

KIERKEGAARD RESEARCH:
SOURCES, RECEPTION AND RESOURCES



VOLUME 5

KIERKEGAARD AND THE RENAISSANCE
AND MODERN TRADITIONS

TOME II: THEOLOGY

EDITED BY
JON STEWART

KIERKEGAARD AND THE RENAISSANCE
AND MODERN TRADITIONS

TOME II: THEOLOGY

Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Resources
Volume 5, Tome II

Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Resources
is a publication of the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre

General Editor

JON STEWART

*Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre,
University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

Editorial Board

KATALIN NUN

PETER ŠAJDA

Advisory Board

ISTVÁN CZAKÓ

FINN GREDAL JENSEN

DAVID D. POSSEN

HEIKO SCHULZ

This volume was published with the generous financial support
of the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation

Kierkegaard and the Renaissance and Modern Traditions

Tome II: Theology

Edited by
JON STEWART

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2009 by Ashgate Publishing

Published 2016 by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © Jon Stewart and the contributors 2009

Jon Stewart has asserted his right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the editor of this work.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Kierkegaard and the Renaissance and modern traditions

Vol. 5 Tome 2: Theology. – (Kierkegaard research : sources, reception and resources)

1. Kierkegaard, Soren, 1813–1855 2. Philosophy, Renaissance

3. Philosophy, Modern

I. Stewart, Jon (Jon Bartley)

198.9

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Kierkegaard and the Renaissance and modern traditions / [edited by] Jon Stewart.

p. cm. — (Kierkegaard research: sources, reception and resources ; v. 5)

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 978-0-7546-6819-0 (hardcover : v. 1 : alk. paper)

1. Kierkegaard, Soren, 1813–1855—Sources. I. Stewart, Jon (Jon Bartley)

B4377.K45527 2008

198'.9—dc22

2008050992

ISBN 13: 978-0-7546-6819-0 (hbk)

Cover design by Katalin Nun.

Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	vii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	ix
Abraham a Sancta Clara: An Aphoristic Encyclopedia of Christian Wisdom <i>Peter Šajda</i>	1
Johann Arndt: The Pietist Impulse in Kierkegaard and Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Devotional Literature <i>Joseph Ballan</i>	21
Ludovicus Blosius: A Frightful Satire on Christendom <i>Peter Šajda</i>	31
Jacob Böhme: The Ambiguous Legacy of Speculative Passion <i>Lee C. Barrett</i>	43
Hans Adolph Brorson: Danish Pietism's Greatest Hymn Writer and His Relation to Kierkegaard <i>Christopher B. Barnett</i>	63
John Calvin: Kierkegaard and the Question of the Law's Third Use <i>David Yoon-Jung Kim</i>	81
Erasmus of Rotterdam: Kierkegaard's Hints at a Christian Humanist <i>Finn Gredal Jensen</i>	111
François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon: Clearing the Way for <i>The Sickness unto Death</i> <i>Peter Šajda</i>	129

August Hermann Francke: Kierkegaard on the Kernel and the Husk of Pietist Theology <i>Joseph Ballan</i>	149
Thomas Kingo: An Investigation of the Poet's and Hymnist's Impact on Kierkegaard <i>Christopher B. Barnett</i>	157
Martin Luther: Reform, Secularization, and the Question of His "True Successor" <i>David Yoon-Jung Kim and Joel D.S. Rasmussen</i>	173
Hieronimus Savonarola: Kierkegaard's Model for the Blood-Witness <i>Ivan Ž. Sørensen</i>	219
Gerhard Tersteegen: Kierkegaard's Reception of a Man of "Noble Piety and Simple Wisdom" <i>Christopher B. Barnett</i>	245
<i>Index of Persons</i>	259
<i>Index of Subjects</i>	267

List of Contributors

Joseph Ballan, University of Chicago Divinity School, Swift Hall, 1025 East 58th St., Chicago, IL 60637, USA.

Christopher B. Barnett, c/o Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre, Farvergade 27 D, 1463 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

Lee C. Barrett, Lancaster Theological Seminary, 555 W. James St., Lancaster, PA 17603, USA.

Finn Gredal Jensen, Society for Danish Language and Literature, Christians Brygge 1, 1219 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

David Yoon-Jung Kim, The Divinity School, Harvard University, 45 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA.

Joel D.S. Rasmussen, Mansfield College, Oxford University, Mansfield Road, Oxford, OX1 3TF, UK.

Peter Šajda, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute of Philosophy, Klemensova 19, 813 64 Bratislava, Slovakia.

Ivan Ž. Sørensen, Roskilde Gymnasium, Domkirkepladsen, 4000 Roskilde, Denmark.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

List of Abbreviations

Danish Abbreviations

- B&A* *Breve og Aktstykker vedrørende Søren Kierkegaard*, ed. by Niels Thulstrup, vols. 1–2, Copenhagen: Munksgaard 1953–54.
- Bl.art.* *S. Kierkegaard's Bladartikler, med Bilag samlede efter Forfatterens Død, udgivne som Supplement til hans øvrige Skrifter*, ed. by Rasmus Nielsen, Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel 1857.
- EP* *Af Søren Kierkegaards Efterladte Papirer*, vols. 1–9, ed. by H.P. Barfod and Hermann Gottsched, Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel 1869–81.
- Pap.* *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer*, vols. I to XI–3, ed. by Peter Andreas Heiberg, Victor Kuhr and Einer Torsting, Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1909–48; second, expanded ed., vols. I to XI–3, by Niels Thulstrup, vols. XII to XIII supplementary volumes, ed. by Niels Thulstrup, vols. XIV to XVI index by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Copenhagen: Gyldendal 1968–78.
- SKS* *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*, vols. 1–28, K1–K28, ed. by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Joakim Garff, Jette Knudsen, Johnny Kondrup, Alastair McKinnon and Finn Hauberg Mortensen, Copenhagen: Gads Forlag 1997ff.
- SVI* *Samlede Værker*, ed. by A.B. Drachmann, Johan Ludvig Heiberg and H.O. Lange, vols. I–XIV, Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag 1901–06.

English Abbreviations

- AN* *Armed Neutrality*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998.
- AR* *On Authority and Revelation, The Book on Adler*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1955.
- ASKB* *The Auctioneer's Sales Record of the Library of Søren Kierkegaard*, ed. by H.P. Rohde, Copenhagen: The Royal Library 1967.

- BA* *The Book on Adler*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998.
- C* *The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997.
- CA* *The Concept of Anxiety*, trans. by Reidar Thomte in collaboration with Albert B. Anderson, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1980.
- CD* *Christian Discourses*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997.
- CI* *The Concept of Irony*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1989.
- CIC* *The Concept of Irony*, trans. with an Introduction and Notes by Lee M. Capel, London: Collins 1966.
- COR* *The Corsair Affair; Articles Related to the Writings*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1982.
- CUP1* *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, vol. 1, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992.
- CUP2* *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, vol. 2, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992.
- EO1* *Either/Or*, Part I, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1987.
- EO2* *Either/Or*, Part II, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1987.
- EOP* *Either/Or*, trans. by Alastair Hannay, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books 1992.
- EPW* *Early Polemical Writings*, among others: *From the Papers of One Still Living; Articles from Student Days; The Battle Between the Old and the New Soap-Cellars*, trans. by Julia Watkin, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990.
- EUD* *Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990.
- FSE* *For Self-Examination*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990.

- FT* *Fear and Trembling*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1983.
- FTP* *Fear and Trembling*, trans. by Alastair Hannay, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books 1985.
- JC* *Johannes Climacus, or De omnibus dubitandum est*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1985.
- JFY* *Judge for Yourself!*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990.
- JP* *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, vols. 1–6, ed. and trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, assisted by Gregor Malantschuk (vol. 7, Index and Composite Collation), Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press 1967–78.
- KAC* *Kierkegaard's Attack upon "Christendom," 1854–1855*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1944.
- KJN* *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks*, vols. 1–11, ed. by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Alastair Hannay, David Kangas, Bruce H. Kirmmse, George Pattison, Vanessa Rumble, and K. Brian Söderquist, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press 2007ff.
- LD* *Letters and Documents*, trans. by Henrik Rosenmeier, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1978 (A translation of *B&A*).
- LR* *A Literary Review*, trans. by Alastair Hannay, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books 2001.
- M* *The Moment and Late Writings*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998.
- P* *Prefaces*, trans. by Todd W. Nichol, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997.
- PC* *Practice in Christianity*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1991.
- PF* *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1985.
- PJ* *Papers and Journals: A Selection*, trans. by Alastair Hannay, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books 1996.

- PLR* *Prefaces: Light Reading for Certain Classes as the Occasion May Require*, trans. by William McDonald, Tallahassee: Florida State University Press 1989.
- PLS* *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. by David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1941.
- PV* *The Point of View* including *On My Work as an Author*, *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*, and *Armed Neutrality*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998.
- PVL* *The Point of View for My Work as an Author* including *On My Work as an Author*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, New York and London: Oxford University Press 1939.
- R* *Repetition*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1983.
- SBL* *Notes of Schelling's Berlin Lectures*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1989.
- SLW* *Stages on Life's Way*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1988.
- SUD* *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1980.
- SUDP* *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. by Alastair Hannay, London and New York: Penguin Books 1989.
- TA* *Two Ages: The Age of Revolution and the Present Age. A Literary Review*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1978.
- TD* *Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1993.
- UD* *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1993.
- WA* *Without Authority* including *The Lily in the Field and the Bird of the Air*, *Two Ethical-Religious Essays*, *Three Discourses at the Communion on Fridays*, *An Upbuilding Discourse*, *Two Discourses at the Communion on Fridays*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997.

- WS* *Writing Sampler*, trans. by Todd W. Nichol, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997.
- WL* *Works of Love*, trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Abraham a Sancta Clara: An Aphoristic Encyclopedia of Christian Wisdom

Peter Šajda

The acquaintance of Søren Kierkegaard with the Baroque Catholic writer Abraham a Sancta Clara may seem surprising at first glance. The German religious writer was for many decades practically unknown in the Protestant world, but his literary talent, peculiar style, and unique combination of humor and satire with Christian moral pedagogy ensured him a lasting, albeit fluctuating, popularity. Kierkegaard was a long-time reader of Abraham a Sancta Clara, gradually purchasing all of Abraham's works and quoting them both in his published and unpublished writings. It is therefore relevant to examine what attracted Kierkegaard to the Baroque author and why Kierkegaard's reception of Abraham a Sancta Clara differed from that of many other thinkers of his time.

I. Brief Overview of Abraham a Sancta Clara's Life and Literary Legacy

Johann Ulrich Megerle, who later became known under his religious name Abraham a Sancta Clara, was born probably on July 2, 1644 in Kreenheinstetten near Meßkirch in southern Germany. After attending the local school and the Latin school in Meßkirch, he was sent to Ingolstadt, where he continued his education with the Jesuits. Following the death of his father, his further education was taken care of by his uncle Abraham Megerle (1607–80), a canon in Altötting, who sent Johann Ulrich to study in Salzburg, this time with the Benedictines. In 1662 Johann Ulrich Megerle joined the order of Discalced Augustinians¹ and started his novitiate in the recently founded priory of Mariabrunn, near Vienna. Out of gratitude to his uncle he adopted the religious name Abraham a Sancta Clara. Due to the increasing danger of Turkish invasion, Abraham a Sancta Clara was forced to interrupt his studies in Vienna and evacuate first to Prague and later to Ferrara, from where he returned to Austria in 1665. After his ordination, he was assigned first to Vienna and then to the Swabian

¹ This reformed branch of the Augustinian order, which came into being in 1592 in Italy, had in Central Europe a relatively short history at the time of Abraham a Sancta Clara's joining the order. Shortly after the foundation of the priory in Prague (1626), the order formed a community in Vienna in 1631. In 1636 Emperor Ferdinand II authorized the Discalced Augustinians to establish a priory in Mariabrunn, where Abraham a Sancta Clara entered the novitiate.

pilgrimage site of Taxa, administered by the Discalced Augustinians, from where he was summoned back to Vienna in 1672. On November 15, 1673 the Augustinian preached in Klosterneuburg on the occasion of the pilgrimage of the imperial court to the tomb of St. Leopold, and his sermon was published under the title *Astriacus Austriacus*. In 1677 Abraham a Sancta Clara received the honorary title of *imperial preacher*, which he included on the title page of most of his works, thus providing them with a special authority.²

As a reaction to the plague epidemics that erupted in Vienna in 1679, Abraham a Sancta Clara composed his most famous work, *Mercks Wienn*, that appeared in 1680 and immediately became a bestseller. This book, which contained powerful illustrative language³ and combined the genres of a plague treatise and fraternity book with the *Totentanz* tradition and upbuilding literature,⁴ ensured the Swabian Augustinian a lasting recognition and popularity. As *Mercks Wienn* comprised relatively few specifically Catholic elements and its style was sensitive to non-Catholic readers,⁵ it was able to transcend the boundaries of a confessional readership and reach a wide international audience.

The Turkish invasion, which at last led to the siege of Vienna in July 1683, was the impetus that prompted Abraham a Sancta Clara to write his call for resistance against the Ottoman “arch-enemy” entitled *Auff auff ihr Christen* (1683). This work brought the German theologian into a close co-operation with the Salzburg-based printing house of Melchior Haan which was to play a decisive part in the dissemination of his literary works.⁶

In the years following the liberation of Vienna, Abraham a Sancta Clara resided at the priory of Graz, where he was elected prior in 1686. In the same year appeared the first volume of his large-scale work *Judas der Ertz-Schelm*, which had a crucial impact on the later reception of his *oeuvre* and was considered by several generations of scholars to be his main work. In 1689 Abraham a Sancta Clara was elected *prior provincial*, and it was during his tenure that the Latin work *Grammatica Religiosa* (1691) was published in Salzburg; a book that attracted special interest on the part of Kierkegaard. In the ensuing years the Augustinian held several leading positions in his order and continued to be a prolific author. He published works in a wide variety of genres, many of which saw a number of reprinted editions, including a German edition of *Grammatica Religiosa*, published in 1699 in Cologne. In 1707 appeared the moral pedagogical work *Huy! und Pfuy! Der Welt*, which coupled the texts of Abraham a Sancta Clara with the exquisite engravings of Jan Luyken (1649–1712)

² The title *imperial preacher* did not involve any special position at the Viennese court. It was an honorary title that provided Abraham a Sancta Clara with no political or pastoral privileges. Cf. Franz M. Eybl, *Abraham a Sancta Clara. Vom Prediger zum Schriftsteller*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag 1992, pp. 49–59.

³ Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Über Abraham a Santa Clara*, Meßkirch: Stadt Meßkirch 1964, pp. 7–8.

⁴ Cf. Eybl, *Abraham a Sancta Clara. Vom Prediger zum Schriftsteller*, p. 238.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

⁶ Cf. Manfred Arndorfer, “Abraham a Sancta Clara und die Erstdrucker seiner Werke bis 1709,” in *Abraham a Sancta Clara*, Karlsruhe: Badische Landesbibliothek 1982, p. 69.

and Caspar Luyken (1672–1708). This “most mature and finest” work of Abraham a Sancta Clara was published two years before the author’s death.⁷ The Augustinian theologian died on December 1, 1709.

After his death Abraham a Sancta Clara remained a popular author, which prompted the publication of his *Nachlass* and the production of various compilations and apocrypha. The fact that Abraham’s books sold well, led several publishers to the idea of combining parts of his already published works with the texts of other authors, ascribing the literary hybrid to the Augustinian preacher. Also the publisher of Abraham’s *Nachlass*, his confrere Alexander a Latere Christi (d. 1719), edited the manuscripts in such a way that the final product was in fact a work of two authors.

The posthumous reception of the writings of the Baroque Catholic author experienced several waves, whereby especially after 1750 the number of reprinted editions declined substantially and mostly minor pieces were published.⁸ The nineteenth century brought about a revival of interest in Abraham a Sancta Clara, part of which was the multi-volume edition of the author’s *Complete Works*, published between 1835 and 1847, primarily in Passau and Lindau.⁹ Although this edition did not differentiate between Abraham’s own *oeuvre* and later additions, it played an important role in the popularization of his writings across German-speaking Europe. It was this edition that conveyed the thought of the Swabian theologian to Kierkegaard, who read it thoroughly, highlighting 63 passages in 8 different volumes.

II. The Reception of Abraham a Sancta Clara in the German Enlightenment, Classicism, and Romanticism

The sources that might have played a role in acquainting Kierkegaard with Abraham a Sancta Clara, did not interpret the Augustinian author in a uniform way. Some treated him as a historical curiosity with little ideological or literary relevance, while others saw in him a valuable upbuilding author or a genuine literary talent. For most of these sources, however, it was Abraham’s peculiar language and original style that evoked interest and not so much the spiritual message behind them. The sources that were at Kierkegaard’s disposal were almost exclusively of German provenance and ranged from the period of the Enlightenment to Classicism and Romanticism.

A short profile of Abraham a Sancta Clara appears in Christian Gottlieb Jöcher’s (1694–1758) *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, whose four volumes were published

⁷ Friedemann Maurer, *Abraham a Sancta Clara’s “Huy! Und Pfiy! Der Welt*, Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer 1968, p. 30. See this work also for the analysis of the pedagogic aspects of Abraham’s pastoral activity.

⁸ Cf. Jean Schillinger, *Abraham a Sancta Clara. Pastorale et discours politique dans l’Autriche du XVII siècle*, Bern: Peter Lang 1993, p. 294.

⁹ *Abraham a St. Clara’s Sämmtliche Werke*, vols. 1–21, vols. 1–2, Passau: Winkler and Vienna: Gerold 1835; vols. 3–6, Passau: Winkler, Vienna: Gerold et al. and Breslau: Max 1835; vols. 7–12, Passau: Winkler 1836–37; vols. 13–14, Passau: Pustet 1840–41; vols. 15–21, Lindau: Stettner and Augsburg: Rieger 1841–47 (*ASKB* 294–311). Kierkegaard owned the complete edition.

in 1750–51.¹⁰ This alphabetically ordered encyclopedia of scholars of all times contains brief biographical information on the Augustinian theologian, as well as an overview of his works. It presents Abraham as an exceptionally gifted priest and renowned preacher, and when listing his most excellent works, it places *Grammatica Religiosa* at the top of the list.¹¹ Kierkegaard owned Jöcher's work and used it to obtain data about authors he was not familiar with, for which he gives evidence in the Preface to *Either/Or*, where he mentions Jöcher along with Diogenes Laertius and Louis Moréri (1643–80).¹²

Louis Moréri's *Le Grand Dictionnaire historique*, which was part of Kierkegaard's personal library, treats Abraham a Sancta Clara only briefly: presenting him as a priest with "rare talents," but making no concrete reference to his works.¹³

The monumental *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* published by Johann Samuel Ersch (1766–1828) and Johann Gottfried Gruber (1774–1851) describes Abraham a Sancta Clara as a man of two extremes. It speaks of a "burlesque originality of his sermons," praising his "deep knowledge of the human" and his "love of truth," but criticizing him for taking recourse to "the most unworthy jests" and sinking to "the lowest platitude."¹⁴ Ideologically, Abraham is seen as incapable of transcending the limitations of his age and—although equally distant from mysticism and scholasticism—he remains an intolerant and superstitious folk preacher, loyal to the Catholic dogmatism of his time.

A rather unfavorable picture of Abraham a Sancta Clara is found in the second essay of *Anti-Goeze* by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–81). In his theological polemics against the Hamburg pastor Johann Melchior Goeze (1717–86), Lessing makes use of an opposition of Abraham a Sancta Clara, on the one hand, and Shakespeare and Molière, on the other. The Augustinian is presented as a preacher of inferior quality, who would make a poor comedy writer, whereas the English and French dramatists are seen as potentially excellent preachers.¹⁵ Kierkegaard was

¹⁰ Christian Gottlieb Jöcher, *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Gleditschens Buchhandlung 1750–51 (ASKB 948–951). In the *Auction Catalogue* C.G. Jöcher's lexicon is listed together with its continuation, produced by Johann Christoph Adelung (cf. ASKB 948–953).

¹¹ Jöcher, *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, p. 31.

¹² SKS 2, 19 / EO1, 11.

¹³ *Le Grand Dictionnaire historique ou le Mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane, Qui Contient en Abregé l'Histoire Fabuleuse des Dieux & des Héros de l'Antiquité Payenne*, ed. by Pierre Roques, vols. 1–6, Basel: Jean Brandmuller 1731–32, vol. 1, p. 39 (ASKB 1965–1969).

¹⁴ Johann Samuel Ersch and Johann Gottfried Gruber, *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, section 1, vols. 1–29; section 2, vols. 1–14; section 3, vols. 1–9, Leipzig: Gleditsch 1818–31 and Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus 1831–37 [section 1, vols. 1–99; section 2, vols. 1–43; section 3, vols. 1–25, Leipzig: Gleditsch 1818–31 and Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus 1831–89], section 1, vol. 1, p. 160 (ASKB 1311–1363).

¹⁵ Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Sämmtliche Schriften*, Berlin: Vossische Buchhandlung 1825–28, vol. 6, pp. 124–5 (ASKB 1747–1762): "Wer Logik in einer Komödie zeigt, dem würde sie gewiß auch zu einer Predigt nicht entstehen: so wie der, dem sie in einer Predigt mangelt, nimmermehr mit ihrer Hülfe auch eine nur erträgliche Komödie zu Stande bringen

familiar with Lessing's controversy with Goeze and owned Lessing's *Sämmtliche Schriften*.¹⁶ In the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* he included several ironic comments on Goeze when elaborating at length on the views of Lessing.¹⁷

Abraham a Sancta Clara appears also in *Geschichte der komischen Litteratur*, written by the Silesian literary historian Karl Friedrich Flögel (1729–88).¹⁸ In his discussion on the nature of the *comical* Flögel argues that a great part of it is determined by the age to which it belongs and that most writers “carry the sign of their time on their forehead.”¹⁹ As an example of the volatile nature of the *genius saeculi* he mentions Abraham a Sancta Clara, whose writings used to enjoy high esteem, but already some decades after his death were subject to censorship.²⁰ Kierkegaard owned Flögel's treatise on the history of comic literature and used it repeatedly as a source of inspiration. He referred to it at the beginning of *Either/Or*, in the *Diapsalmata*,²¹ or availed himself of it when composing the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*.²²

Flögel included a short chapter on Abraham a Sancta Clara also in his *Geschichte des Burlesken*,²³ where he maintains that Abraham's sermons were “diligently attended by many not for the sake of edification, but for the sake of laughter.”²⁴ As an illustration of Abraham's “burlesque writing style”²⁵ Flögel cites his poem

würde, und wenn er der unerschöpflichste Spaßvogel unter der Sonne wäre. Glauben Sie, daß Pater Abraham gute Komödien gemacht hätte? Gewiß nicht, denn seine Predigten sind allzu elend. Aber wer zweifelt wohl, daß Moliere und Shakespeare vortreffliche Predigten gemacht und gehalten hätten, wenn sie, anstatt des Theaters, die Kanzel hätten besteigen wollen?”

¹⁶ Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *sämmtliche Schriften*, vols. 1–32, vols. 1–28, Berlin: Vossische Buchhandlung 1825–27; vols. 29–32 Berlin and Stettin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung 1828 (ASKB 1747–1762).

¹⁷ SKS 7, 90 / CUP1, 91. SKS 7, 104 / CUP1, 107.

¹⁸ Karl Friedrich Flögel, *Geschichte der komischen Litteratur*, vols. 1–4, Liegnitz and Leipzig: David Siebert 1784–87 (ASKB 1396–1399).

¹⁹ Ibid., vol. 1, p. 171.

²⁰ Ibid.: “Man hat schon längst bemerkt, daß die meisten Schriftsteller das Gepräge ihres Zeitalters auf ihrer Stirn tragen; wodurch sie entweder geehrt oder gebrandmarkt werden; ob es gleich zu allen Zeiten Ausnahmen im guten und bösen Verstande gegeben hat. Da ein grosser Theil des Komischen nicht allgemeiner, sondern besondern Natur ist, so wird es auch durch die Zeiten abgeändert...Der berühmte Pater Abraham a Sancta Clara wurde ehemals vor einen sehr erbaulichen Prediger gehalten, und in Wien kam ihm keiner an Beyfall gleich; allein schon unter der Kayserin Maria Theresia stand sein bekanntes Buch: Gack, Gack, Gack, Gack a Ga einer wunderseltamen Hennen im Hertzogthum Beyern in der schwarzen Rolle verbotner Bücher.” Kierkegaard's edition of Flögel also comprises an index of names, where the name of Abraham a Sancta Clara is listed as the first entry.

²¹ SKS 2, 29 / EO1, 11. Kierkegaard refers in *Either/Or* to the first volume of Flögel's four-volume work, where also the reference to Abraham a Sancta Clara is found.

²² Pap. VI B 98, 68.

²³ Karl Friedrich Flögel, *Geschichte des Burlesken*, Leipzig: Schwickertscher Verlag 1794, pp. 241–5 (ASKB 1400).

²⁴ Ibid., p. 241.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 243.

“Anthony of Padua’s Fish Sermon,” as well as his plastic depiction of the Black Death in *Mercks Wienn*.

An important mention of the Swabian theologian can be found in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s (1749–1832) autobiography *Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit*, where Goethe introduces the reader to the world-view and ideological legacy of Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741–1801). When discussing Lavater’s *Pontius Pilate*, Goethe establishes a similarity between the Swiss thinker and Abraham a Sancta Clara in their style of instructing “the masses” about Christ, whereby he emphasizes Lavater’s literal interpretation of the Bible. The edition of Goethe’s works that Kierkegaard owned was, however, incomplete and comprised only the first 15 books of Goethe’s autobiography,²⁶ which makes it rather unlikely that Kierkegaard encountered the Viennese preacher through Goethe.

Goethe’s interest in Abraham a Sancta Clara had an effect on his friend Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805), whom he made familiar with the Augustinian writer in 1798 when the latter was completing the first part of his dramatic trilogy *Wallenstein*. On October 5, 1798 Goethe sent Schiller some of Abraham’s works with the intention of providing him with inspiration for his figure of a Capuchin in *Wallenstein’s Camp*. Schiller was amazed by Abraham’s eloquence and style and described him in a letter to Goethe as “a wonderful original, who necessarily evokes respect.”²⁷ The sermon of the Capuchin, which Schiller included in Scene VIII of *Wallenstein’s Camp*, is an imitation of Abraham a Sancta Clara’s literary style, directly borrowing phrases from the Augustinian’s works. Although Kierkegaard possessed Schiller’s *Complete Works*,²⁸ it is unclear whether he paid any attention to the *Kapuzinerpredigt* in *Wallenstein*.²⁹

A very probable source of information on Abraham a Sancta Clara for the young Kierkegaard is Jean Paul (1763–1825), to whom the Danish thinker referred in one of his journal entries as “the greatest humorist capitalist.”³⁰ Jean Paul appears

²⁶ Abraham a Sancta Clara is mentioned in Book 19 of Goethe’s autobiography. Kierkegaard owned the following edition: *Goethe’s Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand* [in 55 volumes], vols. 1–40, Stuttgart and Tübingen: J.G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung 1827–30; *Goethe’s nachgelassene Werke*, vols. 41–55, Stuttgart and Tübingen: J.G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung 1832–33 (ASKB 1641–1668).

²⁷ *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe in den Jahren 1794 bis 1805*, Stuttgart and Tübingen: J.G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung 1828–29, vol. 4, p. 335. The letter is from October 9, 1798. In this edition it is listed under the number 516. For more detail on the discussion about the *Kapuzinerpredigt* between Schiller and Goethe see letters nos. 510, 511, 512a, 514, and 515.

²⁸ *Schillers sämtliche Werke in zwölf Bänden*, vols. 1–12, Stuttgart and Tübingen: J.G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung 1838 (ASKB 1804–1815). Scene VIII of *Wallenstein’s Camp* which contains material borrowed from Abraham a Sancta Clara is found in vol. 4, pp. 33–8.

²⁹ The fact that Schiller was inspired by Abraham a Sancta Clara when writing his *Wallenstein* is mentioned in at least two other sources that Kierkegaard probably consulted: Ersch and Gruber, *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, section 1, vol. 1, p. 160; Karl Wilhelm Böttiger, vols. 1–8, *Verdenshistorien i Levnetsbeskrivelser*, Copenhagen: C. Steens Forlag 1840–45, part 2, vol. 6, p. 200.

³⁰ SKS 17, 225, DD:18.e / KJN 1, 217.

in Kierkegaard's notes already in March 1836 when the philosopher was reading Christian Molbech's (1783–1857) *Lectures on More Recent Danish Poetry*,³¹ and in 1837 he is part of Kierkegaard's reflections on his attitude to journal-writing.³² Jean Paul mentions Abraham a Sancta Clara in his *Vorschule der Aesthetik*, which Kierkegaard owned in two versions,³³ and which was at his time a popular piece of reference literature. Jean Paul's brief ode to Abraham a Sancta Clara is found in the first part of the work, at the beginning of Program VIII, whose focus is epic, dramatic and lyric humor. Here Jean Paul virtually places a flower on the grave of Abraham a Sancta Clara and claims that the greatest obstacle to the recognition of his talent was "the century and a triple place: Germany, Vienna and the pulpit."³⁴ Although Kierkegaard does not explicitly mention Jean Paul's praise of the Augustinian *satiricus*, in his *The Concept of Irony* he refers to the presentation of irony and humor in *Vorschule der Aesthetik*, which follows almost immediately after the reference to Abraham a Sancta Clara.³⁵

Kierkegaard could also have encountered Abraham a Sancta Clara in the anthology of German songs *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, edited by Achim von Arnim (1781–1831) and Clemens Brentano (1778–1842). This anthology—which was part of Kierkegaard's library—comprised the poem "Anthony of Padua's Fish Sermon" adopted from Abraham a Sancta Clara's *Judas der Ertz-Schelm*, whereby the editors included both the name of the original author and the title of the source.³⁶

A short and highly positive presentation of the Augustinian preacher is found in Wolfgang Menzel's *Die deutsche Literatur*—which Kierkegaard purchased as early as 1836—where Abraham is referred to as "a most spiritous humorist and a laughing

³¹ Christian Molbech, *Forelæsninger over den nyere danske Poesi, særdeles efter Digterne Evalds, Baggensens og Oehlenschlägers Værker*, vols. 1–2, Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel 1832. Cf. SKS 17, 60, BB:1 / KJN 1, 53–6.

³² SKS 17, 229, DD:28 / KJN 1, 221–2.

³³ [Johann Paul Friedrich Richter], Jean Paul, *Vorschule der Aesthetik nebst einigen Vorlesungen in Leipzig über die Parteien der Zeit*, vols. 1–3, 2nd revised ed., Stuttgart and Tübingen: J.G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung 1813 (ASKB 1381–1383); Jean Paul, *Sämtliche Werke*, Berlin: G. Reimer 1826–28, vol. 41 (ASKB 1777–1799).

³⁴ Jean Paul, *Vorschule der Aesthetik*, vol. 1, p. 293: "Eine Blume werde auch hier auf das Grab des guten Abraham a Santa Clara gelegt, welches gewiß einen Lorbeerbaurn trüge, wär' es in England gemacht worden und seine Wiege vorher; seinem Witz für Gestalten und Wörter, seinem humoristischen Dramatisieren schadete nichts als das Jahrhundert und ein dreifacher Ort, Deutschland, Wien und Kanzel." See also Jean Paul, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 41, p. 198.

³⁵ SKS 1, 284 / CI, 244–5.

³⁶ Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn. Alte deutsche Lieder*, vols. 1–3, 2nd ed., Heidelberg: Mohr und Winter 1819 (ASKB 1494–1496), vol. 1, pp. 357–9. The editors shortened and adapted the poem, and gave it the title *Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt*. For further detail see Clemens Brentano, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer 1975ff., vol. 9, 1, pp. 578–81; Josef Schmidt, "Kein Predig niemalsen den Fischln so gefallen," in *Deutsche Barocklyrik*, ed. by Martin Bircher and Alois M. Haas, Bern: Francke Verlag 1973, pp. 311–26. In Kierkegaard's edition of Abraham a Sancta Clara's *Complete Works*, the poem is found in vol. 2, pp. 47–8.

satyrist”³⁷ with the remark that he “hardly wrote a page on which the spirit would not be able to find nourishment.”³⁸

A rare Danish source of information on Abraham a Sancta Clara available to Kierkegaard was Karl Wilhelm Böttiger’s (1790–1862) *Die Weltgeschichte in Biographiien* translated from German in part by Kierkegaard’s relative Hans Brøchner (1820–75).³⁹ The depiction has an encyclopedic character and contains several phrases obviously borrowed from the above mentioned *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*.

An intriguing presentation of Abraham a Sancta Clara—that undoubtedly would have been of interest to Kierkegaard—appears in Joseph von Eichendorff’s (1788–1857) *Geschichte der poetischen Literatur Deutschlands*.⁴⁰ This work was, however, published only in 1857, two years after Kierkegaard’s death. In Eichendorff’s historical analysis Abraham a Sancta Clara is described as “the most evident antipode to the Pietists,”⁴¹ since he succeeded in combining the seriousness of the Christian *kerygma* with humor and satire, thus exerting a much greater influence on the believers than the austere Pietists.⁴² In his *exposé* Eichendorff also welcomes the fact that the writings of German Catholic authors, such as Abraham a Sancta Clara or Angelus Silesius (1624–77), began to experience a revival after the long decades of ignorance.

III. Kierkegaard’s Reading of Abraham a Sancta Clara

Kierkegaard became acquainted with the literary legacy of Abraham a Sancta Clara through the 21-volume *Sämmtliche Werke*, published between 1835 and 1847 in Passau and Lindau. Since this edition was aimed at promoting the baroque author in the literary milieu of the nineteenth century, it sought to adapt the original works to the standards and taste of the contemporary reader.⁴³ Although the result of

³⁷ Wolfgang Menzel, *Die deutsche Literatur*, vols. 1–4, 2nd enlarged ed., Stuttgart: Hallberg’sche Verlagshandlung 1836, vol. 3, p. 246 (ASKB U 79).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

³⁹ Karl Wilhelm Böttiger, *Verdenshistorie i Levnetsbeskrivelser*, vols. 1–8, trans. by A.C. Lund and Hans Brøchner, Copenhagen: Steens Forlag 1840–45, vol. 6, pp. 199–200 (originally, *Die Weltgeschichte in Biographiien*, vols. 1–8, Berlin: Duncker und Humblot 1839–43).

⁴⁰ Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, *Geschichte der poetischen Literatur Deutschlands*, Parts 1–2, Paderborn: Verlag von Ferdinand Schöningh 1857.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, part 1, pp. 203–4: “Endlich müssen wir auch noch den ausgemachtesten Antipoden der Pietisten, den Wiener Hofprediger Abraham a Santa Clara (Ulrich Megerle, 1642–1709) hier anreihen. Nicht als ob etwa Abraham Jene wissentlich parodirt hätte; aber es läßt sich kaum ein entschiedener Gegensatz des reimelichen Pietismus denken, als diese herzhafte Volksfrömmigkeit, die, weil sie ihrer innerlich sicher ist, sich mit Scherz und Lachen gar wohl verträgt.”

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁴³ Cf. *Abraham a Sancta Clara’s Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. 1, pp. IX–XI.

this “adaptation” was rather dubious and the original lost much of its elegance,⁴⁴ the edition fulfilled its purpose of reintroducing the Augustinian author into the consciousness of the age. At the time of the publication of this edition, secondary literature on Abraham a Sancta Clara was basically non-existent,⁴⁵ so Kierkegaard’s encounter with the Augustinian writer was almost entirely confined to his reading of primary sources.

Kierkegaard owned all 21 volumes of the *Sämmtliche Werke* and purchased them in several stages at C.A. Reitzel’s in Copenhagen.⁴⁶ Although he read the baroque author most intensively in 1847–48, his first mention of Abraham a Sancta Clara appears in a journal entry as early as 1837⁴⁷ and the last one as late as 1854.⁴⁸ The Danish thinker read Abraham’s works attentively, highlighting 63 different passages,⁴⁹ some of which he directly copied or paraphrased in his works and journals. An important aspect, which certainly contributed to the positive reception of Abraham a Sancta Clara on the part of Kierkegaard, is the fact that the Augustinian author focuses minimally on the speculative exposition of theological doctrine, and instead concentrates on the practical application of Christian ethics. In this sense Kierkegaard must have perceived Abraham a Sancta Clara in a way similar to other upbuilding authors—such as Johannes Tauler or Johann Arndt—who inspired the formulation of his own *doctrina practica* and its focal point, the imitation of Christ.

⁴⁴ Schillinger, *Abraham a Sancta Clara. Pastorale et discours politique dans l’Autriche du XVII^e siècle*, p. 294.

⁴⁵ Scientific discourse on Abraham a Sancta Clara’s life and work began in the late 1860s with Theodor Georg von Karajan and Wilhelm Scherer and was later continued by a number of German-speaking scholars (Johann Willibald Nagl, Hans Schulz, Karl Bertsche, etc.).

⁴⁶ According to the bills listed in H.P. Rohde’s article, Kierkegaard purchased several volumes of Abraham a Sancta Clara’s works at C.A. Reitzel’s bookstore on January 7, 1846 and September 10, 1850. However, he had probably owned some of the volumes already before 1846, as he quoted Abraham a Sancta Clara in 1837 and 1841. Cf. H.P. Rohde, “Om Søren Kierkegaard som bogsamler,” *Fund og Forskning*, no. VIII, 1961, p. 120; p. 122.

⁴⁷ SKS 17, 126, BB:37 / KJN 1, 116–25.

⁴⁸ SKS 26, 179, NB32:90.a / JP 2, 1538. For further detail on Kierkegaard’s reading of Abraham a Sancta Clara’s *Sämmtliche Werke* see the following article: Peter Šajda, “On Some Aspects of Kierkegaard’s Reading of Abraham a Sancta Clara,” in *Kierkegaard and Great Philosophers*, ed. by Roman Králik et al., Mexico City, Barcelona, and Šafa: Sociedad Iberoamericana de Estudios Kierkegaardianos 2007 (*Acta Kierkegaardiana*, vol. 2), pp. 80–9.

⁴⁹ The text of 61 passages highlighted by Kierkegaard in Abraham a Sancta Clara’s *Complete Works* can be found in *Pap. VIII–2 C 2*, 1–61. The editors of the *Papirer* included the full text of the marked passages. However, in several instances a broader context is needed in order to understand the meaning and position of the highlighted texts. Kierkegaard’s modes of highlighting included underlining, sidelining and folding corners of pages. In addition to the 61 passages listed in *Pap. VIII–2 C 2*, 1–61, there are two further passages highlighted by Kierkegaard, which I found during my study of Kierkegaard’s copy of Abraham’s *Complete Works*. They are located in vol. 11, p. 30, p. 31. The copy of Abraham a Sancta Clara’s *Complete Works* originally owned by Kierkegaard is currently in the possession of the Royal Library in Copenhagen.

The fact that it was primarily Christian praxis that interested Kierkegaard when reading Abraham's works, is confirmed also by the finding that more than half of the passages highlighted by Kierkegaard in the *Sämmtliche Werke* are located in *Grammatica Religiosa*.⁵⁰ This work, whose main thematic focus is the practice of virtue, accounts also for a vast majority of the quotations and references to Abraham a Sancta Clara in Kierkegaard's published and unpublished writings.

It is a noteworthy fact that Kierkegaard read Abraham a Sancta Clara with an open mind and without ideological bias. Neither the marked passages, nor the reflections in his writings suggest that he was disturbed by the specifics of baroque Catholicism or the displays of *pietas austriaca*. A considerable number of passages highlighted by Kierkegaard in Abraham's *Sämmtliche Werke* comprise distinctive Catholic phenomena, such as hagiography, apparitions,⁵¹ intensive sacramental life,⁵² liturgical *specifica*,⁵³ or prophetic dreams.⁵⁴ Some of the marked texts concern also Catholic doctrine—such as the belief in purgatory⁵⁵—and a strong monastic element is present in many of the highlighted stories and quotations.⁵⁶ It is, therefore, evident that Kierkegaard read Abraham a Sancta Clara for the sake of his own edification and with a possible intention of utilizing some of the acquired material for his own upbuilding works. From this perspective, the Augustinian author certainly functioned as one of the channels of Kierkegaard's dialogue with Catholicism.

One of the things that undoubtedly appealed to Kierkegaard when reading Abraham's works was the *embarras de richesse* of references and quotations from older Christian authors. This fact matched Kierkegaard's habit of recording in his journals short textual units of upbuilding character, often copying them from secondary sources. Since Abraham as a Catholic baroque preacher sought to "establish authority through tradition,"⁵⁷ his upbuilding writings abound in quotations from spiritual authorities, such as the church fathers, saints or mystics.⁵⁸ Although it

⁵⁰ Out of the 63 marked passages in Kierkegaard's copy of Abraham a Sancta Clara's *Complete Works* 35 stem from *Grammatica Religiosa*. It is an interesting fact, however, that all the highlighted passages stem from the first two volumes of *Grammatica Religiosa* (*Complete Works*, vols. 15–16), whereas there is no evidence that Kierkegaard ever read the remaining two volumes of the same work (*Complete Works*, vols. 17–18).

⁵¹ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 30. When referring to the passages in *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 1–61 a broader context of the marked texts will taken into account.

⁵² *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 10. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 20. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 54.

⁵³ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 3.

⁵⁴ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 14.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ In the passages marked by Kierkegaard in Abraham a Sancta Clara's *Complete Works* almost all of the quoted Christian authorities are monastic. Also, monks play a central role in a large part of the edifying stories and legends highlighted by Kierkegaard. The Danish thinker was introduced through Abraham to different traditions of religious life, as the marked passages comprise references to desert fathers, hermits, and monastics of the Augustinian, Benedictine, Cistercian, Franciscan, and Dominican traditions.

⁵⁷ Eybl, *Abraham a Sancta Clara. Vom Prediger zum Schriftsteller*, p. 122.

⁵⁸ Joseph Meuer, *Forschungen zur Beurteilung Abrahams a S. Clara*, Bottrop: Wilhelm Postberg 1938, p. 32.

may seem, at first glance, that Abraham used an immense array of sources to support his doctrine with authority, the findings of modern research have shown that much of the quoted material stems from a relatively narrow range of sermon handbooks, compendia and other sources of encyclopedic character that were commonly used by the clergy of his time.⁵⁹ The most quoted authorities in the passages highlighted by Kierkegaard are the Doctors of the Church, such as Augustine,⁶⁰ Gregory the Great⁶¹ or Bernard of Clairvaux,⁶² but Abraham also conveyed to Kierkegaard the wisdom of later non-canonized authors, such as Johannes Tauler⁶³ or Blossius.⁶⁴ Non-Christian sources play a substantially less important role in Abraham's writings, but they also caught Kierkegaard's eye, especially when quoted for edifying purposes.⁶⁵

A large part of the texts marked by Kierkegaard in Abraham's works deals with the Christian dialectics of virtue and vice,⁶⁶ whereby, according to Joseph Meuer, the primary focus of Abraham as a preacher were the virtues of purity, humility, and love.⁶⁷ Kierkegaard did not approach Abraham's reflections on virtuous conduct in a systematic way and highlighted passages dealing both with theological virtues, and various other virtues. Several of the marked passages address the issue of the transformation of will and the virtue of obedience.⁶⁸ Some of these relate directly to the union of human will with the will of God, but the notion of enacting God's will by means of obedience to one's superiors is also discussed. In the latter case an inherent connection is present between the transformation of the will and the monastic vow of obedience.

In connection with the vices directly harming the neighbor, Kierkegaard paid special attention to the vice of judging,⁶⁹ whose original presentation in *Grammatica*

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 35–41; Max Michel, "Die Volkssage bei Abraham a Sancta Clara," *Form und Geist*, no. 61, 1933, pp. 53–4, p. 57; Eybl, *Abraham a Sancta Clara. Vom Prediger zum Schriftsteller*, pp. 134–43.

⁶⁰ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 10. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 19. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 27. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 53.

⁶¹ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 11. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 20. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 26. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 29. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 42. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 46. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 58–9.

⁶² *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 16. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 25. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 31–32. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 39. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 42.

⁶³ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 55.

⁶⁴ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 49–50.

⁶⁵ The passages marked by Kierkegaard in Abraham a Sancta Clara's *Complete Works* include references to several non-Christian authorities, such as Xenophon, Seneca or Marcus Aurelius. Cf. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 15. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 21. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 52. Kierkegaard also highlighted a part of the story about Zeuxis and Parrhasius that originates from Pliny the Elder and a story about Alexander the Great. Cf. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 11. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 24. See also Cf. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 7.

⁶⁶ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 13. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 15. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 17. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 19–20. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 23–25; *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 28. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 32–33. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 35. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 43–5. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 55–59.

⁶⁷ Meuer, *Forschungen zur Beurteilung Abrahams a S. Clara*, pp. 47–54.

⁶⁸ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 43–4. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 53–5.

⁶⁹ *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 29–31. *Pap.* VIII–2 C 2, 33. Both of the passages highlighted by Kierkegaard in Abraham a Sancta Clara's *Complete Works*, which are not included in *Pap.*

Religiosa inspired him to develop further his own critique of relating to the neighbor through the prism of his sins. He turned to Abraham's reflections on this topic when composing the final part of *Works of Love*,⁷⁰ in which he introduced to the reader his concept of Christian *like for like*.

The practice of asceticism in Abraham's texts is often linked to the notion of dying to finite realities⁷¹ and *per consequens* also to a certain form of *contemptus mundi*.⁷² Although the Augustinian writer does not call for an external *fuga mundi*, he shows high appreciation for abnegation, solitude,⁷³ poverty,⁷⁴ and other detachment-oriented ideals common in monasticism. Some of the passages highlighted by Kierkegaard also suggest Abraham's critical stance, or even a pessimistic view of the age he lived in,⁷⁵ which is an interesting parallel to Kierkegaard's own view of his contemporary age.

According to Jean Schillinger, one of the major themes that can be traced throughout Abraham a Sancta Clara's *oeuvre* is that of martyrdom.⁷⁶ This theme, which was of vital importance for Kierkegaard's concept of discipleship and Christianity in general, appears in some of the highlighted passages⁷⁷ which were later directly quoted both in Kierkegaard's journals and published works.⁷⁸

Several of the texts marked by the Danish philosopher in Abraham a Sancta Clara's works direct the attention of the reader to the issue of prayer, both criticizing misguided practice and offering instructions on a proper approach to prayer.⁷⁹ Confidence in God in temptations and tribulations is a related phenomenon, which also captured Kierkegaard's attention in several instances.⁸⁰ A special case in this connection is the tradition of *ars moriendi* and the Christian challenge of viewing life *sub specie mortis*.⁸¹

The highlighted passages also include reflections on the role of fear and the necessary combination of fear and hope,⁸² whereby Abraham a Sancta Clara introduces this concept by claiming that salvation is obtained in fear and trembling.⁸³

VIII-2 C 2, 1-61, concern the sin of judging: Cf. *Abraham a St. Clara's Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 11, pp. 30-1.

⁷⁰ SKS 9, 375 / WL, 382-3.

⁷¹ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 7; Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 16. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 38.

⁷² Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 61.

⁷³ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 16. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 39-42.

⁷⁴ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 38. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 55.

⁷⁵ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 5. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 11. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 14.

⁷⁶ Schillinger, *Abraham a Sancta Clara. Pastorale et discours politique dans l'Autriche du XVII siècle*, p. 93; pp. 196-202.

⁷⁷ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 8. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 32. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 34. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 46-7.

⁷⁸ SKS 9, 223 / WL, 220. SKS 18, 290, JJ:449 / KJN 2, 268. Pap. VIII 2 C 2, 8.

⁷⁹ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 1. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 12. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 14-16.

⁸⁰ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 18. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 26. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 34. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 45. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 49-51.

⁸¹ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 4. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 23. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 43.

⁸² Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 17. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 19. Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 27.

⁸³ Pap. VIII-2 C 2, 17.

The text marked by Kierkegaard in *Auff auff ihr Christen* concerns an issue which he treated at length in several of his works and which became a recurrent topic in his critique of the Danish religious *status quo*. In the mentioned passage Abraham a Sancta Clara points out the emptiness of nominal Christendom and compares the title “Christian” to the names of constellations, which are called *Pisces* or *Aquila*, although—as he points out—they neither swim, nor fly.⁸⁴

The first seven volumes of Abraham’s *Sämmtliche Werke* provided Kierkegaard with rich material on the figure of Judas Iscariot,⁸⁵ whom he repeatedly reflected on both in his published works and in his journals. The depiction of Judas in Abraham’s *Judas der Ertzschelm*—which was largely of medieval origin—found a direct echo in several of Kierkegaard’s journal entries.

Abraham’s unique style of writing, his mastery of language, as well as his frequent use of humor and satire, were certainly among the factors that attracted Kierkegaard’s attention. There are, however, only a few passages that suggest that Kierkegaard highlighted them primarily due to Abraham’s stylistic abilities.⁸⁶ Contrary to the classical and romantic sources, which might have introduced Kierkegaard to Abraham a Sancta Clara’s literary legacy, the Danish philosopher was not interested in the first place in the literary value of the Swabian author. It is obvious from the texts he marked in the *Sämmtliche Werke* that he read Abraham first and foremost as a Christian author. This is confirmed also by the fact that in his journals and published works Kierkegaard referred to Abraham a Sancta Clara almost exclusively when reflecting on religious matters.

IV. Abraham a Sancta Clara in Kierkegaard’s Corpus

Kierkegaard’s first mention of Abraham a Sancta Clara appears in a journal entry in 1837 within a longer reflection on the education of children.⁸⁷ The reference is very brief and Kierkegaard quotes Abraham without indicating the cited work.⁸⁸ The same quotation from Abraham reappears four years later in Kierkegaard’s dissertation *The Concept of Irony*, where again it has only minimal function in the text.⁸⁹ These two instances are the only references to Abraham a Sancta Clara in Kierkegaard’s *corpus* that do not carry any explicitly religious meaning.

After Kierkegaard’s purchase of further volumes of Abraham a Sancta Clara’s *Sämmtliche Werke* in 1846, a direct German quotation from *Huy! und Pfy! Der*

⁸⁴ Pap. VIII–2 C 2, 5.

⁸⁵ Pap. VIII–2 C 2, 2–3.

⁸⁶ Pap. VIII–2 C 2, 6. Pap. VIII–2 C 2, 13.

⁸⁷ SKS 17, 126, BB:37 / KJN 1, 116–25.

⁸⁸ Curtis L. Thompson identified as the source of this reference Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s letter to his brother Karl Gotthelf from January 5, 1778. Cf. *Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s sämtliche Schriften*, vols. 1–32, vols. 1–28, Berlin: Vossische Buchhandlung 1825–27; vols. 29–32, Berlin and Stettin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung 1828, vol. 28, pp. 327–8 (*ASKB* 1747–1762). For more detail see Curtis L. Thompson’s article “Gotthold Ephraim Lessing: Appropriating the Testimony of a Theological Naturalist” in vol. 5, tome I of this series.

⁸⁹ SKS 1, 89 / CI, 28.

Welt appears in Kierkegaard's journal, this time with an exact reference to the cited source.⁹⁰

However, the highest density of quotations from the Augustinian author in Kierkegaard's journals is found in the summer of 1847, shortly before Kierkegaard finished *Works of Love*. At first, Kierkegaard paraphrases Abraham in Danish, but later switches to German and quotes directly from the original. All 10 references and quotations from this period stem from *Grammatica Religiosa*, and all but one are highlighted in Kierkegaard's copy of Abraham's *Sämmtliche Werke*.⁹¹ In several instances they are accompanied by laudatory comments from Kierkegaard.

One of the mentioned quotations especially deserves a more detailed analysis, as it reappears—directly and indirectly—in four other instances in Kierkegaard's *corpus*. The quotation represents Abraham a Sancta Clara's version of the ancient Christian legend of the conversion of St. Thais the Harlot through St. Paphnutius, which Kierkegaard paraphrases in Danish with the remark: "This is an excellent story; a little pruning would improve it."⁹² He indeed rewrites the story when composing the final part of *Works of Love* and has the edited version ready in a draft form for the "Conclusion" of *Works of Love*.⁹³ In the end he decides not to include the story directly, but instead he sums up its key message of the impossibility of God's absence and combines it with another tacit reference to Abraham a Sancta Clara.⁹⁴

The story of St. Thais' conversion is quoted again in Kierkegaard's journal in 1850, as the philosopher recalls his discussion with Martin Hammerich (1811–81) about Christianity that took place during a visit at Jens Finsteen Giødwad's (1811–91). Kierkegaard mentions the maxim of the Greek philosopher Stilpo that when talking about the gods one should find a place where the gods cannot hear you. To this he adds that there is no such a place, which he exemplifies with "that incomparable story which I have put away some place," confessing that he has the story from Abraham a Sancta Clara.⁹⁵ In this instance Kierkegaard relates the story in a new context by coupling it with "what I have said continually, that men have to be taken

⁹⁰ SKS 18, 290, JJ:449 / *KJN* 2, 268.

⁹¹ SKS 20, 178, NB2:90 / *JP* 3, 3787. SKS 20, 178, NB2:91 / *JP* 5, 6024. SKS 20, 179, NB2:97 / *JP* 2, 2000. SKS 20, 180, NB2:98 / *JP* 3, 3741. SKS 20, 180, NB2:99 / *JP* 5, 6027. SKS 20, 180, NB2:100. The last of the indicated citations is dated August 1847 and includes five different references to *Grammatica Religiosa*. The only quotation which is not highlighted in Kierkegaard's copy of *Grammatica Religiosa* is SKS 20, 178, NB2:90 / *JP* 3, 3787.

⁹² SKS 20, 178, NB2:91 / *JP* 5, 6024. Neither in his journals, nor in his draft for *Works of Love* does Kierkegaard mention the protagonists of the story by name. The names are, however, included in Abraham a Sancta Clara's version of the legend. Cf. *Abraham a Sancta Clara's Sämmtliche Werke*, vols. 15–16, pp. 54–6.

⁹³ *Pap.* VIII–2 B 69, 3. Kierkegaard's version of the legend is not a mere mirror translation of Abraham a Sancta Clara. Kierkegaard's draft starts with an instructive introduction, the story is re-phrased, it includes direct speech and is even more dramatic than its counterpart in *Grammatica Religiosa*.

⁹⁴ SKS 9, 375–6 / *WL*, 382–3. The other tacit reference concerns Kierkegaard's use of Abraham a Sancta Clara's critique of the sin of judging, which is analyzed below.

⁹⁵ SKS 23, 480–1, NB20:163 / *JP* 4, 4307.