

Madame Guyon at the centre of a mystical transmission

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I examine here the notion that a mystical transmission was experienced by those living a devout life who gathered round M. Bertot and then Madame Guyon (and before them, round Fr. Chrysostome and then M. de Bernières). I do not aim to discuss the ideas which inspired the adepts of quietude, but to identify their particular experience on the basis of some of the texts available.

At the centre of a Transmission? A mystic does not live by relying on books, but by sharing the experience and the life of a human being who has already walked such a path. Madame Guyon embodied a mystical function and showed how to achieve it. This is particularly evident in the groups evoked here.

M. Bertot and Madame Guyon were not solitary geniuses. They were not formed in isolation, but by accomplished mystics of previous generations.¹ They formed part of a tradition of Franciscan origin.² Each generation acknowledged the authority of a spiritual father (or mother). The spiritual father (or mother) was always formed by his or her predecessor. They could be either clergy or lay, men or women. It was their mystical accomplishment which mattered. Power was not transmitted in the human sense of the term: this was not a monastic order which elected a prior(ess). No voting or discussion: this was a case of informal evidence. The best person formed his friends; on his death his successor, recognised as such for years, was the most accomplished person.

These transmissions of authority took place uninterruptedly during a century, through four generations. Below I cite some written traces linking the central mystical figures, before examining what took place between them and their associates.

The first of these figures was the Franciscan Chrysostome de Saint-Lô (1594 – 1646) of the Regular Third Order, director of the layman Jean de Bernières (1601 – 1659). Fr. Chrysostome launched the idea of establishing a meeting place where their friends could gather and seek to practise inner prayer. Jean de Bernières realised this idea. He described the state of mind which inspired visitors to the *Hermitage* at Caen as follows:

1 Transmission by mystical directors was presented in « Une filiation mystique : Chrysostome de Saint-Lô, Jean de Bernières, Jacques Bertot, Jeanne-Marie Guyon », *XVIIe siècle*, PUF, n° 1-2003, 95-116, <http://www.cairn.info/revue-dix-septieme-siecle-2003-1-page-95.htm>.

I realised that it was necessary to situate this transmission and support it by means of texts produced by devotees in these networks of friends. Texts needed by those interested in Madame Guyon are now available. They are published in two collections: « Sources mystiques » (published by the « Centre Jean-de-la-Croix ») and « Chemins mystiques » (online Internet purchase. See the site <http://www.cheminsmystiques.com>)

Some titles in addition to the sources of this study cited below are: *Les Amis des Ermitages de Caen & de Québec*, D. Tronc, Dossier, « Chemins mystiques », 2016 — *Archange Enguerrand (1631-1699), directeur franciscain récollet et « Bon religieux » auprès de Madame Guyon*, Dossier, « Chemins mystiques », 2017 — *François Lacombe (1640-1715), Vie, Œuvres, Épreuves du Père Confesseur de Madame Guyon*, Sources, « Chemins mystiques », 2016. A synthesis will appear shortly: Dominique et Murielle Tronc, *Expériences mystiques en Occident IV. Une École du Cœur*.

2 D. Tronc, *La vie mystique chez les Franciscains du dix-septième siècle. Tome I. Introductions, Florilège issu de Traditions franciscaines (Observants, Tiers Ordres, récollets)*, Centre Saint-Jean-de-la-Croix, « Sources mystiques », 2014.

*We live here in great repose, liberty, gaiety and obscurity, being unknown to the world and not knowing ourselves either. We go towards God without reflecting, and whether conditions are good or bad we try not to stop.*³

Bernières and Mother Mectilde (1614-1698) who founded the Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament published some of their "Father" Chrysostome's writings, which Mother Mectilde had obtained with great difficulty. They feature their questions and their director's replies.

Then in 1646 Bernières assumed the direction of his associates, including his friend Mectilde. Among others, he directed M^{br} de Laval, the future bishop of Quebec, and Jacques Bertot (1620 – 1671).

The confessor and "mystical director" Bertot took the Norman tradition of the Hermitage to the convent of Montmartre. He impressed the Abbess⁴ and attracted members of the Court.⁵

Several works reveal the ties which united Chrysostome, Bernières, Mectilde and Bertot.⁶ Mectilde wrote to Bernières:⁷

From the Hermitage of the Blessed Sacrament, 30 July 1645.

Sir,

Our good M. Bertot has left us joyfully to satisfy your orders, and we have let him go with pain. His absence has affected us, and I believe that Our Lord wishes us to be affected, since he has given us all so many graces by his means, and we can truthfully say that he has renewed all this poor little monastery and revived the grace of fervour and the desire of holy perfection in our minds. I cannot tell you the good he has done and how much we all needed his aid [...], but I must warn you that he is very tired and needs rest and refreshment. He had to work hard here, speaking constantly, and made several journeys to Paris by coach in extremely hot weather. He never thinks of taking care of himself. But now he no longer lives for himself. God makes him live for us and for many others. So we are allowed to be concerned about his health, and to beg you to make him have a good rest. [...]

One of the faithful, a young widow from Montargis, Madame Guyon, described her first meeting with M. Bertot :

³ Jean de Bernières, *Œuvres mystiques II Correspondance*, Letters and Maxims introduced and commented by Dom Éric de Reviers, o. s. b., H.C. (to be published by Parole et Silence), Letter of 13 May 1654 addressed to Mother Mectilde (1614-1698) who was suffering from not agreeing with Father Père Lejeune S. J.

⁴ Françoise-Renée de Lorraine, Madame de Guise, abbess from 1644 to 1669. She had Bertot's *Conclusion des retraites* [...] published.

⁵ Bertot was the leader of the « little flock » for a Saint-Simon who was reliably informed by his friends the Dukes of Chevreuse and Beauvilliers : « [on pouvait] entendre un M. Bertot à Montmartre, qui était le chef du petit troupeau qui s'y assemblait et qu'il dirigeait » [one could hear at Montmartre a M. Bertot, who was the head of the little flock which gathered there, and which he directed] (Mémoires, éd. Boislisle, t. XXX, p. 71).

⁶ Jacques Bertot *Directeur mystique*, « Sources mystiques », D. Tronc, Editions du Carmel, Toulouse, 2005 ; *Rencontres autour de Monsieur de Bernières (1603-1659) Mystique de l'abandon et de la quiétude*, coll. « Mectildiana », Parole et Silence, 2013 ; *Les Amitiés mystiques de Mère Mectilde du Saint-Sacrement 1614-1698*, coll. « Mectildiana », Parole et Silence, 2017 ; exchanges between Mectilde and Bernières in: Jean de Bernières, *Œuvres mystiques II Correspondance, Lettres et Maximes*, introduced and commented by Dom Éric de Reviers, o. s. b., Parole et Silence (forthcoming shortly). — There was clearly a whole network of relations between the members of the *Hermitage* group. They extended towards other devotees, including Marie des Vallées, a simple but very influential figure. The links were interwoven: a passage from a letter by Bertot was addressed to Jean Eudes, who had been aided by the Abbess of Montmartre, who appreciated and published a work by Bertot...

⁷ Jean de Bernières, *Œuvres mystiques II Correspondance*, *op.cit.*

... I should say that the smallpox had so greatly damaged an eye that I was afraid I would lose it altogether, I asked to go to Paris to have it treated, although much less for that reason than to see M. B [ertot], whom M[other] G [ranger] had recently given me as director, and who was a man filled with light. I must recount how I had the good fortune to meet him for the first time. He had come for M [other] G [ranger]. She very much wanted me to see him; as soon as he arrived she let me know, but as I was in the country I could not find any means of going there. Suddenly my husband told me to go and stay overnight in town to seek something and give some orders. He should have sent me to seek it the next day, but those frightful St Matthew's winds came that night [storm recorded on 21 September 1671], so that the damage they caused prevented me from returning for three days. When I heard the force of that wind at night, I judged that it would be impossible for me to go to the Benedictines that day, and so I would not see M. Bertot. When it was time to go the wind suddenly calmed, and I received more good fortune which enabled me to see him a second time.⁸

But his direction was severe and for a while was not understood. Later, his "spiritual daughter" gathered his writings. *Le directeur Mistique ou les Œuvres spirituelles de M. Bertot, ami intime de feu Mr de Bernières & directeur de Mad. Guion [...]* was published in 1726.⁹ Its Foreword gives a brief summary of his life and testimony to the fidelity of his disciples:

« Monsieur Bertot... born in Coutances... a great friend of... Jean [5] de Bernières... acted as a director of souls in several communities of Nuns... [and directed] several persons... occupying important positions both at Court and in the war. He continued this practice until providence appointed him to direct the Benedictine Nuns of the Abbey of Montmartre near Paris, in which employment he remained for about twelve years [6] until his death... at the beginning of March 1681 after a long wasting disease.... [7] [He was] buried in the Church of Montmartre, at the right side on entering. Some persons... have always preserved such great respect [that they] often went to his tomb to offer their prayers.¹⁰

Madame Guyon referred to his authority until the end of her life:

« I am sending you a letter from a great servant of God who died several years ago. He was a friend of Monsieur de Bernières, and he was my Director in my youth. »¹¹

Moreover, she had made typically Franciscan secret vows:

« In that place [at Gex] I made five vows. The first, of chastity, which I had already made as soon as I became a widow, that of poverty, which is why I gave up all my possessions, I have never confided that to anyone. The third, to blindly obey all external events or what my superiors or directors indicated for me, and within, to depend totally on grace. The fourth, inviolable

⁸ Madame Guyon, *La Vie par elle-même et autres écrits biographiques*, Critical edition with introduction and notes by D. Tronc, Literary study by Andrée Villard, Paris, Honoré Champion, coll. « Sources Classiques », 2001, 2014, 1.19.1.

⁹ Four volumes published in Holland by Poiret's partners (Madame Guyon and Pierre Poiret died in 1717 and 1723 respectively).

¹⁰ *Le directeur Mistique [sic] ou les Œuvres spirituelles de M. Bertot, ami intime de feu Mr de Bernières & directeur de Mad. Guion...*, 4 vol., 1726. : here vol. I, « Foreword » — The suspension points represent cuts making it possible to retain only the rare passages giving biographical details; they are spread over four pages [4] to [7].

¹¹ *Correspondance I Directions spirituelles*, 2003, Letter 22 addressed to the subtle Count Metternich.

attachment to holy Church. The fifth was a special cult, more inner than external of the childhood of Jesus Christ. »¹²

This concludes my glimpse of the links between Chrysostome, Bernières, Bertot and Guyon. Only rare written indications have reached us because no human choice was involved. In their writings mystics are reluctant, except in passing, to refer to the authority of a direction which must be inner.

Moreover, the "external" environment throughout the century was hostile to mystics,¹³ starting with the "objections" raised by Parisian academics at Rouen on reading the third party of the *Reigle* by the Franciscan Capuchin mystic Canfield which appeared in 1609.¹⁴

As for Mectilde, she had much difficulty in recovering Chrysostome's writings from his brethren in the Regular Third Order.

« I try every chance and means to obtain some of those so worthy writings, but the effort is a waste of time. The Provincial and the others have decreed and protested that they will never let those writings out of their hands unless they are corrected in a way which matches their opinions, and they say they are completely full of errors...¹⁵

« I am much afraid they may be burned, for they are in the hands of his persecutors. »¹⁶

She gave a glimpse of the low regard in which Fr. Chrysostome was held by those "responsible" for him » :

« Holy abjection accompanied him in life and death, and even after death he has remained abject in the opinions of some members of the order. Brother Jean [Aumont] told me this and says that to respect four or five of them, his memory must not be evoked in their house [...]

Later, in the fatal year 1694 when Madame Guyon's descent into hell began, Fr. Paulin, leader of that same Regular Third Order, made a "lukewarm" statement on Madame Guyon.¹⁷

¹² Madame Guyon, *Correspondance, Tome II Années de Combat*, Critical edition drawn up by D. Tronc, Paris, Honoré Champion, coll. « Correspondance », 2004, « 194. Letter to the Duke of Chevreuse, 11 September 1694'. — Franciscan influence through the meeting with "the good Franciscan" after returning from the Alverne (La Verna).

¹³ The conflict was not between the mystics, but with their surroundings! The *Mémoire sur le Quiétisme adressé à Madame de Maintenon, Auteur inconnu*, provided information on all Madame Guyon's contacts in 1695, including ordinary people, and indicated how to approach them, starting with unfavourable witnesses so as to be able to put pressure on the others... (Madame Guyon, *Correspondance II Combats*, Champion-Slatkine, 2003, item 504).

¹⁴ Circumstances reported by Jean Orcibal in the introduction to Benet of Canfield, *La Règle de Perfection – The rule of Perfection*, P.U.F., 1982. Similarly, Surin faced with Chéron. Equally, the ordeal suffered by Marie des Vallées. And again, the interdiction placed on Jourdain de Bernière's convent, which delayed the publication of *Lettres et Maximes*.

¹⁵ Jean de Bernières, *Œuvres mystiques II Correspondance, Lettres et Maximes, op.cit.*, Letter from Mectilde to Bernières dated 26 April 1646.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Letter dated 10 April 1646 from Mectilde to Bernières.

¹⁷ *Correspondance, Tome II Années de Combat, op.cit.*, item 478 « Statement by "F. Paulin d'Aumale, monk of the monastery of Nazareth, 7 July 1694. *Ecce coram Deo, quia non mentior.*" — A. S.-S., Fénelon, Correspondence, XI1, f ° 37, "copy of the statement by Fr. Paulin against M^{me} Guyon". — Fénelon, 1828, vol. 7, letter 36. The copy is preceded, f° 35, by a note from the Bishop of Chartres to Tronson dated 4 July 1694 : "Sir, I am requested to advise you not to show the two copies containing opinions on the books by M. G [uyon] [...]". On this statement, see Madame Guyon's letter of 10 December 1694 to the Duke de Chevreuse, item 255 : "The more I think about Fr. Paulin's letter, the more convinced I am that he misunderstands and confuses

It is not surprising that the quietists learned to become prudent. That is why we do not know who succeeded their leader after 1717. Nevertheless, the notion of transmission remained alive in the eighteenth century. If mystical intensity often seemed to disappear, people influenced by Madame Guyon retained the idea of a possible succession and the importance of having a spiritual director. A young Swiss lady asked who had succeeded Madame Guyon :

« M. de Marçais told me that a lady living a devout life in Switzerland, whose name I have forgotten, written to France to enquire whether Madame Guyon had left [93] a successor in the apostolic state who might assist other persons living a devout life. After writing to a number of places, she was finally informed that there was indeed such a person, that is, the Duchess of Grammont ; but that externally she stayed well hidden, owing to the great number of enemies who persecuted the inner life. This was why she was only known to other persons following a devout life. The letters were written several years after 1720. »¹⁸

A document bears witness to the Bernières-Bertot-Guyon transmission as perceived at the end of the Age of Enlightenment. It concerns Jean-Philippe Dutoit (1721-1793). This pastor from Morges near Lausanne, the second publisher of Madame Guyon's works after Pierre Poiret, had a certain influence. He had links with Count Frédéric de Fleischbein (1700-1774), whose wife Pétronille of Echweiler (1682-1740) spent a short time in Blois, Madame Guyon's retreat after her release from the Bastille.¹⁹ The document is the report of a seizure carried out for the Calvinists of Berne by their representative in Lausanne:²⁰ :

« 6 January 1769. We David Jenner, formerly colonel in Holland, currently bailiff of Lausanne, in the name and on behalf of Their Excellencies our Sovereign Lords of the city and republic of Berne, make known that as a result of the orders which we received from Their Excellencies of the Senate, to take away from the Rev. Dutoit de Moudon all his papers, writings and books, make an inventory of them and then arrange for their despatch [...]

After being informed of the orders received, the Rev. Dutoit first indicated that it was his firm intention to obey them in full submission and sincerity, as shown by the following inventory :

Madame Guyon's Bible and several of her works, but not all.

Monsieur de Bernières, i.e. the *Chrétien Intérieur*.

La Théologie du Cœur [by Poiret].

The Mystical Director by Monsieur Bertot.

The list ended with three "classics", Teresa, Luther and the *Imitation*;²¹ with Dutoit... *Declaring in good faith that he knows of no other mystical or ascetic book here.* »

everything..." -- Fr. Paulin remains a notable spiritual author (*La vie mystique chez les Franciscains du dix-septième siècle. Tome I.*, coll. 'Sources Mystiques', 2014, pages 203-214).

¹⁸ Madame Guyon, *La Vie par elle-même et autres écrits biographiques, op.cit.*, « 5,3 History of the last years » (Lausanne ms.TP 1154), 1022-1023.

¹⁹ Jules Chavannes, *Jean-Philippe Dutoit (1865)*, Kessinger Legacy Reprints - D. Tronc, *Écoles du Cœur au siècle des Lumières, Disciples de madame Guyon & Influences*, « The Swiss and Germanic transmissions », coll. « Chemins mystiques ».

²⁰ A. Favre, *Jean-Philippe Dutoit*, Genève, 1911, 115-118 : «Inventory of and report on the seizure of books and writings from M. Dutoit ».

²¹ A very modest « library » found in the little room where Dutoit lived: « [...] Works by Saint Theresa (N.B. Belongs to Mr Grenus.)/The Bible of Martin [Luther]. /The Imitation of A Kempis. »

I have now established some internal links and suggested a delicate outside situation. The (re)discovery²² of a transmission whose backbone passed from the Franciscan Chrysostome de Saint-Lô to M. de Bernières, then M. Bertot, and finally Madame Guyon, is confirmed by the late evidence quoted above.

There were two main links: the friends of the *Hermitage* at Caen preceded and gave birth to the Parisian quietist circle led by M. Bertot and taken over by Madame Guyon and Fénelon. In addition to confirming a transmission, I understood quite quickly that its axis must be situated in a network of friends and the branches of the tree re-discovered. For some I have drawn up dossiers of sources.²³ Men and women benefiting from a lineage leading from older to younger gathered with their mystical contemporaries from the same generation.

For nearly two centuries, about a hundred mystical figures managed through some precious « chemical reaction » to exert an influence and share their energy. The transmission became a tree with thick foliage, and even links to neighbouring trees.²⁴ In the Annex the « *List of relations: Norman, then Parisian and finally European networks* » gives a « transversal view » absent from the « longitudinal » chronological presentation. Two diagrams with comments follow, showing the transmission visually with support from the sources.

§

We now come to the actual experience. Every spiritual father or mother is an object of veneration and absolute fidelity. In Madame Guyon's case this is clear, although it would have been in the interests of those close to her to abandon her. While she had to face power and prison, Fénelon scuppered his career at the Court, and the great Beauvilliers and Chevreuse families discreetly defended her. Only an extraordinary influence makes it possible to explain the attraction and then the fidelity of her friends during twenty years (from the Issy trial in 1694 to the death of the Dukes in 1712/1714). It is what Madame Guyon experienced when she affirmed that grace passed through her person to someone who came to see her. So this group had a specific quality more exceptional than a social organisation around a spiritual leader. What was it ? The phenomenon was reproduced in each generation. This is what those who heard Chrysostome speak of God experienced:

*When he spoke [of the Saviour], it was with ardours which lit the divine fire on all sides; particularly when he gave conferences on the annihilation of a God in the mystery of the Incarnation, he seemed as if completely overcome beneath the great lights which he received, and which he communicated [emphasis added] with extraordinary effects of grace [...]*²⁵

²² (Re)discovery: because Pourrat was already studying the discreet Bertot who preceded Madame Guyon (*Dict. Spir.* art. « Bertot »; *La Spiritualité Chrétienne*, Lecoffre, 1947, Vol. IV, p. 183-195). Baruzi suggested studying the later circles in the eighteenth century (*Saint Jean de la Croix et le problème de l'expérience mystique*, 1931, 442 note 1). Luypaert refers to the « precursors » (p.25, n.2), including the influence of the Capuchin Benet of Canfeld (p.26, n.3), for not everything came from Molinos ! (*La doctrine spirituelle de Bernières et le quietisme*, RHE, 1940, not the best date for the work to become widely known). Etc.

²³ Collections « Chemins mystiques » (published on the Web), and « Sources mystiques » (published by the Centre Jean-de-la-Croix).

²⁴ Not a flat graph if the cross-relations are taken into account. In addition, from the *Hermitage* the structure diverges into three branches existing separately, in Nouvelle-France, at Paris and in Europe, and is finally hidden with the religious order founded by Mectilde (her archives make it possible to check the printed matter and find relations with the branch of quietude).

²⁵ Boudon, « Vie de Chrysostome » (1684), in *Œuvres* (Migne), col. 1275.

Bernières' fidelity to his spiritual father was also unshakeable, as shown by the emotion expressed in a letter to Mother Mectilde:

« It would be a great consolation for me if [...] we could speak of what we have heard our good Father say [...] since God has united us so closely as to make us children of the same Father [...] Do you know that just his memory places my soul in the presence of God? »²⁶

They began to become aware of the sharing of grace by Bernières when his friends prayed together at the *Hermitage* :

Farewell, my very dear sister, MM de Bernières and de Rocquelay greet you ; they are doing wonders in their hermitage: sometimes there are more than fifteen hermits; they often ask for news of you. If our good Mother Prioress wished to write to M. de Bernières about her states of mind, she would be consoled for them, for God gives him prodigious light on the state of blessed and perfect annihilation.²⁷

Bnières noted how active grace was among them. He used the verb « communicate » :

I clearly know that the Hermitage is established by order from God, and our good Father did not have it built by change. The grace of inner prayer is communicated easily there to those who dwell there, and one cannot say how this is done, except that God does it.²⁸

Boudon (1624-1702) testified:

He was consulted not only by laymen, but by the clergy and monastics. A great number of the latter have made retreats in his house with the permission of their superior [...] It was admirable to see the change observed in persons who had special relations with him.²⁹

Bnières waited for inspiration from the Spirit before speaking :

His words were full of a divine force and won hearts to God. After informing him one day about some faults committed by a person in his employment, I noticed that for quite some time he said nothing about it to him; and after that I admired him because although he used very few words to make that person see his faults, saying almost nothing to him, so to speak, that person was as if suddenly struck down by the weight of the few words [Bernières] had said to him, and corrected those faults. I saw clearly that it was not through any negligence, but for a movement of the spirit of God acting in him, that he had waited to warn him. If he had spoken earlier he would have done so as a man, and his advice would not have the effects which resulted.³⁰

²⁶ Jean de Bernières, *Œuvres mystiques II Correspondance, op.cit.*, Letter dated 15 February 1647 to Mother Mectilde. -- « a saint » whom Madame Guyon knew, another link which runs through the century : *Les Amitiés mystiques de Mère Mectilde du Saint-Sacrement 1614-1698*, An anthology drawn up by D. Tronc with the aid of nuns of the Institute of Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament, coll. « Mectildiana », Parole et Silence, forthcoming.

²⁷ Letter to Mother Dorothée de Ste Gertrude (Heurelle), *ms* from Tourcoing, now at Rouen, vol. 5, p. 219.

²⁸ Letter of 13 May 1654 to Mother Mectilde, who was suffering from not being in agreement with Father Lejeune s. j.

²⁹ Boudon, *op.cit.*, col. 1316. — Another example of sharing: Jean de Bernières, *op.cit.*, Letter of 30 August 1657 : « May Jesus be our all for ever. I shall not fail during your retreat to take particular care of you before Our Lord, so that he may complete in you what he has so well begun. In your solitude, keep your soul in the repose which God communicates to it, without interrupting it for any reading, or for vocal prayers except when you can do so easily. In that divine repose, your soul receives a special and secret union with God, and your inner prayer consists mainly in that union. »

³⁰ Boudon, *op.cit.*, col. 1317.

Bertot marks the passage to a second degree in the diffusion of grace, as he boldly stated that his prayer could make others share his mystical states while he said Mass. He did not merely influence; he carried others in his prayer and shared his mystical states with them.

« Let us remain thus, I wish to remain there with you and I will begin today in the holy mass. I am sure that if I am once raised up at the altar, that is to say if I enter into that divine unity [249], I will draw you to it,³¹ you and many others who are merely waiting. And all together, being one in feeling, in thought, in love, in conduct and in mood, we will fall happily into God alone, united with His Unity, or rather being one sole unity in Him alone, by Him and for Him. Farewell in God. »³²

He invited Mme Guyon to transform their relationship into moments of silence when he could communicate grace from heart to heart, and taught her how to favour this:

[240] « Since you wish me to call you my Daughter, which you are indeed before God who has so decided, you will allow me to treat you as such by giving you what I value most, which is a profound silence. Thus, when perhaps you think I might have forgotten you, it will be so that I can think most about your perfection. But I will always speak very little to you; I believe that the time to speak to you is over, and the time to converse with you in peace and silence has arrived.³³

After his death early in 1681, Madame Guyon made her own discoveries and began to analyse what took place during her transmissions. So far as we know these writings are unique, for while this charisma is well-known outside [Western] Christianity, among the Sufis, in India and in Orthodoxy (Saint Seraphim of Sarov), it is less well-known in the Catholic world centred around Jesus as the sole mediator, grace being transmitted by him and with the sacraments compensating for his physical absence.

Perhaps Madame Guyon had experienced transmission with Bishop Ripa, who was close to Cardinal Petrucci, as some Italian quietists probably practised it with Molinos.

On her return to France she received a crowd of visitors at Grenoble. This was when the ecclesiastical authorities began to find that she was trespassing on their territory, and that they needed to get rid of her. This was her first brush with power. To oppose her the authorities used the pretext of a conflict over ideas (on passive inner prayer).

She returned to Paris, where she alternated between successes and ordeals. She took over Bertot's circle and developed friendships which withstood everything, with the Dukes and Duchesses of Chevreuse and Beauvilliers, Fénelon, etc. For them, it was evident that Madame Guyon transmitted grace. Once felt, that experience could not be denied. If someone went to see Madame Guyon and sat beside her in silence, it was to experience the divine presence; she transmitted the mystical experience to others without any asceticism or effort. It all happened simply, sometimes with joking between "Michaelites" -- did not St. Francis of Assisi particularly appreciate St. Michael?

My good father [of Béthune-Charost], have a seal made for me with Saint Michael trampling on the dragon — this is necessary and mysterious — otherwise you will lose your post. Little Cecile will be in charge of the bouquets for the Michaelites' chapel, she must cut off the Baraquin's [the Devil's] right ear. The dog must bite his left ear and Sister Ursula crush the end of his tail. All the other children together will crush his body. S B [Fénelon], another and I will crush his head. Do you

³¹ cf. Jean, 12, 32.

³² *Jacques Bertot Directeur mystique*, Texes presented by D. Tronc, coll. « Sources mystiques », Editions du Carmel, Toulouse, 2005, Letter 4.75. Loss of everything in God. In *Le Directeur Mystique*, 1726, vol. IV, letter 75.

³³ *Jacques Bertot Directeur mystique*, Textes présentés par D. Tronc, *op.cit.*, « Letter 4.71. Silence before God ».

not see P [ut] [Dupuy] who wants to step on his paw, but is afraid of hurting him and only touches a nail? [...] Do you not see Dom Al [leau] who has lost his collar in the struggle, the good marquis who is cutting off one of his rear paws with his sword? The Good [Beauvillier] solemnly holds one of his horns, but he does not want to be disturbed, he holds himself very stiffly.. The Tut [or] [Chevreuse] holds the middle horn and covers his eyes as best he can. See the senior d [uchess] who is trembling with fear, but she still puts one foot on his hindquarters. See from the other side a scatterbrained little d [uchess] who wanted to jump on him with both feet joined; she would have had a fine fall if our patron [St Michael] had not supported her from behind. Come on, courage, go up little by little!³⁴

We have the account of what happened afterwards at Blois, twenty years later. Together with fully ecumenical open-mindedness, the « lady directress » had reached ultimate simplicity:

She lived with those English [Scots] like a mother with her children. [...] They often argued [over politics: the first Scottish Jacobite rising took place in 1715], and quarrelled; on those occasions she brought them round with her gentleness and urged them to give way; she did not forbid them any lawful amusement, and when they amused themselves in her presence and asked her opinion, she answered: « Yes, my children, as you wish ». Then they amused themselves with their games, and during that time this great saint remained plunged and lost in God. Soon these games became insipid to them, and they felt such an inner attraction that they left everything and remained inwardly recollected with her in the presence of God.

When the Blessed Sacrament was brought to her, they remained gathered in her apartment, and when the priest arrived, hidden behind the bed curtain, which was carefully closed so they would not be seen because they were Protestants, they knelt down [43] and were in a deep and delectable state of recollection, each according to the degree of his progress, often also in sufferings relating to their state.³⁵

This was the central experience which was the foundation of the link between Madame Guyon and her disciples : they were attached to someone who gave out grace. This was so in her case, but we have seen it with Chrysostome, then Bernières, then Bertot: in other words, in each generation there appeared a saint through whom the divine presence was experienced. This is what decided the succession in each generation. This is what explains the veneration and fidelity of their followers.

There was one condition for the transmission to take place: the mystic must be in the "apostolic" state (in a state identical to that of the first Apostles), i.e. so empty that one became a passage for grace: no personal power, God did as he wished. It was not an achievement by a human being, but a function which someone did not assume voluntarily:

It is an abuse in the spiritual life, and which slips in even from its start, to want to work for others at the wrong time. And only a false fervour makes one set out to use one's own power to aid them before having received the mission to do so. Some people believe they are capable of leading on the path of the saints when they have not started on it properly themselves, and by wishing to share with others graces they have been given only for themselves, they lose the fruit themselves and cannot aid others with them. One must not seek to aid one's neighbour, no matter how much

³⁴ Madame Guyon, *Correspondance* II, Letter 222. To Nicolas de Béthune-Charost. Octobre 1694. — It takes a very simple mind to appreciate her output of poems based on popular tunes, songs to occupy a winter evening. A mystical "immersion" can take place unexpectedly, without effort: "they felt so attracted..." »

³⁵ « Supplement to the life of Madame Guyon... » (Lausanne *ms.* TP 1155), p. 1006 from *La Vie...*, *op. cit.*

*one wishes to do so, if one does not have experience of divine matters and a vocation. One must first be established in the inner life.*³⁶

One must also be appointed by the spiritual mother or father. Madame Guyon wrote to Fénelon that she had received her "spirit of direction" from Bertot :

It came to my mind this morning that as M. B [ertot], when dying, left me his spirit of direction for his children, neither those who have strayed nor those who have stayed faithful will have that spirit communicated to them except by me, but in union with you. For God makes me be one and indivisible with you, and when all the reservations from you to me have been removed, you will discover a union of divine unity which will charm you. There are several teachers, but there is only one father in Christ,³⁷ and the father in Christ uses [137 r °] not only the force of his speech, but the substance of his soul, which is no other than that central communication of the Word which the Father of spirits alone can communicate to His children, and as that communication by the Word in the soul is the operation of the divine paternity and the mark of adoption of his children, it is also the proof of the spiritual paternity which communicates to all in substance what they need, without knowing how this is done.

*There are some persons who, because of their imperfect state, feel [137 v °] this communication better, because it is always in accordance with the subject who receives it, and not with the one who communicates it. It is the same with all the gifts of the Lord : they are [all the more] sensitive or spiritual when the recipient is more sensitive or spiritual. All receive this communication, although all do not feel it equally. [...]*³⁸

She associated herself with Fénelon, whom she regarded as her successor in that function. Fénelon was her dearest disciple, and one day when she was ill and thought she was dying, she wrote to him to bequeath to him the direction of their spiritual group and the possibility of transmitting grace :

*« I leave you the spirit of direction which God has given me. »*³⁹

This succession never took place, as Fénelon died in January 1715, before her (June 1717).

Fénelon held meetings with his mystic friends at Cambrai. He reported that he sensed Madame Guyon's presence at them. In other words, in union with Madame Guyon. Fénelon shared his mystical state with his visitor:

*I feel a very great desire to be silent and to speak with Ma.⁴⁰ It seems to me that her soul enters mine and that we two are just one with you in God. Quite often in the evening we are together like little children, and you are there too [f ° 19v °] although you are far away from us.*⁴¹

³⁶ Madame Guyon, *Discours sur la vie intérieure*, presented by Murielle and Dominique Tronc, Centre Saint-Jean-de-la-Croix, Collection « Sources mystiques », Tome II, Discours 2,65 = Madame Guyon, *Écrits sur la Vie Intérieure*, Arfuyen, 2005, « 10 Apostolic States... », pp. 124-125.

³⁷ This refers to spiritual paternity.

³⁸ Madame Guyon, *Correspondance, Tome I Directions spirituelles*, Critical edition established by D. Tronc, Paris, Honoré Champion, coll. « Correspondances », 2003, Lettre **Erreur ! Document principal seulement.** À Fénelon. Été 1690.

³⁹ Madame Guyon, *Correspondance, Tome I, Directions spirituelles, op.cit.*, 495 (Letter to Fénelon written at the beginning of April 1690). – The « Spirit of direction» is taken from Psalm 50, 13-14 : « ...strengthen me with a perfect spirit / I will teach thy ways... »

⁴⁰ La Marvalière? As he was the Duke of Beauvillier's secretary, the association of ideas would be all the more natural. [note by Jean Orcibal].

⁴¹ Madame Guyon, *Correspondance, Tome I, Directions spirituelles, op.cit.*, Letter 266. From Fénelon, 25 May 1690.

He confirmed the explanation given by Madame Guyon concerning Matthew 18, 20:

« They speak more from the heart than from the mouth; and the distance between them in no way prevents that inner conversation. God ordinarily unites two or three persons of that sort in so great a unity that they find themselves lost in God until they can no longer distinguish between them [...]

These unions have yet another quality, which is that they in no way cause embarrassment or take control, the mind remaining as free and as empty of images as if they did not exist.⁴² [...]

God also makes unions of relationships, binding certain souls to others as if to their parents in grace [...] »⁴³

Madame Guyon saw herself as a channel acting as a passage for grace, with no will of her own, without any personal intention, in total « passiveness », in extreme submission to God:

« When the soul has lost both all her own power and all reluctance to be moved and acted upon according to the Lord's will, then He makes her act as He wishes [...] When God moves her towards a heart, unless that heart itself refuses the grace which God wishes to communicate to it, or is ill prepared through too much activity, it unfailingly receives a profound peace [...] Sometimes several persons receive the outpouring of these waters of grace at the same time. ⁴⁴ »

She insisted on the fact that there was no personal power [involved], that only an annihilated soul could allow the passage of grace:

You have asked me how the union of the heart takes place. I will tell you that when the soul is entirely freed from all penchants, all inclinations and all natural friendship, God moves the heart as He pleases; and seizing the soul through a stronger contemplation, He makes the heart incline towards someone. If that person is prepared, he or she too must experience a sort of inner contemplation, and something which influences the heart [...] This in no way depends on our will: but God alone operates it in the soul, as and when He pleases, and often when it is least in one's thoughts. All our efforts could not give us that state of mind; on the contrary, our activity would only serve to prevent it.⁴⁵

⁴² Saint John of the Cross: « ...the soul rests sometimes in a great forgetfulness, so that it could not say where it was, nor what it did there, and it does not seem to it that any time has passed in it. Thus it can happen, and sometimes it does, that several hours pass in that forgetfulness; and when the soul returns to itself, it seems that only a moment has passed. » (The Ascent of Mount Carmel, Book II, chapter XIV, p.58 – « And as God has neither form nor image which may be understood by the memory [...] it remains as if without form and without figure [...] in great forgetfulness, without remembering anything. » Book III, Chapter I, p.112. (Translated from *Les Œuvres spirituelles du B. Père Jean de la Croix [...]*, Paris, Jacques D'allin, 1665.

⁴³ Jeanne-Marie Guyon, *Explications de la Bible, L'Ancien Testament et le Nouveau Testament avec des explications et réflexions qui regardent la vie intérieure*, with an introduction and notes by D. Tronc, Paris, Phénix, 2005, «Explanation on Saint Matthew », chap. XVIII, verse 20 (« Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them ») pages 240-241. -- Similarly Jean de Saint-Samson, cited by Madame Guyon in her *Justifications* I, «key VIII Communications », Authority 12 : « Your Reverence well knows how hearts speak mutually to each other, so that the further apart they are, the more they unite and speak together. This is all the more true between us, as our affection is simple and unique in God in whom we live. Thus we converse with one another in simplicity of mind, above all that may be said of current and various events; the more so since what we transfer to one another is life in the life of God Himself, whose love unceasingly inspires us to love Him and lose ourselves in him to the utmost possible point. Even though we may perceive some disorder in these times, nevertheless we do not think about it, leaving events, however they may be, to divine providence. Letter 8 [from Jean de Saint-Samson]. »

⁴⁴ Madame Guyon, *Discours sur la vie intérieure*, *op.cit.*, Discourse 2.64, p. 232.

⁴⁵ Madame Guyon, *Discours sur la vie intérieure*, *op.cit.*, Discours 2.68. (v. also Discourse 2.67.)

We have direct testimony from Madame Guyon, who was the first to analyse what happens during that transmission. It only takes place if the person has attained the apostolic state:

Her own salvation does not visibly concern her, and neither does that of others. Nevertheless, she is engaged in it and working for it through Providence. Sometimes God impels her to strongly desire the salvation and perfection of certain souls, so that she would give her life to make them comply with the full extent of God's intentions for them - but without care or anxiety, without contributing anything of her own, serving purely as an instrument in the hands of God, who gives whatever inclination and activity He pleases, but an activity in perfect repose, without parting from Him, without any personal inclination, although sometimes the inclination may be infinite: for the soul which has arrived at complete detachment and is fit to be poured out into God, being plunged there, is like flowing water which cannot be fixed but flows ceaselessly according to the slope given to it.

She understands that she participates in God's communicable quality, and that she lives and subsists solely to pour it out. The more it flows, the fuller she is, not with her own fullness, but with the fullness of God in Him which is communicated to all beings and draws along with it those He has plunged into Himself. It is He who gives her all her inclinations. However, this is done without paying attention to them, thinking of them or worrying about whether they will succeed: everything could perish and be overthrown without affecting her soul, though this does not prevent her from sharing the good or bad fortune of the souls who are united with her to receive her communications. It is like a river which flows pleasantly when it is given passage, but rises effortfully against itself when its passage is blocked. [...] One no longer knows who or what are relatives, friends, possessions, children, interests, honour, health, life, salvation, glory, eternity: none of that exists any longer for such a soul, although from the outside she seems quite ordinary, acting and doing like others.⁴⁶

****When the soul has lost both all her own power and all reluctance to be moved and acted upon according to the Lord's will, then He makes her act as He wishes without choosing her methods. He communicates through her without the slightest inclination on her part.[...] He communicates with whoever He pleases, as and when he pleases. If she wished to communicate herself, or communicate in a direction not chosen by God, at a time when God did not so move her, this would be entirely useless and would dry up the heart rather than transmitting life to it. But When God moves her towards a heart, unless that heart itself refuses the grace which God wishes to communicate to it, or is ill prepared through too much activity, it unfailingly receives a profound and sometimes even delectable, which is the strongest sign of communication.*

[...]

But one may say, how can that soul discern when and to whom God wishes her to communicate? It is discerned because the soul feels an excess of fullness and clearly senses that it is not for her — for with regard to herself God almost always keeps her in emptiness and complete equilibrium, and this makes her fitter for what God wishes —, as I said, she feels a very strong fullness which would even overwhelm her if she found no one. But God whose goodness is infinite only gives her that fullness when there are subjects more or less prepared to receive it. Nor can the soul be unaware for whom God fills her in this way, because He inclines her heart in the direction where He wants her to communicate, as we place a hosepipe in a garden to water the spot we wish to water, and only that spot is watered. Sometimes several persons receive the outpouring of these

⁴⁶ Madame Guyon, *Discours sur la vie intérieure*, *op.cit.*, Discourse 2.61. = *Écrits sur la Vie Intérieure*, *op.cit.*, pp. 105-107.

*waters of grace at the same time, in proportion to their greater or lesser capacity and whether they are less active and more passive.*⁴⁷

Madame Guyon expressed herself most directly in her commentaries on the mystical "Authorities" she evoked in the *Justifications* collected with Fénelon in 1694. Her comparisons were very direct:

*As iron touched by a magnet is seen to attract iron, so a soul in whom God dwells in this way attracts other souls by a secret virtue; so that it is sufficient to approach her in order to be placed in inner prayer and recollection. This is why as soon as one approaches her, one desires to be silent rather than to speak, and God makes use of that means to communicate with souls: a sign of the purity of these unions and affections.*⁴⁸

Just as soiled and shameless souls communicate that corrupted air to those who approach them: similarly, by a contrary effect a pure soul communicates purity; and as she is full of grace and anointed with the divine ointment, she communicates that grace and that ointment to those who approach her. And as she is full only of God, she can only communicate God. As she is empty of herself, she no longer communicates herself or anything of hers, but the image and the grace of her divine spouse. This is why remembering these persons, far from calling up their impure image, turns first to God and contemplates in Him; this is the surest sign that the soul has left herself to pass into God, that she herself has disappeared, that she herself no longer lives, but her God lives in her; since she no longer gives anything but what affects herself.

*It should also be noted that she does not draw others by any external sign, but as she has arrived at the Centre, the impression is made from within, as if it were God himself, without anything appearing externally; as by leaving herself behind, that soul has gone beyond her own being to lose herself in God beyond herself: so she leaves behind no trace or idea of herself, but only of God, His love and His life.*⁴⁹

She did not express personal mystical effusions, but clarified a communication which progressively grew:

God communicates Himself to all creatures, but He does not communicate Himself with as much abundance and delectation except in fully annihilated souls, because they no longer resist, and as God himself is their basis, He receives Himself in Himself. This is why the communication we receive from God, even within, is felt more easily when it is narrower; and for the same reason, it is less easy to sense when it is more immense, for God does not communicate Himself by Himself except through nothingness, since that is the same thing. [...]

As this communication remains mysterious for all of us, she turned to examples recorded in the scriptures:⁵⁰

For souls who are not annihilated communication takes place through an approach, but for those who are it is by a simple look or thought. St John the Baptist is an example of this: the first communications took place by means of an approach: and this was why the Blessed Virgin remained three months with Saint Elizabeth, after which St. John no longer needed to approach

⁴⁷ Madame Guyon, *Discours sur la vie intérieure*, *op.cit.*, Discourse 2.64 = *écrits sur la Vie Intérieure*, *op.cit.*, pp.114-116.

⁴⁸ Madame Guyon & François de Fénelon, *Florilège mystique/Les «Justifications»*, Complete edition, Chemins mystiques, HC, 2017, « VIII. Communications. Conversations », Commentary on the *Song of Songs*, chap.7 vs.8.

⁴⁹ *Mystical anthology/«Justifications»*, *op.cit.*, « XXI. Spiritual fecundity without leaving the divine Unity », Commentary on the *Song of Songs*, chap.4 vs.11.

⁵⁰ Which she knew exceptionally well, as shown by a list of her citations which cover every aspect of the Bible: she commented it from her youth in over eight thousand pages (the famous "automatic writing").

*Jesus Christ once he was strong. Thus he was not in a hurry to see Him, though when they met there was again a renewal of grace.*⁵¹

*He thirsts: and for what, O Divine Saviour? To communicate the gift of God. Oh, if you knew the gift of God, and who He is who asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him, and he would have given you living water to drink.*⁵² *Oh, it is Himself! Driven as He is by that same thirst, does He not cry: If someone is thirsty, let him come, and rivers of peace will flow within him,*⁵³ *but rivers which mount up to eternal life, that is to say that they produce the effect of placing the soul in eternal life so that she may receive the immense communications of God Himself.*⁵⁴

The primordial model is Christ himself, who cries « if someone is thirsty, let him come, and rivers of peace will flow within him » (John 7,37 – 38). Madame Guyon and those close to her thought they were re-living the experience of the Apostles, who received the grace of Christ directly and re-transmitted it to their disciples. She therefore affirmed that grace can pass through a human being. For Bossuet and her judges it was impossible to tolerate that affirmation, which they interpreted as self-affirmation!

In fact, for her this had nothing to do with the transmitting of a person's power or personal success, but with the transmitting of a divinely imposed function. Everyone mocked her claims, all the more so because she was a woman. Ill-treatment and the verbal violence of her interrogations led her to doubt herself for a moment; she asked herself whether she should not obey the authority of the Church embodied in Bossuet. Then came the turning-point; she realised she could not deny her own experience. From then on Bossuet was up against a wall.

A letter addressed to Marie-Anne de Mortemart⁵⁵ described how she had passed from the realm of dogma to the affirmation of experience:

[...] If a doctor wishes to persuade a sick person that he does not suffer from a certain pain which greatly troubles him, because he, the doctor, and others do not feel it, the sick person, who still feels the same pain, still remains unconvinced; after much arguing he is convinced only that either the doctor does not understand him or that he does not know how to explain his illness in terms which can be understood. It is the same with inner experiences. I imprison and submit my mind in order to believe that what I suffer or experience is neither such a good nor such an evil, and belongs in the sphere of reason and faith; but I am not the master of my pains and cannot persuade myself by either reason or faith that I do not feel them, for I truly do feel them. So all I can do is believe that I express them badly, that they are not of the order of certain illnesses, that I give these [f ° 192v °] pains names they ought not to have; but to convince myself that I do not feel them is impossible; they make themselves felt all too much. I know neither their cause nor their definitions, but I know I endure them. I am told that some have pretended to have them, that others have imagined they had them, etc., that after all few souls have these pains and consequently I do not have them. I believe all that, but I cannot believe the resulting conclusion, which is that I do not

⁵¹ This and the previous citation: Madame Guyon, *Discours sur la vie intérieure, op.cit.*, Discourse 2.67 = *écrits sur la vie intérieure, op.cit.*, pp. 147-149.

⁵² Jn 4, 10.

⁵³ Jn 7, 37–38.

⁵⁴ Madame Guyon, *Discours sur la vie intérieure, op.cit.*, Discourse 2.67 = *Écrits sur la vie intérieure, op.cit.*, p. 150.

⁵⁵ Madame Guyon, *Correspondence, Volume II Combats, op.cit.*, Letter 404. «To the Little Duchess». Juin 1697, p. 591. «Little duchess» not because she was small, but as the youngest member of her family. On the well-attested « Mortemart spirit » *Mémoires de Saint-Simon concernant Fénelon, Madame Guyon et leurs proches*, dossier, coll. « Chemins mystiques ».

feel them, because what one feels and suffers forms part of experience, remains real and cannot be matter for my faith. I will believe that some imagine them, others pretend to have them, others exaggerate their ills, that others misuse them; I will also believe that my fondness for myself makes me exaggerate my ills, makes me give them a name they do not have ; but when I feel them in me with such violence I will not believe that they are imaginary, since I suffer from them.

If you wish, I will not say that certain persons live a devout life, I will not say that I do myself, but I know well that I have followed a way on which I found these passages good. I do not argue about the names of the towns I met on my way, their location or even their structure, but it is certain that I passed through them. I have experienced certain pains or fainting fits, I dispute neither their name nor their origin, but I know I suffered them and cannot doubt that. It seems to me that to know the truth, one cannot avoid maintaining the truth of the inner experience, which is real. For the names, the terms, the dogmas they want to introduce, we may give way and submit, but regarding the factual experience of good and holy souls,⁵⁶ can one say the contrary with truth or even honour? And if we were so cowardly as to do so, would not the experience of so many holy souls who have preceded us, are alive now and will come after us give testimony against us? Everything passes, force, prejudices, etc., but the truth remains. [f ° 193] It seems important to me to separate the dogma, I do not know if that is how to put it, from the fact of experience.

Here Madame Guyon produces a fundamental and astonishingly modern text, after which she no longer backed down.

Although we do not know who succeeded her after her death,⁵⁷ we may note that the « little duchess », the recipient of the above text, received permission to be silent when with other people:

« ... However, when she wishes to be in silence with you, do it through your littleness and do not prevent it. God could grant to your littleness what He would not give for the person. When God made use of me in the past for this sort of thing, I always believed He granted it to the humility and littleness of others rather than to me... »⁵⁸

So Marie-Anne de Mortemart could transmit grace from heart to heart.⁵⁹ On the other hand, it was Madame de Grammont who was named by the Scots⁶⁰ (and also in reply to the request from a young Swiss lady referred to above). Thus we have a choice between two ladies who lived until the middle of the eighteenth century. Did they cooperate, and were they assisted?⁶¹ The study of Scottish, Dutch,

⁵⁶ ? : « bonnes et saintes âmes » ("good and holy souls") *crossed out* and difficult to read (corrected from *Correspondance* II p.591).

⁵⁷ D. Tronc, *Écoles du Cœur au siècle des Lumières, Disciples de madame Guyon & Influences*, *op.cit.*

⁵⁸ Madame Guyon, *Correspondance* II, *op.cit.*, Letter 428 « To the Little Duchess ». September 1697.

⁵⁹ Madame Guyon, *Correspondance* II, *op.cit.*, Champion — Marie-Anne de Mortemart (1665-1750)... *La « petite duchesse » en relation avec Madame Guyon, Fénelon et son neveu (The "Little Duchess" in contact with Madame Guyon, Fénelon and his nephew)*, Dossier put together by D. Tronc, 2016, pub. online.

⁶⁰ « ... There is one there whom I believe L.F. and his br. [note1] have seen, Md La D. de G—che [note2] . . . who is much esteem'd by all the friends of that side as inheriting most of N.M.'s spirit. » (D. Henderson, *Mystics of the North-east*, Aberdeen, 1934 [republished 2016, coll. "Chemins mystiques"], in "Letter XLVIII [From Dr. James Keith to Lord Deskford]". [note1 :] « Lord Forbes and his brother [James] », [note2 :] « cf. Cherel, *Fénelon au XVIII^e siècle en France*, p. 163, quoting a letter which says "priez pour moi —, et obtenez les prières des personnes les plus intérieures de votre connaissance, surtout celles de Madame de Guiche... le duc de Guiche a pris le titre de duc de Gramont in 1720... »

⁶¹ Marie-Anne de Mortemart née Colbert +1750 ; Marie-Christine de Noailles, duchesse de Gramont « The Dove » +1748. Close to Isaac Dupuy + apr.1737 and the Marquis de Fénelon 1688-1746. — These are the

Swiss and Germanic transmissions in France (Fleischbein, Dutoit, etc.) does not reveal a figure mystically comparable to Guyon or Fénelon.⁶² Perhaps the obligatory secret was too well kept.

§

I will end by noting the consequences of Madame Guyon's behaviour:

In a century where freedom was not the norm, living one's personal truth in the midst of the authorities, but without claiming authority, led to conflicts with the holders of authority. Madame Guyon's mystical experience and function of transmitting grace led her to perform three « exploits » :

1) resisting the royal power: Guyon had the opportunity to introduce inner prayer to Saint-Cyr ; she influenced leading aristocrats and, above all, Fénelon. Madame de Maintenon could not tolerate her intrusion in Saint-Cyr, and provoked the king's anger. Pretext: quietist ideas. This worried the king, since at that time freedom of conscience did not exist and he had a stranglehold on ideas.

It must be said that Madame Guyon had taken mysticism into an inappropriate place: the Court of Louis XIV. She found herself involved in problems of power through her influence over the Dukes of Chevreuse and Beauvilliers and over Fénelon who had become the Dauphin's tutor, thus giving the devout party much hope. This undertaking was naive, as it meant practising the values of Christian love in the midst of the Court, but it carried the immense hope of placing on the throne of the 'most Christian King'⁶³ a dauphin whose rule would have embodied its values.

2) resisting the power of official religion: the clergy hid behind a debate of ideas concerning passive inner prayer. In fact they did not accept being eliminated from relations with God: the direct transmission of grace deprived them of their status as intermediaries between God and Christians.

3) resisting the authority of men: this woman dared to affirm her experience, although she was under the sway of men who knew better than her what she should feel or think. She fought especially to have a confessor who respected her.

In conclusion, her mystical experience and her function of transmitting grace led Madame Guyon to accomplish three choices which seem obvious nowadays, but were unacceptable in the seventeenth century :

- 1) As a woman, she refused masculine authority.
- 2) As an individual, she refused the principle of authority by staying firm in her freedom of conscience.
- 3) As a mystic, she established the primacy of experience over dogma.

Three revolutions achieved by a little woman who wanted only to be plunged in God.

four members of the Parisian circle who lived until the middle of the eighteenth century. See the Annex : « List of Contacts ».

⁶² *Ecoles du Cœur au siècle des Lumières, op. cit.* ; Dominique and Murielle Tronc, *Expériences mystiques en Occident IV. Une École du Cœur*, H.C., forthcoming [Quiétismes ; I L'école du cœur en France et Nouvelle-France 1601-1671 : École du cœur and Bernières, L'Ermitage, Bertot, Canada ; II Mme Guyon, Fénelon and their friends 1648-1717 : Mme Guyon, Fénelon, The Work, the Way ; III Transmissions -1792 : France, Scotland, Holland, Switzerland & Germany ; IV Influences : Catholic, Protestant, Echos in the nineteenth century, Echos in the twentieth century].

⁶³ The « Catholic King » being the King of Spain.

List of contacts: Norman, then Parisian and finally European networks:⁶⁴

FIRST GROUP of those close to the *Hermitage of Caen* :

Marie des Vallées (1590-1656), the « saint of Coutances »

Jean-Chrysostome de Saint-Lô (1594-1646) member of the Regular Third Order, « our good Father »

Jourdain de Bernières (1596-1645), who published her brother's writings

Marie de l'Incarnation (1599-1672), apostle of Canada

Jean Eudes (1601-1680), canonised and founder of the Eudists

Jean de Bernières (1602-1659), member of the Secular Third Order, creator of the Hermitage

Jean Aumont (1608-1689), « the winegrower of Montmorency » member of the Third Order

Gaston de Renty (1611-1649), friend of Bernières

Catherine de Bar (1614-1698), Annonciade then « Mother of the Blessed Sacrament », founder of a Benedictine order.

Louis-François d'Argentan (1615-1680), Capuchin, publisher and co-editor of the *Chrétien Intérieur*.

Jacques Bertot (1620-1681) priest, confidant of Bernières, discreet « mystical transmitter » from Caen to Montmartre, Madame Guyon's spiritual father.

François de Montmorency Laval (1623-1708), canonised, first bishop of Quebec, founder of a seminary and a new Hermitage.

Henri Boudon (1624-1702), of the Secular Third O (?), a prolific author

Archange Enguerrand (1631-1699), Recollect, the " good Franciscan" met by the young Madame Guyon.

SECOND GROUP of those close to Mme Guyon and Fénelon, and their disciples :

Initiators (men and women) :

Mother Geneviève Granger 1600-1674

Jacques Bertot 1620-1671

Archange Enguerrand 1631-1699

François Lacombe 1640-1715

Duchess of Béthune-Charost [née Marie Fouquet] 1641 ?-1716

Jeanne-Marie Guyon 1647-1717

Disciple friends « at home » :

François de Fénelon 1651-1715

Paul de Beauvillier 1648-1714 x Duchess de Beauvillier 1655-1733 [née Colbert]

Charles-Honoré de Chevreuse 1656-1712 x Duchess de Chevreuse, -1732 [née Colbert]

Marie-Anne de Mortemart 1665-1750 [née Colbert]

Isaac Dupuy after.1737

Marquis de Fénelon 1688-1746

Marie-Christine de Noailles « the dove » 1672-1748 x A. de Gramont, Count of Guiche

Disciple friends « abroad » :

Pierre Poiret 1646-1719

Chevalier Ramsay (Scottish) 1686-1743

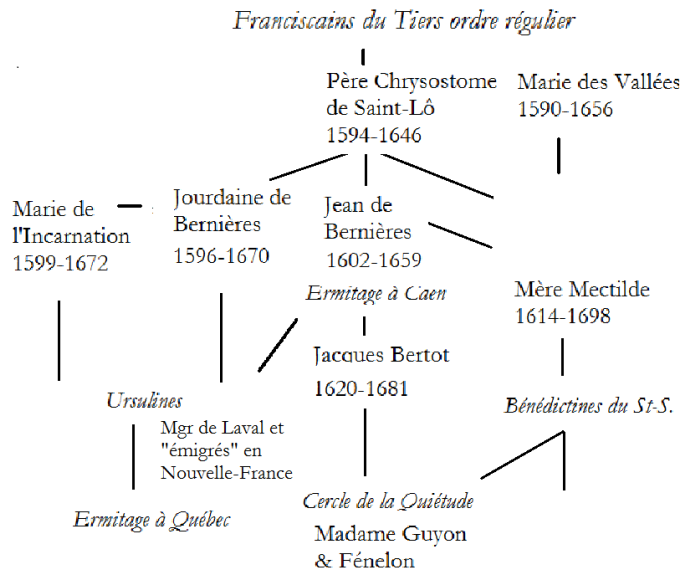
James 16th Lord Forbes 1689-1761 and Lord Deskford 1690-1764

Friedrich von Fleischbein, Baron of Pymont, Pietist 1700-1774

Jean-Philippe Dutoit-Mambrini, pastor at Morges 1721-1793

⁶⁴ The list uses a 'transversal view' which is not used in the 'vertical' presentation of the transmission which is the subject of this contribution. This list is reduced here by selecting from a *turba magna* [great crowd] which needs further examination. Some fifty figures are clearly identified Synthesis: Dominique Tronc, *Expériences mystiques en Occident IV. Une École du Cœur*. (a forthcoming collection). For dossiers on some figures, see : coll. « Chemins mystiques ». (Web).

Madame Guyon at the centre of a mystical transmission (diagrams with comments and sources)



Réseaux des Amis des Ermitages et filiations spirituelles

Madame Guyon

Influences of Madame Guyon and Fénelon

Madame Guyon 1647-1717 & Fénelon 1651-1715

« This side »	« Trans »	« Trans »	« Trans »
France	Scotland	Holland	Switzerland
Germany			
Chevreuse/s	J & G Garden	Poiret	
Péd'Echweiler			
-1712 & -1732	-1699 & -1733	1646-1719	1682-1740
Beauvillier/s	Ramsay	Metternich	Fleischbein
-1714 & -1733	1686-1743	-1731	1700-1774
Dupuy	Forbes 16th	Tersteegen	Klinckow.
- >1737	1689-1761	1697-1769	-1774
Marquis of F.	Deskford		Dutoit
1688-1746	1690-1764		1721-1793
Mortemart			Fabr. de Zelle
1665-1750			-1793
			Pétillet
			Langalerie
			B. Constant
			-1837

Commentaries and Sources :

Commentary :

The first diagram shows the founding figures around whom numerous devotees gathered in "Schools of the Heart". Three branches of a "spiritual delta" formed, starting from a first "group" led by Jean de Bernières under the direction of « our good Father Chrysostome » :

--A second *Hermitage* was founded in Quebec by M^{gr} de Laval.

-- The *Circle of Quietude* created by M. Bertot at Montmartre was taken over by Madame Guyon.

-- The *Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament* were the 'daughters' of Mother Mectilde.

Madame Guyon took over the *Circle of Quietude*.

The second diagram shows the European influence in four columns.⁶⁵ Disciples « at home » et « abroad » [in other countries] are laid out vertically by date and horizontally according to four geographical regions. Cross-relations are omitted. For couples or brothers, the dates of death are separated by '&'.

I realised that it was necessary to locate this transmission and support it by possible recourse to the mystical texts produced by devotees in these networks of friends. Texts in relation with the writings of Madame Guyon are available in two collections: « Sources mystiques » (published by the « Centre Jean-de-la-Croix ») and « Chemins mystiques » (online Internet purchase via the printer <http://lulu.com>, search key Dominique Tronc). Consult the site <http://www.cheminsmystiques.com> and the references in the communication, including in chronological order :

Jean-Chrysostome de Saint-Lô (1594-1646), of the Third Order of Saint Francis of Assisi, Founder of the School of Pure love

Jean de Bernières, Œuvres mystiques I Chrétiens [Sources mystiques] & II Correspondence [forthcoming]

The Friends of the Hermitages of Caen & Quebec [v. DT]

The Mystical Friendships of Mother Mectilde of the Blessed Sacrament 1614-1698

Jacques Bertot mystical director [for available examples, v. DT]

Archange Enguerrand (1631-1699), Franciscan Recollect director and 'Good monastic' according to Madame Guyon

François Lacombe (1640-1715), Life, Works, Ordeals of Madame Guyon's Father Confessor

Memoirs de Saint-Simon concerning Fénelon, Madame Guyon and their associates

Marie-Anne de Mortemart (1665-1750) The "little duchess" [...]

Schools of the Heart in the Age of Enlightenment, Disciples of Madame Guyon & Influences

Expériences mystiques en Occident IV. Une École du Cœur [forthcoming]

Etc.

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Fortunately, *Experimental Theology in America, Madame Guyon, Fénelon, and their readers* by Patricia A. Ward covers both Madame Guyon and the New World...