen (1781-1794), where also Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg (1774-1860) attended his lectures from 1792 to 1794.²⁷ However, only in the works published during his time lecturing in Ingolstadt and Landshut (1799-1821) does Sailer’s unique reading of Fénelon emerge.²⁸ The surviving auction catalogue of Sailer’s library shows that he was able to resort to an extensive book collection,²⁹ which, apart from a complete edition of Fénelon’s works³⁰ and editions of individual writings³¹, included biographies of Fénelon by Bausset, Chas, and Ramsay.³² The catalogue also lists

25 Cf. Poutet, *Querelle*, p. 381; Leuenberger, *Verurteilung*, p. 170-176 (yet containing some confessionally induced misunderstandings).

26 Cf. for example JEAN ORCIBAL, *Une controverse sur l'Eglise d'après une correspondance inédite entre Fénelon et Pierre Poiret*, in: *XVIIe siècle* 29 (1955), p. 420.

27 For Sailer’s importance in making the Catholic reception of Fénelon known in Germany in the 19th century, see Just, *Fénelons Wirkung*, p. 55.

28 For Sailer’s biography, cf. GEORG SCHWAIGER, *Johann Michael Sailer. Der bayerische Kirchenvater*, Munich 1982; BERTRAM MAIER, *Johann Michael Sailer*, in: Peter Walter / Martin H. Jung (eds.), *Theologen des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts. Konfessionelles Zeitalter – Pietismus – Aufklärung*, Darmstadt 2003, p. 244-261. For the context: MARKUS RIES, *Vom freien Denken herausgefordert. Katholische Theologie zwischen Aufklärung und Romantik*, in: Manfred Weitlauff (ed.), *Kirche im 19. Jahrhundert*, Regensburg 1998, p. 54-75.

29 The catalogue was recently reprinted, provided with a preface and indexed: PETER SCHEUCHENPFLUG (ed.), *Die Privatbibliothek Johann Michael Sailers (Regensburger Beiträge zur deutschen Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft; Reihe A: Sources, vol. 14)*, Frankfurt/M. et al. 2006. Cf. also IDEM, *Die Privatbibliothek des Bischofs Johann Michael von Sailer*, in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bistums Regensburg* 41 (2007), p. 161-175.

30 FRANÇOIS DE SALIGNAC DE LA MOTHE-FÉNELON, *Œuvres*, 9 vols., Paris 1787.

31 E.g. the edition of the “*Explication des maximes des saints*” published by Zunner in Frankfurt/Main in 1698.

the works of Mme Guyon, including her correspondence with Fénelon.³³ Sailer thus had the opportunity to engage with Fénelon in depth, and he seems to have done so not only for academic purposes but also for spiritual edification. In his diary, he thus remarks of a stay with friends in Lucerne: “I daily read Mass in the private chapel, afterwards drank coffee with all the house’s residents, then read a contemplation by Fénelon to all, went to look at the old friends in Switzerland – the mountains –, visited people and was everywhere drawn to God.”³⁴

Johann Michael Sailer’s theology can neither be grouped with positivist nor with speculative theology in an early modern sense, even though he himself repeatedly emphasized the importance of a comprehensive theological-philosophical education for his students. For him, the aim of theology was ecclesiastical practice, pastoral care and preaching, which was to be orientated on the catchphrase “God in Christ – the salvation of the (sinful) world.”³⁵ Sailer did not regard religious life as a primarily ecclesiastical-communal but as an individual matter that he did not want to subject to a pattern of dogmatic or canonistic norms. A peculiarity of Sailer’s theology is therefore “that it wanted to be ‘life theology’ insofar as it remained open to the questions and sorrows of the present, a theology ‘answering the demands of its time’.”³⁶ Different than the Catholic ecclesiology in the confessional age as shaped by Robert Bellarmine, the juridical

32 The editions can be identified: LOUIS-FRANÇOIS DE BAUSSET, *Histoire de Fénelon, composée sur les manuscrits originaux*, 2nd ed., 3 vols., Paris 1809; JEAN CHAS, *Nouvelle vie de messire François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon*, Paris 1788; ANDREW MICHAEL RAMSAY, *Histoire de la vie de messire François de Salignac de la Motte-Fénelon, archevêque duc de Cambrai*, The Hague 1723. On Ramsay see GEORG ECKERT, “True, Noble, Christian Freethinking”. *Leben und Werk Andrew Michael Ramsays (1686-1743)*, Münster 2009.

33 JEANNE-MARIE DE GUYON, *Lettres chrétiennes et spirituelles sur divers sujets qui regardent la vie intérieure ou l'esprit du vrai christianisme. Nouvelle édition enrichie de la correspondance secrète de M. de Fénelon avec l'auteur*, 5 vols., London 1767-1768. According to the catalogue, volume 5 was missing during the auction.

34 Qtd. in KONRAD BAUMGARTNER (ed.), *Johann Michael Sailer. Leben und Werk*, Kevelaer 2011, p. 80: “Täglich las ich in der Hauskapelle Messe, trank darauf mit allen Bewohnern des Hauses Kaffee, las danach eine Betrachtung aus Fénelon vor, ging die alten Freunde in der Schweiz – die Berge – ansehen, besuchte Menschen und ward überall zu Gott getrieben.”

35 “Gott in Christus – das Heil der (sündigen) Welt”.

36 KARL HAUSBERGER, *Zum Stellenwert von Autorität und Hierarchie im Kirchenverständnis Johann Michael Sailers*, in: Rolf Decot (ed.), *Kontinuität und Innovation um 1803. Säkularisation als Transformationsprozeß*, Mainz 2005, p. 42. Cf. also ELMAR SALMANN, *Frömmigkeit und Weltethos bei Schleiermacher und Sailer*, in: Mariano Delgado / Gotthard Fuchs (eds.), *Die Kirchenkritik der Mystiker: Prophetie aus Gotteserfahrung*, vol. 3: *Von der Aufklärung bis zur Gegenwart*, Fribourg-Stuttgart 2005, p. 11-20.

categories of which he increasingly distanced himself from in the course of his university teaching, he saw the church as “God’s living organ of speech, as communicator of a live Christianity, and as a divine-human organ for the reproduction and preservation of the Apostolic tradition”.³⁷ According to the phrase “God in Christ – the salvation of the world”, the individual priest, who often was the focus of the moral and pastoral theologian Sailer, had the task to proclaim and communicate this salvation to the world; the individual, in whom the divine evidence of the universal revelation was already lying dormant, was to be led (back) to the recognition of this salvation and onto the path of following Christ.³⁸

Sailer’s focus on individuality and inner religiosity³⁹ was not only criticized by Klemens Maria Hofbauer (see below); he himself had to question it as he came into contact with the Allgäu revivalist movement (“Allgäuer Erweckungsbewegung”) which was preaching a radical form of an individual and immediate connection to God. One consequence of these ideas is a reduced dependence on the institutional church for individual salvation that might even lead to the church’s denial – a problem at the core of every form of mysticism. In order to solve this problem, Sailer resorted to the Romantic idea of an organism which allowed him to connect the exterior and interior life of the church, Holy Mass and sacraments as well as the individual acting out of belief, hope, and love into a unified whole, into an “organism”.

Sailer’s theology thus comes across as strongly “biographical”, particularly with regard to his conception of the church, and as such provides access to central elements of his thought; favoring to base his ideas on situations, he did not offer a theological system.

Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg, Sailer’s intermittent student, was even less concerned with a systematic theological concept than Sailer himself.⁴⁰ As vicar general of his patron,

37 Hausberger, *Autorität und Hierarchie*, p. 43: “lebendiges Sprachorgan Gottes, als Vermittlerin lebendigen Christentums und als göttlich-menschliches Organ zur Fortpflanzung und Erhaltung der apostolischen Überlieferung”

38 Cf. KARL ESCHWEILER, *Die katholische Theologie im Zeitalter des deutschen Idealismus*. Die Bonner Qualifikationsschriften von 1921/22, ed. by Thomas Marschler, Münster 2010, p. 222, who regards as evidence of Fénelon’s influence on Sailer.

39 Cf. also BRIGITTE PHILIPP, *Sailers Theorie der Bildung*, Diss. masch. Passau 1990, p. 125-146.

40 On his biography: KLAUS-GUNTHER WESSELING, Art. Wessenberg(-Ampringen), Ignaz Heinrich Karl Joseph Thaddäus Fidel Dismas Freiherr zu, in: *BBKL* 13 (1996), col. 976-988; MICHAEL BANGERT, *Bild und Glaube. Ästhetik und Spiritualität bei Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg (1774-1860)*, Fribourg-Stuttgart 2009, p. 16-53. From Wessenberg’s autobiographical perspective: WERNER BÄNZIGER, „Es ist freilich schwer, sein

the Archbishop of Mainz, Carl Theodor von Dalberg, since 1802 he effectively was the head of the Diocese of Constance, comprising a major part of the German Southwest as well as parts of Switzerland, and as such also had to attend to ecclesiastical politics and to the maintenance and regulation of pastoral care. This might also explain why Wessenberg was less a systematic or even academic theologian but rather, like Sailer, focused on religious practice. For him, the improvement of pastoral care was a fundamental concern that he tried to address with the reform of the study program at the seminary in Meersburg as well as with the foundation of a seminary at the new episcopal see of Baden in Freiburg.⁴¹

Basic to Wessenberg's theology are therefore Bible-oriented piety and – as a legacy of enlightened optimism – personal rational understanding. As Michael Bangert has noted, a central role in this is played by the motif of being a child of God which Wessenberg had adopted from Fénelon.⁴² Briefly summarized, this motif is concerned with both the Christian self-conception of being a child of God and with the adoration of the infant Jesus as the embodiment of the divine love of mankind as well as with the demand for love by man. Jesus' demand of his disciples to become like children in order to gain the Kingdom of Heaven is essential to this concept. Wessenberg conceives of this childlikeness first of all as "simplicity" of the heart with which God might be recognized, thus not only sweepingly rejecting the "sophistries" of speculative theology but also the Life-of-Jesus-Research of the Enlightenment that differentiated between the historical and the announced Jesus, hence between the person and the message.⁴³ In this, Wessenberg

eigenes Bild mit Treue zu malen...". Die Autobiographien von Pestalozzi, Zschokke und Wessenberg, Aarau u.a. 1996, p. 133-167.

41 Cf. IRMTRAUD GÖTZ VON OLENHUSEN, *Klerus und abweichendes Verhalten. Zur Sozialgeschichte katholischer Priester im 19. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 1994, p. 92f. and 104-113.

42 Cf. Bangert, *Bild und Glaube*, p. 142-165; *ibid.*, p. 131: "His (sc. Fénelon's) works were almost completely held in Wessenberg's library." Cf. also *IDEM*, *Mystik und Amt – Leben in unmöglicher Spannung? Ein Beispiel*, in: Dietlind Langner et al. (eds.), *Gottesfreundschaft. Christliche Mystik im Zeitgespräch*, Fribourg-Stuttgart 2008, p. 219-235. This passage is also based on Bangert's works. On Wessenberg's involvement with Fénelon, cf. already in brief: LINUS BOPP, *Wessenberg und Fénelon*, in: *Oberrheinisches Pastoralblatt* 41 (1960), p. 247-252.

43 On the theological currency, see the discussion about the publications on Jesus by Pope Benedict XVI. Exemplary and not necessarily representative ones include: KARL LEHMANN (ed.), "Jesus von Nazareth" kontrovers. Rückfragen an Joseph Ratzinger, Berlin et al. 2007; HERMANN HÄRING (ed.), "Jesus von Nazareth" in der wissenschaftlichen Diskussion, Münster 2008. A critical survey of Joseph Ratzinger's statements on this topic is provided by HANSJÜRGEN VERWEYEN, *Joseph Ratzinger – Benedikt XVI. Die Entwicklung seines Denkens*, Darmstadt 2007, p. 84-98.

primarily referred to the Gospel of John as the basic text explaining that man would not achieve his salvation from outside but from within his inmost. External help might be allowed, ultimately, however, Wessenberg regarded man to be dependent on God who can only be found within man himself. The theological consequences of this position, incompatible in its ramifications with Roman-Catholic teachings, do not seem to have been adequately reflected by Wessenberg. Yet, for all his emphasis on individuality, he does not deny the necessity of the church. The church's role of being essential for salvation, however, is less important than its pedagogical function: "that Christ did not come to found an invisible but a visible church, and that he had commanded Peter and the other Apostles and their successors to be shepherds and heads of the visible church, and that this visible church had been ordered and structured to guide mankind into the invisible Kingdom of God."⁴⁴

Being a child of God, however, is also understood by Wessenberg as a demand on one's way of life insofar as its spirituality is resulting in a "fundamental self-relativization".⁴⁵ The unity of God and man, ultimately a gift from God, also obliges man to specific acts of Christian love; with the foot-washing, Christ provided the model for this (John 13:1-17).⁴⁶ Speaking with Paul, the qualities characterizing a person motivated by God in this way are kindness, humility, charity, and patience (cf. Col 3:12). These qualities demonstrate that the person has understood and internalized the message of the Gospel.

These brief and sketchy remarks on the principles of Sailer's and Wessenberg's theology already show the connections between their ideas and Fénelon's, as they all combine mysticism with pastoral ideals. Mysticism is thus not aiming at man's "rapture" and a "mystical union" with God or Christ but is instead basically a "theology of experience".⁴⁷ One thing, however, needs to be noted: As frequently as Fénelon is cited by Sailer and

44 Wessenberg, Ueber Schwärmerei (cf. note 3), p. 354: "daß Christus nicht eine unsichtbare, sondern eine sichtbare Kirche zu stiften gekommen sey, und die Person des Petrus und der anderen Apostel und ihrer Nachfolger zu Hirten und Oberhäuptern der sichtbaren Kirche bestellt habe, und daß diese sichtbare Kirche zur Führerin der Menschen in das unsichtbare Reich Gottes bestellt und geordnet sey."

45 Bangert, Bild und Glaube, p. 182.

46 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 186.

47 On mysticism in the 19th century, see NICOLE PRIESCHING, Maria von Mörl (1812 - 1868). Leben und Bedeutung einer 'stigmatisierten Jungfrau' aus Tirol im Kontext ultramontaner Frömmigkeit, Brixen 2004, p. 70-98. On the theology of experience, see JOACHIM TRACK, Art. Erfahrung III. Theologiegeschichtlich III.2 Neuzeit, in: Theologische Realenzyklopädie 10 (1982), p. 116-128.

Wessenberg, as little is he being analyzed in an academic and critical way; usually, his name is rather used as a principal witness to support a particular opinion. Yet, Fénelon can be seen as a model for Sailer and Wessenberg for two reasons: both theologically with regard to the reception of Fénelon's mysticism, as well as with regard to the pastoral way of life of a priest. In Sailer's and Wessenberg's thought, both aspects are essentially connected and can be analytically differentiated at best.

This is illustrated by Fénelon's requirements for preachers, who have to take two sides of the sermon into consideration, the sermon itself having to derive from a meditation of the Holy Scripture and having to move people.⁴⁸ One side refers to the obligatory personal contemplation, the other to the equally necessary use of rhetorical devices that the preacher has to be familiar with and employ. In his "New Contributions to the Education of the Cleric", Sailer included a paper by Fénelon on oratory⁴⁹ that primarily deals with rhetoric and as such is used by him as comprehensive evidence of the above-mentioned.⁵⁰

Wessenberg, with reference to, among others, Fénelon, provides a description of the underlying maxim to which these requirements can be traced back to: "We indeed do have models for this (sc. the art of rhetoric); but sheer imitation is not enough. The heart must speak to the hearts."⁵¹ Not only does he thereby intend to present an edifying ideal

48 On Sailer's homiletics: NICHOLAS SAUL, "Prediger aus der neuen romantischen Clique": Zur Interaktion von Romantik und Homiletik um 1800, Würzburg 1999, p. 33f.; on the reception of Fénelon especially p. 58.

49 JOHANN MICHAEL SAILER, *Neue Beyträge zur Bildung des Geistlichen*, Munich 1809, p. 163-188.

50 Sailer, *Neue Beyträge*, p. 162: "Was den Inhalt der Predigt populär macht, ist die Religion als Geschichte, das Christenthum als Offenbarung Gottes, die Wahrheit als Thatsache. Was den Ausdruck der Predigt populär macht, ist vorzüglich der Geist der Ordnung, die Gabe der Versinnlichung, die Sprache des gerührten Herzens und die Zuverlässigkeit der Selbsterfahrung. Denn der Geist der Ordnung macht die Wahrheit dem Verstande faßlich, die Versinnlichung für die Einbildungskraft lebendig, die Sprache des Herzens rührend für das Herz, die Selbsterfahrung für das Leben anwendbar. Was den wirklichen Vortrag populär macht, ist die harmonische Zusammenstimmung der vier Sprachen zu Einer, der wunderbare Einklang des Wortes, des Accentes, des Blickes, der Mienen, der Geberden und alles Aeußerlichen, das dem Zuhörer sinnfällig werden kann." ["What makes the contents of the sermon popular is religion as history, Christianity as God's revelation, truth as fact. What makes the expression of the sermon popular is primarily the spirit of order, the gift of sensualization, the language of the affected heart, and the reliability of self-awareness. For the spirit of order renders the truth comprehensible to the mind, sensualization renders it alive to the imagination, the language of the heart makes it moving to the heart, self-awareness makes it applicable to life. What makes the actual sermon popular, is the harmonic consonance of the four languages as one, the wonderful harmony of word, accent, look, faces, gestures, and of everything that can be perceived."]

51 IGNAZ HEINRICH VON WESSENBURG, *Die großen Kirchenversammlungen des 15ten und 16ten Jahrhunderts in Beziehung auf Kirchenverbesserung geschichtlich und kritisch dargestellt*, vol. 4, Constance 1840, p. 431s: "Muster hierin (sc. in der Kunst des Vortrags) haben wir wohl; aber mit bloßer Nachahmung ist es hier nicht gethan. Das Herz muß zu den Herzen sprechen."

of a preacher but he also voices his criticism of the use of scholastic figures of argumentation in sermons.⁵² As he notes elsewhere, the scholastic method has alienated more people from the church than introduced them to it.⁵³

In a similar way, Sailer also presents Fénelon as an ideal educator who had set new standards for the education and teaching of youths. Based on Fénelon's principles, the priest Carl Schlund, for example, for whom Sailer created a literary monument in 1819, had formulated rules for the education of girls.⁵⁴ According to these, religion as "feeling", "story", and "terminology should be taught to the daughters in short, plain sentences and easily comprehensible matters."⁵⁵ The aim of such a religious education, which was to be carried out by the priest, was to firmly embed religion as "innermost life" and "as virtue, as morality" in the lives of the youths.⁵⁶ "As Fénelon states, he (sc. the priest) should be a living law bringing religion, and with it the peace of God, into all hearts."⁵⁷

52 Ibid.: "Auch die Schulmethode im Beweisen wird auf der Kanzel meistens den Zweck verfehlen. Noch Innocenz XI., der nämliche, der die lockere Moral gewisser Casuisten verwarf, gab 1680 eine Bulle gegen die verkehrte Art zu predigen heraus, die in unschmackhaften Wortspielen, Gegensätzen, Anspielungen und Metaphern ihren Glanz suchte und Stellen der Schrift und der Väter zu dieser Absicht vertümmelte und verdrehte. Fénelons Gespräche über Kanzelberedsamkeit sind wohl die gediegenste Anleitung, die Forderungen der evangelischen Wahrheit und die des menschlichen Herzens und Geistes gleich sehr berücksichtigend." ["Also the scholastic method of bringing to proof will usually defeat the purpose on the pulpit. Even Innocent XI, the same who condemned the lax morals of some casuists, in 1680 published a bull against the wrong way of preaching that tried to excel through tasteless wordplays, oppositions, allusions, and metaphors, and with this intention mangled and distorted passages from the Scripture and from the Fathers. Fénelon's conversations on the rhetoric of the pulpit provide probably the most dignified instruction, taking both the demands of evangelical truth and those of man's heart and mind into consideration."]

53 Ibid., p. 362, on the relationship between philosophy and theology: "Der aufblähenden, frostigen Weisheit, die zum Unglauben führte, indem sie den Glauben als Thorheit verlachte, und nur die fünf Sinne als ihr Orakel erkannte, mußte die Kirche allerdings muthvoll entgegengetreten und sie konnte es mit Erfolg, aber nicht sowohl mit den Waffen der Scholastik, als mit der Kraft des göttlichen Wortes und mit dem Lichte, das jeden Menschen erleuchtet, der in die Welt kommt." ["The bloated, cold knowledge that leads to disbelief by deriding faith as folly and by only recognizing the five sense as its oracle, had to be courageously confronted by the church. It was able to successfully do so but not so much armed with scholasticism as with the power of the divine word and with the light enlightening every man coming into the world."] By applying philosophy to the sphere of faith "they swelled the ranks of the already large crowd of the church's enemies and alienated many well-meaning friends from it." ["vermehrten sie die ohnehin schon große Schaar der Gegner der Kirche und entfernten viele wohlgesinnten Freunde von ihr."]

54 JOHANN MICHAEL SAILER, *Erinnerungen an Carl Schlund, Pfarrer zu Marktoffingen im Riese. Ein Beytrag zur Bildung der Geistlich-Geistlichen*, Munich 1819, p. 83-86.

55 Ibid., p. 84f.

56 Ibid., p. 85.

57 IGNAZ HEINRICH VON WESSENBERG, *Gott und die Welt oder: Das Verhältnis aller Dinge zu einander und zu Gott*, 2nd part, Heidelberg 1857, p. 46: "Er (sc. der Priester) soll, wie Fenelon sagt, ein lebendiges Gesetz sein, das die Religion und mit ihr Gottes Frieden in alle Herzen trägt."

From a theological perspective, Fénelon was considered a model primarily because of his mysticism. While neither Sailer nor Wessenberg deal with Fénelon's mysticism, with quietism, or with the doctrine of "amour pur" in a systematic way, they repeatedly point to the French bishop's unity of life and teaching that gave him a high degree of credibility.⁵⁸ Fénelon is portrayed as someone who had embodied mysticism in its purest form and with the best theological intentions, yet who had foundered on the unintended consequences of his "Explication des maximes des saints": According to Wessenberg, Fénelon's propositions had been rightfully condemned because, in his book as well as in his correspondence with Mme Guyon, he had abetted quietism.⁵⁹ Wessenberg's main concern, however, is not the text of the "Explication" or its theological evaluation but rather Fénelon's intentions and the essential features of his thought.⁶⁰ Among these above-mentioned features is man's self-denial that is connected to Fénelon's idea of "annéantissement" and is supposed to effect the purification of man and his religiosity.⁶¹ This is necessary because the greatest humiliation of man is a perverted religiosity that turns those aspects perceivable with the senses into the essence of religion and thus turns

58 Cf. e.g. Wessenberg, Ueber Schwärmerei, p. 291-293.

59 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 292.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 293: "Dieser vortreffliche Bischof, eben so geistreich als fromm, wollte die Mystik von Allem läutern, was die Reinheit des christlichen Glaubens und der Sittlichkeit gefährden möchte, und ohne Zweifel wäre er bei seinem edeln Charakter einer befriedigenden Lösung dieser Aufgabe näher gekommen, hätte nicht ihm selber eine vorgefaßte, sehr günstige Meinung von den Gesinnungen der Frau von Guyon die Erörterung erschwert, und wäre diese von seinen Gegnern nicht mit einer bitteren Leidenschaftlichkeit geführt worden, die sie aus dem Gebiete der Wahrheitsliebe in die verworrenen Pfade der höfischen Politik und Ränksucht hinüberspielte." ["This outstanding bishop, as ingenious as pious, wanted to cleanse mysticism of all that might endanger the purity of the Christian faith and the morals, and, due to his noble character, he had doubtlessly come closer to a satisfactory solution of this task, had he not made his argument more difficult by his preconceived, very favorable opinion of the views of Mrs. Guyon, and had this argument not been conducted by his enemies with a bitter passion that carried them from the realm of veraciousness to the muddled paths of courtly politics and scheming."]

61 Cf. JOHANN MICHAEL SAILER, *Das Heiligthum der Menschheit für gebildete und innige Verehrer desselben*, Zweite Sammlung, München 1810, p. 402: "Der Eigenliebe, sagt Fénelon, die Nahrung zu entziehen – ist das rechte christliche Fasten." ["To starve self-love, according to Fénelon, is the correct way of Christian fasting."] On this, see AUGUSTIN THEINER, *Geschichte der geistlichen Bildungsanstalten*, Mainz 1835, p. XXVf.: "Diese individuelle Eigenliebe, die stete Gefährtin des Unglaubens und der Ketzerei, lernte ich in ihrer Blöße durch Fénelon erkennen und verabscheuen." ["I learnt to recognize and detest this individual self-love, the constant companion of disbelief and heresy, in all its nakedness through Fénelon."] On Theiner: HUBERT WOLF, *Simul censuratus et censor: Augustin Theiner und die römische Indexkongregation*, in: Peter Walter / Hermann-Josef Reudenbach (eds.), *Bücherzensur – Kurie – Katholizismus und Moderne*, Frankfurt/M. at al. 2000, p. 27-59.

man into a servant of a self-made idea and into a slave of his own passions.⁶² Yet, Wessenberg, once again drawing on Fénelon, is certainly aware of the fact that such forms of mysticism are not prevalent among the religiosity of the common people. Indeed, an overly permissive use and spread of mysticism might be dangerous as only few people would be able to correctly understand it.⁶³ Wider circles were rather to use the propositions contained in Fénelon's letters, which had been published in translation by Johann Michael Sailer.⁶⁴ These letters discuss everyday spirituality (prayer and reception of the sacraments), the overcoming of various forms of egotism (overambition, self-love, distrust, coldness of heart), criticism of luxurious courtly representation, and, again and again, the shape of the relationship to God: man should seek God in humility and simplicity and should love him for his own sake and not for mundane things – he should not, therefore, put up a pious façade but live a piety coming from the heart.⁶⁵

The relationship between mysticism and spirituality is one that Sailer not only had to deal with in the compilation of his "Letters from all centuries of the Christian era" but also in the context of the mysticizing-heterodox Allgäu revivalist movement that, in its origins, was based on his theology: a number of its leaders were students and friends of Sailer, such as Michael Feneberg or Martin Boos.⁶⁶

This movement was also characterized by a mystic "ideal of piety that was thoroughly influenced by the quest for inwardness and that, on the basis of a radical individualism, led some of its proponents to argue for an immediate relationship to God that was exclusive to a "Ecclesia invisibilis", a community of true believers only recognizable to the

62 Cf. Wessenberg, *Gott und die Welt*, p. 46. Here, Wessenberg is presented as a precursor of contemporary religio-philosophical criticism of idolatry; cf. BERNHARD CASPER, *Das Ereignis des Betens. Grundlinien einer Hermeneutik des religiösen Geschehens*, Munich-Freiburg 1998, p. 137-152.

63 Cf. Wessenberg, *Ueber Schwärmerei*, p. 268.

64 JOHANN MICHAEL SAILER, *Briefe aus allen Jahrhunderten der christlichen Zeitrechnung*, in: Joseph Widmer (ed.), *Johann Michael Sailers sämtliche Werke*, vol. 12: *Theologische Schriften*, Sulzbach 1833, p. 185-242. The first edition was published in six volumes, Munich 1800-1804.

65 On Fénelon's mysticism's "suitability for everyday use", cf. Jeanne-Lydie Goré, *Fénelon ou du pur amour à la politique de la charité*, in: *XVII^e siècle 90/91* (1971), p. 57-73.

66 Cf. also Bräumer, *Arnswaldt*, p. 68-71. On Feneberg and Boos: PETER RUMMEL, *Johann Michael Feneberg – eine prägende Gestalt der Allgäuer Erweckungsbewegung*, in: *Zeitschrift für bayerische Kirchengeschichte* 64 (1995), p. 70-84; HORST WEIGELT, *Martin Boos. Initiator und wesentlicher Repräsentant der Allgäuer katholischen Erweckungsbewegung*, in: *ibid.*, p. 85-105. On the context, cf. KURT NOWAK, *Evangelische Kirchengeschichte von der französischen Revolution bis zum Ende des ersten Weltkriegs*, in: *Ökumenische Kirchengeschichte*, vol. 3, ed. by Hubert Wolf, Darmstadt 2007, p. 31f.

eye of God.”⁶⁷ Such a view was countered by Sailer with the then popular “organic” perspective of the church, according to which the internally concealed and the externally visible spiritual life of the church form a union, just like soul and body. A life based on faith should thus not be separated from the celebration of mass and the administration of sacraments, as the external side was as much part of the essence of a Christian life as the internal.⁶⁸ That Sailer did not only oppose the mystification of the Allgäu revivalist movement with these ideas but also objected to its sharp critics, becomes apparent in his work “Aus Fenebergs Leben” (1814) which described one of the revivalist movement’s leaders: As much as the Allgäu revivalists disregarded the balance described above, as little was there reason to brand them as heretics from the start. To support this view, Sailer used none other than Fénelon; the literary dialogue between the priest Johann Michael Nathanael Feneberg and Fénelon – possibly induced by the assonance of their names – is dealt with on thirty pages, almost a tenth of Sailer’s work.⁶⁹ Fénelon stands at the beginning of a section with several texts written by Sailer or selected by him from Feneberg’s estate, all of which aim at apologetically presenting Feneberg’s world of thought. In this scene, Fénelon is imagined as Feneberg’s diocesan bishop who, because of the allegations made against the priest, wants to make sure that everything is in order.

The fact that Sailer’s literary Fénelon mostly simply agrees with Feneberg’s statements made in the dialogue and only adds little to them at best, shows that there is no real discrepancy between Sailer’s conception of the historical Fénelon and his contemporary Feneberg. Whatever he makes Feneberg say, he therefore also considers to be Fénelon’s view. Initially, Feneberg delimits his concept of an inward-looking Christianity against four other ways of Christian living: against a purely mechanical catechetical piety, against an abstractly classifying scholasticism, against “the rapt” for whom the perception of the senses is the basis of their faith, and against priests who represent the church not as a

67 Hausberger, *Autorität und Hierarchie*, p. 44: “Frömmigkeitsideal, das durch und durch geprägt war vom Streben nach Innerlichkeit und bei einigen seiner Verfechter ... dazu führte, ... auf der Basis eines radikalen Individualismus der unmittelbaren Gottbezogenheit exklusiv einer „Ecclesia invisibilis“, einer nur dem Auge Gottes erkennbaren Gemeinschaft der wahrhaft Gläubigen, das Wort zu reden.”

68 In more detail, *ibid.*, p. 44-47; cf. also MONIQUE BOUIC, in: Johann Michael Sailer et les „réveillés“ de l’Allgäu, in: Konrad Baumgartner / Peter Scheuchenpflug (eds.), *Von Aresing nach Regensburg. Festschrift zum 250. Geburtstag von Johann Michael Sailer am 17. November 2001* (Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bistums Regensburg; 35), Kallmünz 2001, p. 53-67.

69 JOHANN MICHAEL SAILER, *Aus Fenebergs Leben*, Munich 1814.

living community of faith but only as an institution. Together with the scholastics, it is primarily the latter group that is heavily criticized here for their hasty supposition of heresy in all matters, only instigating the latter by their suspicion. But: “Next to these four classes, however, there is a fifth one; there are among us spiritual Christians who, together with Saint Augustine and Saint Chrysostom, understand the whole Catholic doctrinal concept in the old apostolic sense and who evaluate our history with just this sense. Among these, my venerable father Fénelon is paramount.”⁷⁰

Only little later, Sailer draws the consequences of depicting Fénelon as the model of an inward religiosity, when his literary Fénelon with great benevolence agrees with Feneberg’s short version of the confession of faith: “Christ for us, Christ in us. For us, he died on the cross, in us his spirit lives.”⁷¹ With this, Fénelon is turned both into an explicit opponent of scholastic speculation as well as into a supporter of Christianity’s renewal within the spirit of inwardness. Ultimately, as Sailer has him declare, particularly in its second part “Christ in us”, this short version already contained all the propositions about divine grace that had been explicated with great terminological effort by (neo-)scholasticism.⁷² This, in turn, means that the delicate scholastic distinctions have become redundant in favor of simple statements of faith.⁷³ Fénelon’s and Sailer’s approach

70 Ibid., p. 121: “Nun giebt es allerdings neben diesen vier Klassen eine fünfte; es giebt unter uns auch geistige Christen, die den ganzen katholischen Lehrbegriff mit Augustinus und Chrysostomus im alten apostolischen Geiste auffassen und unsere Geschichte aus eben diesem Geiste beurteilen. Unter diesen steht mein ehrwürdiger Vater Fenelon oben an.”

71 Ibid., p. 124: “Christus für uns, Christus in uns. Für uns starb er am Kreuze, in uns lebt sein Geist.”

72 Ibid., p. 124f.: “[...] in uns, werden wohl die meisten gefährlich, schwärmerisch gefunden haben, die nämlich, welche in diesem lebendigen Ausdruck der Wahrheit, ihren alten Wort-Glauben nicht mehr finden konnten, und den tractatus de gratia nur in Worthüllen ohne Erfahrung bey Tag mit sich umhertrugen, und bey Nacht ruhig darauf schliefen. Christus in uns: sagt im Grunde doch nichts anders, als was die andern hundertmal in ihrer gratia interna, illuminante, inspirante, praeveniente, concomitante, subsequente, nur mit andern Worten behauptet haben.” [“[...] in us, most will have considered to be dangerous, infatuated, namely those who were not able to discover their old belief in the word in this living expression of truth, and who, by day, conveyed the tractatus de gratia only in empty words without experience, and by night slept well on it. Christ in us: it basically says nothing else, only in other words, than what the others have asserted a hundred times in their gratia interna, illuminante, inspirante, praeveniente, concomitante, subsequente.”]

73 Ibid., p. 126: “Fenelon: Pater Monschein kenne ich nicht. Ihnen ist er gewiß ein Repräsentant der bloß scholastischen Theologie, die, ohne den Geist und das Leben der praktischen, im Gemüthe nichts wirken kann.

Dieselbe Thatsache, daß nämlich arme unstudirte Mägde von Gott mehr inne werden, als Hochstudirte nicht erstudiren können, dieselbe Thatsache habe ich, ohne jetzt auf Worte, Umstände, Nebendinge acht zu geben, im Kreise meiner Erfahrungen oft genug wahrgefunden. Der Gott, der Hirten zu Propheten, Fischer zu Aposteln, und Magdalenen zu Evangelistinnen der Auferstehung Christi macht, fragt weder

does not intend to measure the faith of common people in terms of scholasticism and does not want to overrate the latter, for every human statement of faith necessarily also injects human weakness into theology.⁷⁴

By presenting Fénelon as preacher, educator, and representative of at least an inner religiosity (not to use the term mysticism), Sailer and Wessenberg do not necessarily paint an historically correct picture of the Bishop of Cambrai, even if they knew his writings and his biography very well. Rather, and corresponding to their theology, it was their intention to depict Fénelon as the ideal of a spiritual priest. This was done most intensively by Sailer in Feneberg's dialogue with Fénelon, in which he himself seems to be hiding behind the figure of Fénelon. Fénelon thus repeatedly becomes a guarantor not only of a "correct" theology but of a timeless Catholicism in general.⁷⁵

Identification and Conviction: Biographical Connections

Sailer's and Wessenberg's identification with Fénelon, which was not only a literary one, was nothing unusual as both were called "Fénelon" by their contemporaries or called those they particularly liked, "Fénelon".

irgend ein Raths-Collegium, noch die Doctoren einer Universität, wenn er Niederes erwählt, um Großes zu thun." [Fenelon: I do not know Father Monschein. For you, he surely is a representative of a naked scholastic theology which, without the spirit and the life of practical theology is not able to affect the mind. The selfsame fact that poor, uneducated maidens become more aware of God than the highly educated are able to do in spite of their studies, this fact I have often enough found to be true in my various experiences, without at this moment paying attention to words, contexts, circumstances. The God who turns shepherds into prophets, fishers into apostles, and Magdalenes into evangelists of Christ's resurrection, does neither ask a college of councilors nor the doctors of a university if he chooses someone humble to do something great.]

74 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 132: "Die Ausdrücke unstudirter Mägde nach dem Rigor dogmatum zu strecken, hielt ich für Unrecht." ["To evaluate the expressions of unstudied maidens according to the Rigor dogmatum, I considered to be unjustified."]

75 Cf. e.g. JOHANN MICHAEL SAILER, *Grundlehren der Religion. Ein Leitfaden zu seinen Religionsvorlesungen an die akademischen Jünglinge aus allen Fakultäten*, Munich 1805, p. 503: "Wer die christ-katholische Religion mit Justinus und Cyprianus, mit Augustinus und Fenelon gemein hat, kann getrost leben und getrost sterben." ["Whoever has the Christian-Catholic religion in common with Justinus and Cyprian, with Augustine and Fenelon, can confidently live and confidently die."] *idem.*, *Aus Fenebergs Leben*, p. 161. Similarly also Lavater writing to Count Friedrich Leopold von Stolberg: "Werde die Ehre der katholischen Kirche! [...] Alle Tugenden der Gallitzin, der Droste, der Katerkamps, der Sailers, der Fenelons müssen sich in Dir vereinigen." ["Become the honor of the Catholic church! [...] All virtues of the Gallitzin, of the Droste, the Katerkamp's, the Sailer's, the Fenelon's have to become united in you."] *qtd. in:* HUBERT SCHIEL, *Sailer und Lavater. Mit einer Auswahl aus ihrem Briefwechsel*, Cologne 1928, p. 59.)

Heinrich Zschokke thus frequently addresses his friend Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg as “my dear Fénelon” or as “my noble Fénelon”,⁷⁶ and praises both as models of a renewed Christianity.⁷⁷ In the same way, Johann Michael Sailer was characterized as a “German Fénelon”.⁷⁸ By the same token, particularly Sailer also came to identify men who came close to his ideal notion of a priest, as Fénelon, as e.g. in the case of Sebastian Winkelhofer or Carl Schlund.⁷⁹ In the case of Winkelhofer, this is connected to a description of his friend and thus implicitly also of Fénelon: The basic virtue of love gives rise to humility and clemency directed towards the outside, sincerity, simplicity, and calmness directed towards the inside, as well as a confidence stemming from the certainty of mental and spiritual superiority.⁸⁰ The great ideal of Fénelon – such was the intention – thus becomes manifest in contemporary priests.

These characterizations, however, always also hint at a judgment of the trial against Fénelon’s “Explication des maximes des saints”: If Fénelon is considered to be an incontrovertible guarantor of Christian values and of Catholicism and at the same time possessed high human virtues, his condemnation must have been wrongful.⁸¹ In this sense, several statements about Fénelon in Sailer’s and Wessenberg’s writings might be read also

76 Cf. RUDOLF HERZOG / OTHMAR PFYL (eds.), *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg und Heinrich Zschokke (1806-1848)*, Basel 1990, p. 86, 127, 194, 282 (and repeatedly in similar forms).

77 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 235f. (Zschokke to Wessenberg, January 7, 1841): “[...] daß die Zeit immer näher rückt, wo die Christenheit statt St. Augustin, St. Benedict, S. Franciscus und St. Loyola, sich einen Sokrates oder Titus zu Heiligen wählen wird, einen Las Casas oder Franklin, einen Fénelon oder Wessenberg.” “[...] that the time comes closer at which Christianity, instead of St. Augustine, St. Benedict, St. Francis, and St. Loyola, will choose a Socrates or Titus as saints, a Las Casas or Franklin, a Fénelon or Wessenberg.”]

78 GEORG AICHINGER, *Johann Michael Sailer. Ein biographischer Versuch*, Freiburg 1865, p. IV.

79 Cf. JOHANN MICHAEL SAILER, *Winkelhofer, der Mensch und Prediger. Ein Andenken für seine Freunde*, Munich 1807, p. 61-64; *idem.*, *Erinnerungen an Carl Schlund*, p. 83.

80 Sailer, *Winkelhofer*, p. 61: “Sie, die Liebe, machte ihn zum deutschen Fénelon. Lieber Fénelon! weil ich dich nicht selber sehen konnte, so war ich froh, dein Bild in Winkelhofer zu sehen.” [“It, the love, makes him a German Fénelon. Dear Fénelon! because I was not allowed to see you myself, I was glad to see your image in Winkelhofer.”]

81 Cf. also the implication in HEINRICH JOSEPH WETZER / Benedikt Welte (eds.), *Kirchen-Lexikon, oder: Encyclopädie der katholischen Theologie und ihrer Hilfswissenschaften*, vol. 2, Freiburg 1848, p. 126: “Den Streit Bossuets mit seinem jüngeren Freunde und Schüler Fenelon pflegt man als ein beklagenswerthes Ereigniß darzustellen, da die beiden großen Männer sich im Verlaufe desselben nicht frei von einem Anfluge menschlicher Leidenschaftlichkeit enthielten, und besonders Bossuets Schärfe und Vehemenz im theologischen Kampfe mitunter eine zu starke Dosis von Zornesmuth beigemischt schien.” [“The dispute between Bossuet and his younger friend and student Fenelon is commonly depicted as an unfortunate event, as during its course, the two great men did not refrain from a semblance of human passion, and especially Bossuet’s acrimony and vehemence sometimes was mixed with too strong a dose of anger during the theological struggle.”]

as an implicit apology of the Bishop of Cambrai. Fénelon's letters, published in translation by Sailer, are thus not only meant to reveal to what extent Fénelon was theologically and politically different from his environment but they also provide the reason for why an "unjust system" had to condemn Fénelon. The same is true for Wessenberg,⁸² who particularly in his pedagogical epic poem "Julius" comes to a clear assessment.⁸³ Such an image of the proceedings against Fénelon and of his "admirable self-denial" in submitting to the Roman verdict was – across the denominations – a major topos in the biographies of Fénelon in the German-speaking area in the early 19th century.⁸⁴

The most prominent and significant text for this is Wessenberg's epic poem "Fénelon" in which Wessenberg's view of Fénelon is expressed best.⁸⁵ It primarily deals with Fénelon's connections to the court of Louis XIV, both in his capacity as tutor to the dauphin as well as during his trial. The text is less concerned with Fénelon as a model of priestly life or as an educator than with providing a counter-image to the world of the court with its "frivolous libertinism and hypocritical asceticism"⁸⁶ and its schemes for power. Precisely because Fénelon cultivates an "undramatic everyday mysticism"⁸⁷ and is presented as the epitome of virtuousness, he shows the court its immorality, which, in turn, brings his opponents to the scene; even Louis XIV is afraid of Fénelon's virtuousness as it might eventually encourage an opposition against his government.

82 Cf.. Wessenberg, *Kirchenversammlungen*, p. 280 (Fénelon as antithesis to Louis' XIV intolerant religious politics), p. 362 and 432 (Fénelon as opponent of scholasticism).

83 IGNAZ HEINRICH VON WESSENBURG, *Julius. Pilgerfahrt eines Jünglings. Gedicht in sieben Gesängen*, Stuttgart-Tübingen 1831, p. 31 (no. 56): "Und unwillkürlich tritt in's Aug die Zähre, / sieht er den Epictet in Ketten gehn, / und Belisar, den Abgott seiner Heere, / des Reiches Retter blind als Bettler stehn, / und einen Fénelon, der Menschheit Ehre, / mit stillem Sinn vor den Verläumdern stehn, / und Morus, Egmont, Sidney, die es wagen / noch wahr zu sein, den Kopf zum Beile tragen."

84 Cf. e.g. JOHANN GOTTFRIED EICHHORN, *Geschichte der Litteratur von ihrem Anfang bis auf die neuesten Zeiten*, vol. 6, Erste Abteilung, Göttingen 1810, p. 498f.; JOHANN SAMUEL ERSCH / JOHANN GOTTFRIED GRUBER (eds.), *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, vol. 12, Leipzig 1824, p. 85; KARL RUDOLF HAGENBACH, *Der evangelische Protestantismus in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung in einer Reihe von Vorlesungen dargestellt. Zweiter Theil: Vom dreißigjährigen Kriege bis zum Anfange des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1839, p. 408f. (without confessional polemics in spite of the Protestant perspective).

85 IGNAZ HEINRICH VON WESSENBURG, *Fenelon. Ein Gedicht in drey Gesängen*, Zurich 1812. On this, Bangert, *Bild und Glaube*, p. 132-136. On Wessenberg's poetry, cf. also: WILHELM KÜHLMANN, *Platonische Spätaufklärung und postjosephinistischer Klassizismus. Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg und sein poetisches Werk*, in: Achim Aurnhammer / idem. (eds.), *Zwischen Josephinismus und Frühliberalismus: literarisches Leben in Südbaden um 1800*, Freiburg 2002, p. 347-366.

86 Bangert, *Bild und Glaube*, p. 133.

87 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

An effective way to denounce Fénelon and remove him from the court is finally found in a heresy trial that is instigated by a personified discord.⁸⁸ After he is charged, the inquisitors are in a frantic search for an adequate reason to convict him, ultimately finding it with great difficulty in the doctrine of the “amour pur”. Wessenberg, however, depicts this denouncing of a theology of love in an ironic way as it stands for a distortion of all theological values into their opposites.⁸⁹ Eventually, however, Fénelon’s honor is retrieved through Innocent’s XII well-known saying that Fénelon had erred due to an excess of love, his enemies, however, due to a lack of love.

Wessenberg surely had a variety of reasons for writing his “Fénelon”. In the preface, he declares that he wanted to erect a “monument to this gracious genius of humanity and Christianity in German”, yet this monument is as much also dedicated to Wessenberg’s employer Carl Theodor von Dalberg.⁹⁰ Michael Bangert has rightfully pointed out that Wessenberg was also concerned with his own matters: providing an account of the historical motivation for his own reform program as well as of his personal identification with Fénelon.⁹¹ Indeed, Wessenberg had repeatedly come under attack for his ecclesiastical reforms in the Diocese of Constance, where he served as Dalberg’s vicar general. By focusing on the ecclesiastical practice in the parishes, on the strengthening of Sunday Mass with sermons, and on curtailing old customs like processions and pilgrimages, Wessenberg had shown himself to be a representative of an “anti-baroque”, enlightened, Josephinist position.⁹² The victory of his opponents is marked by three developments: The dissolution of the Diocese of Constance and the creation of a new

88 Wessenberg, Fenelon, p. 63 (III,45f.): “Der Erste, dessen Willen / allmächtig ward, ersann das Brandmal Ketzerey / für der Vernunft Gebrauch, wie für des Schwärmers Grille. / So wuchs zur Riesenmacht die Ketzermacherey.” Discord subsequently begs: “Dein Blitz laß eine Zeit die Jansenisten ruh'n, / damit nicht Fenelon, die Blindschleich, ihm entgehe!”

89 Ibid., p. 64 (III, 48f.): “Bleicht schon Verzweifelung die Großinquisitoren, / als jetzt des Obmanns Fund erquickt der Schöppen Ohren: / Daß Ketzerey im Wort von reiner Liebe spuckt. Wer zweifelt wohl, dies Wort sey Urgrund alles Bösen? / Steht's in Molinos doch und in der Bourignon. / Dies Wort verdammen ja die bloßen Sinne schon. / Denn reine Lieb' ist nie auf Erden noch gewesen.”

90 Wessenberg, Fenelon, p. V. Cf. also HUBERT WOLF, *Katholische Kirchengeschichte im „langen“ 19. Jahrhundert von 1789 bis 1914*, in: *Ökumenische Kirchengeschichte*, vol. 3, ed. by idem., Darmstadt 2007, p. 102 and 105f. (on Wessenberg at the Congress of Vienna); KARL HAUSBERGER, *Reichskirche – Staatskirche – „Papstkirche“*. Der Weg der deutschen Kirche im 19. Jahrhundert, Regensburg 2008, passim.

91 Cf. Bangert, *Bild und Glaube*, p. 133-136.

92 Cf. Wolf, *Katholische Kirchengeschichte*, p. 123f.; WOLFGANG MÜLLER, *Die liturgischen Bestrebungen des Konstanzer Generalvikars Wessenberg (1774-1860)*, in: *Liturgisches Jahrbuch 10* (1960), p. 232-238.

diocese structure in the German Southwest, Wessenberg's deposition as vicar general due to pressure from Rome (1815) that could not be overturned despite Wessenberg's journey to Rome and his talks with Cardinal Secretary of State Ercole Consalvi, and the impossibility of appointing him (auxiliary) bishop of Constance or archbishop of the new Archdiocese of Freiburg.⁹³ In Fénelon he therefore not only found a historical model for his reform program but also a "fellow sufferer" who was more than a hundred years removed.⁹⁴ The topicality of the Fénelon poem was also recognized by Wessenberg's critic Adam Gärtler who accused him of having deliberately omitted the fact of Fénelon's submission to the papal verdict in his work. In doing so, Gärtler argued, Wessenberg had denied the Pope the honor of having his primacy recognized by one of the greatest men of his day.⁹⁵

Johann Michael Sailer will have had a similar experience when he compiled his "Letters from all centuries of the Christian era". This was during his so-called "Second Fallow Period" between 1794 and 1799, when, under pressure from conservative forces, he had been removed from his professorship at the University of Dillingen and had been transferred to a prebendary in Aisling. There, the "German Fénelon" will easily have been able to identify with his French role model as also the latter had had to leave the royal court – due to charges he, at least, regarded as unjust – and had to return to his Bishopric of Cambrai.

Accusations against Sailer were also brought forth by the Redemptorist Klemens Maria Hofbauer who, among other issues, disapproved of Sailer's pastoral-ethical approach as well as of his connections to the Allgäu revivalist movement. By opposing Sailer,

93 On this issues, see KARL-HEINZ BRAUN, *Die Causa Wessenberg*, in: idem., (ed.), *Kirche und Aufklärung – Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg (1774-1860)*, Munich-Zurich 1989, p. 28-59.

94 Similarly already the first comprehensive biography of Wessenberg: JOSEPH BECK, *Freiherr I. Heinrich von Wessenberg. Sein Leben und Wirken*, Freiburg 1862, p. 420f. On the Roman context: HERMAN H. SCHWEDT, *Rom und der europäische Reformkatholizismus im Vormärz*, in: Helmut Rumpler (ed.), *Bernard Bolzano und die Politik. Staat, Nation und Religion als Herausforderung für die Philosophie im Kontext von Spätaufklärung, Frühnationalismus und Restauration*, Vienna et al. 2000, p. 131-148.

95 Cf. ADAM GÄRTLER, *Frage: Mögte Pabst Pius VII. nicht höchst wichtige Gründe wirklich, wie Er vorgab, gehabt haben, da Er dem Freiherrn von Wessenberg die bischöfliche Würde zu Konstanz zu ertheilen verweigerte, oder so lange verzögert?*, Mainz 1818, p. 35f.

Hofbauer at the same time also fought the tendency of making ethics and Christian love, instead of dogmas and hierarchies, the basis of Christianity.⁹⁶

Fénelon was Sailer's model also in his reaction to the charges: Just as the former had condemned his own writings because they contained traces of "pseudo-mysticism", Sailer would want to act in such a case.⁹⁷ Sailer's statement was also available to the principal censor in the posthumous Roman inquisitorial proceedings against his writings in 1873, Constantin von Schaezler, who quotes them in his report.⁹⁸ Even though he repeatedly cites passages from Sailer's work that mention Fénelon, Schaezler does not reproach Sailer for these frequent references to Fénelon, although such an undifferentiating procedure would have been usual censorial practice.⁹⁹ And even when dealing with those instances in which Sailer explicitly referred to Fénelon, Schaezler did not take the Bishop of Cambrai into account. This, however, might also to some extent be due to Sailer's way of working, who himself in most of his writings mentions Fénelon rather in passing than entering into lengthy studies or interpretations.

Images of Fénelon in Sailer and Wessenberg

To conclude this survey of the writings of Johann Michael Sailer and Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg in search of their reception of Fénelon, the findings are summarized in the following couple of theses:

1. In Sailer's and Wessenberg's depictions, Fénelon fulfills three functions: As guarantor of Catholicism, as the ideal type of a priest and pastor, and as a "suffering righteous" due to his conviction considered to be unjust. With these idealizations,

96 On the „Hofbauer-Gutachten“ on Sailer and its context (with additional information): OTTO WEIB, Das Hofbauerbild im Wandel, in: idem., Kulturen – Mentalitäten – Mythen. Zur Theologie- und Kulturgeschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, ed. by Manfred Weitlauff et al., Paderborn et al. 2004, p. 24f. Cf. ROLF DECOT, Klemens Maria Hofbauer. Konservativer Erneuerer der Kirche Österreichs, in: Helmut Rumpler (ed.), Bernard Bolzano und die Politik. Staat, Nation und Religion als Herausforderung für die Philosophie im Kontext von Spätaufklärung, Frühnationalismus und Restauration, Vienna et al. 2000, p. 105-130.

97 Johannes Michael Sailer, Ss. Theologiae Doctor et Professor in Universitate Landshutana de se ipso, Landshut 1820, p. 91-94. On the underlying charge cf. Hausberger, Autorität und Hierarchie, p. 41.

98 Edited in HUBERT WOLF, Johann Michael Sailer. Das postume Inquisitionsverfahren, Paderborn 2002, p. 199f.

99 On the procedures of Schaezler cf. PHILIPP SCHÄFER, Schaezlers Sailer. Ein erster Blick auf die Anklageschrift in systematischer Perspektive, in: ibid., p. 238f.

both authors were able to establish connections to their own biographies. Against the background of these three aspects, Fénelon becomes both the measure used for theological authors as well as a honorific metaphor (“German Fénelon”, “my dear Fénelon”).

2. There is no differentiated discussion of Fénelon’s theology or of his doctrine of “amour pur”, rendering Sailer’s and Wessenberg’s support of Fénelon with regard to his trial theologically undertheorized.¹⁰⁰ Instead, the trial is reduced to its (ecclesio-)political aspects and Fénelon’s theology is treated rather implicitly.¹⁰¹ Frequently, Sailer (and to lesser extent also Wessenberg) use Fénelon as a witness or as an example without he himself or his theology being part of the argumentation.¹⁰²
3. Sailer’s and Wessenberg’s image of Fénelon – apart from their personal identification – is thus decisively influenced by practical theology, turning him not only into an example of the demands faced by priests during the period of the two authors but also ultimately making his mysticism the basis of an everyday spirituality accessible to everyone.¹⁰³

In this, however, the objectives of Fénelon in the late 17th and the aims of the two theologians at the beginning of the 19th century converge: All of them were concerned with both a practicable spirituality as well as with the distinctions between spirituality, mysticism, and mystification. And for all three, the effects of this effort partly resulted in their failure: Fénelon found himself reduced to his function as bishop, Sailer had to face numerous charges forcing him to spend eight “fallow years”, and Wessenberg, due to his reform politics in Constance, had to withdraw from church service. As different as their motivation might have been in particular and in each case, both authors’ reception of

100A different literary view of Fénelon is found in Jean Paul: Cf. ROBERT SPAEMANN, *Fénelon und Jean Paul*, in: IDEM., *Reflexion und Spontaneität. Studien über Fénelon*, Stuttgart 1963, p. 254-277 (in the new edition from 1990: p. 270-294), reprinted in: *Jahrbuch der Jean-Paul-Gesellschaft* 15 (1980), p. 55-81.

101Cf. Bangert, *Bild und Glaube*, p. 131-136 and 147-150.

102This might disparagingly be called “namedropping”. Cf. e.g. Wessenberg, *Ueber Schwärmerei*, p. 537.

103Differently in the literary interpretation in IGNAZ AURELIUS FEBLER, *Theresia, oder Mysterien des Lebens und der Liebe*, 2 vols., Breslau 1807; cf. the discussion in: *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, no. 38 from February 8, 1810, col. 297-304. Here, Fénelon – in line with Feßler’s interest in mysticism in the sense of an all-oneness – is represented as a mystic discussing this topic as a theologian and providing instructions on mysticism as pedagogue.

Fénelon certainly provides rewarding insight into their thinking and merits a more detailed analysis in further research.