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The Doctrine of Justification and the Rise of Pluralism in the Post-Tridentine Catholic Church

Introduction: Trent and Post-Tridentine Pluralism Regarding Grace, Free Will and Predestination

Soon after beginning deliberations in the winter of 1545–1546, the Council of Trent agreed to give priority to those issues that were immediately at stake in the controversy with the Protestants, more specifically the question of Scripture and tradition (especially dealt with in Session 4) and the question of original sin and justification (Sessions 5 and 6). It may be helpful first to recapitulate the main lines of the Council's ideas on these matters. On original sin, the Council argued that, due to the Fall, Adam lost both his sanctity and the justice "in which he was constituted" ("*in qua constitutus fuerat*"). As a consequence, he was subject to the concupiscence of the flesh, bodily corruption and death. Adam's sin and its consequences were transmitted by sexual propagation from one generation to the next, affecting all members of the human race, in their body and soul (cf. O'Malley: 2013, 103). Man in the state of original sin, strictly speaking, cannot do a single work on his own to earn salvation, although, – and this is important –, *de iure* he is still able to act well. After the Fall, man's capacities are weakened and sapped of their strength, but are in no way annihilated. Regarding the process of justification, the Council fathers emphasized the primacy of grace in all stages. In baptism, man receives the grace of God, through the merits of Christ, by which his sins are forgiven, both original sin and personal sins, and his soul is regenerated so that there is nothing left in the reborn that God would detest. The Council reconfirmed the theological idea of the *gratia inhaerens*, which implies that God's "grace and charity that is poured forth into men's hearts by the Holy Spirit", changes, from within, the soul of the individual for the better ("*renovatio interioris hominis*"). Justification, in other words, is not simply imputed to the person, a clear statement not only in the light of the controversy with the Lu-

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therans, but also in the light of future debates among Catholic theologians (cf. O'Malley: 2013, 115). However, the Council fathers also declared that man has to consent freely to the "movement of grace", which is expressed in his doing good works, earning him further merits with a view to eternal salvation. The Council had to admit that concupiscence remains in the reborn, but against the Lutherans it emphasized that it is not a sin in the true and proper sense of the word, but rather the consequence of sin and an inclination to actual sin. It only becomes an actual sin when man gives in to the allurements of sin with the free consent of his will. Therefore, the Council stressed that man's struggling against sin and his willing and performing the good that God wishes, can only happen under the stimulus from, and with the help of, God's grace. On predestination the Council was short, warning against a rash presumption of being among the predestined (Tanner/Alberigo: 1990, 2.671–681; O'Malley: 2013, 102–116; also Leppin: 2013, 167–183; McGrath: 1998^2, 255–273; Duffy: 1993, 221–260; Lehmann: 1989, 368–372).

The decree on justification, which was the result of seven months of intensive debate, draft documents and reworked texts, has been praised for its balanced content and measured language by many, including John O'Malley in his 2013 book on the Council of Trent (115 and especially 253–255). However, the decree was unable to bring forth the desired reconciliation with the Protestants – not a single decree was able to do that – but it was also at the basis of heated debates among Catholic theologians of various schools and religious orders, something that O'Malley also recognized. Within a few years after the promulgation of the justification decree, the topics of grace, free will and predestination proved to be the most important bone of contention between the diverse theological schools in post-Tridentine Catholicism. What in an optimistic view may be characterized as theological pluralism, was at times a harsh controversy, the most important episodes of which we will now recall to the mind. We will first focus upon the situation in Louvain, where the positions of Michael Baius caused unrest as early as the 1550s and 1560s. The conflict eventually affected a large part of the Catholic theological world and was acerbated when the Jesuit Leonard Lessius voiced opposing views. Similar positions taken by the Spanish Jesuit Luis de Molina caused a bitter controversy with the Dominican Domingo Bañez and a group of Spanish Thomist theologians. Rome's decision to reserve the question to its own discretion did not, however, prevent the so-called 'Jansenist' controversy from breaking out in the first part of the seventeenth century, a controversy that would haunt the Catholic Church in the following decades and even centuries to come.

Baius, Lessius and the Theological Faculties of Louvain and Douai

The Louvain theologian Michel de Bay or Baius (1513–1589) is one of the first, if not the first, figure whose theological standpoints gave rise to major controversies, to the point that Rome was urged to intervene. Baius, from the French-speaking south of the Low Countries, was from 1551 holder-ad-interim and from 1552 titular of the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures at the theological Faculty of Louvain, a position he would occupy for the next 37 years. In this capacity, Baius developed a new line within Louvain theology for which he found an ally in his friend and likeminded colleague John Hessels (1522–1566), as well as an eager audience among several students at the Louvain Faculty. Without dismissing scholastic theology as such, Baius and Hessels aimed at basing theology primarily upon the Bible and the Church fathers, with Augustine taking pride of place, for these were the sole authorities on which the Protestants wanted to base the debates – a method Baius explains in a famous letter he wrote to the Cardinal Lodovico Simonete in 1568 (Baius: 1696, 124–125). Living at the border of Europe's Protestant regions, he considered this theological method to be the most appropriate for entering into a debate with the Calvinists, in the hope of bringing them back into the Catholic fold. Apart from his outspoken opinions on the sources of theology, Baius developed views with regard to the state of man before the Fall, man in his fallen nature, and man under grace, which challenged the norm set by the Council of Trent and which experimented with alternative language and approaches (Quilliet: 2007, 315–318; McGrath: 1998[2], 277–279; also Soen: 2007 and Grossi: 1968).[1]

Baius first argued that God created man with a "*natura integra*", that is an "integer" or "innocent" nature, so that man was perfectly happy, was able to master, by his will, his physical instincts, more specifically the "*concupiscentia carnis*", and, hence, was perfectly able to execute God's commandments. It is important to notice that Baius was convinced that this "integer" or "innocent" nature was by no means the result of an additional supernatural grace, but that man was "*naturaliter*" created to obey God's Law and to receive, as a reward, eternal beatitude (while at the same time recognizing that the Spirit dwells in the just man). Baius deviated manifestly from traditional theological reasoning, but he saw it as a necessary implication of the conviction that the Fall not only caused forfeiture of some additional supernatural grace, but thoroughly affected man's nature itself. And this brings us to Baius' second important theological intuition: man's nature is profoundly corrupted after the Fall with the result that he is incapable of resisting the allurements of the flesh and obeying God's com-

1 Quilliet's book unfortunately lacks a decent apparatus of footnotes, although his account of the *causa Baii* and his representation of Baius' theology is generally accurate.

mandments, viz. doing good works. Disordered concupiscence, which is the main characteristic of original sin, should be considered as an actual sin, even before man's consent, argued Baius. Postlapsarian man, delivered to himself and without the help of grace, cannot do otherwise than sin. The so-called virtues of the pagans are vices and worth only eternal damnation. With his views on the complete corruption of human nature, Baius had come quite close to the teachings of the mainstream reformers, and had distanced himself from the Council of Trent, which had emphasized that man's free will "had been weakened and sapped in its strength, [but] was in no way extinct" (Tanner/Alberigo: 1990, 2.671). There is a third element of Baius' views that we should elaborate on, viz. that fallen nature has been restored to its original integrity through the redemptory work of Christ and the merits that issued from it. By virtue of Christ's merits and through the gift of grace, God makes man just and this justice consists, according to Baius, in man's ability to observe effectively God's commandments, which are meritorious for eternal life. Baius did see a manifest link between justice and charity considered as the integral observance of God's Law. He did not align himself with scholastic theology – reconfirmed at Trent – that considered justification as a *gratia inhaerens* or inherent grace instilled in man and renewing him ontologically from within. He limited himself to considering an "*animi motus*" or "movement of the soul". He nevertheless accepted that this was an intrinsic justification – "*Restauratur quod per peccatum in nobis periit*" (Baius: 1565, 1. I, c. IX) – also taking his distance from the Protestant view which tended to see justification extrinsically as the non-imputation of sins. But for every concrete good act, man needed the help of God's grace: "[…] *in singulis actibus* […] *auxilio Dei indigent*" (Baius: 1563, c. X) (Vanneste: 1994, 123–166; Vanneste: 1977, 327–350; also Quilliet: 2007, 321–324; Schelkens/Gielis: 2007, 436–443).

Baius' ideas led, very soon, to suspicion in theological and ecclesiastical circles in Louvain (and abroad) that he disregarded the scholastic tradition, consecrated at Trent, and came dangerously close to the theological viewpoints of Luther and Calvin. When one of Baius' Franciscan students, namely Antonius Sablonius (Sablon) proved to be 'affected' by his teachings, the Roman instances entrusted Petrus Regis, former Provincial Minister and lecturer, to examine the question. Regis consulted the Louvain theologians as well as their Paris colleagues, and the latter declared in the course of 1560 fourteen propositions ascribed to Baius to be obviously "*haereticae*" or "*falsae*", while also expressing serious doubts regarding four others. Baius opposed the validity and content of the Paris condemnation, and the ensuing controversy led to a deep and years-long division within the Franciscan Order in the (southern part of the) Low Countries (van Eijl: 1958, 227–238 and 273–293).

Baius published in 1563, with the Louvain printer Petrus Zangrius Tiletanus, a collection of short treatises with telling titles, such as *De libero hominis arbitrio*

eiusque potestate, the *De justitia et justificatione*, and *De sacrificio.* The works were published with the approval of the official book censors, who were Louvain colleagues of Baius (including Francis Sonnius, Bishop of 's-Hertogenbosch since 1561). A new series of treatises was published in 1564–1565, containing *De meritis operum*, the *De prima hominis justitia et virtutibus impiorum*, the *De sacramentis in genere contra Calvinum*, and the *De verbis sine quibus non perficitur sacramentum baptismi* (all with the Louvain printer Johannes Bogardus). With the publication of these works, criticism within the Louvain Faculty of Theology grew stronger. Baius' denouncers were led by Josse Ravesteijn 'of Tielt', called Tiletanus (1506–1570), who was a disciple of Ruard Tapper (1487–1559) and was, thus, a representative of the 'old' Louvain school of Augustino-Thomism. Ravesteijn and his like-minded colleagues contacted King Philip II himself, so that Baius' works were subject to examination by the theological faculties of Alcalá and Salamanca, which censured several of his propositions in 1565, especially taken from the second book including *De meritis operum*, *De prima hominis justitia et virtutibus impiorum.* King Philip was, however, quite slow in sending the censure to Louvain. As a reaction, Baius published in 1566 a new edition of his first (non-condemned) works, the *Opuscula omnia*, to which he added new treatises, such as *De peccato originis*, *De charitate*, *De indulgentiis* and *De oratione pro defunctis* (published with Johannes Bogardus). The Spanish universities were again alarmed, and in June 1567 the University of Alcalá issued a condemnation, targeting the treatises included in the *Opuscula omnia.* In the meantime, Ravesteijn and other theologians had, in concertation with the Cardinal-Archbishop of Malines, Granvelle, convinced King Philip II to intervene so that Rome would speak out. Subsequently, Pope Pius V issued a bull entitled *Ex omnibus afflictionibus* (1 October 1567), which condemned 76 or 79 propositions – depending on the edition – taken from the work of Baius, Hessels and others, without naming the authors. The bull was not published, but was sent to Granvelle's vicar general Maximilian Morillon, who discretely presented the document, first to Baius personally and then in the closed college of Louvain doctors. All theologians, including Baius, attested their submission to the papal pronouncement (van Eijl: 1953, 719–776; also Quilliet: 2007, 324–328).

Baius, who understood that his viewpoints were being targeted, wrote in early 1569 a personal letter to the Pope, in which he asked for a re-evaluation of his views. The Pope, however, replied to Baius that he maintained his earlier conclusions and that the propositions included in the bull were condemned. Although Baius was not immediately prepared to align himself by a written submission to the papal pronouncement, the Holy See choose to deal with the case patiently, because any disagreement within the Church would give further arguments to the Protestant adversaries. Only after a few months, and at the instigation of the Duke of Alba, the Governor of the Low Countries, did Baius'

Louvain colleagues manage to convince him to align himself in writing with the Pope's view as expressed in *Ex omnibus afflictionibus*. In any case, the controversy did not harm Baius' career: in 1575, he became dean of the collegial church of Saint-Peter and vice–chancellor of the University of Louvain, which might be regarded as the most important position an academic could obtain (Quilliet: 2007, 328–330).

Meanwhile, Pope Pius' bull of 1567 was subject to divergent interpretations. Depending on where a certain comma was placed in the conclusion of the bull, it could be read either as a full-fledged condemnation or as a soft warning. The discussion about the *comma pianum* caused Pope Gregory XIII to issue a new bull *Provisionis Nostrae* in 1580, which removed any doubt about Pope Pius' bull and the condemnations it contained. During a solemn reunion at the Faculty, Baius recognized that the papal condemnation related effectively to what was included in his writings; he aligned himself with the papal pronouncements, and wrote, at the explicit demand of the envoy of the Pope, the Jesuit Cardinal Francis Toletus, a confession, which has since become notorious in the Catholic Church (van Eijl: 1955, 499–542; Quaghebeur: 2003, 61–79; Quilliet: 2007, 331–333).

One of the most determined adversaries of Baius was Robert Bellarmine, who in that period held lectures in Louvain's Jesuit college, refuting the teachings of Baius.[2] Later in the essay, we will return to Bellarmine's work, but first we will turn to the so-called *Formula doctrinae*, the 'official doctrine' drawn up by the royal professor of scholastic theology Johannes Lensaeus (Jean de Lens [1541–1593]) in 1586, on behalf of the Louvain Faculty of Theology and in reaction to Baius' positions (Steyaert: 1742, 1.193–225). Given the topics at stake in the controversy, the *Formula doctrinae* concentrates on original sin and its consequences, arguing: (1) man's original justice should be considered as a supernatural gift of grace; (2) through the Fall, man forfeited original justice, his natural capacities to do good were weakened but not entirely annihilated; (3) justification should be seen as an interior renovation of man's soul by inherent grace so that man, subsequently, can observe God's precepts. Lensaeus, in particular, invoked the authority of Paul and Augustine, claiming above all to provide a correct interpretation of the Church father, which was one of the main points of contention of the controversy. The *Formula doctrinae* was regarded as an important codification of the 'official' Louvain doctrine in the years to come, and was applauded by the Roman authorities (Roegiers: 2003, 5–6; van Eijl: 1994, 215).

2 "Around the end of 1579, Bellarmine reviewed the manuscripts of his Louvain lectures and selected the passages relating to his refutation of Baius' teachings. These selected texts were then edited as: *Refutatio Baii excerpta ex commentariis P. Bellarmini in Summa Divini Thomae*. It is a work intended to be circulated within the Society of Jesus" (Cai: 2014, 47). *De gratia primi hominis* (1593) was the most important anti-baianist writing that issued from the controversy between Bellarmine and the Louvain professor.

A year later, in 1587, the Louvain Faculty of Theology felt obliged to proceed against an adversary on another flank. The Jesuits, who had become established in Louvain in 1542 at the behest of Ruard Tapper, strove, from 1583, to open up their philosophical and theological courses to all students from the University, with the concomitant ambition of granting academic degrees, as they did at Louvain's French-speaking sister-university in Douai. Apart from the fact that the University felt its monopoly on education threatened, the Faculty also took offense at the theological views that some young Jesuit professors propagated in their Louvain College, views that differed from the *Formula doctrinae.* Possibly at the instigation of Michael Baius himself (van Eijl: 1994, 216; Bernard: 1926, 453), the Faculty issued a censure on 12 September 1587 on 34 propositions which had been defended by the Jesuits Leonard Lessius (1554–1623) – in his famous *Theses theologicae* (1586) – and John Hamelius (1554–1589). The condemnation was followed on 20 February 1588 by another, and even more developed and outspoken censure from the Douai Faculty of Theology, of which William Hessels van Est (Estius [1542–1613]) was the principal author (*Censvræ facultatum:* 1641, 3–40 [censura lovaniensis]), 41–118 [censura duacensis]; Stucco: 2014, 279–283; van Eijl: 1994, 217–223; also Roegiers: 2012, 159–161; Rai: 2016, 89–93, esp. 92; Roegiers: 2003, 6, and Boute: 2010, 268–311). All points of criticism concerned Lessius' daring emphasis on man's cooperation in the economy of salvation, which the Louvain and Douai theologians considered to be a deviation from Augustine's theology and highly suspect of "semi-Pelagianism" (Backus/Goudriaan: 2014, 25–46). The Louvain theologians took offense, for example, at Lessius' view that after the Fall, God gave Adam and his posterity the sufficient means against sin and the aids to pursue eternal life, in entire other words, He gave them suffient help so that they were able to return to Him ("*possint reverti*"). This was one point on which Lessius was very insistent. And although the theologians had to admit that "in a certain sense" ("*aliquot sensu*") one could speak of sufficient aids, since God's benefices would never be absent from this world, so that adults who used them in good way could come to salvation, they emphasized that "in a proper and exact way of speaking" it could not be said that God gives sufficient aids to salvation to all of mankind. In this regard they pointed to God's Law, which was given to the Jewish people, some of whom made a good use of it, but it was absolutely not "sufficient" for the salvation of the Jews and even contributed to their rejection (Assertio II, in *Censvræ facultatum:* 1641, 24–25; expressly on sufficient grace, see also Assertio III, 25–26; VII, 30–31; XVI, 42–43; XVIII, 47–48; XIX, 48–49 etc.).[3] Further: although Lessius suggested that sufficient grace was given to all men, he stressed that grace was only made

3 It must be noted that the Assertio II reported in the Louvain *censura* "Deus post *praevisum* peccatum originale habuit", has another *lectio* in the Douai *censura*, "Deus post *primum* peccatum originale habuit", 82. The latter reading may be the original one.

efficacious when man accepted this graceful offer through a free decision of his own will and the performance of good acts ("*velle*" and "*perficere*" or "*exsequi*"), which implied that man could also refuse God's offer. The Louvain theologians for their part emphasized that "God's grace was intrinsically and from itself efficacious" ("*gratia divina ex se ab intrinseco efficax*") in those people who were predestined to receive its benefits, so that they came quite close to holding the irresistibility of God's grace (e. g. Assertio X, in *Censvræ facultatum:* 1641, 34–36; also Assertio XII, 37–38). According to the Louvain and Douai theologians, God efficaciously foreordained the number of the predestined from all eternity, on the basis of his absolute sovereign will. Their views about a "*predestinatio 'ante' previsa merita*" were a reply to Lessius' suggestion that not everything was established in God's eternal decree, that there was room for man's free will and consequent contingencies, and that God made his predestinatory decrees on the basis of a foreknowledge of man's cooperation with his grace. Lessius' view about a "*predestinatio 'ex' praevisis meritis*" was among the most semi-Pelagian expressions to be found in early modern Catholic theology (Assertio XXX, in *Censvræ facultatum:* 1641, 59; 111–113).[4]

Lessius replied to the censure by the Louvain and Douai theologians by affirming that the 34 propositions were taken out of their original context and distorted in their meaning. To clarify his position, he wrote a *Responsio*, trying to bring his views closer to those of Augustine. He sent this document to Claudio Acquaviva, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, who, in his turn, asked the advice of some prominent theologians of the Order, among whom Robert Bellarmine and Jean Azor (van Eijl: 1994, 224–255). Although Bellarmine held mainstream ideas regarding the relation between sufficient and efficacious grace, he was initially prepared to defend his confrere before the Roman instances. Lessius' sustained acceptance of the view that predestination is ordained on the basis of foreseen merits ("*ex praevisis meritis*"),[5] as well as politics within the Jesuit Order in the wake of the congregations *de auxiliis* (cf. intra), drove Bellarmine to take more distance (Rai: 2016, 99–101). Actually, Bellarmine's position was closer to the Augustinian tradition, and modern scholarship speaks about a 'Bellarmine Augustinism'. In any case, even though Louvain and Douai condemned Lessius'

4 Van Eijl somewhat inaccurately writes about a "*praedestinatio propter praevisa merita*", whereas the Latin reads "*praedestinationem ad gloriam pendere ex operibus praevisis*" (1994, 214).

5 Still in 1610 Lessius maintained, with reference to Augustine, that predestination is "*ex praevisis meritis*" (Lessius: 1610, 258; the reference is to Augustinus, *Div. quaest. Simpl.*, I, q. 2, 4 [CCSL 44], 28).

ideas, other faculties of theology, such as that of Paris, and even some bishops sided with Lessius' positions against those of Baius (Broggio: 2009, 55–56).[6]

Molina and Bañez in Spain

While this controversy raged in the Low Countries at the Universities of Louvain and Douai, another theological controversy arose in Spain where Dominican theologians and Jesuits became engaged in a bitter theological debate on the role of human free will in the economy of salvation. In Salamanca in the years 1582–1584 an "open scholarly engagement" took place between the Dominican Domingo Bañez (1528–1604) and the Jesuits Prudencio de Montemayor (d. 1599) and Luis de Léon (1527–1591). The debate led the Inquisitor Juan de Arrende to proceed against the two Jesuits, and on 3 February 1584, after two years of debate, the Cardinal Gaspar de Quiroga forbade Luis de Léon from teaching, even privately, and deprived Montemayor of his lectureship for seven years.

The controversy seriously escalated in 1588, when the Jesuit Luis de Molina (1535–1600) published his book, commonly called the *Concordia*, whose full title is *De liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, divina praescientia, providentia, praedestinatione et reprobatione Concordia* ["On the Concord of the Free Will with the Gifts of Grace, Divine Foreknowledge, Providence, Predestination and Reprobation"] (e. g. Matava: 2016, 16–36; Broggio: 2009; McGrath: 1998[2], 279–281; Beltran de Heredia: 1968; also Stucco: 2014, 79–140; Quilliet: 2007, 335–352). The book had received approval from the official book censor, the Dominican friar Bartolomeo Ferreira, although other Dominicans, including Domingo Bañez, were already growing concerned with what they considered to be statements of doubtful orthodoxy. According to Molina, God wants all men to be saved and, to that aim, gives the sufficient means, but it is up to man to make these opportunities efficacious through the free consent of his will, a situation which includes the possibility of not accepting God's gracious offer. In effect, according to Molina, "it may happen that, between two persons whom God calls more inwardly with equal aid, one would convert himself, according to the freedom of his own free will, and the other would persist in his infidelity. It also often happens that, with the same aid, one does not convert himself, another does" (Molina: 1588, q. 14, ar. 13, d. 12, p. 52–53). These ideas were similar to those defended by Lessius in Louvain, but they were in clear contraposition with the views of Bañez, as we will see. In any case, for Molina the consent of free will was crucial, a freedom which was believed to consist in a preceding independent judgement of the reason. Molina self-evidently accepted

6 Bishops such as Joannes Hauchin (Malines), Lindanus (Roermond), Pierre Simons (Ypres), defended Lessius' position against Baius.

that man remains incapable of doing works that lead to his salvation, without the aid of God's grace ("*concursus Dei generalis*"; Molina: 1588, q. 14, ar. 13, d. 7, p. 22). God's help, however does not operate 'on' the *secundae causae*, as the Thomists thought the *prœmotio physica* does, but it acts 'with' the *secundae causae*, like a simultaneous help that safeguards man's free action. Molina maintained that "all the effect and all the action, totally called *effect*, are both by God and by our free will, like two parts of one integral cause, of the action as well as of the effect" (Molina: 1588, q. 14, ar. 13, d. 12, p. 61).[7]

One of the main challenges to the Molinist system was the reconciliation of man's freedom with God's foreknowledge, providence, and predestination. To answer this question, Molina developed his famous theory of the three logical levels of knowledge in God. First, there is the knowledge of simple intelligence ("*scientia simplicis intelligentiae*"), through which God knows all possible things. Second, there is the famous middle knowledge ("*scientia media*"), which is in the core of the Molinist system, but which in fact goes back to Pedro de Fonseca (1528–1599), who may have been the first to use that term (Perszyk: 2011, 1, fn. 1). By means of this middle knowledge, God has certain foreknowledge of what any person would do in any given circumstance, 'before' those circumstances are actualized. On this level, there remains at least the logical possibility that the opposite will happen, for this logical possibility guarantees human free will. Third is the knowledge of vision ("*scientia visionis*"), by which God sees everything that He will actually create (Gerace: 2016, 114–115; Cruz Cruz: 2014; Freddoso: 1988, 46–47; Gaskin: 1950, 412–430). The knowledge of simple intelligence and middle knowledge are both prior to any intervention on the part of God's will, but if the first level is addressed to all potencies, including those that will not be actualized, the second has a restricted focus since it is addressed only to those potencies that would be actualized. "Would" but not "will", since the future actualization of those potencies is – at least on this level – not necessary, since there is still the logical possibility of their opposite occuring.[8] This means that, although God has certain foreknowledge of human actions, they are free because antecedent to the intervention of God's will. Therefore, at least logically, a person could do the opposite of what God has foreknown. It also means that

7 Apart from this *gratia cooperans*, Molina also accepts a *gratia praeveniens* as an "*auxilium Dei particulare*" by means of which God helps our will in the accomplishment of its supernatural aims, including the intellectual scrutiny of revealed truths. Both aspects of grace constitute the vocation to the faith, leaving to man the liberty to believe or not to believe (Molina: 1588, q. 14, ar. 13, d. 14, m. 2, p. 66).

8 As Molina further explains in the edition of 1595, where he added the *disputatio* 51, 52, 53, it could happen that one who had been predestined would be condemned and one who had been rejected would be saved (Molina: 1595, q. 14, ar. 13, d. 51, p. 219). Molina's *scientia media* was influenced by John Duns Scotus (cf. amongst others Dekker: 1993 and Anfray: 2014).

God's predestination and providence, being acts of his will, come logically after middle knowledge. These acts of God's will, however, do not depend on God's middle knowledge; in other words, God does not make his decision on the basis of his foreknowledge, lest his will be conditioned by human free will. It is only according to his own sovereign decision ("*pro suo solo beneplacito*") that God predestines people, bestowing on them his divine aids. On the other hand, predestination also comes through the faithful's own merits, considered as an instrumental cause of salvation ("*praedestinatio per propria merita*" and not, as Lessius holds, "*praedestinatio ex praevisis meritis*").[9] Similarly, reprobation is also subject to God's will, a will that permits man to sin if man so wishes (Molina: 1588, q. 23, ar. 3, p. 398). In sum, although it is God who eventually and sovereignly decides whether to save a person or not, a person's works play an evident role, according to Molina. It may seem contradictory, but *scientia media* is the 'theological device' intended to solve this inconsistency.

Molina and his theology were countered by an array of Dominican theologians, the most famous of whom was Domingo Bañez, but which also included confreres such as Thomas de Lémos and Didace Alvarez. Bañez, more so than in earlier theological systems, distinguished between sufficient and efficacious grace, a distinction that gained increased importance in the theological discussions of the time. Though the distinction is present in some form in the writings of Augustine and Thomas, it is not developed there at length. Sufficient grace implies that Christ, through his death and resurrection, and the merits they entail, gave all men the possibility of being saved ("*posse*"). "Nevertheless, God does not always intend his *auxilium* to efficaciously result in a salutary act of free choice", as Robert Matava argues in his recent book on Bañez. Efficacious grace means that God's grace becomes efficient solely in those whose will is brought in line with His will ("*velle*") and who are, subsequently, able to do good works ("*exsequi*" or "*perficere*"). They are those whom God has from all eternity chosen, irrespective of any contribution on their part, to receive the efficacious *auxilium* to long for the good and to be able to do what they long for. This way, they increase merits with a view to salvation. It should however be emphasized that, according to Bañez, and seen from God's point of view, "all grace is 'effi-

9 Molina never uses the expression "*post praevisa merita*", and it cannot be accepted since it means that a person's action influences God's decision: in such a case, only after having seen the person's behavior, would God decide to save or damn her/him, but this is an evident limitation of God's absolute power. On the contrary, God is completely free in his decision, but a person can contribute to her/his salvation through her/his own merits ("*praedestinatio per propria merita*"). See Molina: 1595 q. 53, ar. 13, d. 14, m. 3, p. 262 and Molina: 1588, q. 23, ar. 4 & 5, d. 1, m. 8, p. 448. On God's beneplacit will, see Molina: 1588, q. 23, ar. 4 & 5, d. 1, m. 9, p. 466. Also Cruz Cruz: 2014, 102, n. 42. At p. 100, n. 37 Cruz affirms he based his analysis on Le Bachelet: 1931, I, xi–xiii. Comp. Gerace: 2016, 118–119.

cacious' in the sense that all grace efficaciously brings about the effect God intends it to achieve" and "the efficacy of *auxilium* is not determined by the mode of human response to it" (Matava: 2016, 47; Cai: 2012, 305–318; on Bañez, also McGrath: 1998[2], 281–282; Stucco: 2014, 141–154).

In the Thomist-Bañezian system, the idea of a *præmotio physica* or *prædeterminatio physica* plays a crucial role (Cai: 2012, 296–305; Peroutka: 2010, 107). Its point of departure is the idea that God is the first and universal cause (*causa prima*) and the prime mover (*motor primus*), and that all secondary agents act in virtue of God Himself. This implies that God's grace efficaciously "pre-moves" or "predetermines" the will of those predestined to that aim, so that it is solely prepared to long for the good God wants, and is moved to perform what was longed for. We are of course very close here to the ideas of the irresistibility of God's efficacious grace and the de facto denial of man's free will. However, in this system, perfect freedom does not consist in the "indeterminedness" to do something or to do something contrary, whether good or evil, but it is a freedom perfected by God's efficacious grace so that man is efficaciously moved by God's grace to choose the good that God commands.

The difference between Bañez and Molina (Oakes: 2016, 154–157; Matava: 2016, 116–126; Aichele/Kaufmann: 2014, xxiii–xxviii) can easily be shown thanks to a passage taken from Bañez' *Scholastica Commentaria in primam partem Thomae Aquinatis Summa Theologiae*, first published in 1584. Bañez takes the opposite point of view from Molina regarding the role of free will in the economy of salvation, when he argues: "ignorantly some people are used to saying that with the same aid of God's grace, one converts himself, and another one does not. When talking this way, people easily fall into the error of the Pelagians" (Bañez: 1584, I_{am}, q. 19, ar. 8, p. 367F–368 A). Bañez therefore maintains that God bestows his grace only on those He foreknows and predestines so that they will accept it; otherwise, the gift of grace would be useless. Said inversely, God does not undertake his salvatory initiative for those who do not want to believe, but for those whom He has predestined to believe. For them, God's grace is sufficient ("*sufficit*") to make them willing to do so (Bañez: 1584, I_{am}, q. 19, ar. 6, p. 364B). The use of the verb *sufficere* is not to be misinterpreted; indeed, in Bañez' system the notion of sufficient grace is eroded and "the distinction between sufficient and efficacious grace is one of *genus*. Sufficient grace (consisting of precepts, instructions, admonitions, corrections) would suffice indeed, as long as man was not so corrupt; however, since he is, he needs God to effectively move his will in a true and real manner, suavely, without coercion" (Stucco: 2014, 201; Cai: 2012, 311–316).[10]

10 Bañez does not see the difference between sufficient and efficacious grace, first because he maintains that God's efficacious grace assists human free will, and second, because the good

Bañez also explains that notwithstanding his providence and immutable decision, God does not "tie" ("*ligare*") nor "destroy" ("*destruere*") human free will, rather he "preserves" ("*conservare*") and "effectuates" ("*efficere*") it. In this regard Bañez maintains that there is no "*ab extrinseco* cooperation" between God and man, since this presupposes an 'absolute' human will, able on its own to choose between good and evil, a possibility that dangerously leads to Pelagianism. On the contrary, the cooperation between God and man is an effect that infallibly follows from the aid of God's preparative grace. Such cooperation does not, however, limit human free will, rather it "makes complete" ("*perficere*") a person's free will, so that s/he is willing to perform good actions (Bañez: 1584, II_{am} II_{ae}, q. 19, ar. 9, p. 575C; Cai: 2012, 319–325).[11] In short, God's efficacious grace is key to Bañez' system. The human will is considered in a thoroughly Augustinian way, not as the ability to choose between good and evil indiscriminately, but as the desire to act well, since it has been perfected by God's efficacious grace (on Bañez' view, see also Cai: 2010).

Given the great distance between Molina's work and the traditional Dominican-Thomistic view (O'Connor: 1947), the *Concordia* was soon suspected of heresy by the Inquisitor Bartolomeo Fereira. Molina's teachings seemed to be very close to those of Prudencio de Montemayor. Moreover, Bañez made his own criticism of Molina's *Concordia*, but the Jesuit replied to Bañez by adding an appendix to the second edition of his *Concordia* in 1589, which was then approved by the Inquisitor. However, the controversy was not resolved there. In 1590 Bañez and the Mercedarian Francisco Zumel (*ca.* 1540–1607) were appointed to create a new *Index librorum prohibitorum:* in 1593 they started to scrutinize Molina's *Concordia* as well as his *Commentaria* on Aquinas' *Summa theologiae.* In reaction, Molina denounced, in 1594, both Bañez and Zumel as promoters of Reformation-minded teachings, to which Bañez responded with another censure of the Jesuit's works, arguing that they went against both the doctrine of the Church and Aquinas' philosophy.

use of it is an "effect of the preparative grace (*gratia praeparans*) and of God's efficaciously adjuvant grace (*gratia Dei efficaciter adiuvans*)" (Bañez: 1584, II_{am} II_{ae}, q. 19, ar. 9, p. 575C).

11 "Ut vero quia ipse Deus sua providentia, & immutabili consilio non ligat, neque destruit iudicium nostrum, quo iudicamus indifferentiam medii, & ordinabilitatem eius, & ordinandum esse ad finem, non etiam nostrae operationis libertatem destruit, sed potius illam efficaciter efficit, fovet, atque conservat. Ecce quomodo cum divina providentia infallibili, & efficaci stat nostrae operationis libertas, imò sine illa stare non posset. Non enim est cooperatio quae quasi ab extrinseco coniungatur cum divino auxilio: hoc enim esset declinare in errorem Pelagianum: sed est effectus, qui consequitur infallibiliter ex tali auxilio gratiae praeparantis. Neque hoc derogat libertati arbitrii, sed potiùs perficit libertatem ad bene operandum."

Bellarmine and the Middle Path Between Anti-Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians

In 1586, the Jesuit theologian Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) began publishing his three-volume *Disputationum de controversiis christianae fidei:* the first volume was published in 1586, the second in 1588, and the third in 1593 (Motta: 2005, 226–243; Richgels: 1980, 3; Bodrick: 1961, 189–216; also Biersack: 1994, 167–178; Ceyssens: 1994, 179–205).[12] In the final volume, he mainly focused on the relation between eternal predestination, temporal grace and human free will, also giving attention to the relation between justification and good works (Bellarmine: 1593, 504–1415). As Bellarmine explains, there are three main doctrines concerning predestination: (1) Pelagianism, which teaches that a man can save himself only by means of his own force, without prevenient grace (Bellarmine: 1593, 580B); (2) the opposite position voiced by Calvin and Luther, which does not recognize a difference between sufficient and efficacious grace, and which, according to Bellarmine, claims that all who are not separated from the "mass of perdition" by means of divine predestination, lack the sufficient aid to be saved (Bellarmine: 1593, 580C); (3) *in medio stat virtus*, the position of the Catholic Church, which teaches that each person receives sufficient grace, but without prevenient grace, nobody can desire, ask for, or accept God's grace. In order to corroborate this view, Bellarmine refers to many theologians, including Louvain scholars, such as Pope Adrian VI, John Driedo and Ruard Tapper (Bellarmine: 1593, 580C–581 A).

In the third volume of the *Disputationes* Bellarmine also criticizes the doctrines of his confreres Luis de Molina and Leonard Lessius, without naming them. Nevertheless, the references to their doctrines are evident, since Bellarmine directly mentions their doctrine on predestination, as we will show further on. Bellarmine first refers to Molina, by claiming that there is a difference between the *ratio* of predestination and its execution. Indeed, by means of predestination, God gave the kingdom of heaven to "determined men" ("*certi homines*"), whom he loved without any foreknowledge of their good works. At the same time, concerning the execution, God established that good works are necessary to obtain eternal life. Hence, according to Bellarmine, the difference between these two *rationes* is the basis upon which a Catholic theologian ought to build his doctrine of predestination. Hence, he clarifies that (Molina's) doctrine of a "*praedestinatio per propria merita*", which Bellarmine interprets as "*praedestinatio per opera bona praevisa*" could not be accepted *tout court*, since such an expression can be understood in two different ways, making it either true or false. Indeed, if "*per opera praevisa*" is related to the verb "[God] predestined" – so to

12 The first edition of the third volume (1593) was printed in both Ingolstadt (with David Sartorius) and Lyon (with Jean Pillehotte). For this essay, we use the Ingolstadt-edition.

the *ratio* of predestination –, then the doctrine is false, since it supposes that God has predestined men to receive the kingdom of heaven, because he first foresaw their good works. In this way, in his act of choice, the Creator would be influenced by the creature, which implies that He would no longer be free and his absolute sovereignty would be limited. However, if "*per opera praevisa*" relates to the verb "to grant [the kingdom of heaven]" – so to the *ratio* of the execution – then the sentence is true, since glorification is the effect of both justification and good works (just as justification is the effect of vocation, and vocation is the effect of predestination) (Bellarmine: 1593, 628B).

Concerning Lessius, Bellarmine claims that Augustine, basing himself on other Church fathers – though Bellarmine does not specify on whom – maintained that in the Catholic Church the doctrine of predestination on the basis of God's free sovereign will ("*gratuita praedestinatio*") has always been present. Therefore, the doctrine of "*praedestinatio ex operibus praevisis*" could not possibly be defended in the Church, unless we were to accept that a person can contribute *aliquid boni* that makes her/him just and separates her/him from the mass of perdition. But, as Bellarmine reiterates, this doctrine of predestination "*ex operibus praevisis*" is universally rejected by all the Church fathers (1593, 629B). Moreover, on the basis of Paul's Epistle to the Romans 9:15, Bellarmine confirms that predestination, vocation and separation [of the faithful] from the mass of perdition do not depend on any foreknowledge of human works; they merely depend on God's own discretion and will ("*beneplacitum*") (Bellarmine: 1593, 612 A), as Molina also affirmed in his *Concordia* (1588, 416).

Bellarmine therefore maintains that God predestined some people but not others, and that he did solely on the basis of his own sovereign decision. On the other hand, good works are needed to attain salvation. In this scheme, grace plays a key-role (Motta: 2005, 441–498). The gift of God's grace is twofold: sufficient and efficacious. Sufficient grace is given to everyone, in every time and place, and by means of it, people have the possibility ("*posse*") to will the good and to act well. However, sufficient grace does not determine that people are really going to act well. Therefore, people need efficacious grace which is, however, not given to everyone, but is only granted to some as a "singular gift" ("*donum singulare*"), consisting of faith, perseverance, continence, etc. so that those who receive it can effectively act accordingly (Bellarmine: 1588[3] (1586), 549C).[13] In Bellarmine's view man's possibility "to will" is very prominently elaborated, (even on the level of sufficient grace), which sharpens the contrast with Bañez' doctrine of *præmotio physica.* Bellarmine further analyzes the concept of grace according to its seven partitions, and to that end makes abundant use of Augustine: (1) eternal

13 We were not able to consult the *editio princeps* of the first volume of the *Disputationes* (1586), hence we refer to the 1588 Ingolstadt-edition.

and temporal; (2) "grace freely given" or "gratuitous grace" and "grace that makes us pleasing" in God's eyes; (3) permanent or habitual grace and "grace of special aid"; (4) the latter grace can be excitant or adjuvant; (5) grace can be also sufficient or efficacious; (6) efficacious grace can be both operating and cooperating; and (7) prevenient or subsequent grace.

First, eternal grace is God's love by means of which He loved men from eternity, before the creation of the world, predestining and electing (some of) them to be adopted as his sons, while temporal grace represents all the aids that mankind receives in the worldly life, as an effect of eternal grace (Bellarmine: 1593, 521D). In this sense, Bellarmine is here recovering Augustine's distinction between predestination, which is the "preparation for grace" and the grace which is the gift granted during the temporal dimension, as an effect of predestination itself (Aug. *De praed. Sanc.* 10, 19 [BA 24], 522). Secondly, focusing upon temporal grace, Bellarmine distinguishes between "grace freely given" ("*gratia gratis data*"), which is a supernatural gift especially granted to some people with a view to the spiritual salvation of the other faithful, and the grace that "makes us pleasing" in God's eyes ("*gratia gratum faciens*"), which is also a supernatural gift that relates to man's own sanctification and salvation (Bellarmine: 1593, 521D–522 A).[14] Third, the grace that "makes us pleasing" in God's eyes or "sanctifying grace", can be "permanent", when it constitutes a *habitus* infused into the faithful, who prove to have the three theological virtues – faith, hope and charity – or it can be a "special aid" ("*gratia auxilii specialis*"), viz. a motion, somewhat ad hoc, by which God helps man in his actions that transcend in one or another way his nature (Bellarmine: 1593, 522D–523 A). Fourth, this special aid can be twofold: "excitant" when God inspires or entices men's hearts to perform good works, and "adjuvant" when God helps the faithful while acting well (Bellarmine: 1593, 524 A–C). Fifth, God's aid can also be "sufficient", since by means of it God prepares ("*paratus est*") a person so that s/he has the possibility of wanting ("*possit velle*") to believe, to convert or to do a good work, but still this person does not actually will it. It is only thanks to God's "efficacious grace", that the faithful infallibly will ("*re ipsa velle*") and act accordingly, by believing, converting themselves and performing good works (Bellarmine: 1593, 524C–D). Sixth, efficacious grace can be conceived as "operating", when it effects that a person wills, and "cooperating" when it effects that a person puts into action what he or she has previously willed (under the induction of operating grace) (Bellarmine: 1593, 524D). Bellarmine finally affirms that "excitant" and "operating" grace can also be conceived as "prevenient", while "adjuvant" and "cooperating" grace can be conceived as "subsequent" (Bellarmine: 1593, 525 A).

14 According to Bellarmine, Adam's original iustice was a question of "*gratia gratum faciens*" or sanctifying grace (e. g. Cai: 2014, 71 and 78).

Prevenient and subsequent therefore simply indicate the moments in which they work, whether prior to a vocation or during the performance of good works etc. Most importantly, Bellarmine stresses the necessity of both sufficient and efficacious grace in the economy of salvation. The first is sufficient since it is given to everybody, so that each person has the ability to desire the faith. However, to yield fruit, efficacious grace is needed, which God bestows to some men (and not others) according to his own decision.

The Roman Congregations on the Aids by Divine Grace

The controversy between Bañez and Molina that dragged on for years, was the direct occasion for Rome to intervene, after the Holy See had already witnessed the earlier debates between Bañez and the Jesuits Prudencio de Montemayor and Luis de Léon (1582–1584 Salamanca), as well as the controversies between Lessius and Baius in Louvain and Douai (roughly 1585–1588). Eventually Pope Clement VIII forcefully silenced the debates in 1597, reserving deliberation about the theological issues at stake to the so-called *Congregationes de auxiliis gratiae divinae*. The *Congregations on the Aids of Divine Grace* met several times in the years 1598–1607 and looked for a solution, which above all called for the correct interpretation of Saint Augustine, the *doctor gratiae*. Very soon the congregation decided to censure Molina's *Concordia*, a decision that Clement VIII was initially prepared to implement, but which he eventually declined to carry out, due to the influence of the Jesuits and their political protectors, not the least of whom was the Spanish King. Again, in 1601, the *Concordia* was judged to be censured, but once again, there was strong lobbying against the censure. To solve the question, Robert Bellarmine even proposed convening a new Council. Eventually Clement VIII decided to attend personally the debates between Dominicans and Jesuits between 1602–1604, after which he decided to condemn Molina's teachings, since he preferred the Bañezian view. The Pope, however, died before being able to promulgate the condemnation. According to Matava, it was as if Bellarmine had 'foreseen' that the Pope would have died before being able to condemn Molina. The new Pope, Leo XI died soon after his enthronement, and his successor Paul V, who had followed the debates of the congregation as a cardinal, opted for listening again to the opinion of the two parties, as well as to that of each member. Eventually, in 1607 Paul V closed the debates by "issuing a decree forbidding the antagonists [viz., Dominicans and Jesuits] to call one another's views heretical or even temerarious, according to the technical jargon of theological censure. The Holy See would, the Pope continued, resolve the issue at an opportune time" (Freddoso: 1988, viii). As a final act, in 1611 the Pope prohibited the publications of works related to the troublesome question of efficacious grace, except with his

own approval, a prohibition that was repeated in 1625 (Matava: 2016, 16–34; on the *Congregationes de auxiliis*, see also Stucco: 2014, 155–218). It should be observed, however, that this prohibition was not published in, e. g. the Netherlands.

The 'Jansenist' Controversy

Outspoken anti-Pelagian ideas regarding grace and free will, were voiced by, amongst others, William Hessels van Est (Estius; 1542–1613), professor of theology in Douai, who had them included in his commentaries on Thomas Aquinas and in his commentaries on the Epistles of Paul (François: 2014, 119–130; Fleischmann: 1940). It was, however, another native of the northern Netherlands who would re-open 'Pandora's box', namely Cornelius Jansenius (1585–1638). Jansenius had studied theology in Louvain, where a strong current of anti-pelagian Augustinian theology persisted. He perfected his studies, and especially his methodology, in France, where he met Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, also called 'Abbot of Saint-Cyran' (1581–1643). Together, they intensively studied the Bible and the Church fathers (especially Augustine). Jansenius became a doctor of theology as well as the first president of the Holland College (1617) and was appointed one year later as an ordinary professor at the Louvain Faculty of Theology (1618). In 1630 Jansenius even became the holder of the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures in Louvain, which was the Faculty's most important chair. In 1635 he became bishop of Ypres, but died of the plague three years later (on Jansenius, see especially Orcibal: 1989; 1977, 351–380).

Jansenius thought it was his personal vocation to find a solution to the problem that the *Congregationes de auxiliis* had left unsolved, through a thorough study of the Scriptures and the writings of Augustine on predestination, grace and free will, especially the Church father's anti-Pelagian writings, while showing a certain disregard for speculative, scholastic theology. It resulted in a great synthesis of historical theology on the question, published posthumously in 1640 with the Louvain printer Jacob Zegers as the *Augustinus*. In this book and in his Bible commentaries, Jansenius emphasized, first, that human beings, corrupted by original sin, are prone to concupiscence, are able neither to choose nor to perform good works, and by necessity fall into sin: "[…] *amissa boni faciendi et mali cavendi libertas, inductaque peccandi necessitas* […]" (t. II, book III/III. *De statu naturae lapsae*, ch. 2, col. 433–436 and ch. 9–11, col. 470–480; book III/IV. *De statu naturae lapsae*, ch. 18, col. 631–632). In several places in his three-volume book Jansenius argues, in the wake of Augustine, that "all the works of the infidels, how precious and perfect they may look from the angle of philosophical virtue, are in the real and proper sense sins" (here t. III, book I. *De gratia Christi*

Salvatoris, ch. 5, col. 19). People in the state of original sin are, therefore, worthy of eternal damnation, for "God cannot let sin go unpunished" (t. II, book IV/III. *De statu purae naturae*, ch. 2 and 3, col. 885–896). Secondly, postlapsarian man, whose free will has been enslaved by concupiscence, cannot free himself by his natural forces, but only by the grace of the Saviour (t. III, book I. *De gratia Christi Salvatoris*, ch. 2, col. 9–14). In other words, God grants salvation from eternal damnation to those whom He has elected to receive it, not on the basis of any foreseen merits on the man's part, but on the basis of his own sovereign decision. The others are abandoned to the mass of perdition, not on the basis of any foreseen demerits, but as a deliberate act of divine justice given the gravity of original sin (e. g. t. III, book X. *De gratia Christi Salvatoris*, ch. 1–4, col. 1010–1025). God's grace works efficaciously ("*infallibiliter operatur*") in the elect so that they not only are able ("*posse*") to obey God, but are also willing ("*velle*") to perform God's commandments ("*perficere*"). Even more, the efficaciousness of God's grace implies that the human will is incapable of resisting it: "Grace does not await for our consent, but rather produces it! *Qua fit ut velit*" – a point on which Jansenius is quite insistent, but one which would also cause him problems (e. g. t. III, book II. *De gratia Christi Salvatoris*, ch. 4, col. 97–102; especially ch. 24 and 25, col. 196–207; summary in Stucco: 2014, 241; Kolakowski: 1995, 14–15). Thirdly, it is not difficult to find utterances in Jansenius' works suggesting that the Son of God, who died for his flock, did not die for all men, but only for the predestined. For Jansenius, it was a semi-Pelagian error to argue that Jesus died for all (t. III, book III. *De gratia Christi Salvatoris*, ch. 20 and 21, col. 369–392). This argument goes hand in hand with a denial of grace that is merely sufficient: "*Ex natura gratiae Christi ostenditur, nullis dari sufficientem gratiam juxta sensum recentiorum*". If Christ had died for all humans, He would have yielded the merits or the grace that would save everybody. For this grace is always efficacious (and the will is unable to resist it). But Christ died only for the elect, and they alone are predestined to receive that grace it entails. Jansenius' argument in chapter 13 of the third volume of his *Augustinus*, is very crucial here. It claims that it is an error of the semi-Pelagians to maintain that "God does not order impossible things and therefore He gives to all sufficient aid [enabling them] to do what he orders" (t. III, book III. *De gratia Christi Salvatoris*, ch. 4, col. 262–263; ch. 13, col. 324–337; Kolakowski: 1995, 10).

Jansenius gave his name to a set of theological ideas, spiritual attitudes and devotional practices, which are in religious history known as 'Jansenism', counting adherents who are believed to have constituted a distinct group or even a genuine party within seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Catholicism. In reaction to this view, historians in the past few decades have argued that any attempt to see 'Jansenism' as a distinct and coherent historical group should be considered as upholding a historiographical myth, mainly shaped by its adver-

saries. Very famous is Lucien Ceyssens' position that "Jansenism has never existed, at least not in that shape as anti-Jansenism has fought against" and that it was mainly a creation forged by its opponents, whether Jesuits or the popes that sided with them. According to Ceyssens Jansenism was whatever anti-Jansenism was not (Ceyssens: 1993, 129; 114). A similar position has been taken by the author Thomas O'Connor, who was at the very most prepared to see "a deceptive coherence between the different 'Jansenisms'" (2012, 318; 330–333). Monique Cottret has recently voiced similar ideas (2016, 321). This position makes it clear that it is indeed a mistake to consider 'Jansenism' as a monolithic or static bloc containing positions that remained unaltered over a period of roughly 150 years (1640–1790). But against Ceyssens and likeminded scholars who considered Jansenism largely as a construct of its adversaries, it is far more fruitful to approach it as a dynamic movement developing from an initial nucleus – an anti-Pelagian theology of predestination, grace and free will – and adopting further contents and practices, as time and contexts evolved and condemnations succeeded. Following Peter Hersche (1977, 24–43), the Louvain scholar Jan Roegiers favored such a stratigraphic model and considered Jansenism as consisting of several layers or *strata* which were built one upon the other, as time and place changed, and as theological conflicts unfolded (2003, 2–3). To this should be added that individual 'Jansenists' adhered to theological viewpoints and adopted moral and devotional practices in various and often inconsistent ways.

Although theologians like William Hessels van Est propagated radical anti-Pelagian viewpoints regarding predestination, grace and free will, next to rigorist moral viewpoints in the early seventeenth century, Jansenius' publication of the *Augustinus* (1640) was pivotal to the movement and a reference point for generations of faithful who shared the same theological ideas, emotions, and the bent for a pessimist anthropology underlying them. Conscious of their own sinfulness and in search of salvation, 'Jansenists' inclined to "make the sufferings of their Savior their own" and follow the path of salvation He had shown. In this regard, they usually espoused a rigorist moral lifestyle, cherished a deeper spiritual piety focused on Jesus' cross, and practiced strict penitential discipline. They required real contrition in confession, which implied an honest regret for having offended God, out of love for Him, and not merely out of a fear for God's punishments and the fire of hell. The Jansenists' scruples made them reluctant to receive frequent communion, since this was a sign of perfection and not a means to it (Strayer: 2008, 47–57; on Jansenism, see also McGrath: 1998[2], 282–284).

It goes without saying that the 'Jansenists' were outspoken opponents of the above-sketched Molinist theology and of the concomitant life of faith they believed to be advocated by many Jesuits. It included a lax moral theology and bent for casuistry, which conflicted with 'Jansenist' moral rigorism and search for perfection. Jesuit theology and sacramental life tended to accept that attrition –

regret for having offended God from fear for eternal damnation – was sufficient for sacramental absolution, which ran against the 'Jansenist' predilection for contritionism. Jesuits and like-minded clergymen promoted frequent communion and devotion to the Holy Sacrament, which cut against 'Jansenist' reluctance to receive frequent communion (Strayer: 2008, 57–59). The 'Jansenists' reproached the Jesuits for revitalizing the ancient condemned heresies of Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism, whereas the Jesuits "accused the Jansenists […] of being tainted with the horrors of the Calvinist heresy" (Kolakowski: 1995, 5).

When Jansenius' *Augustinus* appeared in 1640, exactly on the centennial of the founding of the Jesuits, members of the Order in France and the Low Countries considered it as an outright provocation. They cited Paul V's decree of 1625 forbidding anyone to write about grace and free will, and charged the book of resuscitating the condemned propositions of Michael Baius. As a consequence, Pope Urban VIII prohibited the *Augustinus* by the bull *In eminenti Ecclesiae militantis*, dated 6 March 1642, but only published in 1643 (Cottret: 2016, 15–28; Strayer: 2008, 59–61, 67; also Quilliet: 2007, 449).

The bull, however, did not have an immediate resonance, and Jansenius' ideas spread rapidly, especially in France and the Low Countries. In France, the leader of the 'Jansenist' movement Antoine Arnauld (1612–1694), member of the theological Faculty in Paris released in 1643 his doctoral dissertation *On Frequent Communion.* 'Jansenism' also prospered in the (model) abbey of Port Royal, led by Mère Angélique Arnauld, the sister of Antoine Arnauld. Another protagonist was Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, also called 'the Abbot of Saint-Cyran', who was an ascetic, spiritual director of Port-Royal, and leader of a party opposing the 'worldly' Cardinal de Richelieu. In the Low Countries, the universities of Louvain and Douai were strongholds of Jansenism, and the secular clergy adhered – more or less – to its viewpoints, particularly in the Dutch Republic where Jansenius' ideas were considered a means to compete with Calvinism (Cottret: 2016, 29–43; Strayer: 2008, 61–62, 67; also Quilliet: 2007, 435–449).

Further instigation of the Jesuits led Pope Innocent X to issue the bull *Cum Occasione* in 1653, which condemned five propositions said to be taken from Jansenius' *Augustinus*, primarily targeting the denial that Christ died for *all* people and the concomitant refutation of *sufficient* grace, as well as the strong positions concerning *efficacious* grace, which man was said not to be able to resist (Strayer: 2008, 68–69; Quaghebeur: 2005, 130–151; Kolakowski: 1995, 3–25; Ceyssens: 1980, 368–424; also Quilliet: 2007, 451–453).

Antoine Arnauld and the 'Jansenists' in France (and the Low Countries) agreed that the Pope had the right to condemn the five propositions since they smacked of heresy ("*question de droit*"), but they argued that in fact none of the five could be found in Jansenius' *Augustinus* ("*question de fait*"). Given the 'mistakes' Rome had made in this dossier, the 'Jansenists' also questioned the

Pope's double claim to inspiration by the Spirit and infallibility, which they argued did not extend to matters of fact (Cottret: 2016, 53–56; Strayer: 2008, 70–71; also Quilliet: 2007, 453–455).

Another foreman of French Jansenism, Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), published in 1656–1657 the *Lettres écrites à un Provincial* "Les Provinciales", in which he ridiculed the laxity of the Jesuits (Cottret: 2016, 63–66). In March 1656, Blaise Pascal's niece was miraculously cured of cancer after being touched by a thorn allegedly taken from Christ's crown of thorns worn on the cross. In the ensuing months, eighty more sufferers reported being healed by the "Miracle of the Thorn". This helped to save the 'Jansenist' cause in 1656 just as the tidal wave of persecution seemed about to crush it. "Jansenists saw the 'Miracle of the Thorn' as proof positive that they had the truth and that God was with them and not with the Jesuits" (Cottret: 2016, 70–76; Strayer: 2008, 72–73 [quotation]; also Quilliet: 2007, 455–473). By the end of the seventeenth century, as Robert Kreiser (1978, 72) has stated, "The expectation of miracles and other supernatural signs had become almost an integral part of the 'Jansenist' worldview."

In France and the Low Countries the Jesuits and their allies declared, however, that the *Augustinus* did contain the five condemned propositions. On 7 November 1656, after only a six weeks' deliberation, Pope Alexander VII issued the bull *Ad sacram.* Like Innocent X's *Cum occasione* four years earlier, *Ad sacram* condemned the five propositions "in the sense Jansenius has meant them" and affirmed that they could indeed be found in his *Augustinus.* The implication was that the aforementioned distinction between "right" and "fact" was declared meaningless (Cottret: 2016, 67–70; Strayer: 2008, 71; also Quilliet: 2007, 474).

As a reaction, Antoine Arnauld and his co-religionists decided to observe a "*silence respectueux*" or "respectful silence". In response, the French Assembly of the Clergy of the following year (1657) drew up a *Formulaire* that contained a profession of faith conformable to *Ad sacram* and made subscription to it obligatory. But again, the issue of whether the bull had to be unconditionally accepted, and the formulary signed was subject to vehement debate (Cottret: 2016, 84–87; Strayer: 2008, 73).

On 15 February 1665, Alexander VII released another bull entitled *Regiminis apostolici.* Like *Cum occasione* (1653) and *Ad sacram* (1656), it condemned the five propositions in Jansenius' *Augustinus* and declared the question of "right" and "fact" meaningless. Moreover, it approved the obligation of all clergy to subscribe to the anti-Jansenist *Formulaire* (Strayer: 2008, 73; also Quilliet: 2007, 479).

However, the new Pope Clement IX was able to settle the discussion in the years 1667–1669, by imposing a compromise. It was accepted that recalcitrant bishops and clergy could subscribe to the *Formulaire* "pure and simple" as opposed to subscribing to it "sincerely". It was enough to accept the con-

demnation of the five propositions as "*quaestio juris*". A "respectful silence" about the "*quaestio facti*" was accepted. This settlement led to the *Pax Clementina* or Clementine Peace, which lasted for about thirty years (Cottret: 2016, 107–123; also Quilliet: 2007, 481–498).

Enjoying the *Pax Clementina*, the influence of Jansenism began to spread widely, both within France and abroad. Blaise Pascal published his *Pensées* (first edition 1669), which emphasized the need for faith, a gift of God, as well as reason, which was an answer to ascendant rationalism. Pasquier Quesnel (1634–1719), collaborator with Antoine Arnauld and his *de facto* successor as leader of the 'Jansenist faction', published his *Réflexions morales sur le Nouveau Testament* (first edition 1671). It gave proof of the Jansenists' desire to base theology and moral life upon the teachings contained in the Scriptures, which they considered to be made available for everybody in the vulgar tongues. The book became more outspokenly 'Jansenist' with every new edition – as the 'Jansenists' regained confidence under the continuing *Pax Clementina* – and the book eventually received the approval of Archbishop Louis Antoine de Noailles of Paris (June 1695) (Cottret: 2016, 128–134; also Quilliet: 2007, 499–509).

It was Clement XI, however, who brought an end to the Clementine Peace with his bull *Vineam Domini* of 1705: he declared that "respectful silence" was not enough and required denial in word and conscience of the five propositions which, he maintained, were part of Jansenius' teachings. Since the nuns of Port-Royal only gave qualified assents to the papal condemnations, Louis XIV ordered the Port-Royal abbey to be abolished and its buildings razed in 1708–1711 (Cottret: 2016, 138–141; also Quilliet: 2007, 509–512).

With the consent of the King, Clement XI condemned with the bull *Unigenitus Dei Filius* of 1713, 101 propositions taken from the *Réflexions morales* of Pasquier Quesnel, including the proposition that the Bible could be read by all and sundry. The condemnation was also a blow to Louis Antoine de Noailles, by then elevated to the Cardinalate. Several bishops and clerics in the Low Countries and France, but also elsewhere, appealed against the bull to a future general council, again calling into question papal infallibility. Submission to the bull was often required under constraint, and more than before anti-Jansenism was the main criterion for promotion in the Church. Those who defended the dogmatic character of *Unigenitus* were called Ultramontanists. They defended not only papal infallibility, but also the immediate jurisdiction of the Pope over the whole Church and the subordination of civil power under spiritual. 'Jansenists', for their part, were inclined to defend the independence of the local viz. national Churches under their bishops, a position that was already to be found in Jansenius' works but which only grew stronger as the 'Jansenists' reproached the papacy for having made 'contested' decisions, to put it mildly (Cottret: 2016, 151–155; also Quilliet: 2007, 512–523).

'Jansenist' convictions as well as the wish to uphold independence vis-à-vis Rome, eventually led to a – not unimportant – schism in the Catholic Church. After the vicar apostolic of the Holland Mission, Petrus Codde, was dismissed by Rome, precisely because of 'Jansenist' ideas, a considerable part of the Catholic diocesan clergy in the Dutch Republic refused to accept his successor, appointed by Rome. Instead, the chapter of Utrecht decided in 1723 to elect a 'Jansenist-minded' archbishop, Cornelis Steenoven, also tying in with the full institutional organization of the Catholic Church in the Low Countries as it existed before the Reformation. The clash with the Roman center not only related to doctrine, but also had an ecclesiological aspect, since it ran against Rome's will to administer the Holland Mission directly, with the Jesuits as its most important agents. The clash lies at the basis of the independent Church of Utrecht, a schism that lasts up till today (Schoon: 2011; Berlis: 2000; also Quilliet: 2007, 546–547).

Conclusion

When the reformers made the doctrines of grace and free will the core of the new faith, they started a debate that gave rise to a plurality of insights and launched a controversy not only between Catholics and Protestants, but also among representatives of various currents within the confessions themselves. Catholic theologians of several schools and religious orders took advantage of the latitude the Council of Trent had given, in order to express themselves on the relation between predestination, grace, and free will. As shown, a strong anti-Pelagian Augustinian school arose in the Low Countries, with Michael de Bay and his friend and colleague John Hessels as the main protagonists. They expressed negative views about the capacity of postlapsarian man to contribute to his salvation, stressing instead the overwhelming need for God's grace. Baius' ideas were rejected both by faculties of theology (Alcalá and Salamanca) and by popes (Pius V and Gregory XIII). Like a counterweight, the Jesuit Leonard Lessius stressed the importance of the human contribution to salvation, even maintaining a "*praedestinatio ex previsis meritis*". Such ideas were much to the distaste of the Augustinian milieu in Louvain and Douai, whose theological faculties censured Lessius' *Theses theologicae*. Other Jesuits preferred to situate themselves within the more traditional 'center'. Bellarmine for instance stressed the difference between *gratia sufficiens* and *gratia efficax*, by means of which God, through Christ's salvatory death and resurrection, bestows sufficient means to all mankind, opening the possibility to be saved. But this possibility is only actualized by God's efficacious grace, which efficaciously leads those on whom it is bestowed to salvation.

A similar debate also occurred in Spain, where the Dominican Bañez firmly maintained the efficaciousness of God's grace, even affirming that it is impos-

sible to receive it without converting (working like a "*predeterminatio physica*"). In contrast, the Jesuit Luis de Molina maintained that it is indeed possible that God's grace fails, since it is up to human free will to accept or reject it. Moreover, God predestines people "*per propria merita*", and these are therefore an instrumental (co-)cause of salvation. Ironically, Molina's *Concordia* (1588) effected strong 'discord' within the Church. A first Roman congregation *de auxiliis* was instaured in 1597 by Clement VIII in order to solve the *querelle* between Dominicans and Jesuits, but after ten years of deliberations, Paul V interrupted the work of the congregations, accepting de facto both views. In some ways, this shows that the two views on God's grace are an unsolvable antinomy.

Radical anti-Pelagian Augustinism continued to attract adherents, especially in the seventeenth-century Low Countries, with important names such as William Hessels van Est (Estius), Cornelius Jansenius 'of Ypres', father of so-called 'Jansenism', and others. In France 'Jansenism' was embraced by men such as Antoine Arnauld, Blaise Pascal, and Pasquier Quesnel, and especially took hold in the monastery of Port-Royal. Once again the efficaciousness of God's grace was stressed, to the detriment of man's free will. 'Jansenist' views were considered to be outside mainstream Catholic 'interpretation', and several popes showed their disapproval, instigated to that aim by several members of the Jesuit Order.

Using the scheme from Michael D. Torre's monograph on the Spanish Dominican Francisco Marín Sola (1873–1932) as a basis, we can show the main differences between Molina, Bellarmine, Juan González de Albeda,[15] Bañez, and Jansenius regarding the relation between predestination, grace and free will (Torre: 2009, 191):

Jesuits	Molina: all grace is versatile and sufficient	Scientia media accepted
	Bellarmine: grace is sufficient and efficacious	Physical premotion rejected
Dominicans	De Albeda: grace is sufficient and efficacious	Scientia media rejected
	Bañez: God's grace is infallibly efficacious (category of sufficient grace is eroded)	Physical premotion accepted (category of free will is eroded)
Augustinists	Jansenius: God's grace is intrinsically efficacious	Human will cannot resist divine grace (restrained use of scholastic categories)

In short, the question on predestination, grace and free will was debated for several decades and even centuries in the wake of the Council of Trent. What in

15 Juan González de Albeda (1569–1622) was a Spanish Dominican who commented on Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, a commentary that was first pubished in Alcalá in 1621. His views on grace and free will mainly influenced the French Thomists.

an optimistic view may be characterized as theological pluralism, was at times a hard and bitter controversy which was accompanied by mutual censorships, denouncements and condemnations. It ultimately led to the most important schism in the Catholic Church after the Reformation, the schism of Utrecht in 1723. Of course, similar processes on the Reformed side could undoubtedly be recalled to our memory. This leads us to the observation that views regarding predestination, grace, and free will were based upon underlying anthropological intuitions that transcended the confessions. These gave rise to objective similarities across the confessions/denominations. Positive, humanist views on man's capacities, even after the Fall, and the belief that man could be educated as a virtuous person, were upheld by Jesuits (and their theological allies) on the Catholic side, and by the Arminians on the Protestant side. Far more negative views of man's capacity or preparedness to do good were maintained by strict Augustinian-minded theologians, such as the Jansenists on the Catholic side and orthodox Calvinists on the Protestant side. Time and again the question has been asked how these far-fetched – and for contemporary readers often irritantingly hair-splitting – reflections and controversies contributed to the rise of skepticism and rationalism, a development that would soon dominate Europe's intellectual atmosphere.

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