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Economic and Confessional Relationships in 18th Century Travel Writing from the Rhine

Christoph Nebgen *

Abstract: *»Beschreibung von ökonomischen und konfessionellen Zusammenhängen in Reiseberichten vom Rhein im 18. Jahrhundert«.* For the enlightened community in the 18th century in Germany, travel writing was an important medium for sharing "empiric" data and facts about the different parts of the "Holy Empire." Starting with the publications of Friedrich Nicolay in 1783, observations on different religious behaviour was an important influence on the economy. For example, Catholicism was said to be a major factor for the economic backwardness of the South. For the majority of enlightened travellers of the 18th century, the industrial protestant regions like northern Germany, or at a European level the Netherlands and England, were the embodiment of the economic development of a modern state.

Keywords: Rhineland, Enlightenment, Protestantism, Catholicism, Travel Writing.

1. Introduction

In the second half of the 18th century travel writing begun to be very popular on the German book market. In some enlightened journals of the time, individual letters to the editor complained about their multitude:

> Fast niemand macht ja itzt in Deutschland eine Lustpartie mehr, einen Spazierritt, eine Fußpromenade für sich; Nord und Süd muß es erfahren, muß lesen, was dem theuren Mann begegnet, und (noch schlimmer!) was ihm dabei eingefallen ist.[1]

Both travel and the respective reports had long since been a privilege. Mainly the nobility was able to go on so-called "grand tours" and write about their experiences (Geyken 2002). The infrastructural improvements in the first half of the 18th century facilitated a cheaper and more convenient way for ordinary citizens to travel. The result was a large number of printed reports written for enlightened readers. They served to inform the public in reading rooms and

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[1] Berlinische Monatsschrift 4 (1784), 319-332 ("Nowadays in Germany, almost no one goes for a nice walk or a ride on his own any more; the north and the south have to know, have to read what a man encounters on his way, and (even worse!) what has come to his mind.")

academies on geographic, economic, scientific, cultural and therefore religious aspects. Travelling was considered part of an empirical understanding of the state of the nation and was therefore established as a separate school subject at the University of Göttingen. The enlightened travellers of the 18th century were subject to a veritable information obligation: the 1742 edition of the "Zedler Universal Lexicon" included 91 different subject fields which a bourgeois traveller should know about. Traveling was also considered a possible means to unify Germany on a cultural level, whereas territorially it was still sectionalised. In 1765 the publicist and politician Friedrich Carl von Moser observed on the sectionalisation of Germany in his book "Von dem deutschen Nationalgeist": "Wir kennen Uns selbst nicht mehr; Wir sind Uns unter einander Fremde geworden, Unser Geist ist von uns gewichen."[2]

Moser decidedly criticized the fact that the confessional loyalty of a traveller influenced his choice of travel destinations and that he thus performed a cultural self-limitation:

> Unsere junge Deutsche halten Reisen nicht anders, als Störche, sie besuchen nur das Nest, wo ihr Vater und Groß-Vater ware; was hilft es einem rheinischen Edelmann, welcher dereinst wohl Churfürst in einem der drey Erzstifter wird, daß er Rom, Wien und alle Catholische Höfe gesehen hat und nicht weiß, noch aus lebendiger Kenntniß erfährt, wie man in Berlin, Dresden, Hannover, Cassel und an andern Orten, wo doch auch noch Deutsche wohnen, denckt?[3]

This comment expresses the potential that, among the circle of enlightened patriots, was believed to lie in travel and travel reports. After the French revolution there was an ongoing debate on the pros and cons of a "homogeneous culture" and the degree of heterogeneity necessary for building a real nation among German intellectuals. The trips to the provinces and the documented "folkloristic" data and information in the subsequent travel writings made the facts available, on which grounds the enlightened community could discuss the multicultural state of the fatherland and options for a possible future of a common nation.

The journalistically most successful writing, inspired by Moser's statement, resulted from a journey undertaken by the Berlin publisher Friedrich Nicolai in 1781. Nicolai's published work "For a better understanding of the fatherland" was primarily motivated by the noble patriotic goal to break the German provincialism and to promote mutual cultural and religious tolerance through an

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[2] "We don't know ourselves anymore; we have become strangers to each other; our spirit has left us."

[3] "Our young Germans do travel like storks, they only come to see the nest where their ancestors lived; what good is it for a Rhenish nobleman who will in the future be elector of one of the three archdioceses to see Rome, Vienna and all Catholic courts but not to learn or to experience how people in Berlin, Dresden, Hanover, Cassel and other places think, where Germans also live?"

increased knowledge of the various German people. It can be described as an "irony of history", because new religious and cultural trenches were established by Nicolai's polemic anti-Catholicism, which increased from volume to volume. In the style of an ethnologist, Nicolai presented Catholicism as an exotic and regressive culture which cannot meet the requirements of the Enlightenment (Borutta 2010, 51).

In addition to cultural, geographical, political and purely religious aspects, the economy played an important role in the reports of travellers. Oftentimes confessional associations were stated: In 1776 Carlo Antonio di Tassullo Pilati, an Italian intellectual, reflected on the various states of economic development, on his (ultimately forced) journey through different European countries:

> Je vu, de mes propres yeux, que les états gouvernés par des princes ecclésiastiques, sont les plus misérables de toute l'Allemagne: point de commerce, point de manufactures, point d'industries: l'agriculture y est presque nulle; la population y languit; les chemins publics y sont affreux; les villages y sont rares & petits, & les forêts pour les chasses de leurs Altesses fréquentes et immenses. (Tassullo Pilati 1776)[4]

Through his traveling Pilati was confirmed in his opinion, which he had already published a few years earlier in a pamphlet directed against the privileges of the Catholic Church. This report was quickly translated into German (Tassullo Pilati 1768).

At a superficial glance, the influence of the Catholic Church – namely the clergy – had a negative impact on the development of the economies. Pilati's seemingly empirically substantiated reflections on the relationship between state and church were pre-empted by novelistic prologue. Pilati presented the negative impact of the Church on social life as a dystopian fable. Based on the fictional Kingdom Cumba, located "between the imperial China and the brasil-portuguese kingdom" Pilati described the development of an archaic but free society before the arrival of Christian missionaries – especially Jesuits, Franciscans and Dominicans as a rapid degeneration process, where the foreign invaders overturn the old order of society on the basis of their religion and through fraud and cunning. The result is a general social aberration that spoils the people morally. A small caste of affluent people, mainly priests, develops which ruin the entire country intentionally. In the following 500 pages Pilati explains that the fable of Cumba is nothing more than a diagnosis of the state of the Catholic-dominated countries, based on the historical, legal and empirical considerations of his time. Reflecting on the different economic conditions

[4] "I have seen, with my own eyes, that the states which are led by ecclesiastical princes are the most miserable ones in Germany: when it comes to commerce, manufactory, industry: agriculture does not really exist there, the population there swelters, the public pathways there are hideous; the villages there are rare & small, & the forests for the hunt of their highnesses frequent and immense."

in the Reich, he noted the particular importance of the different confessions, since the Protestants were "mostly rich and the Catholics mostly poor."[5] Pilati's text lines up with a variety of books and writings of the last four decades of the 18th century. They try to explore why the economies in Protestant areas were apparently much more effective and, according to cameralistics, more beneficial to the state than the economies in Catholic regions. Four years after Pilati's "reflections" a polemic pamphlet was published in the German book by an author who operated under the programmatic pseudonym Christian Friedrich Menschenfreund entitled *Warum ist der Wohlstand der protestantischen Länder so gar viel größer als der katholischen?* (Menschenfreund 1772). Symptomatic of the widespread critique of the economic policies of the ecclesiastical states – even among enlightened Catholics – an article was published in 1785 by the liberal Fulda clergyman Philipp Anton von Bibra. In the *Journal von und für Deutschland* – he asked a price question regarding the ecclesiastical states: "Which are the actual shortcomings and how can they be removed"[6] The prize was won by the Councillor of Oettingen-Wallerstein Joseph von Sartori, who described that the major problem was the lack of an elective monarchy which prevents that a consistent policy is established which benefits the country (Wende 1966). Therefore the theoretical economic debate of the 18th century engaged on the context of religious beliefs and economics long before Max Weber's famous thesis (Münch 1994). Besides the lack of an elective monarchy addressed by Sartori, further well-known reservations regarding Catholicism that serve as a cause of the economic backwardness were added to the contemporary debate: the cash flow to Rome, the "dead" assets of the monasteries and convents, the overall costs of Catholic piety and their disastrous impact on the (working) morale of the population:

> Kameralistischer Utilitarismus und aufklärerische Rationalität berechneten buchhalterisch die Kosten der Frömmigkeit, politische Arithmetik und Statistik bilanzierten auf Heller und Pfennig, auf Stunde und Minute die Geld- und Zeitverschwendung katholischer Religiosität. (Münch 1994)[7]

Friedrich Nicolai gratifyingly used these arguments in his "description" to highlight obvious differences: the regressive – because Catholic – southern Germany in regard to the modern – because Protestant dominated – northern Germany (Borutta 2010). In a fusion of religious, moral, aesthetic, social and ultimately economic categories Nicolai stated for Catholicism a penchant for "idleness" and immorality. In the eyes of the enlightened Protestants, followers

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[5] „…beynahe alle reich, die Catholiken hingegen beynahe durchweg arm."

[6] „Welches sind also die eigentlichen Mängel, und wie sind solche zu heben?" Journal von und für Deutschland 2 (1785), 7. Stück, 552.

[7] "Cameralistic utilitarianism and enlightened rationalism assessed the costs of devoutness, politic arithmetic and statistics calculated the waste of money and time of Catholic religiousness down to the last penny."

of this denomination appeared as a class of unworthy citizens. The description of the Catholic shortcomings was not done for the purpose of stipulating development aid, but primarily as an empirically verifiable confirmation of certain ethical maxims. Catholic piety was therefore no longer criticized only from a basis of content-religious reasons but also based on the cameral economy – even within the church among reformers – judged as an anachronism (Münch 1994, Borutta 2010).

The first person who made use of such an approach in travel writing of the Rhine journey, was the Swedish explorer and orientalist Jakob Jonas Björnstahl in 1782. He visited the Moravian congregation in 1774 in Neuwied and contrasted the explicitly pietistic form of inner-worldly asceticism with the Catholic monasticism:

> Den 6. Julius besahen wir das herrnhuthsche Brüderhaus. Man kann es wie ein von lauter arbeitsamen Leuten, nützlichen Mitbürgern, nicht aber, wie bey den Römischkatholischen, von Müssiggängern und geistlichen Tagdieben, bewohntes Kloster ansehen.[8]

This is the characteristic style in which 90% of the travel writers describe Catholic economies. An exception can be found in an unexpected place: Johann Kaspar Riesbeck, born in Höchst (at that time Kurmainz), who, in 1781 and 1782, published some radical-enlightened *Letters on monkhood by a catholic priest to his friend*,[9] and in 1783 (initially anonymously) wrote two volumes named *Letters of a travelling Frenchman on Germany to his brother in Paris*[10] (Schmidt 1994). Riesbeck's travelogue, which was one of the best known and most widespread of the 18th century, is full of sharp social criticism which focused on particular noble privileges and the excessive tax burden of the Third Estate. There are also numerous polemical statements in which he repeated his previously published criticism of monasticism. His positive assessment of the economic conditions in the ecclesiastical states along the Rhine seems even more astonishing in this context:

> Allein sosehr man auch in Deutschland gegen die geistlichen Regierungen eingenommen ist, so haben sie doch gewiß auch zu dem blühenden Zustand dieser Gegenden beigetragen. In den drei geistlichen Kurfürstentümern, welche den größten Teil dieses Landstriches ausmachen, weiß man nichts von den gehäuften Auflagen, worunter die Untertanen vieler weltlicher Fürsten Deutschlands seufzen. Diese Fürsten haben die Grenzen der alten Steueranlage sehr wenig überschritten. Man weiß in ihren Landen wenig von der Leibeigenschaft. Die Apanage vieler Prinzen und Prinzessinnen zwingen sie zu keinen Erpressungen. Sie haben kein unmäßiges Militäre und verkaufen ihre

[8] "On July 6th we visited the convent of Herrnhuth. You can describe it as a monastery full of hard-working people, helpful fellow citizens, not like the faineants and clerical dawdlers among the Roman Catholics."

[9] Briefe über das Mönchswesen von einem catholischen Pfarrer an einen Freund.

[10] Briefe eines reisenden Franzosen über Deutschland an seinen Bruder zu Paris.

> Bauernsöhne nicht, und sie haben an den innern und äußern Kriegen Deutschlands nie so viel Teil genommen als die weltlichen Fürsten. Wenn sie gleich nicht so geschickt sind, ihre Untertanen zum Kunstfleiß aufzumuntern, so ist doch der mannigfaltige Landbau in ihrem Gebiete auf einen sehr hohen Grad von Vollkommenheit gekommen.[11]

Riesbeck, who had received his education from the monks of St. Anthony and in 1768 initially started a study of theology in Mainz, had, as a local, a different perspective on the development of economic relations and their actual impact on the daily lives of people. However, the passing travellers – and that was the majority of the travel writers – were denied this experience, and thus prejudices based on superficial examination shaped their reports. The simple-minded polarization between the hard-working, thrifty and economically successful Protestants and the idle Catholics, which had been proclaimed in the influential work of Friedrich Nicolai as the cultural differentiator between the north and south, dominated the view of most Rheine travel reports in the last two decades of the 18th century. The Berlin lawyer Josef Aloys Mercy described his experience of the Palatine Electorate to Mainz in 1790, by using the example of the obvious confessional influences on different sleep behaviors of farmers:

> Selbst ein katholischer Domherr erkannte den Wohlstand, mit welchem die weltlichen Staaten vor den geistlichen in Deutschland gesegnet sind, und setzte zur Untersuchung der Ursachen einen Preis aus: dieser Vorzug entging auch meinen flüchtigen Blicken nicht in der Pfalz und dem benachbarten Churfürstenthume Maynz; es herrscht dort sichtbar mehr Industrie, als an den entgegen gesetzten Rheinufern der geistlichen Staaten. Sonst war ich immer der Meinung, je gelinder der Landmann gehalten wäre, und je weniger Abgaben er zu entrichten hätte, desto mehr erweitere sich sein Wirkungskreis; ich fand aber das Gegentheil bei dem Maynzischen Unterthan, und ohne Vergleich mehr Thätigkeit bei dem Pfälzer, dem Druck und Abgaben das Leben viel saurer machen. Zur Zeit, wo noch die Feyertage der Kirche dem katholischen Bauer die Hälfte des Jahres wegnahmen, mußte der lutherische und refomirte Nachbar ganz natürlich mit seiner Haus- und Landwirthschaft schneller und besser vordringen. Schleicht man des Morgens frühe durch diese Gegenden, so wette ich darauf, daß der Bauer, der schon zwischen 4 und 5 Uhr an die Arbeit geht, kein Katholik, jener aber, der erst um 7 Uhr seinen Fensterladen eröffnet, ganz gewiß ein Katholik ist; betet nun dieser noch allemahl seinen Rosenkranz? o-

[11] "Although in Germany one may be against the clerical governments, they surely have contributed to the prosperity of these regions. In the three electorates which make up the biggest part of this region, one knows nothing about the heaped obligations that make the subjects of many German secular princes sigh. These princes have rarely exceeded the limits of the old control system. In their regions one knows little about peonage. The apanage of many princes and princesses does not force them into blackmail. They have adequate military forces and do not sell the sons of their peasants, and they have never participated in internal and external German wars as the secular princes. Although they might not be as clever to encourage their subjects to diligence, the diversified cultivation in their regions has reached a very high degree of perfection."

der laßen jenen die Nahrungssorgen nicht länger ruhen? welcher von beiden hält mehr auf Mitwirkung der Gnade des Schöpfers?[12]

In 1794, the Royal Prussian economist Christian Friedrich Meyer roamed the Rhineland with decidedly economic and scientific interest (published 1797). His description of the free city of Cologne is strongly reminiscent of the dystopia of the Kingdom of Cumba, which had been drawn by Carlo Antonio Pilati:

> In Cöln erhält sich zwar die Handlung wegen der vortrefflichen Wasserlage, weil die ganze Stadt längst dem Rhein gebauet worden, vorzüglich, indem viele reiche und große Handlungshäuser ihren Stapel und Wohnsitz dort haben, woher es denn auch kommt, daß selten unter hundert Schiffen mit Kaufmannsgüter vor Anker liegen: Allein das macht den Ort noch nicht glücklich, so lange ich auf den Straßen nur Schaaren von zerlumpten Bettlern herumschleichen sehe, welche ein Gewerbe daraus machen, und als bloße Erdenlasten zu betrachten sind. So oft ich hingegen in das Bergische Land komme, freue ich mich mit herzlichem Genuß am Anblick des gemeinen Mannes, der durchgehends geschäftig und reinlich gut gekleidet ist.[13]

However, the travel literature rarely discussed the fact that in Cologne the Catholics – and not the cleric – had brought about self-earned wealth and that the economic situation of the free imperial city depended on much more complex situations than exclusively confessional disputes (Neutsch 1986). With the gradual secularization of the left bank of the Rhine by the French after 1794, the perception of conditionalities of the local economic conditions also changed. The causes of any economic disproportions were no longer regarded

[12] "Even a catholic canon recognized the prosperity with which the secular states, in contrast to the spiritual states, are blessed in Germany, and endowed a reward for the investigation of the causes: this asset was not missed by my hasty glances in the Palatinate and in the neighboring electorate Maynz; it is obvious that there is more industry than at the opposite borders of the Rhine River of the spiritual states. Apart from that, I have always held the opinion that the milder a fellow-countryman is kept, and the less he is forced to pay dues, the more his sphere of influence would be enlarged; but I found the contrary in the subject of Maynz, and without comparison more activity in the Palatinate, whose life is much more complicated by pressure and dues. At a time where the public holidays of the church took away half of the year of a catholic peasant, the Lutheran and reformed neighbor naturally had to be faster and better with his household and farming. If you sneak through these fields in the early morning I bet that the peasant you meet at work between 4 and 5 o'clock is not a catholic; but the one who opens his window at 7 o'clock surely is a catholic; does this one still pray the rosary? Or does the anxiety of not knowing where to get food from prevent him from sleep? Which of the two does more rely on the mercy of the Creator?"

[13] "In Cologne the business is kept in perfect shape because of the most suitable place near the water, because the whole city has been built along the Rhine River; because many a rich and big commerce holds its stack and residence there; that is why rarely less than 100 ships loaded with merchandises lie there at anchor: alone this does not make the place a lucky one, as long as I see cohorts of ragged beggars sneak around who make a business out of it, and who have to be considered as mere burdens. But as soon as I come to the 'Bergische Land', I am pleased to see the picture of the simple man who is always busy and clean and well-dressed."

as genuinely confessional. Certain differences in the economic action of various denominations were now explained extrinsically. In 1811, the Division Chief of the prefecture of the new French province Donnersberg, Ferdinand Bodman, collected a multitude of economic data for a statistical yearbook in order to meticulously describe the state of the new part of the Grande Nation. He ascribed the now empirically documented differences in economic power between Catholic and Protestant dominated regions as purely socioeconomic:

> In den protestantischen Gemeinden findet man einen höhern Wohlstand, eine Folge ihres größern Fleißes und ihrer Sparsamkeit. So unbezweifelbar diese Erscheinung auch ist, so wage ich es doch nicht sie der Religion allein zuzuschreiben. Die ehemalige Verfassung, unter welcher die Bewohner dieses Departements lebten, hatte ohne Zweifel einen weit größern Einfluß auf ihre Betriebsamkeit, als der Glaube, zu dem sie sich bekennen; und die Erfahrung bestätigt sich in allen Ländern, daß diejenigen, welche sich zu der am wenigsten begünstigten Religion bekennen, eine angestrengtere Thätigkeit zeigen: es scheint, als suchten sie das gestörte Gleichgewicht durch ihre Arbeitsamkeit wieder herzustellen, und durch den Besitz eines größern Vermögens an Einfluß und Ansehen zu gewinnen, was die Verfassung des Landes ihnen, wegen ihrem Glauben, ungerecht versagt.[14]

However, the French view of the new parts of the country did not underestimate the economic consequences of religious customs. These were found significantly more often in the Catholic sphere than in the Protestant. With ethnographic precision, officials of the French state dedicated to the customs and practices of their new neighbours and documented their social development. The Jansenist Armand Gaston Camus, who had been the archivist of the French National Archives since 1790, precisely observed the local customs and traditions during a trip to the left bank in 1803. The custom of the parish fair was a particularly striking negative:

> Hier ist Vereinigung der Menschheit: Gelegenheit, die Menschen und ihre Gewohnheiten zu studiren. Diese Kirmessen sind nicht immer Religionsfeste. Unabhängig von den eigentlichen Kirmessen sind noch die Feste der Kirchenpatronen. Zuweilen hat man die Kirmessen mit diesen Patronenfesten vereinigt..... Wenn die Kirmeß ganz nach alter hergebrachter Weise gefeiert wird, so darf diese Zeit des Müßiggangs nicht weniger als acht Tage dauren, und um die Kosten der Kirmeslustbarkeiten bestreiten zu können, das heißt, um zu

[14] "In the protestant communities, you find more wealth as a result of their diligence and their economy. Even though there is no doubt on this fact, I do doubt that it is a benefit of the religion alone. The former constitution under which the habitants of this department lived, had without a doubt a far greater influence on their activity than their belief; and this experience is confirmed in all countries, that those who admit to the least favoured religion show a more tiring activity; it seems as if they seek to even up the disturbed balance by their hard work, and by owning a greater fortune to gain more influence and reputation, a right which the constitution of the country refuses to give them because of their faith."

> trinken und zu rauchen, verkauft der Bauer, wenns seyn muß, sein bestes Kleid und schönstes Hemd.[15]

The parish fair celebration, as noted by Camus, is not the pleasure of a single social group, but to all social classes and has extremely harmful consequences for the country's economy:

> Müssig seyn, eine große Anzahl Bierkrüge auszuleeren, viel Tabak zu verdampfen; das sind die Vergnügen aller derer auf einer Kirmeß, die nicht tanzen: sehr ähnliche Vergnügen mit den gewöhnlichen Zeitvertreiben an langen Abenden. Fast alle Leute, selbst viele von denen, die nicht zum gemeinen Volke gehören, verlassen um die Hälfte des Nachmittags Kabinet, Schreibpult, Handel, Gesellschaft und Familie, um drei Stunden in einer Tabaksgesellschaft zuzubringen, mitten im Tabaksdampf und unter Bierdünsten, und denn gehen sie nach Hause. Zwar nicht immer wie Betrunkene, aber doch in einem Zustande von Dummheit und Schläfrigkeit, der vom Übermaß im Biergenuß und den dicken Dünsten entsteht, die sie eingeathmet haben.[16]

However, compared to the enlightened critics of the late 18th century, Camus renounced any polemic and showed himself rather tolerant:

> Ich bestreite diesen Leuten ihr Glück nicht, aber ich bin auch weit entfernt, sie deswegen zu beneiden. Daß sie sich glücklich glauben, dazu wünsche ich ihnen Glück; aber es steht mir auch frei, eine solche Art Glück nicht zu lieben.[17]

While many travel writers at this time almost smugly notice that old monasteries now partly convert to factory buildings in the left bank of the Rhine, it is again a native of the Rhineland who took a more nuanced view of the economic consequences of the French secularisation. Kaspar Heinrich von Sierstorpff, native of a Rhenish noble family, statesman for the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel and even the founder of the spa in Driburg, pointed to the fate of those affected by the abolition of the clergy and nuns and called attention to the economic consequences for the crafts and the destitute (1804):

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[15] "Here is the unity of mankind: the opportunity to study the people and their customs. These parishes' fairs are not always religious celebrations. There are also the celebrations of the patrons of the churches apart from the parish fairs. Occasionally they were celebrated at the same time. If the parish fair is celebrated in a traditional manner, the period of faineance may not last less than eight days, and in order to come up for the costs, that means to drink and to smoke, the peasant, if he is forced to, sells his best shirt and suit."

[16] "To be faineant, to empty a whole lot of beer glasses, to smoke a lot of tobacco; these are the delights of all those who do not dance at a parish fair: very similar delights as the common amusements of long evenings. Almost all people, even many of those who do not belong to the common people, leave the cabinet, desk, commerce, society and family around the second half of the afternoon in order to spend three hours within a tobacco society, in the midst of tobacco smoke and smell of beer, and they leave for home. Not always like drunken men, but still in a condition of foolishness and drowsiness that results from too much beer and the dense smoke that they have inhaled."

[17] "I do not contradict to these people's happiness, but I am far from being envious. That they assume to be lucky, that is what I wish for them; but I am as well free not to like such a kind of luck."

> Tausende von Mönchen und Nonnen, und selbst die Stiftsgeistlichen, die ehemals ihre Familien unterstützten, fallen diesen nun grösstentheils wieder zur Last. ... Durch diese Aufhebung der geistlichen Stiftungen verliert nun ausserdem noch ein sehr grosser Theil der hiesigen Handwerker und kleinere bürgerliche Familien, die durch sie ihren Unterhalt gewannen; die sehr vielen Armen, die täglich aus den Klöstern ihr Essen erhielten, sind auf einmal, ohne daß man sich im geringsten um sie bekümmert hat, verlassen.[18]

The judgments and reviews of the denominational disparities of economic activity in the travel literature from the Rhineland in the 18th and early 19th centuries were partly based on empirically raised data but the analysis of its causes were the result of exaggerated accusations against the ecclesiastical states and the insinuation of an allegedly defective work ethic of its people. For the majority of the enlightened travellers of the 18th century the industrial regions, protestant regions like northern Germany, or at a European level, the Netherlands and England, served as the benchmark for the economic development of a modern state (Borutta 2010, Hersche 2006). A modernization beyond this dominant model was considered inconceivable, and consequently the economy of the ecclesiastical states was evaluated only on the basis of figures and externals. Voices and opinions of "concerned" persons were not even considered. Among the representations of the Rhine trips it remains an exception that in 1809 the travel writer Philip Andreas Nemnich did not comment on the epilogue of a Catholic resident of Neuwied in his *Diary of a cultural and industry trip*[19] *(1809-11)*. Although this may have only happened to demonstrate the Catholic naivety in economic matters, a very pious argument for economic and lifestyle restraint can be stated:

> Das Logis im Braunschweigischen Hof, in Neuwied, fand ich, wegen der Lage am Rhein, sehr angenehm. Hier trat ich reisefertig ans Ufer, um die Wasser-Diligence zu erwarten. Von fern erblickte ich ein großes Fahrzeug, mit vielen Menschen darauf. Ist das die Diligence? frug ich einen neben mir stehenden Mann. ‚Nein, mein Herr, das sind Wallfahrer. Diese kommen dreißig Stunden weit her, und haben noch dreißig Stunden zu machen, ehe sie nach ihrer Bestimmung kommen. Es sind 60 bis 70 Menschen darauf. Mehrere Fahrzeuge sind schon vorangegangen, und noch mehrere werden nachfolgen.' Es ist doch wirklich sündlich, war meine Meinung, daß diese Leute gerade um die Erndtezeit Haus und Hof verlassen, um sich einem offenbaren Müßiggang zu ergeben, und den Reichthum, den ihnen die wohltätige Natur bietet, so von sich zu stoßen. ‚Mein Herr,' erwiderte verdrießlich der Mann, ‚Er ist nicht auf dem rechten

[18] Thousands of monks and nuns and even the priests who used to support their families in the past become a burden to them again... A big part of the local craftsmen and many smaller middle-class families are socially deprived by the neutralization of the clerical trusts which they used to earn their sustenance from; many poor people, who used to get their daily meals from the monasteries, are now abandoned.

[19] Tagebuch einer der Kultur und Industrie gewidmeten Reise.

Wege. Arbeiten macht nicht reich. Es ist der Segen des Herrn, der allein reich macht. Diesen muß man erflehen, mit Fasten, Beten, und Wallfahren.'[20]

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[20] "The lodging at the 'Braunschweigische Hof' in Neuwied seemed very comfortable to me, especially because of the neighborhood of the Rhine River. I stepped to the water to get the ferry. From afar I saw a huge vehicle with lots of people on it. Is this the ferry? I asked a man standing close to my side. 'No, sir, these people are pilgrims. They have been travelling for 30 hours, and they still have to make another 30 hours until they reach their destination.' There are 60 to 70 people on the ferry. Various vehicles have already proceeded, and others will follow. In my opinion, it is a sin to leave the farms in the midst of the harvest season to do an obvious faineance and to throw away nature's generous fortune. 'Sir', the man by my side responded grumpily, 'He is not on the right way. Work does not lead to wealth. It is the Lord's mercy alone that makes you rich. You have to beg for this mercy by abstinence, prayers and pilgrimage'."

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