Borrowing the wings of Daedalus: competing ideas of divine wisdom and secular scholarship in the decoration of the library hall of Bad Schussenried

Katherine Anne Kunau
University of Iowa

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BORROWING THE WINGS OF DAEDALUS:
COMPETING IDEAS OF DIVINE WISDOM AND SECULAR SCHOLARSHIP IN THE
DECORATION OF THE LIBRARY HALL OF BAD SCHUSSENRIED

by

Katherine Anne Kunau

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts
degree in Art History in the Graduate College of the University of Iowa

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Thesis Supervisor: Professor John Beldon Scott
This is to certify the Master's thesis of

Katherine Anne Kunau

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the Master of Arts degree in Art History at the May 2011 graduation.

Thesis Committee:  __________________________

John Scott, Thesis Supervisor

________________________

Dorothy Johnson

________________________

Julie B. Hochstrasser
God, the librarian said, is in one of the letters on one of the pages of one of the four hundred thousand volumes in the Clementine.

Borges, “The Secret Miracle”
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO SCHUSSENRIED IMAGERY

High on the library ceiling, there is a painting of a man with wings - no angel, he, but a mortal human attempting to take flight. The wings are expansive, white and feathered. Straps around his shoulders hold them securely in place, and his feet are attached to the wings by cords, allowing him to flap his wings more forcefully. Father Kaspar Mohr (Fig. A1) was a Premonstratensian monk who lived from 1575-1625, and during his life he devoted much of his time to the investigation of the science and mechanics of flight. After studying canon law in Rome, he came to the monastery of Bad Schussenried, nestled in gently rolling hills under the jurisdiction of the imperial city of Biberach.\(^1\) It was at Bad Schussenried that Father Mohr's pursuit of the natural sciences and his avian interests became all consuming.

Entranced by the idea of flight, Father Mohr constructed a mechanism comprised of wings and straps that he hoped would free him from man's earthbound status.

Deciding that his new invention required testing, the doctor tried to jump from the third floor of the monastery dormitory, and was only with difficulty restrained by the Abbot, who later made Mohr take a holy oath swearing that he would make no more attempts to fly.\(^2\) He is forever preserved in this endeavor, however, in the ceiling fresco in the library of the Premonstratensians of Bad Schussenried.


\(^2\) Frank Kuhn, *Der Bibliothekssaal im neuen Kloster Schussenried*, (Lindenberg: Josef Fink, 2003), 27.
The library hall of Bad Schussenried is a mid-eighteenth century (1755-1757) compilation of pastel hues, delicate stuccowork, gleaming white sculptures, and ecstatically Baroque frescoes. Father Mohr can be found in the southwest corner of the large ceiling fresco; a literal and figural balance point between secular and divine knowledge. To his left are three Christian theologians, dressed in habits and deep in conversation. Below him are the great pagan philosophers of antiquity, each identifiable by a particular attribute. Father Mohr himself is being cautioned, not by the abbot that aborted his flight attempt, but by the mythical figure of Daedalus, to whom the dangers of human flight were well known. As Ovid wrote in his *Metamorphoses* (8:185-271), Daedalus created wings of feathers and wax for himself and his son Icarus, so that they might escape the tower in which the King of Crete had imprisoned them. As they were escaping by air, Icarus flew too close to the sun, melting the wax on his wings, causing him to plunge to his death. Father Mohr's winged figure creates a fulcrum between two different sections of thought – he is the point at which secular and religious teaching meet. The library hall of Bad Schussenried celebrates the integration of secular learning with theology, a theme personified by the figure of Father Mohr.

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, there had been increasingly aggressive calls from Protestant scholars within the Holy Roman Empire to suppress the monasteries, claiming that these religious institutions were nothing more than obsolete relics of an outdated medieval system that contributed nothing to modern society. As the eighteenth century progressed, even educated Catholics became uncomfortable with certain aspects of their faith; pilgrimages to
shrines with dubious relics, endless religious processions, and what was viewed as a
superstitious excess of religious holidays and church services. These inner-Catholic
criticisms of the faith, added to the virulent anti-Catholic polemics of the Protestant
Reformation and Enlightenment, damaged the image of the Church, and, in order to
stay relevant, the monastic orders of southern Germany needed to demonstrate real
support for the scholarly pursuits of their members. What then, does Father
Mohr’s figure, poised between secular and divine knowledge, tell us about the
Premonstratensian Order? Is the inclusion of the so-called, “Flying Father of
Schussenried,” with his interest in physics, zoology, and other natural sciences, a
display of the intellectual curiosity of the Premonstratensian Order and their
acceptance of non-theological disciplines? Or is the depiction of his aborted but
surely ill fated flight a warning about the dangers of secular learning? Father Mohr’s
inclusion in Bad Schussenried’s fresco reflects the thinking of the
Premonstratensians towards the new intellectual spirit of the eighteenth century;
secular learning can be used for good if tempered by clear theological guidance.
This intellectual stance is repeatedly demonstrated throughout the ceiling imagery
in the Schussenried Library.

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5 Johannes May, Bibliotheksaal Schussenried: Kleinrod des Rokoko und geistvoller Bilderkosmos, (Bad Buchau: Federeese-Verlag, 2003), 40.
CHAPTER 2
THE IDEA OF DIVINE WISDOM

The overall theme of the library ceiling fresco is, like that of many other Baroque libraries, Divine Wisdom. The three main scenes situated on the central axis of the ceiling: the Virgin Mary with Christ Child (Fig. A2), Crucifixion (Fig. A3), and the Lamb of the Apocalypse with the Book of the Seven Seals (Fig. A4), are all traditional symbols of Divine Wisdom, or Göttliche Weisheit. The Pauline Epistles contain the first example of the Crucifixion being used as a symbol of wisdom, and all three figures are prominent in subsequent wisdom literature, including Claude Clément’s highly influential tract on the decoration of libraries. First published in Lyon in 1635, Clément’s work was unusual amongst other treatises on this subject in his belief that the sapiental, or wisdom tradition, was essential to the decoration of monastic libraries. Although there is no extant record of what, if any, treatises were perused by Abbot Nikolaus Kloos and painter Franz Georg Hermann, 

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6 The Pauline Epistles are the thirteen New Testament books that claim authorship of the Apostle Paul. Nine of these epistles are written to churches and the remaining four are personal and pastoral. The books included in this grouping are: Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First and Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, and Philemon “Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible Online.” Douay-Rheims Bible Online Organization, accessed September 5, 2010, http://www.drbo.org/.


9 Kuhn asserts that Abbot Kloos was believed to have been extremely influential in the iconographic program of the library, although he gives no specific proof for this declaration. Kuhn, 10.
Clément's remained a well-regarded and significant document throughout the eighteenth century, and the ceiling fresco of Schussenried exhibits many of its major characteristics.\footnote{Garberson, 107.}

The Christian idea of wisdom evolves throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament, wisdom is a gift of God \textit{and} a rationally acquired ability. However, the New Testament describes wisdom as something that can be revealed only through Christ, and specifically through the mystery of his Crucifixion, and was thus associated with ultimate salvation.\footnote{Ibid, 105.} In his first letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul writes, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void."\footnote{1 Corinthians, 1:17.} This latter, New Testament definition of wisdom was still in use in eighteenth century Catholicism, and was viewed as vastly superior to wisdom gained through understanding of the natural world. Catholic theologians saw this secular wisdom as inherently flawed, open to abuse and misuse. Secular books could provoke so much animosity in religious houses that the monastery of Mattsee, near Salzburg, had a special stove built that was inscribed "\textit{Bibliotheca Vulcanus Consecrata}," and decorated with paintings of the heretical folios that the monks burnt in it.\footnote{Dieter Richter, "A Lesson in Reading: Waldsassen Library," \textit{FMR} 14 (1994): 48.} Although Counter

Reformation Catholicism was attempting to accommodate and integrate new ideas

\footnote{German painter Franz Georg Hermann was a native of Kempten, Germany. The library ceiling of Bad Schussenried is his best-known work. Hermann Bauer, \textit{Franz Georg Hermann, 1692-1768}. Kempten: T. Dannheimer, 1992.}
of humanism and secular learning into monastic scholarship, there was still much inter-order resistance to the sanctioning of secular learning by the Church.\textsuperscript{15}

The decorative programs of Baroque libraries were attempts to depict the relationship with the educational reforms dictated by the sixteenth century Council of Trent.\textsuperscript{16} These two-century-old decrees, emphasizing the need for the education of the clergy as teachers of society and desire to move beyond the view of monastery life as intellectually moribund, became critical in the eighteenth century when Catholicism was attempting to regain lost ground, facing not just Protestantism itself, but the rise of humanism and interest in book culture that went hand in hand with the Enlightenment. Bad Schussenried was not the only monastery building or rebuilding a library in the eighteenth century (Fig. A5) – dozens of houses in southern Germany, Austria, and Switzerland were busy creating monuments depicting their order’s devotion to learning. These building programs were part of an ongoing competition between religious orders and were designed to display the wealth and learning of the abbey to its subjects.\textsuperscript{17} Many of the “old order” monasteries of southern Germany and Austria (Benedictine, Augustinian,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{16}] Chapter VII of the Decrees of the Twenty-Third Session pronounces the necessity of those being ordained to be examined by men skilled in both divine \textit{and} human law; Chapter XVIII discusses the education of those promoted to cathedrals and other major churches. The Council of Trent put great emphasis on personal devotion, and the ability of the clergy to suitably understand and explain biblical sacraments and how they related to civil law to their parishioners was especially important. Chapter VII of the Decrees of the Twenty-Fourth Session also discusses this issue. Olin, 93, 97, 111.
\item[\textsuperscript{17}] In addition to libraries, this period of monastic expansion saw the creation of residence complexes, administrative buildings, churches, and wine cellars, reflecting the wealth of the Baroque Catholic institutions. Forster, 129.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Cistercian, Premonstratensian) embarked on these extensive building projects as a way to challenge the domination of enlightened Catholicism and education by the relatively new Jesuit Order.\textsuperscript{18}

Cesare Ripa’s \textit{Iconologia}, the standard iconographic handbook of this time, includes in its 1613 edition the allegorical figure of Divine Wisdom (\textit{Sapienza Divina}), which went on to appear in all subsequent edition. Castellini, the editor, stated that he included this figure specifically to counterbalance the Ripan figure of \textit{Sapienza Profana}, or secular wisdom, which appeared in earlier editions of the \textit{Iconologia} as the Roman goddess Minerva.\textsuperscript{19} The principal attribute of the figure of Divine Wisdom was the Book of the Seven Seals, a symbol for the obscurity of and difficulty obtaining divine wisdom. The lamb standing on the book served as a reminder of the purity and humility required from all those who would seek this knowledge from God.\textsuperscript{20}

Unlike many other Baroque libraries, Bad Schussenried does not have the Ripan figure of Divine Wisdom. Instead, the theme of \textit{Göttliche Weisheit} is communicated by the separate sapiental icons of the Lamb, Book, Virgin, and Crucifixion. This iconographic choice was an unusual one for the time, as most libraries designed after 1720 used the singular figure of Divine Wisdom, by that time a highly recognizable allegory that most visitors to the library would have been

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, 130.

\textsuperscript{19} Ripa’s section on \textit{Sapienza} in the 1618 edition of his work includes the general figure of \textit{Sapienza}, with figural subsets, \textit{Sapienza Humana} (as opposed to \textit{Profana}), and \textit{Sapienza Divina}. In this later edition, the figure of secular wisdom is a nude, double-handed figure that no longer had Minerva-like qualities.


\textsuperscript{20} Ripa, 457-458.
very familiar with and required no explanation. Wiblingen, a Benedictine monastery in nearby Ulm, boasts a splendid Baroque library where Divine Wisdom holds court in the center of the ceiling, as do many other south German/Austrian monastery libraries. Nikolaus Kloos, abbot of Schussenried monastery from 1755-1775, was originally from Biberach, the imperial city whose district included Schussenried. Biberach, situated halfway between Schussenried and Ulm, relied on Ulm a great deal, routinely asking them to represent Biberach’s interests at the Imperial Diet and intervene in various matters of canon law. These close political and religious ties require that any building program at Wiblingen would be known throughout the Biberach district. Kuhn especially suggests that Kloos was believed to have been influential in Schussenried’s iconographic program. In the post-Counter Reformation world, abbots were required to be well-educated men, who would have been expected to both appreciate and contribute to the iconographic programs of their decoration. The cartouche below the main scene at the western end of the ceiling fresco reads, “Sedes Sapientia Magnifica a Nicolao Antistite,” (Seat of the glorious wisdom of Abbot Nikolaus) (Fig. A6), and this phrase is also found in the abbot’s official portrait by Gottfried Bernhard Götz (Fig. A7). Perhaps Schussenried’s decision to return to the original icons of the wisdom tradition was a

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21 The monasteries of Altenburg (Benedictine), Amorbach (Benedictine), Benediktbeuern (Benedictine), Engelzell (Trappist), Füssen (Benedictine), Melk (Benedictine), Sankt Pölten (Benedictine), and Ursberg (Premonstratensian) also feature the Ripan figure of Divine Wisdom. Garberson, 117.

22 Close, 45.

23 Kuhn, 11.

24 Olin, 5-10.
deliberate attempt by Abbot Kloos to set the Premonstratensians of Schussenried apart from their ecclesiastical neighbors.
CHAPTER 3

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON BIBLIOTHEKSAAL SCHUSSENRIED

Two German scholars, Frank Kuhn and Johannes May, have published books on the library decoration at Schussenried, both in 2003. The earliest source cited by either author, however, is an article by Bernhard Rueß from 1897. Most of the sources that May and Kuhn cite are from the latter half of the twentieth century. After Bad Schussenried was secularized in 1803, the archives of the monastery were removed and most important papers from the period of the library’s creation now reside in the Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart.

May and Kuhn both make iconographic studies of the library of Bad Schussenried, and their identifications of figures on the ceiling are largely in agreement, differing only in slight details. There are also figures that neither identify. However, their analyses lack anything beyond surface classification of figures. Beyond this superficial analysis, however, there is a distinct lack of historical context in their work to explain why specific figures are included. This paper looks to discuss where May and Kuhn’s accounts do not agree, name

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26 Bernhard Rueß, Der Bibliotheksaal des ehemaligen Norbertinerreichtiftes Schussenried, (Schussenried: Dr. D. Königl, 1897).

27 The Stuttgart holdings include Schussenrieder Hauchronik: 1183-1764, Repertorium des Reichsstiftes Schussenried, Pfarrchronik Schussenried, 1705 begonnen, and Schussenrieder Klosterrechnungen von 1590-1803, “Specificatio der Baukosten des Klosters.” The latter is found at the Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg. Although the author of this study has not had the opportunity to review these documents, they certainly require further research in order to authenticate subsequent articles and advance scholars’ knowledge of the conditions of the monastery at the time of the library’s construction.
unidentified figures, and give social and historical context to the construction of the library and its decoration.
CHAPTER 4
ICONOGRAPHY OF THE LIBRARY CEILING FRESCO

The library of Bad Schussenried takes up two floors and has entrances at both the southeast and southwest corners of the first floor. Today, visitors are required to use the western entrance, but the more common entrance in the eighteenth century would have been from the east. Two of the three main sapiental figures – the Crucifixion and the Lamb of the Apocalypse with the Book of Seven Seals (Figs. A3 and A4) – are oriented towards the eastern entrance. From this vantage point, the first frescoed scene to catch the viewer’s eye would be the audience scene between Abbot Nikolaus Wierith of Obermarchtal before King Louis XIV (Fig. A8) in the center of the western end of the fresco. This meeting took place at the palace of Versailles in 1686, and occurred after the general conclave of the Premonstratensian Order met in their hometown of Prémontré, France. At the time of this meeting, Abbot Wierith was an imperial prelate of the Holy Roman Empire and trusted councilor of Emperor Leopold I. The abbot’s inclusion in this conclave was a signal honor, evidence of the high regard in which he was held in both the Premonstratensian and larger Swabian religious community. King Louis was apparently so impressed with the abbot’s intelligence and eloquence that he not only provided him with a tour of Versailles’ gardens and fountains in a litter held by

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28 Prémontré is located approximately twelve miles west of Laon in the département of Aisne in northern France.

Swiss Guardsmen (in deference to the abbot’s pronounced gout), but also presented him with an exquisite diamond cross, small but extremely expensive.30

In Bad Schussenried’s depiction of the meeting, King Louis is seated on a raised dais under a red and gold canopy. Abbot Wierith wears a blue cape that was a traditional mark of esteem from the Premonstratensian Order’s founder, St. Norbert of Xanten.31 Sumptuously dressed courtiers, unidentified by either May or Kuhn, surround the two main figures. Since the meeting between Abbot Wierith and Louis XIV took place at Versailles, once can assume that these unspecified figures are part of Louis’ ecclesiastical staff or the Abbot’s retinue. In October 1685, just a few months before this meeting, the French Parliament had registered the Edict of Fontainebleau, bringing to an end the toleration of Protestant Huguenots by French Catholics. Religious tension was rife in France since Louis had banned the public exercise of Protestantism, or “religion prétendue réformée”, as it was referred to in official documents, and Louis, surrounded since birth by incredibly intelligent, astute churchmen like Cardinals Richelieu, Mazarin, and Retz, would do so in the middle years of his reign.32 Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, François Fénelon, Étienne Le Camus, Harlay de Champvallon, and François de la Chaise were all prominent

30 Ibid.

31 These capes were a matter of much contention for the Premonstratensians during the Counter-Reformation. Originally given by St. Norbert of Xanten as a mark of his esteem for the Premonstratensians of Saxony, by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they were worn as a fashion statement by all but the most pious Premonstratensian monks and were considered a sign of the decadence and unnecessary worldliness of the Order. They were later abandoned in favor of the traditional completely white habit.


members of Louis’ religious household, and it is highly likely that one or more of them are featured around their king in Schussenried’s fresco. Of these, Bousset and De La Chaise are perhaps the most probable inclusions. Bousset, in addition to being court preacher to Louis XIV, was also a highly influential bishop, theologian, and politician who was a strong advocate of the divine right of kings; De La Chaise was a French Jesuit priest who was father confessor to the King.33 Both men would have been fifty-nine at the time of Louis’ meeting with Abbot Wierith, and Figures A8/1, A8/2, and A8/3 could possibly include one of these personages. Figure A8/4, in red clerical robes and biretta, could be either Champvallon, fifth archbishop of Paris or Le Camus, bishop of Grenoble.34

Equally intriguing is the pale, wispily painted scene taking place above the head of Abbot Wierith. A mountainous landscape rises into the heavens; a lone white lamb perched precariously on one of the crags. Christians associate lambs (originally one of the traditional sacrificial animals of the Hebrews) with Christ and his redemptive sacrifice, in addition to its association with the figure of Sapienza Divina.35 The library of Bad Schussenried, with its thematic emphasis on the importance of both divine and secular wisdom, aimed to prove that the Church still filled a necessary place in society.

Working clockwise around the ceiling, the scene to the right of King Louis XIV and Abbot Wierith depicts Poetry (Fig. A9), illustrated here by the ancient poets and

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34 Wilkinson, 216.
35 Ripa, 460.
their subjects. May and Kuhn agree that Homer and Virgil are amongst the figures, but do not identify them as the same image. Kuhn has Fig. A9/1 identified as the poet Virgil, May has determined it to be King Agamemnon. The presence of a crown and regal-looking raiment on the figure tend to favor May’s identification. Kuhn calls Fig. A9/2 Ovid and Fig. A9/3 Homer; May states that both could be either Homer or Virgil. However, one can logically assume that Homer is Fig. A9/3, as only the blind creator of the *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* would have needed a clerk, seen in Fig. A9/4.

Again, the intriguing figures in the background are not mentioned. Like the previous scene, mountains rise behind the ancient poets, representing the mythical Mount Helicon and its sacred springs, bastion of Apollo’s Muses. On this mount stands Pegasus, as opposed to the previous scene’s lamb. Pegasus was a familiar figure in the eighteenth century, both from its inclusion in pagan mythology and use as a decorative symbol. Ripa cites the figure of Pegasus five times in his *Iconologia*, and although the winged horse is often associated with the chariots of various pagan deities, it also has Christian symbolism that makes it an especially appropriate addition to the Schussenried ceiling.

Ripa’s figure of *Virtù* is a depiction of Bellerophon astride Pegasus in the act of killing the Chimera, and is subtitled the “Medal of True Light.” In Christian iconography, the figure of Pegasus is often associated with purity, light, and the

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36 Franz Georg Hermann signed his name and date on the bottom of the white plinth to the left of his depiction of Aeneas, Anchises, and Ascanius.

transport of the deceased Christian soul to heaven. The winged horse also has Apocalyptic associations, as it has been compared to the “white horse” ridden by the Conqueror in the Book of Revelations. Apocalyptic figures like the Lamb on the Book of the Seven Seals and Crucifixion are often included in the iconography of Divine Wisdom, and therefore Pegasus enhances the overall theme of the ceiling while acting as another connection between ancient beliefs and Christian theology, echoing that established by Father Mohr in his position as fulcrum in the balance between pagan philosophers and Christian theologians.

To the right of Poetry are representatives of Canon and Civil Law (Fig. A10). May and Kuhn agree on the identities of three of the five Church jurists, but May offers no explanation for Figs. A10/1 and A10/2, while Kuhn identifies Fig. A10/1 as Pope Benedict XIV, founder of the history of Canon law. Kuhn briefly mentions the correlation between these figures and the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, but draws no conclusions from it. The term *Corpus Juris Canonici* (literally, “body of canon law”) was officially recognized by the Church in 1580, but had been used for centuries before that to describe a collection of significant sources of law used in canonical courts of the Catholic Church. Three of the figures identified by Kuhn: Gratian, Pope Gregory XIII and Pope Benedict XIV, were major contributors to this collection of law. Gratian’s *Decretum* was already being called *Corpus Juris Canonici* in the

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38 Ripa, 566.

39 The Roman Emperor Flavius Gratianus, commonly known as Gratian, reigned from 375 to 383 AD and favored Christianity over traditional Roman polytheism, forbidding the worship of pagan gods in Rome. He published an edict stating that all his subjects should profess the faith of the bishops of the Nicene Creed as approved at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD.

twelfth century, Pope Gregory XIII was the first publisher of Canon law in the 
sixteenth century, and in 1746, Pope Benedict XIV (identified as such only by Kuhn – 
May leaves this figure ambiguous) claimed that his collection of Papal Bulls formed a 
significant part of the Corpus. While the figure in all white has been identified by 
both May and Kuhn as Abbot Heinrich Österreicher of Schussenried (1481-1505), 
there is at least one and possibly two cloud-seated figures whose identities remain 
mysterious. Popes Gregory IX, Boniface VIII, and Clement V were also major 
contributors to the Corpus and may be represented in the Premonstratensian vision 
of Canon law.

Below the Church jurists are two figures representing the world of secular law. May's explanation of these two figures is more specific than Kuhn's; he 
identifies the crowned, armored man as the Holy Roman Emperor, representing the 
political right and worldly dominion, while the man to his left is the Emperor 
Justinian, in whose reign the Corpus Justinian, a compendium of all Roman law, was 
gathered. There are very few instances of generalized personifications on the 
Schussenried ceiling, and this iconographic inconsistency is notable. Although 
neither May nor Kuhn make a firm identification of these two figures, it seems likely 
that they were originally intended to be specific characters.

Canon and Civil Law lead the viewer to the circular Temple of the Holy Ghost 
with the Seven Columns of Wisdom (Fig. A11). There is no dispute between May 
and Kuhn on the identities of these figures, from left to right: Strength, Science,

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Wisdom, Piety, Fear of the Lord, Advice, and Intellect.\textsuperscript{41} The Holy Ghost appears at the apex of the temple, shining the light of its wisdom over the assembled allegorical figures. Two of the figures are holding mirrors that reflect the holy wisdom on to the rest of the figures on the ceiling, both religious and secular. The New Testament form of wisdom, associated with the sacred mystery of the Crucifixion and coming Apocalypse is infused into all the ceiling scenes, assuring all viewers that ancient philosophers and pagan poets are acceptable additions to monastic decoration and learning if they’re permeated with the wisdom of Catholicism.

Medicine (Fig. A12) follows to the right of the Temple of the Holy Ghost. Saints Cosmas and Damian look on from above while famous physicians gather below. May and Kuhn agree that the ancient healers Galen, Hippocrates, and Dioscorides are pictured, but are uncertain which figure represents which. Galen of Pergamon (129-199/217 AD) is a famous Roman physician who was the greatest medical researcher of the ancient world; Hippocrates of Cos, who lived in the Age of Pericles, who was the father of Western medicine; and Dioscorides, (40-90 AD) who authored a five-volume pharmacopeia that was read by healers for more than a thousand years.\textsuperscript{42} Besides the four main figures variously ascribed as famous ancient healers, there are several ancillary figures that May and Kuhn both describe as unnamed chemists or alchemists, as they are seen tending to medicinal plants or

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\begin{enumerate}
\item Each figure is identifiable by an appropriate attribute: Strength is draped in a lion skin and holds the jawbone of an ass that Samson used to kill a thousand Philistines; Science holds a scroll depicting the phases of the moon; Wisdom grasps a triangle (symbolizing the Holy Trinity), angle, and sinker; Piety swings an incense burner; Fear of the Lord cowers before a flash of lightening from God (divine wisdom or divine inspiration); Advice has two mirrors reflecting each other to view a problem from all sides; Intellect is magnifying the sun’s rays into the eye of an eagle.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
grinding ingredients (presumably to make medicines). Pharmacies were common components of monasteries and the brothers of Schussenried would have been quite familiar with the mortar-and-pestle medicines portrayed. Neither May nor Kuhn notes anything special about Fig. A12/1 – the purple-robed man holding a bulb-headed glass container (used in the preparation of medicines) next to the tree with the snake entwined in its branches. This figure is the Greek deity Asclepius, god of medicine and healing. His proximity to the snake is quite telling, as Asclepius's most common attribute is his snake-entwined staff, which remains a symbol of medicine to this day. In antiquity, non-venomous snakes were often placed in dormitories where the sick and injured slept to honor Asclepius.43

Premonstratensian Order and Catholic Church History (Fig. A13) follows Medicine on the ceiling. While Kuhn makes no absolute identifications, May declares the two main figures seated on clouds to be Caesar Baronius (Cesare Baronio) and Abbot Hugo von Etival. The former, an Italian cardinal, Vatican librarian, and ecclesiastical historian, is best remembered as the author of the *Annales Ecclesiastici*, an official history of the Catholic Church. Baronius undertook this commission at the request of St. Philip Neri, who felt that there should be a Catholic response to the Protestant *Magdeburg Centuries*.44 The *Annales* spread quickly throughout Catholic Europe, its chronological format influencing not only

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Catholics but also Protestant historians and eighteenth-century scientists.\(^{45}\) The latter figure, Abbot Hugo von Etival was titular bishop of Ptolemeis and a historian in his own right, as he authored an influential history of the Premonstratensian Order. Both May and Kuhn classify the third figure in the clouds to be an unidentified Premonstratensian clergyman (all-white habit.) The figures below are unidentified and assumed to be either specific prophets or Church patriarchs; figures representing generalized groups or ideas would be unusual in this fresco.

The eastern end of the fresco is taken up with a large-scale Crucifixion (Fig. A3) another typical feature of Divine Wisdom-themed frescoes. When looking at the image from the library floor, the right-hand side of the Crucifixion displays figures from the Old Testament and the New Testament figures stand on the left-hand side. There is no disagreement between May and Kuhn on the identification of these figures. The blending of Old and New Testament ideas of wisdom – a rationally acquired property versus a spiritual state revealed through the mystery of Christ’s Crucifixion – are depicted visually in the Premonstratensian’s library through the combination of secular and theological studies.\(^{46}\)

To the right of the Old Testament lie World History and Geography (Fig. A14). As was typical, Church chroniclers of world history are positioned above earlier pagan writers, emphasizing the Catholic belief that the wisdom of the Church was superior to that of the secular world. This composition could also be interpreted as the Christian historians’ building on the works of the ancient authors.

\(^{45}\) Ibid, 57.

\(^{46}\) Garberson, 105.
that came before. Hermann's painting uses this hierarchal composition in Medicine, Philosophy, Ancient and Religious Philosophy, Canon and Civil Law, as well as World History and Geography. Again, May and Kuhn agree that the same characters are depicted, but have a slight disagreement on the identities of Figs. A14/1 and A14/2, as both are identified as the pagan historian Livy and Jewish chronicler Flavius Josephus. As Fig. A14/2 is holding a scroll copy of the *Historia Romana*, Livy's famous work for Emperor Augustus, it seems logical that said figure would represent Livy.

Church Fathers with Heretics, the scene that follows World History has two distinct parts (Fig. A15). The Latin Church Fathers and Premonstratensian Order founder Norbert of Xanten are perched on the clouds overlooking Archbishop Johannes Lohel of Prague preaching to the assembled heretics. May and Kuhn agree that Fig. A15/1 is the Hussite Prokop, one of the most prominent generals of the Hussite, or Bohemian Wars fought between the followers of the Czech priest and religious reformer Jan Hus and the forces of Sigismund, the Holy Roman Emperor. Jan Hus was a Czech priest who was burned at the stake in 1415 for crimes against the Church and was considered by Protestants to be a predecessor to the Reformation.47 Both May and Kuhn identify Fig. A15/2 as Johann Ziska, another Czech general and follower of Hus, but Kuhn alone asserts that Fig. A15/3 is Tanchelinus of Antwerp.48 Tanchelinus’ presence amongst the heretics would

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48 Tanchelinus is also known as Tankelin.
hardly be surprising; he was a heretical preacher in Belgium and a contemporary of St. Norbert. Active in Utrecht and Antwerp from 1110-1115, Tanchelinus preached that the value of the sacraments was dependent on the holiness of the priests administering them. He also claimed to be betrothed to the Blessed Virgin and extorted money from the townspeople of Antwerp by claiming that funds were needed for their marriage. Tanchelinus died mysteriously in 1115 (possibly murdered), but his heresies certainly would have been known to St. Norbert and were perhaps passed down in Premonstratensian teachings.49

Continuing the clockwise progression around the library ceiling, the viewer moves from Theology to King Solomon on the Lion Throne (Fig. A16). The fresco emphasizes Solomon’s symbolic value as a beacon of Biblical wisdom by surrounding him with famous scenes from his life. To Solomon’s left are the two mothers fighting over one live baby while the pale body of the dead one lies on the stairs to Solomon’s throne. A bare-chested solder is raising his sword, preparing to slice the child in two as Solomon commanded while the child’s real mother frantically gestures to the other mother to take the child, so long as he can live. To Solomon’s right is a scene from his legendary meeting with the Queen of Sheba, taken from the Old Testament (2 Paralipomenon 9:1-10). Two courtiers approach the King with bouquets from the Queen of Sheba and challenge him to distinguish the true flowers from the fake without touching or smelling them. Solomon solves the problem by observing which bouquet attracts bees to it and again proves his

wisdom. There are a number of unidentified figures here, three soldiers on the left, joined by two elderly men in flowing robes and headdresses, and similar figures on the right to represent Solomon’s court.

Ancient and Religious Philosophy follows Solomon’s Throne (Fig. A17). This grouping is imagined as a meeting uniting ancient scholars with medieval theologians, and it is here that the viewers return to the figure of Father Mohr with which they began their perusal of the ceiling. As always, the theologians are located above the pagan philosophers, but the figure of Father Mohr acts as a balance point between the wisdom of the Church and secular world. May and Kuhn agree on the identities of all the philosophers present, but differ in their explanations of the unusual tree to the right of Fig. A17/1, identified as Francisco Suarez, the eminent Jesuit theologian and philosopher. May only briefly mentions the tree, calling it the, “Tree of Porphyrius.” Kuhn describes it as a way of explaining philosophical concepts and the hierarchy of Aristotelian ideas. The tree’s very presence in the fresco is intriguing, and worthy of greater attention.

The tree is indeed a Tree of Porphyry (Fig. A18) named for the ancient Greek philosopher from Tyre who wrote Isagoge, an introduction to Aristotle’s “Categories” that was later translated into Latin and used as the standard textbook through the Middle Ages.50 The Tree of Porphyry itself is a hierarchical construction of logic, presenting Aristotle’s basis of thought as a tree-like scheme of divisions, indicating that a species is defined through genus and a difference. The tree begins

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by citing a genus to which a species belongs, then the difference that gives it species and locates it within the genus (Fig. A19). Interestingly, this Tree of Porphyry reads “Socrates” at the base of its branches, and therefore going on to establish Socrates as a mortal, rational, sensitive, animal, corporeal substance. Although an unusual addition to library iconography, the Tree of Porphyry was still a common philosophical image in the eighteenth century. Edmond Pourchot, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Paris, used the figure in the fifth volume of his Institutiones philosophicae ad faciliorem veterum, ac recentiorum philosophorum lectionem comparatae, published in multiple editions between 1695 and 1755. Pourchot’s figure of the “Arbor Porphyrii” greatly resembles that used on the Schussenried library ceiling (Fig. A20).

Like the figure of Father Mohr, the Tree of Porphyry acts as a balance point between secular, Aristotelian philosophy and Christian theology. Thomas Aquinas used Porphyry’s classification of Aristotle in his philosophical writings, which were gathered into the Twenty-Four Thomistic Theses by Pope Pius X. The sixteenth of these uses the central “spine” of the Porphyrian tree to state:


54 “Homo ut sit homo et animal et vivens et corpus et substantia.”
The same rational soul is so united to (its) body, that it is the unique substantial form of the same, and through it a man has (the ability) to be man and animal and a living (creature) and a body and a substance and a being. The soul, therefore, gives man every essential grade of perfection; furthermore, it communicates to (its) body the act of being whereby it itself is.55

The incorporation of Catholic spirituality into the Aristotelian categorization used to define man as a rational animal displays the Christian belief that a body needs a soul to exist. The importance of the Tree of Porphyry's presence on the library ceiling is its exemplification of the larger idea of the Schussenried library ceiling – that the integration of secular and divine wisdom is not merely a concession to Counter Reformation educational mandates, but a desirable integration that benefits theology.

Although the numbered theses of Aquinas were not organized and collected until the twentieth century, the philosophical and theological teachings of Thomas Aquinas first gained influence in the first half of the fourteenth century with the propagation of his masterwork, Summa Theologica. Thomism continued to spread throughout Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, culminating in Pope Pius V proclaiming Thomas Aquinas a “Doctor of the Universal Church” (Doctores Ecclesiae, a title conferred on those whose work proved hugely beneficial to the Church as a whole) in 1567. The doctrine of St. Thomas was an especially important

55 “Eadem anima rationalis ita unitur corpori, ut sit eiusdem forma substantialis unica, et per ipsam habet homo ut sit homo et animal et vivens et corpus et substantia et ens. Tribuit igitur anima homini omnem gradum perfectionis essentialem; insuper communicat corpori actum essendi quo ipsa est.”

part of Catholic Scholasticism (used largely on the part of medieval thinkers to harmonize pagan “authorities” with their own Christian beliefs). Scholasticism suffered the same slings and arrows as the rest of the Catholic Church in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – Protestantism, humanism, and an increased study of nature – but the inclusion of this tree on the ceiling of the library of Bad Schussenried reflects the Order’s interest in the blending of Christian and pagan learning that Scholasticism offered. The Porphyrian tree itself, like the figure of Father Mohr that parallels it, denotes the Premonstratensian belief that both divine and secular wisdom can exist side by side – in this case, within the same arboreal figure and in the overall theme of Schussenried’s ceiling fresco.

The ceiling is the focal point of the library, but it is hardly the only use of art as propaganda in the room. Four allegorical frescoes are nestled in the corners below the ceiling vault, symbolizing Architecture (southeast corner, Fig. A21), Music (southwest, Fig. A22), Sculpture (northwest, Fig. A23), and Painting (northeast, Fig. A24). These arts are balanced by the four cardinal virtues represented on the long sides of the gallery. Temperance (Fig. A25) and Prudence (Fig. A26) are on the south side, facing Justice (Fig. A27) and Fortitude (Fig. A28) on the north. A grisaille Athena (Fig. A29), goddess of wisdom and patroness of the arts and sciences, is positioned at the center of the west wall, facing a similarly painted Apollo, god of light and the fine arts. A white and gilt balustrade marks the boundary of the library's upper gallery, and both the east and west sides have three main sculpted figures: a bearded figure identified by both Kuhn and May as a Hapsburg ruler, surrounded by two putti (Fig. A30). Exactly which emperors are being depicted is a matter of some debate – Kuhn suggests the names Rudolf I, Karl V, or Karl IV, but does not explain his choices – whether they are based on close ties with Schussenried or the physical appearance of the portrait busts.\footnote{Kuhn, 31.} The possible presence of imperial Hapsburg iconography in this south German monastery reflects the continuing tensions left over from the seventeenth century, when anti-Hapsburg sentiment (focused especially on the Emperor Ferdinand II) was rife amongst...
German Protestants. The Hapsburgs, a strongly Catholic dynasty, always had strong ties to southern Germany, and monasteries in particular were devoted to them.\textsuperscript{58} Many built elaborate “Kaisersäle” as an ostentatious demonstration of their devotion to the imperial crown.\textsuperscript{59} Such an obvious sign of devotion to the dynasty would not be seen in eighteenth-century northern Germany. However, the bust has no obvious imperial iconography, which would be unusual for the portrait of an emperor. In the eighteenth century, Schussenried was under the jurisdiction of the imperial city of Biberach, and the bust may depict a previous or presently reigning bishop.

There is further painting on the underside of the gallery. Echoing the arrangement on the upper floor, the projecting ledges under the gallery are frescoed with the Four Elements: Air (southwest, Fig. A31), Fire (southeast, Fig. A32), Water (northeast, Fig. A33), and Earth (northwest, Fig. A34). Between the elements are representations of the Mechanical Arts: Warfare (Artillery), Mining, Navigation, Fortification, Prophecy, Seafaring, Heraldry, Archaeology (Figs. A35-A42).\textsuperscript{60} Small frescoes in the corners of the hall show the instruments used to explore the arts shown on the long sides of the ceiling: writing implements, optical devices, mathematic instruments, and catalogs of books and directories (Figs. A43-A46). The sixteen sculptures on the first floor of the library are divided into two categories: Defenders of the Faith (Fig. A47) and Enemies of the Faith (Figs. 48-55). The


\textsuperscript{59} Forster, 130.

\textsuperscript{60} May, 60.
Defenders of the Faith stand paired at the East and West ends, and at the center of
the North/South walls.61 Between each of these pairs stand two Enemies of the
Faith, represented by pairs of putti.62 These paired heresies are identified by both
May and Kuhn.63

Although less iconographically explicit than the ceiling painting, the other
decorative elements of the library also emphasize the theme of blending divine and
secular wisdom. Typical visitors to the library of Bad Schussenried would have been
educated, worldly people (leaders of both secular and Church society, along with an
increasing number of noblemen on the Grand Tour) who would have recognized
these evocations of Mechanical Arts, Four Elements, and Enemies of the Faith,
simultaneously exhibiting the riches of the natural and secular worlds while
stress[ing] the importance of keeping Catholicism supreme. The subtext of the library
iconography seems to warn of the consequences what can happen when the world
cherishes the physical over the spiritual, and not just in the heresies of the Hussites
and Muslims.

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61 Norbert von Xanten and John the Evangelist stand in the south, St. Augustine and St. Basil
the Great in the north, Hieronymous and St. Matthew in the east, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux and
John Chrysostom in the west.

62 The Defenders of the Faith are half-size, full-grown men, bearded, robed, holding religious
texts and gesturing animatedly. Enemies of the Faith are represented by paired putti accessorized
with tablets and various accoutrements of the sect they symbolize.

63 Working around from the northwest corner, May identifies the Enemies of the Faith as a
Freemason, Lutheran/Calvinist, Pneumatomachian, Materialistic Epicurean, Scout for the State,
Hussite, Nestorian/Arian, Muslim. Working from the southeast, Kuhn describes them as allegory of
the Enlightenment, follower of Tanchelinus, Nestorian/Jew/Arian, Muslim, Freemason,
Lutheran/Calvinist, and Epicurean/Materialist.
May, 68-69, Kuhn, 33.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

To return to the initially considered image of Father Mohr, balanced precariously between pagan philosophy and Christian theology, and paralleling the Tree of Porphyry, the overall theme of the library of Bad Schussenried is the blending of sacred and secular knowledge and is nowhere clearer than in this scene - the coming together of Catholic philosophy and ancient, humanistic learning represented by both Father Mohr and the Porphyrian Tree. The two figures represent both sides of this academic bifurcation, Father Mohr, a slightly cautionary tale of what can happen when enthusiasm for the natural sciences clouds knowledge of man’s God-given limitations and the Porphyrian Tree, an elucidation of what Christianity can achieve when aided by secular wisdom. Catholic monasteries strove to be relevant institutions in eighteenth-century Germany, and Schussenried’s ostentatious demonstration of their inclusion of secular learning in the theological realm attests to their desire to both survive, and be respected in the Enlightenment world. The ceiling creates a balance between the antagonistic worlds of secular and religious scholarship, and the Premonstratensians’ hoped that this established balance would allow their monastery to endure the obstacles to their faith that the Enlightenment had placed for them.
APPENDIX

FIGURES

Figure A1: Franz Georg Hermann, *Father Kaspar Mohr*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A2: Franz Georg Hermann, *Virgin Mary with Christ Child*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A3: Franz Georg Hermann, *Crucifixion*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A4: Franz Georg Hermann, *Lamb of the Apocalypse with the Book of the Seven Seals*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A5: Domenikus Zimmermann, Franz Georg Hermann, Fidelis Sporer, Johann Baptist Trunk, Library Hall of Bad Schussenried, c. 1755-1765, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A6: Cartouche reading: *Sedes Sapientia Magnificata a Nicolao Antistite* (*Seat of the glorious wisdom of Abbot Nicholas*), 1755-1757, stucco and gilt, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A7: Gottfried Bernhard Götz, *Abbot Nikolaus Kloos, c. 1770*, oil on canvas, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A9: Franz Georg Hermann, *Poetry*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A10: Franz Georg Hermann, *Canon and Civil Law*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A11: Franz Georg Hermann, *Temple of the Holy Ghost with the Seven Columns of Wisdom*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A12: Franz Georg Hermann, *Medicine*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A13: Franz Georg Hermann, *Premonstratensian Order and Catholic Church History*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A14: Franz Georg Hermann, *World History and Geography*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A15: Franz Georg Hermann, *Church Fathers with Heretics, 1755-1757*, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A16: Franz Georg Hermann, *King Solomon on the Lion Throne, 1755-1757*, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A17: Franz Georg Hermann, *Ancient and Religious Philosophy*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A18: Franz Georg Hermann, *Tree of Porphyry*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A19: Tree of Porphyry translated from a version by Peter of Spain, 1239.

Figure A20: Edmond Pourchot, Arbor Porphyrii, 1751. Taken from Institutiones philosophicae ad faciilorem veterum, ac recentiorum philosophorum lectionem comparatae.
Figure A21: Franz Georg Hermann, *Architecture*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany

Figure A22: Franz Georg Hermann, *Music*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A23: Franz Georg Hermann, *Sculpture*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A24: Franz Georg Hermann, *Painting*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A25: Franz Georg Hermann, *Temperance*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A26: Franz Georg Hermann, *Prudence*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A27: Franz Georg Hermann, *Justice*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A28: Franz Georg Hermann, *Fortitude*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A29: Franz Georg Hermann, *Athena*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany

Figure A30: Johann Baptist Trunk, *Hapsburg Ruler (?) with Putti*, plaster, c. 1765, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A31: Franz Georg Hermann, *Air*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A32: Franz Georg Hermann, *Fire*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A33: Franz Georg Hermann, *Water*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A34: Franz Georg Hermann, *Earth*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A35: Franz Georg Hermann, *Warfare (Artillery)*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A36: Franz Georg Hermann, *Mining*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A37: Franz Georg Hermann, *Navigation*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A38: Franz Georg Hermann, *Fortification*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A39: Franz Georg Hermann, *Prophecy*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A40: Franz Georg Hermann, *Shipbuilding*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A41: Franz Georg Hermann, *Heraldry*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A42: Franz Georg Hermann, *Archaeology*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A43: Franz Georg Hermann, *Writing Implements*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A44: Franz Georg Hermann, *Optical Devices*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A45: Franz Georg Hermann, *Mathematic Instruments*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A46: Franz Georg Hermann, *Catalogs of Books and Directories*, 1755-1757, fresco, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A47: Fidelis Sporer, *Defender of the Faith: St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A48: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Freemason*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A49: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Lutheran/Calvinist*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A50: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Pneumatomachian*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A51: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Materialist/Epicurean*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A52: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Symbol of the Enlightenment*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A53: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Hussite*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.

Figure A54: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Nestorian/Arian, or Jew*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
Figure A55: Fidelis Sporer, *Enemy of the Faith: Islam*, c. 1765, plaster, Bad Schussenried, Germany.
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