confessional positions hardened, his intellectual freedom and boldness were less and less welcome, on either side of the Catholic-Protestant divide. Methodologically, he ushered in developments that would be hallmarks of a later time; theologically, his work embodies a kind of irenic spirit championed in our own time. But in his own time, Cajetan the biblical scholar remained a 'lonely prophet of things to come.'¹¹¹

AUGUSTINUS SANIOR INTERPRES APOSTOLI.

THOMAS STAPLETON AND THE LOUVAIN AUGUSTINIAN SCHOOL'S RECEPTION OF PAUL

Wim François*

Paul in Louvain's Augustinian Bible Exegesis

In 1546, an important initiative in the field of Bible commentary and, insofar as we can use this word in a 16th century context, biblical exegesis, was taken in Louvain. In that year, the Emperor Charles V appointed two so-called 'royal professors' at the University of Louvain, one of them in the Sacred Scriptures (and the other in Scholastic Theology). There is much to be said for the suggestion that, in doing so, Charles V associated himself with the spirit of the Council of Trent. During their humanistically or even Erasmian inspired fifth session of 17 June 1546, the Council fathers expressed their desire that biblical studies should be made available in institutes for training the clergy: as such, priests would be able to base their sermons on biblical texts.¹ The decision of the Council gave an important impetus to what has been called the Golden Age of Catholic Exegesis during the period

* I wish to thank Ms. Jennifer Besselser-Dunachie for her invaluable assistance in translating the text.

¹ The text of the decree: "Sessio quinta: decretum de lectione et praedicatione," in *Concilium Tridentinum: Diariorum, actorum, epistularum, tractatum nova collectio*, 5: *Actum Pars IIa*, ed. Stephan Ehres (Freiburg i.Br., 1911), pp. 241–243. On the origin of the Tridentine decree on Bible study and preaching: Johann E. Rainey, "Entstehungsgeschichte des Tridentiner Predigterformdecretes," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 39 (1915), 255–317, and 465–523; Arthur Allgeier, "Das Konzil von Trient und das theologische Studium," *Historisches Jahrbuch im Auftrag der Görres-Gesellschaft* 52 (1932), 313–339; Hubert Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient*, 2: *Die erste Trienter Tagungsperiode 1545/47* (Freiburg i.Br., 1957), pp. 83–103; Leopold Lottner, *Volksprache und Schriftsprache: Geschichte einer Lebensfrage bis zum Ende des Konzils von Trient*, Wiener Beiträge zur Theologie 5 (Vienna, 1964), pp. 264–274; Antonio Larios, "La reforma de la predicación en Trento (Historia y contenido de un decreto)," *Communio* 6 (1973), 22–83; Andrew Byrne, *El ministerio de la palabra en el concilio de Trento* (Pamplona, 1975), pp. 58–92; Frederick J. McGinness, "An Erasmian Legacy: Ecclesiastics and the Reform of Preaching at Trent," in *Heresy, Culture, and Religion in Early Modern Italy: Contexts and Contestations*, eds. Ronald K. Delip, Michelle M. Fontaine, and John Jeffries Martin, Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies 76 (Kirkville, MO, 2006), pp. 93–112.

¹¹¹ Jared Wicks, "Thomas De Vio Cajetan," in Carter Lindberg, ed., *The Reformation Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Early Modern Period* (Oxford, 2002), p. 280.

between 1550 and 1650. In Louvain, the institution of a royal chair of Sacred Scriptures at the Faculty of Theology brought about qualitatively good biblical studies.²

The first royal professor of Sacred Scriptures was John Leonard van der Eycken, or Hasselius (†1552). He served as part of a delegation to the Council of Trent in 1551 and his chair, meanwhile, was entrusted to the young doctor Michel de Bay or Michael Baus (†1589). When Van der Eycken passed away in Trent in 1552, his young substitute remained in his post until his death in 1589. However, Hasselius and Baus did not produce any significant Bible commentaries. As such, Baus is mainly known for his radically Augustinian doctrine of grace and salvation, which eventually earned him a papal condemnation in 1567. His like-minded friend and colleague John Hessels (†1566),³ lecturer of theology and Sacred Scriptures at the Premonstratensian abbey of Park, professor at the Faculty of Theology and since 1562 titular of the royal chair of Scholastic Theology, did produce some interesting Bible commentaries. The irony of the situation, thus, is that Baus, professor royal of Sacred Scriptures for nearly four decades, did not leave any significant Bible commentary to posterity, whereas Hessels, his colleague in Scholastic Theology, did. Among the latter's writings we find a commentary on Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, posthumously published in 1568 by his younger colleague Henry Gravius, together with a commentary on the First Letter of Peter and a commentary on the First Letter of John in the same year, and a commentary on the Gospel of Matthew published in 1572. Hessels can be considered

² Wim François, "Exégèse biblica agustiniana en Lovaina en el siglo XVI," *Augustinus* 54 (2009)—forthcoming; Edmond J.M. van Eijl, "De theologische faculteit te Leuven in de XV^e en XVI^e eeuw. Organisatie en opleiding," in *Fasculus S. Theologiae Lovaniensis 1432–1797: Bijdragen tot haar geschiedenis. Contributions to its History. Contributies tot son historie*, ed. Edmond J.M. van Eijl, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 45 (Louvain, 1977), pp. 69–153, esp. pp. 95–98, and 152. Also: Victor Baroni, *La Contre-Réforme devant la Bible. La question biblique*, doctoral dissertation Faculty of Theology (Lausanne, 1943), pp. 235–237, 287–296; Robert De Langhe, "Les recherches bibliques à l'Université de Louvain," in *Sacra Pagina. Miscellanea biblica congressus internationalis catholici de re biblica*, eds. Joseph Coppens, Albert Descamps, and Edouard Massaux, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 12–13, 1 (Gembloux, 1959), pp. 28–40, esp. pp. 29–30.

³ On Hessels' life and works, see, for example, Edward Van Even, "Hessels (Jean)," *Biographie Nationale de Belgique* 9 (1886–87), 320–322; Jacques Forget, "Hessels, Jean," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 6 (1920), 2321–2324; André Duval, "Hessels (Jean)," *Catholicisme* 5 (1957), 699–700.

as an early representative of a 'Louvain school' of Augustinian Bible exegesis.⁴

A contemporary of Hessels and Baus was Cornelius Jansenius, titled 'of Ghent' (†1576).⁵ He was successively lecturer at the Premonstratensian abbey of Tongerlo (1540–47), parish priest in Courtrai/Kortrijk (1547–61), and ordinary professor of theology at Louvain University (1562–64/68). After he had returned from the Council of Trent, in 1564, he was appointed the first bishop of Ghent; it was not until September 1568, however, that he could take possession of his Episcopal see. Cornelius Jansenius of Ghent can be considered Louvain's major biblical scholar from the Early Modern Era, although he was never titular of the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures.⁶ As early as 1549, when he was still a parish priest in Courtrai/Kortrijk, Jansenius published a so-called *Concordia evangelica*, a harmony text based on the four Gospels (including even some parts of the Acts of the Apostles). He has also handed down commentaries on various Old Testament Wisdom Books. His paraphrases of the Psalms were particularly highly regarded, and they were used as a text book in Louvain for almost two

⁴ On Hessels' exegetical work: Jean-Pierre Delville, *L'Europe de l'exégèse au XVI^e siècle. Interprétations de la parabole des ouvriers à la vigne (Matthieu 20, 1–16)*, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 174 (Louvain, 2004), pp. 468–474; Wim François, "Augustinian Bible Exegesis in Louvain. The Case of John Hessels' Commentary on 1 John 2, 15–18a," *Augustiniana* 57 (2007), 399–424.

⁵ On Jansenius' life and works, see, among others, Henri de Voocht, *History of the Foundation and the Rise of the Collegium Trilingue Lovaniense 1517–1550*, 2: *The Development*, UCL. Recueil de travaux d'histoire et de philologie 4/4, Humanistica Lovaniensia 11 (Louvain, 1953), pp. 512–515; Jan Roegiers, "Cornelius Jansenius (1565–1576)," in *Het bodem Gent (1559–1997): Vier eeuwen geschiedenis*, eds. Michel Cloet, Ludo Collin, and Robert Boudens (Ghent, 1991), pp. 35–50, and 540–541; Jan Roegiers, "Jansenius (Cornelius)," *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques* 26 (1997), 942–947.

⁶ On Jansenius' exegetical work: Dietrich Wünsch, *Evangelienharmonien im Reformationszeitalter. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Darstellungen*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 52 (Berlin, 1983), pp. 209–230; Michael Andrew Screech, "Erasmus and the Concordia of Cornelius Jansenius, Bishop of Ghent: Christian Folly and Catholic Orthodoxy," in *Colloquio Erasmus de Liège. Commemoration du 450^e anniversaire de la mort d'Érasme*, ed. Jean-Pierre Massaut, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 247 (Paris, 1986), pp. 297–307; Michael Andrew Screech, "The Diffusion of Erasmus's Theology and New Testament Scholarship in Roman Catholic Circles Despite the Tridentine Index. (More on the Role of Cornelius Jansenius (1510–1574), Bishop of Ghent)," in *Théorie et pratique de l'exégèse. Actes du troisième colloque international sur l'histoire de l'exégèse biblique au XVI^e siècle (Genève, 31 août–2 septembre 1988)*, eds. Irena Backus and Francis M. Higman (Geneva, 1990), pp. 343–353; Jean-Pierre Delville, "Jansenius de Gand (1510–1576) et l'exégèse des paraboles," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 92 (1997), 38–69. The article has been inserted as a paragraph in Delville, *L'Europe de l'exégèse au XVI^e siècle*, pp. 474–487.

centuries. The years 1571–72 saw the publication of Jansenius' most famous work, viz. his commentary on the above mentioned harmony of the Gospels, entitled *Commentaria in suam Concordiam ac totam historiam evangelicam*. Jansenius' *Concordia* and his commentary on the harmony of the Gospels exercised a strong influence among Catholic exegetes and pastors. His biblical theology was indebted to Augustine, although it should be stressed that Jansenius adopted a moderate stance. The editions went through several reprints in all the major printing centres of Europe, until late in the seventeenth century.⁷

From this list, it is obvious however that Jansenius concentrated on the Wisdom Books and the Gospels but did not produce any commentary on Paul's Epistles. It would seem that Jansenius associated himself with a tradition that had existed since the end of the Middle Ages, in which the Gospels and the Psalms were considered to be the primary sources for a biblical spirituality that was also completely accessible for the laity. The many books—also in the vernacular!—containing the Gospel readings of the Mass, and other exemplars with the Psalms would seem to testify to this tradition. Jansenius aimed at providing his clerical students and priests—necessary mediators between God's Word and the faithful—with Bible commentaries that were both based upon a sound exegetical basis and served a spiritual and pastoral-liturgical purpose. His *Concordia* and his commentary on the harmony of the Gospels was meant as an exegetical basis for the sermons priests were expected to give during Sunday Mass. His paraphrases of the Psalms served a similar purpose, for the Psalms were the basis of the liturgy of the hours (in which many lay people also participated), and a verse from the Psalms was also read or sung between the Epistle and Gospel reading during Mass. Although a passage from the Epistles was read during the first reading of the Mass, the Letters of Paul were considered too difficult, unsuited as a fundament for lay spirituality, and hence rarely taken as a basis for the homily. The way in which they had been used in the development of the theology of the Reformation had certainly demonstrated to what sort of wayward interpretation these Epistles could lead. The disputable place of Paul's Epistles in the spirituality of the Catholic laity, and their limited relevance for preaching in the

church, would seem to explain why they are not present in the work of the pastorally inclined Jansenius.

The combined exegetical and pastoral-liturgical motivation of Jansenius' work also became apparent through a range of homilies on the Gospel readings of the Sunday Mass, which were selected by the German canon George Braun and published at Cologne in 1577, a year after Jansenius had passed away in his cathedral city of Ghent. The homilies were developed on the basis of the *Commentaria* on the Gospel harmony. Written in Latin, they were primarily intended to a readership of priests and preachers who could use them as a source of inspiration while preparing their homilies. Also Jansenius, as a bishop, made a point of preaching during Sunday Mass in the cathedral or other churches.

Thomas Stapleton and his exegetical work

After Bains' death, the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures was entrusted to Thomas Stapleton (1535–1598).⁸ An English Elizabethan exile in Louvain since 1559, Stapleton studied theology at the University there and spent a period in Paris to perfect his knowledge of the Sacred Tongues. Early in 1563, Stapleton briefly returned to his fatherland. He refused to swear the Oath of Supremacy, and chose exile with his family in Louvain. During the years 1563 to 1569 Stapleton was active as a 'freelance controversialist' who, predominantly in English, attacked the Protestants and their doctrines. In 1569 he moved to Douai, where he began to teach theology and, in 1571, obtained a doctorate at the then recently founded University. For his controversial theological literature he began writing in Latin. He entered the novitiate of the Jesuits in 1585, but at the age of fifty his health was unable to sustain the harsh discipline and he left the order a year later to resume his former office. Stapleton however maintained a warm relationship with the Jesuits and during the doctrinal debates of 1587–88 on predestination, grace and free will, he sided with the Jesuit Leonard Lessius against the Louvain theologians

⁷ Wünsch, *Evangelienharmonien in Reformationszeit*, pp. 222–230, esp. p. 229: "Bei der Würdigung der katholischen Theologie des ausgehenden 16. Jahrhunderts ist diese Schriftgelehrsamkeit zu beachten und nicht etwa als Monopol der Kirchen der Reformation zu sehen."

⁸ For an introduction to the life and the work of Thomas Stapleton, see Gordon Alblon, "An English Professor at Louvain: Thomas Stapleton (1535–1598)," in *Miscellanea historica in honorem Alberti De Meyer: Universitäts Catholice in Opificio Lovaniensi annis XXV professoris*, UCL, Recueil de travaux d'histoire et de philologie 22–23, 2 (Louvain, 1946), pp. 895–913; Marvin Richard O'Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation* (New Haven, CT, 1964), pp. 23–81.

and his Douai colleagues.⁹ The animosity towards Stapleton's doctrinal position subsided for a while, but regained momentum in the summer of 1590 when the Louvain theologians expressed concern about two sermons Stapleton may have given, entitled *Contra praedestinationem ex solo Dei placito* and *Contra gratiam efficacem*. The nuncio in the Spanish Netherlands, Ottavio Mironi Frangipani, charged the bishop of Antwerp, Laevinus Torrentius, with attempting to prevent their publication in the bishop's town. The latter however found no single trace of the contested sermons. Whether by coincidence or not, in the same summer of 1590, King Philip II signed the letters patent appointing the 55-years-old Stapleton royal professor of Sacred Scriptures in Louvain. Ironically, the Jesuits' friend succeeded Michael Batus, one of his main theological opponents during the Louvain controversy of the preceding years. Attached to his professorship Stapleton also received a canonry in the chapter of the first foundation in the St.-Peter's church in Louvain. Soon afterwards he was also made dean of Hilvarenbeek, in the diocese of 's-Hertogenbosch, in the present-day Netherlands.

At the end of his stay in Douai and during his professorship of Sacred Scriptures in Louvain, Stapleton published a series of *Promptuariorum*.¹⁰ These were books of sermons which covered the Gospel texts to be read at Mass throughout the liturgical year, and commented on them from both a moral and a dogmatic standpoint. In 1589 Stapleton edited, in collaboration with the publisher Michael Sonnius in Paris, a so-called *Promptuarium catholicum* on the Gospels to be read during Mass on Sundays and Holy days. Each *Promptuarium* begins by quoting the Gospel text in full and is followed by a short commentary, of two or three pages at most. Stapleton hoped this book of commentaries would provide a useful manual for clerics who had to preach not only for the edification of their own people, but also against the so-called heretics who made the accusation that Catholic doctrines could easily be

refuted by reference to the Gospels themselves. In 1591, while teaching in Louvain, Stapleton's *Promptuarium morale super evangelia dominicalia* was published by the widow of Christopher Plantin and Jan (i) Moretus in Antwerp. Two separate volumes were published, first a *pars aestivalis* (literally: summer part), which comments on the Gospel readings for the 24 Sundays after Pentecost, and later on during that year a *pars hyemalis* (literally: winter part), in which the 28 remaining Sundays are given. Stapleton's *Promptuarium morale* was not openly controversial. The text of the Sunday Gospel was followed, first, in a smaller letter-type, by a *Pericope moralis huius Evangelii* and, afterwards, by "Stapleton's immensely learned, verse by verse commentary, which might run to as many as ten pages and never less than five".¹¹ During subsequent years Stapleton continued in the polemical strain of the so-called *Promptuarium catholica*. The *Promptuarium catholicum* on the Gospels of the Saints' days was edited in 1592 and was then published together with the *Promptuarium* of the Gospels for Sunday Mass, that year an edition left the presses of Gottfried von Kempen in Cologne and another those of Petrus Bellerus in Antwerp. In 1594 Stapleton completed the last of this series, the *Promptuarium catholicum* on the Gospel of the Mass for each weekday of Lent, from Ash Wednesday through Maundy Thursday; it was published by the printing offices of the Burckmann family in Cologne. Stapleton's *Promptuariorum* were reprinted several times, up to the eighteenth century.¹²

Although he would always remain a genuine controversialist, Stapleton had to direct his mind to more scholarly objectives too, after he had been entrusted with the courses of Sacred Scriptures at Louvain. As many Catholic Bible commentators of the time, he gave priority

⁹ O'Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, p. 70.

¹⁰ Edmond J.M. van Elij, "La controverse louvainoise autour de la grâce et du libre arbitre à la fin du XVI^e siècle," in *Augustinus à l'époque florissante de théologie de Louvain*, eds. Mathijs Lambertis and Leo Kems, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 111 (Louvain, 1994), pp. 207–282, esp. pp. 234–235 and 271.

¹¹ O'Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, pp. 70–71; Jeanine De Landtsheer, "The Relationship between Jan Moretus and Thomas Stapleton as Illustrated by their Correspondence," in *Antwerp, Dissident Typographical Centre: The Role of Antwerp Printers in the Religious Conflicts in England (16th century)*, eds. Dirk Imhof, Gilbert Tournay, and Françoise de Nave (Antwerp, 1994), pp. 75–83; Jeanine De Landtsheer, "Catalogue n° 72," in *Antwerp, Dissident Typographical Centre*, eds. Imhof, Tournay, and de Nave, pp. 140–141.

¹² In 1610 the third Synod of Antwerp decreed that pastors should possess in their personal libraries Stapleton's *Promptuarium morale* and *Promptuarium catholica*. Cf. *Decretum synodi dioecese Antwerpensis, Mense Maio anni M. DC. X. celebratae* (Presidente in ca. ... Ioanne Mitræo episcopo...), Antwerpiae: Ex officina Plantiniana, Apud Ioannem Moretum, 1610, 8^o, 154, [3], [3b] p.: in –8^o, p. 46. Comp. Robert Lechat, *Les réfugiés anglais dans les Pays-Bas espagnols durant le règne d'Élisabeth 1558–1603*, Université de Louvain. Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des conférences d'histoire et de philologie 38 (Louvain, 1914), pp. 200–201. M.R. O'Connell has noted that both *Promptuarium morale* and *catholica* had been translated into Flemish (O'Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, p. 71). This information proves to be wrong: It may be due to an erroneous interpretation of the passage in Lechat's book, or even based on a confusion with the High German translation of Stapleton's *Promptuarium* on the Gospels of Sundays and Holy days, entitled *Frederich- und Hauspostil, Oder Catholisches Zeygelnus*, made by Aegidius Sturz and published in 1595 by Wolfgang Eder in Ingolstadt.

to the literal sense of the text, but he also sought to put forward the correct interpretation of the text, considered in the light of the ongoing controversies of his age. As such, he attempted to repudiate the scriptural interpretations of Calvin and his "lackey" Theodore Beza. Stapleton conceived of the lectures he gave at Louvain as "antidotes" to the "poison of Calvin and Beza".¹³ When they were published in 1595 by the printer Jan van Keerberghen, they formed two distinct parts, the first of which, *Antidota evangelica*, included a study of each of the four Gospels. The second part, the *Antidota apostolica*, was in itself divided into two volumes, which contained commentaries on Acts and commentaries on Romans respectively; it is the latter work that we will consider in this article.¹⁴ In 1598, a third volume was added to the *Antidota apostolica*: It contained commentaries on I and II Corinthians. Stapleton passed by without further commentary any passage he judged to have been left untouched by the Protestants.¹⁵ When dealing with Bible verses which did play a part in the controversy between Catholics and Calvinists, however, Stapleton quoted directly from Calvin and/or Beza in order to forward his personal assessment of their arguments, sustained by Augustine (and sporadically by another Church Father). Judging by the modest amount of reprints, Stapleton's *Antidota* seem to have been far less popular than his *Promphutaria*.

From his position in Louvain, Stapleton also entered into a debate with the Cambridge theologian William Whitaker, the "anglocalvinista".¹⁶ Both men devoted a whole series of writings, i.e. reciprocal retorts, to the authority of Scripture. Whitaker was anxious to demonstrate that the authority of Scripture was independent of the Church's judgment. Stapleton, for his part, emphasized the Church's authority with regard to Scripture.

¹³ Comp. O'Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, pp. 72, and 73-74. R.W. Holder made the interesting suggestion that Stapleton's use of the title *Antidota* may be inspired by Calvin's publication of some of the proceedings of Trent "with antidote". The link is indeed obvious, but, until now, I did not find any explicit reference of Stapleton's to Calvin's earlier use of the term.

¹⁴ Thomas Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica contra nostris temporis huereses... In Epistolam R. Pauli ad Romanos: Tomus II*—, Antverpiae: Apud Ioannem Keerbergium, 1595, 16f, 81f, [1b] p. 17, [1b] f.; in -8°. See among others p. 623: "toxico Calviniano suam Antidotum tribuimus."

¹⁵ Comp. O'Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, p. 73.

¹⁶ O'Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, pp. 54 and 74-77. Comp. Jeanine De Landtsheer, "Catalogue n° 76," in *Antwerp, Dissident Typographical Centre*, eds. Imhof, Tournay, and de Nave, pp. 143-144.

In short, Stapleton wrote mainly as an indefatigable controversialist, rather than as a talented Bible commentator. He tried to help his pupils and fellow-clergymen to combat heresy by printing the Catholic answer to the most debated biblical questions of the day. Stapleton liked to base his ideas on Augustine, which is also the case in his Bible commentaries, but he also associated himself with the later scholastic tradition as represented by Thomas Aquinas. In this sense he disagreed on more than one point with the radical Augustinian faction represented by Bains, and he did not subscribe to the latter's ideas on justification, grace and free will.¹⁷ On the contrary, Stapleton tried to maintain good contacts with Lessius and the Jesuits. His loyalties however were increasingly put under pressure, e.g. when he was sent in 1596, together with Jacobus Janssonius and Joannes Clarius, as part of a delegation to the nuncio Frangipani, in order to voice the theological Faculty's opposition to the Jesuits, the latter aspiring to establish a separate Louvain circuit of philosophical (and eventually theological) courses.¹⁸

In January 1597, after a professorship of only seven years, Stapleton accepted an offer of a proto-notaryship in Rome and he prepared to take up his new life at the Papal Court, where he was generally expected to receive the cardinalate in succession to William Allen. However, Stapleton's leave from Louvain, as well as the requested travel allowance, was delayed, and his health deteriorated. Stapleton never went to Rome, and he died on 12 October 1598 in Louvain.

A Pauline-Augustinian interpretation of Adam's fall and the consequences thereof for posterity

To illustrate Stapleton's approach, we will now consider how he treats the fall of Adam and its consequences for mankind in his *Antidota* to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans. Right from the outset, in the first few pages of his introduction, it becomes clear that our controversial theologian, in his interpretation of Paul, is explicitly intent on entering

¹⁷ Michael Seybold, "Zur theologischen Anthropologie bei Michael Bains (1513-1589) und Thomas Stapleton (1535-1598)," in *Männheit und Verblindung: Michael Schmaus zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. Leo Scheffczyk, Werner Dettloff, and Richard Heinzmann, 1 (Paderborn, 1967), pp. 799-818, esp. pp. 817-818.

¹⁸ Bruno Bouc, "Valui Altare contra Altare? Graduation Rituels and University-Jesuit Confrontation: The Louvain Case 1593-1598"—in preparation.

the debate with Calvin, Beza and even with Whitaker and the English puritans. As antidote to the poisonous reading of the "haeretic",¹⁹ he wants to expose, in his own words, the true and pure teaching of Paul's Epistle, as is evident in the judgement of the orthodox Fathers, the uniform rule of Catholic faith ("regula fidei"), and the whole context of the apostolic Letter.²⁰ Before we proceed to his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, we want first to summarize Stapleton's vision on the original righteousness and on the original sin of Adam. In doing so we will make use of the outline employed by Michael Seybold, in the study he published in 1964 on the doctrine of justification as expounded by Stapleton, and as is found in particular in his *De Iustificazione*.²¹ Subsequently we will look at the place he gives to original sin and *concupiscentia* in a number of passages in his *Antidota* on the Epistle to the Romans, and also at how he answers the question "Quid potest homo lapsus?"

*The original righteousness or iustitia originalis*²²

According to Stapleton, the primary characteristic of original righteousness was harmony between all man's faculties. The body and human senses were in harmony with each other and were ordered by the higher faculties (the *pars superior*) of the soul, such as the will and reason; in this way they were able to pursue their natural goal in an ordered manner. This harmony between body and soul composes what is referred to as the material element of the *iustitia originalis*. The higher faculties of the soul allowed themselves to be totally directed by God; the soul pursued in this way her supernatural goal, that is, to enjoy God forever. This obedience to God was called the formal element of the *iustitia originalis*. All human faculties of body and spirit were in this way ultimately anchored in God: "amor Dei super omnia". The basis of the *iustitia originalis* was God's gift of grace and could not be considered as a mere natural harmony. Furthermore, Stapleton emphasised that the original righteousness was not only a personal endowment bestowed

on Adam, but a constitution true of all human nature. This meant that Adam's personal decisions had an effect beyond his own person and had consequences for the natural constitution in itself.

*Adam's original sin*²³

Adam could have remained in this supernatural, beatific state if he had wished to do so. However, in an act of free will, he turned away from God, to make the created reality, and ultimately his own person, his centre. The fundamental basis of the sin was therefore pride. His turning away from God through a free act of his will signified the 'formal' element of the sin. This rebellion against God meant also the loss of an ordering of the will under God. The loss of the harmony between body and spirit is referred to as the material element of the sinful state into which Adam had entered. The disharmony of body and spirit was not then called sin in a formal sense, but a punishment for the formal sinfulness, the rebellion against God. This distinction, finding support in the Thomistic division between *forma* and *materia*, was strongly held to by Stapleton.

*Original sin and concupiscentia*²⁴

We need to keep these fundamental ideas in mind when, with reference to his discussion of Paul's Epistles, Stapleton, in his *Antidota*, addresses several elements of the doctrine of original sin. In Rom 5:12, 18–19, Stapleton read amongst other things: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world and by sin death: and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned... Therefore, as by the offence of one, unto all men to condemnation: so also by the justice of one, unto all men to justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners: so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just." Stapleton emphasizes here that Adam's sin has affected all humankind. In his explanation he appealed to the aforementioned distinction between *forma* en *materia*.²⁵ The original sin was not sin in the

¹⁹ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, f. 12v: "... contra venenatos hodie haereticorum sensus, quibus literas Apostolicas, Paulinas maxime, et hanc potissimum ad Romanos epistolam, foede contaminant, Antidota meditare."

²⁰ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, f. 16v–7r.

²¹ Michael Seybold, *Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Thomas Stapleton*, Konfessionskundliche und kontroversienhistorische Studien 21 (Paderborn, 1967).

²² Seybold, *Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Thomas Stapleton*, pp. 55–60.

²³ Seybold, *Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Thomas Stapleton*, pp. 61–63.

²⁴ Seybold, *Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Thomas Stapleton*, pp. 64–73.

²⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Ia–IIae, q. 75–84, Editio Leonina 7 (Rome, 1882), pp. 47–109; *Quaestiones disputatae de malo* q. 4–5, Editio Leonina 23 (Rome, 1982), pp. 103–143.

sense that Adams formal act, his rebellion against God and his personal will to sin, was also imputed to humankind of later times. But Adam's original decision to sin was constitutive for human nature. It was this sinful constitution that Adam's whole posterity had inherited. This does involve a formal inclination to sinfulness (it's true), as with Adam, but on the material level, it involves an inherent disharmony between body and soul, as the result of Adam's original choice.²⁶ Stapleton assumed that all the "heretics" were of this opinion.²⁷

Stapleton did correct Theodorus Beza when he, in his *Annotationes maiores* (first printed in 1594), had oversimplified in writing that Adam had passed on his sin to posterity.²⁸ Instead of doing so Stapleton referred to Augustine, who had suggested more specifically, that Adam had passed on the corruption and dark decay that sin brings forth.²⁹ Without giving an explicit reference, he was probably alluding to certain passages from the *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum*, which played an important role in his entire commentary of this passage,³⁰ and possibly also to *Contra Iulianum*.³¹

²⁶ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 302–303: "Pecaverunt autem contrahendo peccatum, et sic contrahendo, ut ipsi peccatores constituerentur. Quare est in singulis proprium peccatum originale, et singuli singulas maculas et culpas habent originales... non quia peccatum quod perpetravit Adam, illorum proprie est, aut illis imputatur, sed quia peccatum Adae illorum originaliter est, et ab Adam originem accipit ac causam, quod ab illo nascentes contrahunt... Uterque ut causa efficiens atque originalis pontifex, non ut causa formalis. Inobedientia Adae non est nostra formaliter, ut ille actus inobedientiae Adami nobis imputetur, nosque propterea solum inobedientes dicamur quia ille non obedivit, nulla alia in nobis culpae macula inhaerente..."

²⁷ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 303: "... quod totum haereticum latetur."

²⁸ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos* p. 301: "Ficticia Bezae antichristi penitus vana et impia ostenditur, ex ea parte qua dicit, Christum et Adamum in eo similes esse, quod uterque, quod suum est, cum suis communicat. Non enim Adamus suum peccatum ab eo propagatis communicat, ut Beza exponit..." For quotations we refer to the following edition: Theodorus Beza, *Joan. Christi Domini. Nostrum Testamentum, sive Novum Foedus... quodam Theod. Bezae Annotationes... Accessit etiam Joachimi Camerarii in Novum Foedus Commentarius/-*, Cantabrigiae: Ex Officina Rogeri Danielis 1642, [8] f. 766 p. [12] f. 125 p. [12f.] in -f°, p. 404A l. 66–67.

²⁹ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 301–302: "... sed [Adamus communicat] suam ex peccato corruptionem et occultam tabe, ut D. Augustinus docuit."

³⁰ Augustinus, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* I 9, 10, eds. Carolus F. Urba and Iosephus Zycha, CSEL 60 (Vienna, 1913), p. 11 l. 19.

³¹ Augustinus, *Contra Iulianum* V, 15, 54, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, PL 44 (Paris, 1845), col. 814 l. 37–39.

In indicating the inherent disharmony between body and soul, constituting the 'material' aspect of original sin, Stapleton referred to the notion of *concupiscentia carnis*. He applied the *concupiscentia carnis* in particular to the "caro corrupta", the unbridled, disordered lusts that troubled the carnal body, as for example in his *Antidota* on Rom 6:12: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, so as to obey the lusts thereof."³²

In his *Antidota* on Rom 7:7: "For I had not known concupiscentia, if the law did not say: Thou shalt not covet", Stapleton dwelt at great length on the *concupiscentia* forbidden by God's law, and does this with the "modern haeretic" in mind.³³ Stapleton seems to assume here that the notion of *concupiscentia* could not be reduced to *concupiscentia carnalis*. He distinguished in the first place the "concupiscentia", which was said to be a completely natural capacity to both good and evil, and with which the very first human, still in state of innocence, was said to be endowed. In the second place he spoke of *concupiscentia carnis* in a limited sense, to which he assigns the appropriate term "libido" (although he notes all the same, with reference to Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, that this is a general term, applicable to every desire).³⁴ Thirdly, more essentially, he referred to the sensuality or "sensualitas", which is defined by Augustine in his *De Trinitate* as "the senses of the body... excluded from the reason".³⁵ This should be understood as the rebellion and depravity of the lower powers in man that affected mankind as a result of original sin, which is also called the "lex membrorum", for it is considered a punishment for original sin, and also bringing with it a continual inclination towards sensual desire.³⁶ In his definition, Stapleton paraphrased Thomas of Aquino explicitly.³⁷ Here once again,

³² Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 318.

³³ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 360–362.

³⁴ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XIV, 15, eds. Bernardus Dombart and Alphonse Kalb, CCSL 48 (Turnhout, 1955), pp. 437 l. 31–438 l. 82.

³⁵ Augustinus, *De Trinitate* XII, xii, eds. William J. Mountain and Frans Glorie, CCSL 50 (Turnhout, 1968), p. 371 l. 8–9. Comp. Augustine, *On the Trinity* 12.12, ed. Gareth B. Matthews and trans. Stephen McKenna, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, MA, 2002), p. 95.

³⁶ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 361: "... quae totam inferiorum virum rebellionem et depravationem ex peccato originali invectam complectitur, quae vocatur infra *lex membrorum*, quia est impetus quidam sensualitatis, in brutis quidem dominantis, ideoque simpliciter lex, in homine originali iustitia destituito poenaliter cul[un] consequens..."

³⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Ia-IIae q. 91 ar. 6, Editio Leonina 7, pp. 157–158.

Stapleton seems to assume that the passions of the sin are principally active in the human body. This became evident from additional cross-references to Paul: "corpus peccat" (Rom 6:6), "lex membrorum" and "lex peccati" (Rom 7:23), "vetus homo... qui corrumpitur secundum desideria erroris" (Eph 4:22), "caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum spiritus" (Gal 5:7). Evidently, Stapleton also quoted Augustine to so lend support to Paul. In his *De civitate Dei*, Augustine had also called this fundamental corruption and sensuality "the root of error and perverse love, from which come forth innumerable crimes".³⁸ And in Letter 167—Letter 29, in Stapleton's count—which dealt with the meaning of the Epistle of James and was directed at Jerome, the Church Father had spoken of "fomes peccati" or "fuel of sin".³⁹ Stapleton assumed that Augustine, in these passages, was also referring to the evil fruits of *concupiscentia*, which, and this is important, come forth through the consent of (higher) reason ("per consensum superioris rationis").⁴⁰ From this, a fourth meaning needed however also to be distinguished, that of the habitual, inherent, *concupiscentia*, in the sense of the very primary inclinations and disordered desires ("primi motus et desideria prava"), before it was possible to speak in any sense of consent. To clarify this distinction Stapleton quoted Jas 1:14–15: "every man is tempted by his own concupiscentia... Then, when concupiscentia hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. But sin, when it is completed, begetteth death", and—without an explicit quotation—he referred to Augustine's *Contra Iulianum*.⁴¹

An important aspect in the *Antidota* on Rom 7:7 was to determine which of the aforementioned forms of *concupiscentia* were forbidden by God's Law of God, i.e. the Decalogue.⁴² This did not concern the habitual, inherent, *concupiscentia*, that is the very primary inclinations and disordered desires, which had come to every human being through original sin, but rather the actual deed, to which man, by means of his

free will ("actus et consensus interior"), had consented. It was therefore the deliberate consent of the will that made *concupiscentia* an actual sin. This implied that in those who were re-born, i.e. those who had been baptised, *concupiscentia* as such could no longer be called sin, in as far as there was no subsequent consent.⁴³ In the light of the ongoing theological controversy, Stapleton put a strong emphasis on this point: Protestants did consider these primary impulses to be sin, even if there was no consent. Stapleton also asked himself what this meant for heathens who were not baptised. Referring to Augustine's *Contra Iulianum*,⁴⁴ he suggested that the disordered desires of the heathens were "to some extent sin" ("quodammodo peccata"), since ultimately all mankind is one with Adam, through whom sin has come to them. Or, in other words: the involuntary desires which disturbed mankind, were even in the case of the heathens not "in the actual sense of the word" ("proprie") sin, because the free consent of the will was absent. In other words: *concupiscentia* was guilty in the heathens who were not baptised, in the sense that it was imputed as sin, rather than actually being sin ("in peccatum potius imputetur quam proprie peccatum sit").⁴⁵

Stapleton referred to Calvin's commentary on the relevant verse "Thou shalt not cover"—first published in 1540 and revised in later versions—and noted that he had interpreted Augustine as saying that God "in this last commandment demands from us such integrity that no corrupt lust should move us to evil, however much we may withhold our consent." For Stapleton this remark was totally absurd, and in complete contradiction with the previously cited word of James. The reason that Calvin thought this was because "in the preceding commandments Moses had condemned all the corrupt affections which our hearts conceive, the yearnings by which we are tempted."⁴⁶ On the basis of the above Stapleton took note of Calvin's categorizing the primary impulses of *concupiscentia* as already meriting judgement and

³⁸ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XXII, 22, eds. Dombart and Kalb, CCSL 48, p. 842 l. 20–21.

³⁹ Augustine, *Ep. 167. De Sententia Iacobi apostoli*, III 10, ed. Alois Goldbacher, CSEL 44 (Vienna, 1904), p. 597 l. 8.

⁴⁰ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 361: "Sed concupiscentia et sensualitas... pro eius malis fructibus accipitur, non quidem omnibus, sed quos per consensum superioris rationis parit..."

⁴¹ In the margin of the book there is a reference made to Lib. 6 c. 8, but the subject in question fits in more with Lib. 6 c. 9 (Augustinus, *Contra Iulianum* VI, 9, ed. Migre, PL 44, cols. 836–838).

⁴² Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 362–363.

⁴³ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 362: "Hanc enim per se concupiscentiam seu sensualitatem, cuiusque primos motus et desideria prava decalogus per modum obligationis non prohibet, sed actum et consensum interiorem..."

⁴⁴ Augustine, *Contra Iulianum* VI, 5, 12, ed. Migre, PL 44, col. 829 l. 27–45.

⁴⁵ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 362.

⁴⁶ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 363, with a quotation from [John Calvin,] *Iohannis Calvinii commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. Thomas H.L. Parker, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 22 (Leiden, 1981), p. 142 l. 101–106; comp. Jean Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, trans. Ross Mackenzie, eds. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, Calvin's Commentaries (1960; repr. Grand Rapids, MI, 1980), pp. 142–143.

in this way as sin, without there having been any consent. This position was at complete odds with the doctrinal tradition of the Catholic Church, which he summarized concisely at the end of his discussion.⁴⁷ The fact that Calvin had introduced a further distinction between the primary impulses on the one hand and consent to these on the other, was inconsequent, as this seemed to have no real significance for the "impostor".⁴⁸

In his *Antidota* to Rom 7:13 "But sin, that it may appear sin, by that which is good, wrought death in me: that sin, by the commandment, might become sinful above measure",⁴⁹ Stapleton examined this above mentioned theme further and was obliged all the same to conclude that Paul repeatedly made use of the word "sin" ("peccatum") in reference to *concupiscentia*. This was why, he argued, the Protestants ("haeretici") obstinately maintained that *concupiscentia* was also sin in the actual meaning of the term, in those who had been re-born, and this despite the fact that there was no question of free consent. In their opinion, mankind, even the baptised, were always in a position of sin before God. But, however sinful mankind was in himself, he was still covered by the screen of grace ("umbraculum gratiae tegatur"), and sin was not imputed to him ("non imputetur"). In order to answer the Protestants, Stapleton quoted once more from Augustine, to whom the heretics were also keen to refer. The Church Father held the key by which Paul's indication of *concupiscentia* as sin could be interpreted in the right way: *concupiscentia* did not mean sin in the one re-born in the true meaning of the word ("veri nominis peccatum non est"), but could be called so "because it came forth from sin and moved to sin" ("quia ex peccato facta est...vel quia ad peccatum movet").⁵⁰ It is perhaps of interest to note that Stapleton cited several isolated phrases from Augustine's *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* in this regard.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 366: "...ipsa prava desideria absque consensu nulla prorsus peccata sunt, quae reum hominem teneant, sed vitia naturae corruptae, consensus autem adiectus veri nominis peccatum facit..."

⁴⁸ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 365-366, with a quotation from Calvin, *Commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. Parker, p. 142 l. 12-17.

⁴⁹ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 377.

⁵⁰ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 382.

⁵¹ Augustinus, *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* I, 13, 26-27, eds. Carolus F. Urba and Iosephus Zycha, CSEL 60 (Vienna, 1913), p. 445 l. 20-21, and p. 446 l. 5-6.

In his *Antidota*, on the notorious passage from Rom 7:17-18: "Now then it is no more I that do it: but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that there dwelleth not in me, that is to say, in my flesh, that which is good. For to will is present with me: but to accomplish that which is good, I find not", Stapleton repeats that it is in the flesh that the seat of sin is to be found, to which the blame for the evil deed must be attributed, that is doing (desiring) what one does not want. The "subject", which continues to lust in the reborn person, is therefore the flesh.⁵² It becomes very clear in this passage however, that the Louvain theologian did see the Pauline *σάρξ* in a broader way. "Caro" could not only be applied to the previously mentioned lower and fleshly desires, which were considered incompatible with the mind and higher reason. "Caro" could also mean the carnal and disordered desires within the mind and higher reason itself, which was called "the will" or, even more precisely, "the consent of the will" ("consensus voluntatis").⁵³ The will was to be found, as it were, between the fleshly part (the "pars inferior") and the spiritual part (the "pars superior") of man. Stapleton meant that the will could give in to fleshly desires, but was in no way predetermined to do so.

It was for this reason that Stapleton reacted against Calvin who situated the "seat of the flesh" ("sedes carnis") in the mind and the will ("in ipsa mente ac voluntate") of mankind, even with those who had been regenerated, so that while they partially consented to God's Law, they also shrunk from it, were partially spirit but also partially flesh. Calvin concluded subsequently that there was no single law that could be adhered to by any regenerate person, and no single good work or any observance of the law that could be reckoned as righteous before God. Every act of mankind, even of the regenerate, was steeped in evil. As support Stapleton included a long quotation from Calvin's commentary on Rom 7.⁵⁴

⁵² Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 394.

⁵³ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 394-395: "Caro enim vel ipsum inferiorem et carnalem appetitum, qui menti et superiori rationi repugnat, vel carnalem aliquem et inordinatum affectum in ipsa mente ac superiori ratione, quam voluntatem seu voluntatis consensum dicimus (qui affectus pravus ac vitiosus recto ac spirituali oppositus) significare posse videtur..."

⁵⁴ Calvin, *Commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. Parker, p. 150 l. 58-61, 83-85, and p. 151 l. 1-8.

To refute Calvin, Stapleton introduced a long quotation from Augustine's *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*,⁵⁵ it was at this point that he even called Augustine Paul's "senior interpreter". From this Stapleton concluded that it is neither the "anima" nor the "spiritus" which makes mankind consent to sin or commit an evil deed, for these belong to the domain of grace (which immediately opens up the possibility for performing truly good acts). It is the fleshly part that drives mankind to sin. It is on the basis of the distinction introduced here by Paul, between "anima" and "voluntas animae" on the one hand, and "caro" on the other hand, that the Apostle can rightly say, in Stapleton's opinion: "Now then it is no more I that do it: but sin that dwelleth in me." Now if I do that which I will not, it is no more I that do it: but sin that dwelleth in me.⁵⁶ The "I" obviously referred to man's "pars superior", the "anima" and the "voluntas animae", "sin" referred rather to the "fuel of sin" ("fomes peccati") which was to be found in the flesh. And once again a supporting quotation was given from Augustine's oeuvre, this time from *sermo* 154.⁵⁷

Following on from the above, Stapleton read in Rom 7:22-23: "For I am delighted with the law of God, according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind and captivating me in the law of sin that is in my members." In explanation of these verses, Stapleton immediately called upon Augustine's *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*⁵⁸ and his *De nuptiis et concupiscentiis*,⁵⁹ from which he quoted in detail. On the basis of Paul, as interpreted by Augustine, what was essential according to Stapleton was to take delight in the law of God according to the interior self, and not consent to concupiscence according to the law of sin. The captiv-

ity of the sin did not have a hold on the whole person, but only on his "flesh". The inner man, the "lex mentis", was able to choose what was good, and not, therefore, consent to *concupiscentia*. In opposition to Calvin, Stapleton emphasised that a regenerated Christian was not just a captive of *concupiscentia*, and that living according to the Spirit was certainly, through God's grace, possible.⁶⁰

In short, Stapleton opposed the Protestant belief that *concupiscentia* or the "sensuality" and their primary inclinations remained sin, even in the regenerate, and were in themselves meriting damnation. Justification meant from this perspective, that God no longer imputed this sin to those baptised in Christ ("non imputatur"). Stapleton summarised this fundamental Protestant view again at the beginning of his discussion of Rom 8:1. In contrast he put forward the Catholic idea that according to Paul *concupiscentia* in the baptised was in itself not sin that would lead to damnation, as long as one did not consent to the "lex peccati" that was at work in the flesh.⁶¹

Quid potest homo lapsus?

Thomas Stapleton sought to give an answer to the question: "Of what is fallen man still capable?" He assumed in the first place that man's natural capacities, such as mind and will, although diminished through original sin, had not lost all potential. The mind was still oriented towards truth and the will toward good. Subsequently, even in his fallen state, man had the capacity to choose between good and evil. Stapleton was therefore critical of Theodorus Beza, whom he called in this context the most vicious corruptor of Paul ("Pauli corruptor pessimus"),

⁵⁵ Augustinus, *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* I, 10, 18, eds. Urba and Zycha, CSEL 60, p. 440 l. 14-22.

⁵⁶ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 399-400: "...Quare Apostolus interiecta distinctione, de se et de carne sua, iterum concludit: Si quod vobis, supple voluntate animae et delibetata; illud facio, id est, concupisco; iam non ego operor illud, sed quod habitat in me peccatum, id est, nulla pars animae meae, nulla voluntas mea hoc operatur, sed fomes ille peccati in carne mea habitans."

⁵⁷ Augustinus, *Sermo* civ, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, PL 38 (Paris, 1841), col. 838 l. 27-29.

⁵⁸ Augustinus, *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* I, 10, 19-20, eds. Urba and Zycha, CSEL 60, pp. 441 l. 10-442 l. 6.

⁵⁹ Augustinus, *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I, 30, 33-34; 31, 35, eds. Carolus F. Urba and Iosephus Zycha, CSEL 42 (Vienna, 1902), pp. 245 l. 8-246 l. 11.

⁶⁰ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 417-418: "Talem hic seipsum et in sua persona iustos omnes in Christo regeneratos describit Apostolus, qui ab ipsa etiam concupiscentia abhorrent, qui, iuxta quod lex dicit, vellent omnino non concupiscere, et legi veritati ipsum concupiscere condelectantur secundum intentionem hominem, Dei videlicet gratia renovatum. Sic mentem habent liberam ab omni consensione in malum, licet carnem gerant captivam ad concupiscendum id quod malum est."

⁶¹ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 427: "Sustinet hodie perniciter haeretici, ipsam concupiscentiam seu sensualitatem, eiusque primos motus, esse in renatis vere peccata damnatione digna, sed non imputari illis, quia in Christo sunt, hoc est, quia baptizati sunt. Atqui Apostolus damnationem hoc loco removel non simpliciter ab iis qui in Christo sunt, sed qui sic in Christo sunt, ut non secundum carnem ambulant, id est, qui sensualitatem aut legem peccati in carne consentiendo non sequuntur." With a quotation from Augustinus, *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* I, 10, 21, eds. Urba and Zycha, CSEL 60, p. 442 l. 15-16.

since he had denied the *liberum arbitrium* and had portrayed mankind as being in complete slavery to sin. In his annotations⁶² on Rom 6:20 he had written: "For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness" (in the sense of "unable to accomplish something with regard to one's own justification"). Since Beza, in his negation of the *liberum arbitrium*, had appealed to Augustine, and in particular to his anti-Pelagian writings, Stapleton responded with multiple references to Augustine. He quoted extensively from *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* in this context, in which the Church Father had said, amongst other things, that it is far from being true that free choice perished in the sinner⁶³ and also from Letter 215, the famous letter to Valentine and his brethren, in which Augustine had written that: "the Catholic faith neither denies free will whether for a bad life or a good one, nor allows it so much effect that it can do anything without the grace of God."⁶⁴ Stapleton recognized, at the same time, that if the *liberum arbitrium* was to choose to do a good deed, which was to lead moreover to salvation, then God's grace was imperative. In addition to this, Stapleton referred to multiple other writings such as *De correptione et gratia*, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali* and *De gratia et libero arbitrio* to prove his point.⁶⁵

Calvin was also completely mistaken in his assumption of man's total depravity, and incapacity to do anything but sin. He had also misunderstood Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings and his *necessitas peccandi*. Calvin's perspective on this point comes to the fore amongst other places in his commentary on Rom 10:5-8: "Paul now compares the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of works in order to make it clear how greatly they are at variance. The difference which exists between opposites is seen more clearly by a comparison between

⁶² Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 339: "Eritis peccati iugo prorsus mancipati. Hoc autem quum ita se habeat, minor qua tandem fronte audeant sophisticæ suum liberum arbitrium tueri, liberum sane iustitiæ, servum autem peccati, ut illis toties exprobat Augustinus." This is a quotation from: Beza, *Jesu Christi Domini Nostri Novum Testamentum, see Novum Fœdus...*, p. 412B l. 20-25.

⁶³ Augustine, *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* I, 2, 5, cds. Urba and Zycha, CSEL 60, p. 426 l. 4-18. Comp. Augustine, *Answer to the Pelagians, II: Marriage and Deeds, Answer to the Two Letters of the Pelagians, Answer to Julian*, trans. Roland J. Teske, ed. John E. Roelle, The Works of Saint Augustine, A translation for the 21st Century, I/24 (New York, 1998), p. 118.

⁶⁴ Augustine, *Ep. 215. Ad Valentium et fratres*, 4, ed. Alois Goldbacher, CSEL 57 (Vienna, 1911), pp. 390 l. 21-391 l. 3. Comp. Augustine, *Letters, Volume 5 (204-270)*, trans. Wilfrid Parsons, The Fathers of the Church, A New Translation 32 (1956; repr. Washington, D.C., 1977), p. 65.

⁶⁵ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 339-341.

them."⁶⁶ This black and white reasoning was foreign to Stapleton. In his *antidota* to Calvin's commentary he quoted Augustine's *De spiritu et littera*⁶⁷ and his *Expositio epistolae ad Galatas*, beginning with the words: "Thus it is one thing not to be justified, another not to be justified before God."⁶⁸ In his interpretation of Augustine's comment, he proposed that the righteousness which was the result of obedience to the Law ("iustitia ex lege"), which man can achieve assisted by his natural capacities, could not be called sheer unrighteousness ("non est mera iniustitia") and that this was not the absolute opposite of justification through faith ("ex fide iustitia"), in the way that evil is the opposite of good. The "iustitia ex lege" however differed from, and was imperfect and insufficient for justification in the eyes of God. ("iustificationem coram Deo").⁶⁹ For this, grace and faith were essential.

In summary, in answer to the question of what fallen man is still capable, the question first needed to be asked: "Quid potest homo lapsus in ordine ad vitam moralem?" To systematize Stapleton's answer to this, we refer to the four elements which M. Seybold recognizes in the Louvain theologian's perspective.⁷⁰ Stapleton assumed in the first place that the nature of fallen man has been damaged by original sin, but still retained the ability to choose good, or—expressed negatively—to not always sin. Mankind was not doomed, always and in every way, to rebel against God. Consequently, it was clear that this good was actually good, since it was oriented towards the ultimate goal, ("finis ultimus"), God. The infallaparian man could not, in his own natural powers, produce a perfect and undivided orientation toward the ultimate goal, God, subject to *concupiscentia* as he was. To love God above all things ("amor Dei super omnia") was ultimately not possible without the support of grace, offered to man in Jesus Christ. As far as his supernatural salvation was concerned, fallen man could do nothing, thereby providing an adequate answer to the second question: "Quid potest homo lapsus in ordine ad vitam supernaturalem?"

⁶⁶ Calvin, *Commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. Parker, p. 224 l. 92-94; comp. Calvin, *The Epistle of Paul The Apostle to the Romans*, trans. Mackenzie, p. 222.

⁶⁷ Augustine, *De spiritu et littera* 29, 50, cds. Carolus F. Urba and Iosephus Zycha, CSEL 60 (Vienna, 1913), p. 206 l. 3-12.

⁶⁸ Augustine, *Expositio ad Galatas* 21, ed. Ioannes Divjak, CSEL 84 (Vienna, 1971), p. 81 l. 6-12. Comp. Augustine's Commentary on Galatians 21 (11), ed. Eric Plummer, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, 2003), pp. 158-159.

⁶⁹ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, pp. 631-632.

⁷⁰ Comp. Seybold, *Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Stapleton*, pp. 78-85.

Conclusion

What can be concluded about Stapleton's reception of Paul, on the basis of a study of both some key texts taken from the Apostle's Epistle to the Romans and the author's preface to this commentary? Stapleton considered Paul as the most learned among the evangelists and the apostles, immersed in divine wisdom and inflamed by godly love, but writing on difficult issues in a sometimes obscure style. The topics of grace and free will Paul is dealing with in his Epistle to the Romans, have even been untouched by the other canonical writers.⁷¹ Both the Fathers of the Church, the scholastic theologians and the contemporary writers have immensely struggled with the theological issues under discussion. Protestants from their part have distorted the meaning of Paul's words. Luther, "the father of contemporary apostasy",⁷² and other heretics in his track, have constructed, on the basis of Romans, the doctrine of the justification on the sole basis of faith, and made it the hermeneutical key for the understanding of the whole Gospel. Therefore Paul's Epistles had to be studied by sincere theologians in order to formulate the Catholic answer to the main debated theological questions of the era. In line with his conferees, Stapleton considered it his first duty to interpret Paul's Epistles in accordance with the "regula fidei" as worded by the Fathers of the Church ("veteres") and the scholastic theologians ("recentiores").⁷³ Secondly, as a true controversial theologian, he aspired to offer a strong antidote to Calvin, Beza and Whitaker—Stapleton's regular teaser—who made Paul's Epistles the basis of their erroneous views with regard to the fall of Adam and its consequences for his posterity. This approach was, as argued Stapleton, his very own

⁷¹ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, f. 14v-5r: "Sed in una hac ad Romanos epistula veluti totum effundens spiritum suum, multis nominibus singulariter difficilis est. Quia multas movet quaestiones, easdemque difficultes, quia utitur phrasibus confusis et minus explicatis, concise loquendo, et praeter vulgarem morem, quia disputationes tractat veluti inustatas, de quibus in Evangelio vel caeteris Apostolis parum aut nihil invenias..."

⁷² Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, f. 13r.

⁷³ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, f. 13v-7r: "...Possent hic praeter veteres et intermedios huius epistolae doctissimos interpretes (...) recentiores, nostraeque aetatis interpretes bono numero recensere... Primum, ut divini Apostoli germanam ac genuinam disputationem, sensum verum, purum, et orthodoxum, iuxta veterum et orthodoxorum Patrum iudicium, iuxta analogiam et regulam fidei Christianae Catholicae, demique iuxta ipsius litterae Apostolicae planum et perspicuum contextum, retinere, tradere, explicare..."

contribution to the debate about Paul's book.⁷⁴ It goes without saying that Stapleton considered the Epistle to the Romans (and to the Corinthians) as food for learned theologians and not for simple laypeople. Therefore his commentaries were part of his *Antidota*, and not of his *Pronphutaria*, the latter intended to provide his fellow clergymen with a practical pastoral aid, to help them prepare their sermons about the Lord's exemplary words and deeds as included in the Gospels.

On the basis of the above discussed passages in Romans, we can deduce Stapleton's formulation of the Catholic answer to the debated questions of that era. All descendants of Adam are born burdened with guilt, as a consequence of Adam's sin, since all humanity share the same human nature. Formally considered, the inherited guilt consists in turning away from God, and therefore in the rebellion of man in relation to God. On the material level, original sin expresses itself in inner disharmony within the human person. This is what is meant by *concupiscentia*, which is at work in man's fleshly nature. Stapleton shared this conviction with his theological opponents. He was explicit in his resistance however, of the Reformed thesis that *concupiscentia* and the related primary inclinations remained as sin, even in the baptised, inevitably leading to damnation. This also implied that every act of a human person was steeped in evil and could in no way contribute to his or her justification. Justification meant that God did not impute the sin to the baptised. Stapleton opposed this with the Catholic view: *concupiscentia* was for the baptised only a sin, in the strict meaning of the word, when he or she consented with the will. Stapleton viewed man as retaining his natural capacities, such as the will and reason, even if these had been damaged. Mankind was therefore capable, through a faithful fulfilment of the law, of morally good actions, even if the grace of God and faith were imperative for justification.

By means of literal quotations, free allusions and formal references to Augustine, and in particular to his anti-Pelagian writings, Stapleton sought to substantiate his interpretation of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Augustine was of-course also a preferred Protestant reference. Although Stapleton refers to no other Church Father in the passages we have studied, his interpretation of Augustine is moderate, so that he keeps

⁷⁴ Stapleton, *Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos*, f. 17r ⁹Alter, et huic instituto proprius, ut fraudulentis et impurissimis haereticorum corruptis occurrerem..."

at a distance from the in the meantime condemned Baianism. There is no doubt that this is related to his wanting to remain true to Thomas Aquinas, who was accused by the Reformers of having distorted the faith. Stapleton's intention is to demonstrate that Augustine, the Church Father, and Thomas, the scholastic master, do not contradict each other but rather promote the same faith of the Church, as it was formulated in a sublime but often difficult way by Paul, the Apostle.⁷⁵

PAUL AND SPANISH EVANGELICALISM

⁷⁵ Comp. Seybold, *Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Stapleton*, p. 90.