



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

*il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)*  
di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

## GIANSENISMO

Cornelius Jansen, Bishop of Ypres (Cornelius Jansenius Yprensis), from whom Jansenism derives its origin and name, must not be confounded with another writer and bishop of the same name Cornelius Jansenius Gandavensis (1510-1576), of whom we possess several books on Scripture and a valuable "Concordia Evangelica."

### Life and writings

The subject of this article lived three-quarters of a century later than his namesake. He was born 28 October, 1585, of a Catholic family, in the village of Accoi, near Leerdam, Holland; died at Ypres, 6 May, 1638. His parents, although in moderate circumstances, secured for him an excellent education. They sent him first to Utrecht. In 1602 we find him at the University of Louvain, where he entered the College du Faucon to take up the study of philosophy. Here he passed two years, and at the solemn promotion of 1604 was proclaimed first of 118 competitors. To begin his theological studies he entered the College du Pape Adrien VI, whose president, Jacques Janson, imbued with the errors of Baius and eager to spread them, was to exert an influence on the subsequent course of his ideas and works. Having hitherto been on amicable terms with the Jesuits, he had even sought admission into their order. The refusal he experienced, the motives of which are unknown to us, seems not to be altogether unrelated to the aversion he subsequently manifested for the celebrated society, and for the theories and practices it championed.

He was also associated with a young and wealthy Frenchman, Jean du Verger de Hauranne, who was completing his course of theology with the Jesuits, and who possessed a mind subtle and cultured, but restless and prone to innovations, and an ardent and intriguing character. Shortly after his return to Paris towards the end of 1604, du Verger was joined there by Jansenius, for whom he had secured a position as tutor. About two years later he attracted him to Bayonne, his native town, where he succeeded in having him appointed director of an episcopal college. There, during eleven or twelve years of studies ardently pursued in common, on the Fathers and principally on St. Augustine, the two friends had time to exchange thoughts and to conceive daring projects. In 1617, while du Verger, who had returned to Paris, went to receive from the Bishop of Poitiers the dignity of Abbot of St-Cyran, Jansenius returned to Louvain, where the presidency of the new College de Sainte Pulcherie was confided to him. In 1619





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he received the degree of Doctor of Theology, and afterwards obtained a chair of exegesis. The commentaries which he dictated to his pupils, as well as several writings of a polemical nature, brought him in a short time a deserved renown.

These writings of Jansenius were not at first intended for publication, in fact they did not see the light until after his death. They are concise, clear and perfectly orthodox in doctrine. The principal ones are "Pentateuchus, sive commentarius in quinque libros Mosis" (Louvain, 1639), "Analecta in Proverbia Salomonis, Ecclesiasten, Sapientiam, Habacuc et Sophoniam" (Louvain, 1644); "Tetrateuchus, seu commentarius in quatuor Evangelia" (Louvain, 1639). Some of these exegetical works have been printed more than once. Among his polemical works are "Alexipharmacum civibus Sy vaeducensibus propinatum adversus ministrorum fascinum" (Louvain 1630); then, in reply to the criticism of the Calvinist Gisbert Voet, "Spongia notarum quibus Alexipharmacum aspersit Gisbertus Voetius" (Louvain, 1631). Jansenius published in 1635, under the pseudonym of Armacanus, a volume entitled "Alexandri Patricii Armacani Theologi Mars Gallicus seu de justitia armorum regis Galliae libri duo". This was a bitter and well-merited satire against the foreign policy of Richelieu, which was summed up in the odd fact of the "Most Christian" nation and monarchy constantly allying themselves with the Protestants, in Holland, Germany, and elsewhere, for the sole purpose of compassing the downfall of the House of Austria.



The same author has left us a series of letters addressed to the Abbot of St-Cyran, which were found among the papers of the person to whom they were sent and printed under the title: "Naissance du jansenisme decouverte, ou Lettres de Jansénius à l'abbé de St-Cyran depuis l'an 1617 jusqu'en 1635" (Louvain, 1654). It was also during the course of his professorate that Jansenius, who was a man of action as well as of study, journeyed twice to Spain, whither he went as the deputy of his colleagues to plead at the Court of Madrid the cause of the university against the Jesuits; and in fact, through his efforts their authorization to teach humanities and philosophy at Louvain was withdrawn. All this, however, did not prevent him from occupying himself actively and chiefly with a work of which the general aim, born of his

intercourse with St-Cyran, was to restore to its place of honour the true doctrine of St. Augustine on grace, a doctrine supposedly obscured or abandoned in the Church for several centuries. He was still working on it when, on the recommendation of King Philip IV and Boonen, Archbishop of Mechlin, he was raised to the See of Ypres. His consecration took place in 1636, and, though at the same time putting the finishing touches to his theological work, he devoted himself with great zeal to the government of his diocese. Historians have remarked that the Jesuits had no more cause to complain of his administration than the other religious orders.

He succumbed to an epidemic which ravaged Ypres and died, according to eyewitnesses, in dispositions of great piety. When on the point of death he confided the manuscript which he cherished to his chaplain, Reginald Lamaeus, with the command to publish it after taking counsel with Libert Fromondus, a professor at Louvain, and Henri Calenus, a canon of the metropolitan church. He requested that this publication be made with the utmost fidelity, as, in his opinion, only with difficulty could anything be changed. "If, however," he added, "the Holy See wishes any



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change, I am an obedient son, and I submit to that Church in which I have lived to my dying hour. This is my last wish."

The editors of the "Augustinus" have been wrongly accused of having intentionally and disloyally suppressed this declaration, it appears plainly enough on the second page in the original edition. On the other hand its authenticity has been contested by means of external and internal arguments, founded notably on the discovery of another will, dated the previous day (5 May), which says nothing regarding the work to be published. But it is quite conceivable that the dying prelate was mindful of the opportunity to complete his first act by dictating to his chaplain and confirming with his seal this codicil which, according to the testamentary executors, was written only half an hour before his death. It has been vainly sought, a priori, to make the fact appear improbable by alleging that the author was in perfect good faith as to the orthodoxy of his views. Already, in 1619, 1620, and 1621, his correspondence with St-Cyran bore unmistakable traces of a quite opposite state of mind; in it he spoke of coming disputes for which there was need to prepare; of a doctrine of St. Augustine discovered by him, but little known among the learned, and which in time would astonish everybody, of opinions on grace and predestination which he dared not then reveal "lest like so many others I be tripped up by Rome before everything is ripe and seasonable". Later, in the "Augustinus" itself (IV, xxv-xxvii), it is seen that he scarcely disguises the close connection of several of his assertions with certain propositions of Baius, though he ascribes the condemnation of the latter to the contingent circumstances of time and place, and he believes them tenable in their obvious and natural sense.

Nothing, therefore, authorized the rejection of the famous declaration, or testament, of Jansenius as unauthentic. But neither is there any authorization for suspecting the sincerity of the explicit affirmation of submission to the Holy See which is therein contained. The author, at the time of his promotion to the doctorate in 1619, had defended the infallibility of the pope in a most categorical thesis, conceived as follows: "The Roman Pontiff is the supreme judge of all religious controversies, when he defines a thing and imposes it on the whole Church, under penalty of anathema, his decision is just, true, and infallible." At the end of his work (III, x, Epilogus omnium) we find this protestation perfectly parallel with that of his testament: "All whatsoever I have affirmed on these various and difficult points, not according to my own sentiment, but according to that of the holy Doctor, I submit to the judgment and sentence of the Apostolic See and the Roman Church, my mother, to be henceforth adhered to if she judges that it must be adhered to, to retract if she so wishes, to condemn and anathematize it if she decrees that it should be condemned and anathematized. For since my tenderest childhood I have been reared in the beliefs of this Church; I imbibed them with my mother's milk; I have grown up and grown old while remaining attached to them; never to my knowledge have I swerved therefrom a hair's-breadth in thought, action or word, and I am still firmly decided to keep this faith until my last breath and to appear with it before the judgment-seat of God." Thus Jansenius, although he gave his name to a heresy, was not himself a heretic, but lived and died in the bosom of the Church. In view of the fact that he consciously and deliberately aimed at innovation or reforming, it would certainly be difficult to exculpate him entirely or declare that his attitude was in no wise presumptuous and rash; but impartial history may and should take into account the peculiar atmosphere created about him by the still smouldering controversies on Baianism and the widespread prejudices against the Roman Curia. To determine the extent to which these and similar circumstances, by deluding him necessarily diminished his responsibility, is impossible, that is the secret of God.



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### The "Augustinus" and its condemnation

After the death of Jansenius, the internuncio Richard Aravius vainly endeavoured to prevent the printing of his manuscript; this undertaking, actively furthered by the friends of the dead man, was completed in 1640. The folio volume bore the title: "Cornelii Jansenii, Episcopi Yprensis, Augustinus, seu doctrina S. Augustini de humanae naturae sanitate, aegritudine, medicina, adversus Pelagianos et Massilienses". It was divided into three volumes, of which the first, chiefly historical, is an exposition in eight books of Pelagianism; the second, after an introductory study on the limitations of human reason, devotes one book to the state of innocence or the grace of Adam and the angels, four books to the state of fallen nature, three to the state of pure nature; the third volume treats in ten books of "the grace of Christ the Saviour", and concludes with "a parallel between the error of the Semipelagians and that of certain moderns", who are no other than the Molinists. The author, if we are to accept his own statement, laboured for twenty years on this work, and to gather his materials he had ten times read the whole of St. Augustine and thirty times his treatise against the Pelagians. From these readings emerged a vast system, whose identity with Baianism neither skilful arrangement nor subtile dialectic could disguise.

His fundamental error consists in disregarding the supernatural order, for Jansenius as for Baius, the vision of God is the necessary end of human nature; hence it follows that all the primal endowments designated in theology as supernatural or preternatural, including exemption from concupiscence, were simply man's due. This first assertion is fraught with grave consequences regarding the original fall, grace, and justification. As a result of Adam's sin, our nature stripped of elements essential to its integrity, is radically corrupt and depraved. Mastered by concupiscence, which in each of us properly constitutes original sin, the will is powerless to resist; it has become purely passive. It cannot escape the attraction of evil except it be aided by a movement of grace superior to and triumphant over the force of concupiscence. Our soul, henceforth obedient to no motive save that of pleasure, is at the mercy of the delectation, earthly or heavenly, which for the time being attracts it with the greatest strength. At once inevitable and irresistible, this delectation, if it come from heaven or from grace, leads man to virtue; if it come from nature or concupiscence, it determines him to sin. In the one case as in the other, the will is fatally swept on by the preponderant impulse. The two delectations says Jansenius, are like the two arms of a balance, of which the one cannot rise unless the other be lowered and vice versa. Thus man irresistibly, although voluntarily, does either good or evil, according as he is dominated by grace or by concupiscence; he never resists either the one or the other. In this system there is evidently no place for purely sufficient grace; on the other hand it is easy to discern the principles of the five condemned propositions (see below).

In order to present this doctrine under the patronage of St. Augustine, Jansenius based his argument chiefly on two Augustinian conceptions: on the distinction between the *auxilium sine quo non* granted to Adam, and the *auxilium quo*, active in his descendants; and on the theory of the "victorious delectation" of grace. A few brief remarks will suffice to make clear the double mistake. In the first place the *auxilium sine quo non* is not, in the idea of Augustine, "a grace purely sufficient", since through it the angels persevered; it is on the contrary a grace which confers complete power in *actu primo* (i.e. the ability to act), in such a way that, this being granted, nothing further is needed for action. The *auxilium quo*, on the other hand, is a supernatural help which bears immediately on the *actus secundus* (i.e. the performance of the action) and in this grace, in so far as it is distinguished from the grace of Adam, must be included the whole series of efficacious graces by which man works out his salvation, or the gift of actual perseverance, which gift conducts man



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infallibly and invincibly to beatitude, not because it suppresses liberty, but because its very concept implies the consent of man. The delectation of grace is a deliberate pleasure which the Bishop of Hippo explicitly opposes to necessity (*voluptas, non necessitas*); but what we will and embrace with consenting pleasure, we cannot at the same time not will, and in this sense we will it necessarily. In this sense also, it is correct to say, "*Quod amplius nos delectat, secundum id operemur necesse est*" (i.e. in acting we necessarily follow what gives us most pleasure). Finally, this delight is called victorious, not because it fatally subjugates the will, but because it triumphs over concupiscence, fortifying free will to the point of rendering it invincible to natural desire. It is thus clear that we can say of men sustained by and faithful to grace, "*Invictissime quod bonum est velint, et hoc deserere invictissime nolint*".

The success of the "Augustinus" was great, and it spread rapidly throughout Belgium, Holland, and France. A new edition, bearing the approbation of ten doctors of the Sorbonne, soon appeared at Paris. On the other hand, on 1 August, 1641, a decree of the Holy Office condemned the work and prohibited its reading; and the following year Urban VIII renewed the condemnation and interdiction in his Bull "In eminenti". The pope justified his sentence with two principal reasons: first, the violation of the decree forbidding Catholics to publish anything on the subject of grace without the authorization of the Holy See; second, the reproduction of several of the errors of Baius. At the same time, and in the interests of peace, the sovereign pontiff interdicted several other works



directed against the "Augustinus". Despite these wise precautions the Bull, which some pretended was forged or interpolated, was not received everywhere without difficulty. In Belgium, where the Archbishop of Mechlin and the university were rather favourable to the new ideas, the controversy lasted for ten years. But it was France which thenceforth became the chief centre of the agitation. At Paris, St-Cyran, who was powerful through his relations besides being very active, succeeded in spreading simultaneously the doctrines of the "Augustinus" and the principles of an exaggerated moral and disciplinary rigorism, all under the pretence of a return to the primitive Church. He had succeeded especially in winning over to his ideas the influential and numerous family of Arnauld of Andilly, notably Mère Angélique Arnauld, Abbess of Port-Royal, and through her the religious of that important convent. When he died, in 1643, Doctor Antoine\*

Arnauld quite naturally succeeded him in the direction of the movement which he had created. The new leader lost no time in asserting himself in startling fashion by the publication of his book "On Frequent Communion", which would have been more correctly entitled "Against Frequent Communion" but which, as it was written with skill and a great display of erudition, did not a little towards strengthening the party.

Although the Sorbonne had accepted the Bull "In eminenti", and the Archbishop of Paris had, in 1644 proscribed the work of Jansenius, it continued to be spread and recommended, on the pretext that authority had not rejected a single well-determined thesis. It was then (1649) that Cornet, syndic of the Sorbonne, took the initiative in a more radical measure; he extracted five propositions from the much-discussed work, two from the book "On Frequent Communion", and submitted them to the judgment of the faculty. This body, prevented by the Parlement from pursuing the examination it had begun, referred the affair to the general assembly of the clergy in 1650. The



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greater number considered it more fitting that Rome should pronounce, and eighty-five bishops wrote in this sense to Innocent X, transmitting to him the first five propositions. Eleven other bishops addressed to the sovereign pontiff a protest against the idea of bringing the matter to trial elsewhere than in France. They demanded in any case the institution of a special tribunal, as in the "De auxiliis" affair, and the opening of a debate in which the theologians of both sides should be allowed to submit their arguments. The decision of Innocent X was what might have been expected: he acceded to the request of the majority, keeping in view as far as possible the wishes of the minority. A commission was appointed, consisting of five cardinals and thirteen consultors, some of whom were known to favour acquittal. Its laborious examination lasted two years: it held thirty-six long sessions, of which the last ten were presided over by the pope in person. The "Augustinus" which, as has been said, had friends on the bench, was defended with skill and tenacity. Finally its advocates presented a table of three columns, in which they distinguished as many interpretations of the five propositions: a Calvinistic interpretation, rejected as heretical, a Pelagian or Semipelagian interpretation, identified by them with the traditional doctrine, also to be cast aside, and lastly, their interpretation, the idea of St. Augustine himself, which could not but be approved. This plea, skilful as it was could not avert the solemn condemnation, by the Bull "Cum occasione" (31 May, 1653), of the five propositions, which were as follows:

- Some of God's commandments are impossible to just men who wish and strive (to keep them) considering the powers they actually have, the grace by which these precepts may become possible is also wanting;
- In the state of fallen nature no one ever resists interior grace;
- To merit, or demerit, in the state of fallen nature we must be free from all external constraint, but not from interior necessity,
- The Semipelagians admitted the necessity of interior preventing grace for all acts, even for the beginning of faith; but they fell into heresy in pretending that this grace is such that man may either follow or resist it;
- To say that Christ died or shed His blood for all men, is Semipelagianism.

These five propositions were rejected as heretical, the first four absolutely, the fifth if understood in the sense that Christ died only for the predestined. All are implicitly contained in the second, and through it, all are connected with the above-mentioned erroneous conception of the state of innocence and the original fall. If it be true that fallen man never resists interior grace (second proposition), it follows that a just man who violates a commandment of God did not have the grace to observe it. That he therefore transgresses it through inability to fulfil it (first proposition). If, however, he has sinned and thus demerited, it is clear that, to demerit, the liberty of indifference is not requisite, and what is said of demerit must also be said of its correlative, merit (third proposition). On the other hand, if grace is often wanting to the just, since they fall, it is wanting still more to sinners; it is therefore impossible to maintain that the death of Jesus Christ assured to every man the graces necessary for salvation (fifth proposition). If this be so, the Semipelagians were in error in admitting the universal distribution of a grace which may be resisted (fourth proposition).



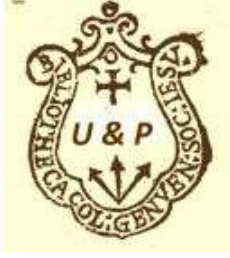
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### Resistance of the Jansenists

Well received by the Sorbonne and the General Assembly of the Clergy, the Bull "Cum occasione" was promulgated with the royal sanction. This should have opened the eyes of the partisans of Jansenius. They were given the alternative of finally renouncing their errors, or of openly resisting the supreme authority. They were thrown for the moment into embarrassment and hesitation, from which Arnould extricated them by a subtlety: they must, he said, accept the condemnation of the five propositions, and reject them, as did the pope, only, these propositions were not contained in the book of the Bishop of Ypres, or if they were found therein, it was in another sense than in the pontifical document; the idea of Jansenius was the same as that of St. Augustine, which the Church neither could, nor wished to, censure. This interpretation was not tenable; it was contrary to the text of the Bull, no less than to the minutes of the discussions which had preceded it, and throughout which these propositions were considered and Presented as expressing the sense of the "Augustinus". In March, 1654, thirty-eight bishops rejected the interpretation, and communicated their decision to the sovereign pontiff, who thanked and congratulated them. The Jansenists persisted none the less in an attitude opposed alike to frankness and to logic. The occasion soon arrived for them to support this with a complete theory. The Duc de Liancourt, one of the protectors of the party, was refused absolution until he should change his sentiments and accept purely and simply the condemnation of the "Augustinus". Arnould took up his pen and in two successive letters protested against any such exaction. Ecclesiastical judgments, he said, are not all of equal value, and do not entail the same obligations; where there is question of the truth or falsity of a doctrine, of its revealed origin or its heterodoxy, the Church in virtue of its Divine mission is qualified to decide; it is a matter of right. But if the doubt bears upon the presence of this doctrine in a book, it is a question of purely human fact, which as such does not fall under the jurisdiction of the supernatural teaching authority instituted in the Church by Jesus Christ. In the former case, the Church having pronounced sentence, we have no choice but to conform our belief to its decision; in the latter, its word should not be openly contradicted it claims from us the homage of a respectful silence but not that of an interior assent. Such is the famous distinction between right and fact, which was henceforth to be the basis of their resistance, and through which the recalcitrants pretended to remain Catholics, united to the visible body of Christ despite all their obstinacy. This distinction is both logically and historically the denial of the doctrinal power of the Church. For how is it possible to teach and defend revealed doctrine if its affirmation or denial cannot be discerned in a book or a writing, whatever its form or its extent? In fact, from the beginning, councils and popes have approved and imposed as orthodox certain formulas and certain works, and from the beginning have proscribed others as being tainted with heresy or error.

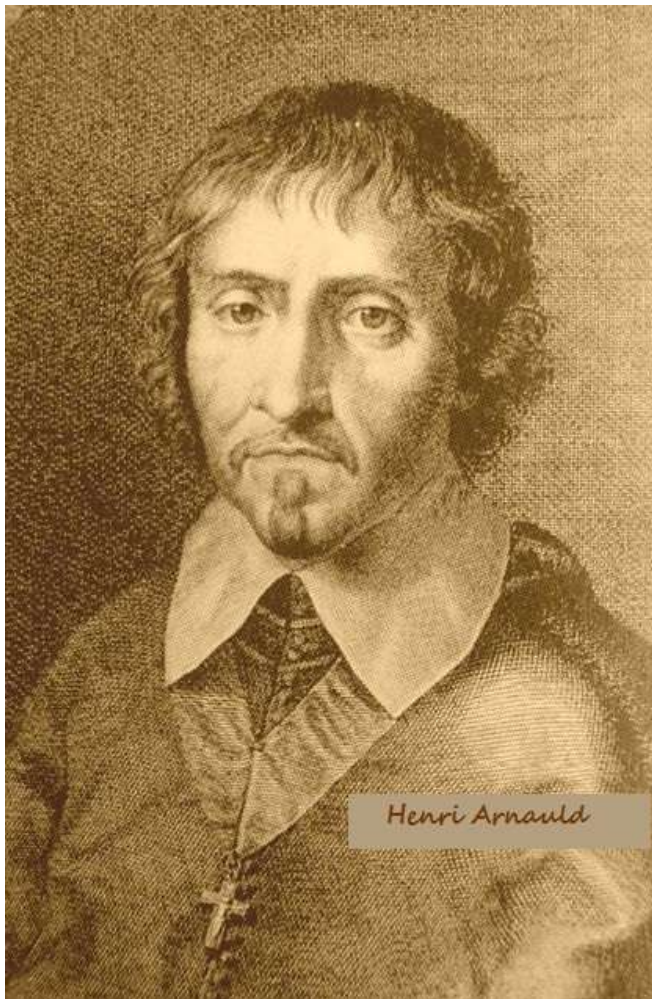


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The expedient contrived by Arnauld was so opposed to both fact and reason that a number of Jansenists who were more consistent in their contumacy, such as Pascal, refused to adopt it or to subscribe to the condemnation of the five propositions in any sense. The greater number, however, took advantage of it to mislead others or deceive themselves. All of them, moreover, through personal intercourse, preaching, or writing, displayed extraordinary activity in behalf of their ideas. They aimed especially, following the tactics inaugurated by St-Cyran, at introducing them into



religious orders, and in this way they were in a measure successful, e.g. with the Oratory of Berulle. Against the Jesuits, in whom from the first they had encountered capable and determined adversaries, they had vowed a profound antipathy and waged a war to the death. This inspired the "Provinciales" which appeared in 1656. These were letters supposedly addressed to a provincial correspondent. Their author Blaise Pascal, abusing his admirable genius, therein lavished the resources of a captivating style and an inexhaustible sarcastic humour to taunt and decry the Society of Jesus, as favouring and propagating a relaxed and corrupt moral code. To this end the errors or imprudences of some members, emphasized with malicious exaggeration, were made to appear as the official doctrine of the whole order. The "Provinciales" were translated into elegant Latin by Nicole disguised for the occasion under the pseudonym of Wilhelmus Wendrochius. They did a great deal of harm.

However, the Sorbonne, again declaring itself against the faction, had, by 138 votes against 68, condemned the latest writings of Arnauld, and, on his refusal to submit, it dismissed him, together with sixty other doctors who made

common cause with him. The assembly of bishops in 1656 branded as heretical the unfortunate theory of right and of fact, and reported its decision to Alexander VII, who had just succeeded Innocent X. On 16 October the pope replied to this communication by the Bull "Ad sanctam Beati Petri sedem". He praised the clear-sighted firmness of the episcopate and confirmed in the following terms the condemnation pronounced by his predecessor: "We declare and define that the five propositions have been drawn from the book of Jansenius entitled 'Augustinus', and that they have been condemned in the sense of the same Jansenius and we once more condemn them as such." Relying on these words, the Assembly of the Clergy of the following year (1657) drew up a formula of faith conformable thereto and made subscription to it obligatory. The Jansenists would not give in. They claimed that no one could exact a lying signature from those who were not convinced of the truth of the matter. The religious of Port-Royal were especially conspicuous for





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their obstinacy, and the Archbishop of Paris, after several fruitless admonitions, was forced to debar them from receiving the sacraments. Four bishops openly allied themselves with the rebellious party: they were Henri Arnauld of Angers Buzenval of Beauvais, Caulet of Pamiers, and Pavillon of Aleth. Some claimed besides that the Roman pontiff alone had the right to exact such subscription. In order to silence them, Alexander VII, at the instance of several members of the episcopate, issued (15 February 1664) a new Constitution, beginning with the words, "Regiminis Apostolici". In this he enjoined, with threat of canonical penalties for disobedience, that all ecclesiastics, as well as all religious, men and women, should subscribe to the following very definite formulary:

I, (Name), submitting to the Apostolic constitutions of the sovereign pontiffs, Innocent X and Alexander VII, published 31 May, 1653 and 16 October, 1656, sincerely repudiate the five propositions extracted from the book of Jansenius entitled 'Augustinus', and I condemn them upon oath in the very sense expressed by that author, as the Apostolic See has condemned them by the two above mentioned Constitutions (Enchiridion, 1099).

It would be a mistake to believe that this direct intervention of the pope sustained as it was by Louis XIV, completely ended the stubborn opposition. The real Jansenists underwent no change of sentiment. Some of them, such as Antoine\* Arnauld and the greater number of the religious of Port-Royal, defying both the ecclesiastical and the civil authority, refused their signature, on the pretext that it was not in the power of any person to command them to perform an act of hypocrisy, others subscribed, but at the same time protesting more or less openly that it applied only to the question of right, that the question of fact was reserved and should be so, since in this respect the Church had no jurisdiction, and above all no infallibility. Among those who stood for explicit restriction and hence for refusal to sign the formulary as it was, must be numbered the four bishops mentioned above. In the mandates through which they communicated to their flocks the Bull "Apostolici" they did not hesitate expressly to maintain the distinction between fact and right. The pope being informed of this, condemned these mandates, 18 January, 1667. He did not stop there, but, in order to safeguard both his authority and the unity of belief, he decided, with the full approbation of Louis XIV to subject the conduct of the culprits to a canonical judgment, and for this purpose he appointed as judges nine other members of the French episcopate.

### **The peace of Clement IX**

In the midst of all this, Alexander VII died, 22 May, 1667. His successor Clement IX wished at first to continue the process, and he confirmed the appointed judges in all their powers. However, the king, who had at first displayed great zeal in seconding the Holy See in the affair, seemed to have let his ardour cool. Rome had not judged it expedient to yield to all his wishes regarding the formation of the ecclesiastical tribunal. Together with his court he began to be apprehensive lest a blow should be struck at the "liberties" of the Gallican Church. The Jansenists skilfully turned these apprehensions to their profit. They had already won over several ministers of state, notably Lyonne, and they succeeded in gaining for their cause nineteen members of the episcopate, who in consequence wrote to the sovereign pontiff and to the king. In their petition to the pope these bishops, while protesting their profound respect and entire obedience, observed that the infallibility of the Church did not extend to facts outside of revelation. They further confounded purely human or purely personal facts with dogmatic facts, i.e. such as were implied by a dogma or were in necessary connection with it, and under cover of this confusion, they ended by affirming that their doctrine, the doctrine of the four accused bishops, was the common doctrine of the theologians most devoted to the Holy See, of Baronius, Bellarmine, Pallavicini, etc. The same assertions were



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repeated in a more audacious form in the address to the king, in which they spoke also of the necessity of guarding against theories which were new and "harmful to the interests and safety of the State". These circumstances brought about a very delicate situation, and there was reason to fear that too great severity would lead to disastrous results. On this account the new nuncio, Bargellini, inclined towards a peaceful arrangement, for which he obtained the pope's consent. D'Estrées, the Bishop of Laon, was chosen as mediator, and at his request there were associated with him de Gondren, Archbishop of Sens. and Vialar, Bishop of Châlons, both of whom had signed the two petitions just spoken of, and were, therefore, friends of the four accused prelates. It was agreed that these last should subscribe without restriction to the formulary and cause it to be subscribed to in like manner by their clergy in diocesan synods, and that these subscriptions should take the place of an express retractation of the mandates sent out by the bishops. Pursuant to this arrangement they convened their synods, but, as later became known all four gave oral explanations authorizing respectful silence on the question of fact, and it would seem that they acted thus with some connivance on the part of the mediators, unknown, however, to the nuncio and perhaps to d'Estrées. But this did not prevent them from affirming, in a common address to the sovereign pontiff, that they themselves and their priests had signed the formulary, as had been done in the other dioceses of France.



D'Estrées for his part wrote at the same time: "The four bishops have just conformed, by a new and sincere subscription, with the other bishops". Both letters were transmitted by the nuncio to Rome, where Lyonne, also alleging that the signatures were absolutely regular, insisted that the affair should be brought to an end. For this reason the pope, who had received these documents 24 September, informed Louis XIV of the fact about 28 September, expressing his joy for the "subscription pure and simple" which had been obtained, announcing his intention to restore the bishops in question to favour and requesting the king to do the same. However, before the Briefs of reconciliation thus announced had been sent to each of the four prelates concerned, rumours which had at first been current with regard to their lack of frankness grew more definite, and took the shape of formal and repeated denunciations. Hence, by order of Clement IX, Bargellini had to make a new investigation at Paris. As the final result he sent to Rome a report drawn up by Vialar. This report stated with regard to the four bishops: "They have condemned and caused to be condemned the five propositions with all manner of sincerity, without any exception or restriction whatever, in every sense in which the Church has condemned them"; but he then added explanations concerning the question of fact which were not altogether free from ambiguity. The pope, no less perplexed than before, appointed a commission of twelve cardinals to obtain information. These secured, it seems, the proof of the language made use of by the bishops in their synods. Nevertheless, in consideration of the very grave difficulties which would result from opening up the whole case again, the majority of the commission held that they might and should abide practically by the testimony of the official documents and especially by that of the minister Lyonne regarding the reality of the "subscription pure and simple", at the same time emphasizing anew this point as the essential basis and the condition sine qua non of peace.

The four Briefs of reconciliation were then drawn up and dispatched; they bear the date, 19 January, 1669. In them Clement IX recalls the testimony he had received "concerning the real and complete



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obedience with which they had sincerely subscribed to the formulary, condemning the five propositions without any exception or restriction, according to all the senses in which they had been condemned by the Holy See". He remarks further that being "most firmly resolved to uphold the constitutions of his predecessors, he would never have admitted a single restriction or exception". These preambles were as explicit and formal as possible. They prove, especially when compared with the terms and object of the formulary of Alexander VII, how far wrong the Jansenists were in celebrating this termination of the affair as the triumph of their theory, as the acceptance by the pope himself of the distinction between right and fact. On the other hand it is clear from the whole course of the negotiations that the loyalty of these champions of a stainless and unflinching moral code was more than doubtful. At all events, the sect profited by the muddle these manoeuvres had created to extend its conquest still further and to get a stronger hold on several religious congregations. It was favoured by various circumstances. Among them must be included the growing infatuation in France for the so-called Gallican Liberties, and in consequence a certain attitude of defiance, or at least indocility, towards the supreme authority; then the Declaration of 1682, and finally the unfortunate affair of the Régale. It is worthy of remark that in this last conflict it was two Jansenist bishops of the deepest dye who most energetically upheld the rights of the Church and the Holy See, while the greater number of the others too readily bowed before the arrogant pretensions of the civil power.

### **Jansenism at the beginning of the eighteenth century**

Despite the reticence and equivocation which it allowed to continue, the "Peace of Clement IX" found a certain justification for its name in the period of relative calm which followed it, and which lasted until the end of the seventeenth century. Many minds were tired of the incessant strife, and this very weariness favoured the cessation of polemics. Moreover the Catholic world and the Holy See were at that time preoccupied with a multitude of grave questions, and through force of circumstances Jansenism was relegated to second place. Mention has already been made of the signs of a recrudescence of Gallicanism betrayed in the Four Articles of 1682, and in the quarrels of which the Régale was the subject. To this period also belongs the sharp conflict regarding the franchises, or droit d'asile (right of asylum), the odious privilege concerning which Louis XIV showed an obstinacy and arrogance which passed all bounds (1687). Moreover, the Quietist doctrines spread by de Molinos, and which seduced for a brief period even the pious and learned Fénelon as well as the relaxed opinions of certain moralists, furnished matter for many condemnations on the part of Innocent XI, Alexander VIII, and Innocent XII. Finally, another impassioned debate had arisen which drew into the arena several groups of the most distinguished and best intentioned theologians, and which was only definitively closed by Benedict XIV, namely the controversy concerning the Chinese and Malabar Rites. All these combined causes had for a time distracted public attention from the contents and the partisans of the "Augustinus". Besides, "Jansenism" was beginning to serve as a label for rather divergent tendencies, not all of which deserved equal reprobation. The out-and-out Jansenists, those who persisted in spite of everything in upholding the principle of necessitating grace and the consequent errors of the five propositions, had almost disappeared with Pascal. The remainder of the really Jansenist party without committing itself to a submission pure and simple, assumed a far more cautious demeanour. The members rejected the expression "necessitating grace", substituting for it that of a grace efficacious "in itself", seeking thus to identify themselves with the Thomists and the Augustinians.



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Abandoning the plainly heretical sense of the five propositions, and repudiating any intention to resist legitimate authority, they confined themselves to denying the infallibility of the Church with regard to dogmatic facts. Then, too, they were still the fanatical preachers of a discouraging rigorism, which they adorned with the names of virtue and austerity, and, under pretext of combating abuses, openly antagonized the incontestable characteristics of Catholicism especially its unity of government, the traditional continuity of its customs, and the legitimate part which heart and feeling play in its worship. With all their skilful extenuations they bore the mark of the levelling, innovating, and arid spirit of Calvinism. These were the fins Jansenistes. They formed thenceforth the bulk of the sect, or rather in them the sect properly so called was summed up. But apart from them, though side by side with them, and bordering on their tendencies and beliefs, history points out two rather well-defined groups known as the "duped Jansenists" and the "quasi-Jansenists". The first were in good faith pretty much what the fins Jansenistes were by system and tactics: they appear to us as convinced adversaries of necessitating grace, but no less sincere defenders of efficacious grace; rigorists in moral and sacramental questions, often opposed, like the Parleментарians, to the rights of the Holy See; generally favourable to the innovations of the sect in matters of worship and discipline. The second category is that of men of Jansenist tinge. While remaining within bounds in theological opinions, they declared themselves against really relaxed morality against exaggerated popular devotions and other similar abuses. The greater number were at bottom zealous Catholics, but their zeal, agreeing with that of the Jansenists on so many points, took on, so to speak, an outer colouring of Jansenism, and they were drawn into closer sympathy with the party in proportion to the confidence with which it inspired them. Even more than the "duped" Jansenists they were extremely useful in screening the sectarians and in securing for them, on the part of the pastors and the multitude of the faithful, the benefit either of silence or of a certain leniency.



But the error remained too active in the hearts of the real Jansenists to endure this situation very long. At the beginning of the eighteenth century it manifested itself by a double occurrence which revived all the strife and trouble. The discussion began afresh with regard to the "case of conscience" of 1701. A provincial conference was supposed to inquire whether absolution might be given to a cleric who declared that he held on certain points the sentiments "of those called Jansenists", especially that of respectful silence on the question of fact. Forty doctors of the Sorbonnet — among them some of great renown, such as Natalis Alexander — decided affirmatively. The publication of this decision aroused all enlightened Catholics, and the "case of conscience" was condemned by Clement XI (1703), by Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris, by a large number of bishops, and finally by the faculties of theology of Louvain, Douai, and Paris. The last-named, however as its slowness would indicate, did not arrive at this decision without

difficulty. As for the doctors who signed, they were terrified by the storm they had let loose, and either retracted or explained their action as best they might, with the exception of the author of the whole movement, Dr. Petitpied, whose name was erased from the list of the faculty. But the Jansenists, though pressed hard by some and abandoned by others, did not yield. For this reason Clement XI, at the request of the Kings of France and Spain, issued 16 July 1705, the Bull "Vineam



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Domini Sabaoth" (Enchiridion, 1350) in which he formally declared that respectful silence was not sufficient for the obedience due to the constitutions of his predecessors. This Bull, received with submission by the assembly of the clergy of 1705, in which only the Bishop of Saint-Pons obstinately refused to agree with the opinion of his colleagues, was afterwards promulgated as a law of the State. It may be said to have officially terminated that period of half a century of agitation occasioned by the signing of the formulary. It also terminated the existence of Port-Royal des Champs, which up to that time had remained a notorious centre and hotbed of rebellion.

When it was proposed to the religious that they should accept the new Bull, they would consent only with this clause: "that it was without derogating from what had taken place in regard to them at the time of the peace of the Church under Clement XI". This restriction brought up again their entire past, as was clearly shown by their explanation of it, and therefore made their submission a hollow pretence. Cardinal de Noailles urged them in vain; he forbade them the sacraments, and two of the religious died without receiving them, unless it were secretly from a disguised priest. As all measures had failed, it was high time to put an end to this scandalous resistance. A Bull suppressed the title of the Abbey of Port-Royal des Champs, and reunited that house and its holdings to the Paris house. The Court gave peremptory orders for a prompt execution, and, despite all the means of delay contrived and carried out by those interested, the pontifical sentence had its full effect. The surviving choir religious were scattered among the convents of the neighbouring destroyed dioceses (29 October 1709). This separation had the desired good results. All the rebellious nuns ended by submitting, save one, the mother prioress, who died at Blois without the sacraments, in 1716. The Government wishing to eradicate even the trace of this nest of errors, as Clement XI called it, destroyed all the buildings and removed elsewhere the bodies buried in the cemetery.

During the disputes concerning the "case of conscience", a new book came cautiously on the scene another "Augustinus", pregnant with storms and tempests, as violent as the first. The author was Paschase Quesnel, at first a member of the French Oratory, but expelled from that congregation for his Jansenistic opinions (1684), and since 1689 a refugee at Brussels with the aged Antoine\* Arnauld whom he succeeded in 1696 as leader of the party. The work had been published in part as early as 1671 in a 12mo volume entitled "Abrégé de la morale de l'Évangile, ou pensées chrétiennes sur le texte des quatre évangélistes". It appeared with the hearty approbation of Vialar, Bishop of Châlons, and, thanks to a style at once attractive and full of unction which seemed in general to reflect a solid and sincere piety, it soon met with great success. But in the later development of his first work, Quesnel had extended it to the whole of the New Testament. He issued it in 1693, in an edition which comprised four large volumes entitled, "Nouveau testament en français avec des réflexions morales sur chaque verset". This edition, besides the earlier approbation of Vialar which it inopportunately bore, was formally approved and heartily recommended by his successor, de Noailles, who, as subsequent events showed, acted imprudently in the matter and without being well-informed as to the contents of the book. The "Réflexions morales" of Quesnel reproduced, in fact, the theories of the irresistible efficaciousness of grace and the limitations of God's will with regard to the salvation of men. Hence they soon called forth the sharpest criticism, and at the same time attracted the attention of the guardians of the Faith. The Bishops of Apt (1703) Gap (1704), Nevers, and Besançon (1707) condemned them, and, after a report from the Inquisition, Clement XI proscribed them by the Brief "Universi dominici" (1708) as containing the propositions already condemned and as manifestly savouring of the Jansenist heresy". Two years later (1710) the Bishops of Luçon and La Rochelle forbade the reading of the book.



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Their ordinance, posted in the capital, gave rise to a conflict with Noailles, who, having become cardinal and Archbishop of Paris, found himself under the necessity of withdrawing the approbation he had formerly given at Châlons. However, as he hesitated, less through attachment to error than through self love, to take this step, Louis XIV asked the pope to issue a solemn constitution and put an end to the trouble. Clement XI then subjected the book to a new and very minute examination, and in the Bull "Unigenitus" (8 September, 1713) he condemned 101 propositions which had been taken from the book (Enchiridion, 1351 sq.). Among these were some propositions which, in themselves and apart from the context, seemed to have an orthodox sense. Noailles and with him eight other bishops, though they did not refuse to proscribe the book, seized this pretext to ask explanations from Rome before accepting the Bull. This was the beginning of lengthy discussions the gravity of which increased with the death of Louis XIV (1715), who was succeeded in power by Philippe d'Orléans. The regent took a much less decided stand than his predecessor, and the change soon had its effect on various centres, especially on the Sorbonne, where the sectaries had succeeded in winning over the majority. The faculties of Paris, Reims, and Nantes, who had received the Bull, revoked their previous acceptance. Four bishops went even farther, having recourse to an expedient of which only heretics or declared schismatics had hitherto bethought themselves, and which was essentially at variance with the hierarchical concept of the Church; they appealed from the Bull "Unigenitus" to a general council (1717). Their example was followed by some of their colleagues, by hundreds of clerics and religious, by the Parlements and the magistracy Noailles, for a long time undecided and always inconsistent, ended by appealing also, but "from the pope obviously mistaken to the pope better informed and to a general council".



Clement XI, however, in the Bull "Pastoralis officii" (1718), condemned the appeal and excommunicated the appellants. But this did not disarm the opposition, which appealed from the second Bull as from the first Noailles himself published a new appeal, no longer chiefly to the pope "better informed", but to a council, and the Parlement of Paris, suppressed the Bull "Pastoralis". The multiplicity of these defections and the arrogant clamour of the appellants might give the impression that they constituted, if not a majority, at least a very imposing minority. Such, however, was not the case, and the chief evidence of this lies in the well-established fact that enormous sums were devoted to paying for these appeals. After allowing for these shameful and suggestive purchases, we find among the number of the appellants, one cardinal, about eighteen bishops, and three thousand clerics. But without leaving France, we find opposed to them four cardinals, a hundred bishops, and a hundred thousand clerics, that is, the moral unanimity of the French clergy. What is to be said, then, when this handful of protesters is compared to the whole of the Churches of England, the Low Countries, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Naples, Savoy, Portugal, Spain, etc., which, on being requested to pronounce, did so by proscribing the appeal as an act of schism and foolish revolt? The polemics, however, continued for several years. The return to unity of Cardinal de Noailles, who submitted without restriction in 1728 six months before his death, was a telling blow to the party of Quesnel. Henceforth it steadily grew less, so that not even the scenes that took place at the cemetery of Saint-Médard, of which mention is made below, restored it. But the Parlements, eager to declare themselves and to apply their Gallican and royalist principles,



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continued for a long time to refuse to receive the Bull "Unigenitus". They even made it the occasion to meddle in scandalous fashion in the administration of the sacraments, and to persecute bishops and priests accused of refusing absolution to those who would not submit to the Holy See.

### The convulsionaries

We have reviewed the long series of defensive measures contrived by the Jansenists rejection of the five propositions without rejection of the "Augustinus", explicit distinction between the question of right and the question of fact; restriction of ecclesiastical infallibility to the question of right; the tactics of respectful silence, and appeal to a general council. They had exhausted all the expedients of a theological and canonical discussion more obstinate than sincere. Not a single one of these had availed them anything at the bar of right reason or of legitimate authority. They then thought to invoke in their behalf the direct testimony of God Himself, namely, miracles. One of their number, an appellant, a rigorist to the point of having once passed two years without communicating, for the rest given to a retired and penitent life, the deacon François de Paris had died in 1727. They pretended that at his tomb in the little cemetery of Saint-Médard marvellous cures took place. A case alleged as such was examined by de Vintimille, Archbishop of Paris, who with proofs in hand



declared it false and supposititious (1731). But other cures were claimed by the party, and so noised abroad that soon the sick and the curious flocked to the cemetery. The sick experienced strange agitations, nervous commotions, either real or simulated. They fell into violent transports and inveighed against the pope and the bishops, as the convulsionaries of Cévennes had denounced the papacy and the Mass. In the excited crowd women were especially noticeable, screaming, yelling, throwing themselves about, sometimes assuming the most astounding and unseemly postures. To justify these

extravagances, complacent admirers had recourse to the theory of "figurism". As in their eyes the fact of the general acceptance of the Bull "Unigenitus" was the apostasy predicted by the Apocalypse, so the ridiculous and revolting scenes enacted by their friends symbolized the state of upheaval which, according to them, involved everything in the Church. They reverted thus to a fundamental thesis such as has been met with in Jansenius and St-Cyran, and which these latter had borrowed from the Protestants. A journal the "Nouvelles Ecclesiastiques", had been founded in 1729 to defend and propagate these ideas and practices, and the "Nouvelles" was profusely spread, thanks to the pecuniary resources furnished by the Boîte à Perrette, the name given later to the capital or common fund of the sect begun by Nicole, and which grew so rapidly that it exceeded a million of money. It had hitherto served chiefly to defray the cost of appeals and to support, in France as well as in Holland, the religious, men and women, who deserted their convents or congregations for the sake of Jansenism.



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The cemetery of Saint-Médard, having become the scene of exhibitions as tumultuous as they were indecent, was closed by order of the court in 1732. The oeuvre des convulsions, as its partisans called it, was not, however, abandoned. The convulsions reappeared in private houses with the same characteristics, but more glaring. Henceforth with few exceptions they seized only upon young girls, who, it was said, possessed a divine gift of healing. But what was more astonishing was that their bodies, subjected during the crisis to all sorts of painful tests, seemed at once insensible and invulnerable; they were not wounded by the sharpest instruments, or bruised by enormous weights or blows of incredible violence. A convulsionary, nicknamed "la Salamandre", remained suspended for more than nine minutes above a fiery brazier, enveloped only in a sheet, which also remained intact in the midst of the flames. Tests of this sort had received in the language of the sect the denomination of secours, and the secouristes, or partisans of the secours, distinguished between the petits-secours and the grands-secours, only the latter being supposed to require supernatural force. At this point, a wave of defiance and opposition arose among the Jansenists themselves. Thirty appellant doctors openly declared by common consent against the convulsions and the secours. A lively discussion arose between the secouristes and the anti-secouristes. The secouristes in turn were soon divided into discernantes and melangistes, the former distinguishing between the work itself and its grotesque or objectionable features, which they ascribed to the Devil or to human weakness, while the latter regarded the convulsions and the secours as a single work coming from God, in which even the shocking elements had purpose and significance.

Without entering further into the details of these distinctions and divisions, we may ask how we are to judge what took place at the cemetery of Saint-Médard and the matters connected therewith. Whatever may have been said on the subject, there was absolutely no trace of the Divine seal in these happenings. It is needless to recall St. Augustine's principle that all prodigies accomplished outside the Church, especially those against the Church, are by the very fact more than suspicious: "Praeter unitatem, et qui facit miracula nihil est". Two things only call for remark. Several of the so-called miraculous cures were made the subject of a judicial investigation, and it was proved that they were based only on testimonies which were either false, interested, preconcerted, and more than once retracted, or at least valueless, the echoes of diseased and fanatic imaginations. Moreover, the convulsions and the secours certainly took place under circumstances which mere good taste would reject as unworthy of Divine wisdom and holiness. Not only were the cures, both acknowledged and claimed, supplementary of one another, but cures, convulsions, and secours belonged to the same order of facts and tended to the same concrete end. We are therefore justified in concluding that the finger of God did not appear in the whole or in any of its parts. On the other hand, although fraud was discovered in several cases, it is impossible to ascribe them all indiscriminately to trickery or ignorant simplicity. Critically speaking, the authenticity of some extraordinary phenomena is beyond question, as they took place publicly and in the presence of reliable witnesses, particularly anti-secourist Jansenists. The question remains whether all these prodigies are explicable by natural causes, or whether the direct action of the Devil is to be recognized in some of them. Each of these opinions has its adherents, but the former seems difficult to uphold despite, and in part perhaps because of, the light which recent experiments in suggestion, hypnotism, and spiritism have thrown on the problem. However this may be, one thing is certain; the things here related served only to discredit the cause of the party which exploited them. Jansenists themselves came at length to feel ashamed of such practices. The excesses connected with them more than once forced the civil authorities to intervene at least in a mild way; but this creation of fanaticism succumbed to ridicule and died by its own hand.





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### Jansenism in Holland and the schism of Utrecht

Injurious as Jansenism was to religion and the Church in France, it did not there lead to schism properly so called. The same does not hold good of the Dutch Low Countries, which the most important or most deeply implicated of the sectaries had long made their meeting place, finding there welcome and safety. Since the United Provinces had for the most part gone over to Protestantism, Catholics had lived there under the direction of vicars Apostolic. Unhappily these



representatives of the pope were soon won over to the doctrines and intrigues of which the "Augustinus" was the origin and centre. De Neercassel, titular Archbishop of Castoria, who governed the whole church in the Netherlands from 1663 to 1686, made no secret of his intimacy with the party. Under him the country began to become the refuge of all whose obstinacy forced them to leave France and Belgium. Thither came such men as Antoine\* Arnauld, du Vaucel, Gerberon, Quesnel, Nicole, Petitpied, as well as a number of priests, monks, and nuns who preferred exile to the acceptance of the pontifical Bulls. A large number of these deserters belonged to the Congregation of the Oratory, but other orders shared with it this unfortunate distinction. When the fever of the appeals was at its height, twenty-six Carthusians of the Paris house escaped from their cloister during the night and fled to Holland. Fifteen Benedictines of the Abbey of Orval, in the Diocese of Trier, gave the same scandal. Peter Codde, who succeeded Neercassel in 1686, and who

bore the title of Archbishop of Sebaste, went further than his predecessor. He refused to sign the formulary and, when summoned to Rome, defended himself so poorly that he was first forbidden to exercise his functions, and then deposed by a decree of 1704. He died still obstinate in 1710. He had been replaced by Gerard Potkamp, but this appointment and those that followed were rejected by a section of the clergy, to whom the States-General lent their support. The conflict lasted a long time, during which the episcopal functions were not fulfilled. In 1723 the Chapter of Utrecht i.e. a group of seven or eight priests who assumed this name and quality in order to put an end to a precarious and Painful situation, elected, on its own authority, as archbishop of the same city, one of its members, Cornelius Steenhoven, who then held the office of vicar-general. This election was not canonical, and was not approved by the pope. Steenhoven nevertheless had the audacity to get himself consecrated by Varlet, a former missionary bishop and coadjutor Bishop of Babylon, who was at that time suspended, interdicted, and excommunicated. He thus consummated the schism, interdicted likewise and excommunicated, he died in 1725. Those who had elected him transferred their support to Barchman Wuitiers, who had recourse to the same consecrator. The unhappy Varlet lived long enough to administer the episcopal unction to two successors of Barchman, van der Croon and Meindarts. The sole survivor of this sorry line, Meindarts, ran the risk of seeing his



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dignity become extinct with himself. To prevent this, the Dioceses of Haarlem (1742) and Deventer (1757) were created, and became suffragans of Utrecht. But Rome always refused to ratify these outrageously irregular acts, invariably replying to the notification of each election with a declaration of nullification and a sentence of excommunication against those elected and their adherents. Yet, in spite of everything, the schismatical community of Utrecht has prolonged its existence until modern times. At present it numbers about 6000 members in the three united dioceses. It would scarcely be noticed if it had not, in the last century, made itself heard by protesting against Pius IX's re-establishment of the Catholic hierarchy in Holland (1853), by declaring itself against the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception (1854) and Papal Infallibility (1870), and lastly, after the Vatican Council, in allying itself with the "Old Catholics", whose first so-called bishop it consecrated.

### Decline and end of Jansenism

During the second half of the eighteenth century the influence of Jansenism was prolonged by taking on various forms and ramifications, and extending to countries other than those in which we have hitherto followed it. In France the Parlements continued to pronounce judgments, to inflict fines and confiscations, to suppress episcopal ordinances, and even to address remonstrances to the king in defence of the pretended right of the appellants to absolution and the reception of the last sacraments. In 1756 they rejected a very moderate decree of Benedict XIV regulating the matter. A royal declaration confirming the Roman decision did not find favour in their eyes, and it required all the remaining strength of the monarchy to compel them to register it. The sectaries seemed by degrees to detach themselves from the primitive heresy, but they retained unabated the spirit of insubordination and schism, the spirit of opposition to Rome, and above all a mortal hatred of the Jesuits. They had vowed the ruin of that order, which they always found blocking their way, and in order to attain their end they successively induced Catholic princes and ministers in Portugal,



France, Spain, Naples, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies the Duchy of Parma, and elsewhere to join hands with the worst leaders of impiety and philosophism. The same tendency was displayed in the work of Febronius, condemned (1764) by Clement XIII; and, instilled into Joseph II by his councillor Godefried van Swieten, a disciple of the revolted church of Utrecht, it became the principle of the innovations and ecclesiastical upheavals decreed by the sacristan-emperor (see FEBRONIANISM). It raged in similar fashion in Tuscany under the government of the Grand Duke Leopold, brother of Joseph II; and found another manifestation in the famous Synod of Pistoia (1786), the decrees of which, at once the quintessence of Gallicanism and of the heresy of Jansenism, were reprovved by the Bull of Pius VI, "Auctorem fidei" (1794). On French soil the remains of Jansenism were not completely extinguished by the French Revolution, but survived in some remarkable personalities, such as the constitutional Bishop Grégoire, and in some religious congregations, as the Sisters of St.

Martha, who did not return in a body to Catholic truth and unity until 1847. But its spirit lived on,



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especially in the rigorism which for a long time dominated the practice of the administration of the sacraments and the teaching of moral theology. In a great number of French seminaries, Bailly's "Théologie", which was impregnated with this rigorism, remained the standard textbook until Rome in 1852 put it on the Index "donec corrigatur". Among those who even prior to that had worked energetically against it, chiefly by offering in opposition the doctrines of St. Alphonsus, two names are deserving of special mention: Gousset, whose "Théologie morale" (1844) had been preceded by his "Justification de la theologie morale du bienheureux Alphonse-Marie Liguori" (2nd ed., 1832); Jean-Pierre Berman, professor at the seminary of Nancy for twenty-five years (1828-1853), and author of a "Theologia moralis ex S. Liguori" (7 vols., 1855).

Such is, in outline, the historical account of Jansenism, its origin, its phases, and its decline. It is evident that, besides its attachment to the "Augustinus" and its rigorism in morals, it is distinguished among heresies for crafty proceedings, chicane and lack of frankness on the part of its adherents, especially their pretence of remaining Catholics without renouncing their errors, of staying in the Church despite the Church itself, by skilfully eluding or braving with impunity the decisions of the supreme authority. Such conduct is beyond doubt without a parallel in the annals of Christianity previous to the outbreak of Jansenism in fact, it would be incredible if we did not in our own day find in certain groups of Modernists examples of this astonishing and absurd duplicity. The deplorable consequences, both theoretical and practical, of the Jansenist system, and of the polemics to which it gave rise, may readily be gathered from what has been said, and from the history of the last few centuries.

**About this page:** APA citation. Forget, J. (1910). Jansenius and Jansenism. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved July 9, 2010 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08285a.htm> - MLA citation. Forget, Jacques. "Jansenius and Jansenism." The Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. 8. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910. 9 Jul. 2010 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08285a.htm> - Transcription. This article was transcribed for New Advent by Tomas Hancil. - Ecclesiastical approbation. Nihil Obstat. October 1, 1910. Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. Imprimatur. +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

Nella controversie sulla Grazia, e in particolare sul rapporto tra Grazia e Libero Arbitrio, Fulgenzio Bellelli (morto nel 1742) e Johannes Laurentius Berti (morto nel 1766) facevano parte della corrente dell'**Augustinanesimo**:

Just as Thomism appeals to the teachings of St. Thomas as its authority, Augustinianism appeals to St. Augustine. Both systems maintain that grace is intrinsically and by its very nature efficacious, but Augustinianism claims merely a *proedeterminatio moralis*, and proceed not from the concept of God as the first and universal cause and prime mover, but with Jansen builds upon the idea of a twofold delight in human nature. The exponents of this system are: Berti, Bellelli, Louis Habert, Bertieri, Brancatus de Lauria, and others. The greatest defender of the system is Laurentius Berti (1696-1766), who in his work "De theologicis disciplinis" (Rome, 1739-) propounded the theory with such boldness, that the Archbishop of Vienne, Jean d'Yse de Saléon, in his work entitled "Le Bajanisme et le Jansénisme resuscités dans les livres de Bellelli et Bertieri" (s. l., 1745), declares it to be nothing other than a revival of Jansenism. After an official investigation, however, Benedict XIV exonerated the system.



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The foundation of the system is the same as that of Jansenism, though it claims to be thoroughly Augustinian. In Augustinianism also there is a ceaseless conflict between the heavenly delight and the evil delight of the flesh, and the stronger delight invariably gains the mastery over the will. Sufficient grace, as a weak delight, imparts merely the ability (*posse*), or such a feeble will that only the advent of the victorious delight of grace (*delectatio coelestis victrix, caritas*) can guarantee the will and the actual deed. Therefore, like Thomism, the system postulates an essential difference between sufficient and efficacious grace. The necessity of *gratia efficax* does not spring from the subordinate relation between *causa prima* and *causa secunda*, but from the inherited perversity of fallen human nature, whose evil inclinations can no longer, as once in Paradise, be overcome by the converting grace (*gratia versatilis; adjutorium sine quo non*), but only by the intrinsically efficacious heavenly delight (*gratia efficax; adjutorium quo*).

Augustinianism differs, however, from Jansenism in its most distinctive feature, since it regards the influence of the victorious delight as not intrinsically coercive, nor irresistible. Though the will follows the relatively stronger influence of grace or concupiscence infallibly (*infallibiliter*), it never does so necessarily (*necessario*). Although it may be said with infallible certainty that a decent man of good morals will not walk through the public streets in a state of nudity, he nevertheless retains the physical possibility of doing so, since there is no intrinsic compulsion to the maintenance of decency. Similar to this is the efficacy of grace. We may refrain from a criticism of Augustinianism since it never really became a school, and since it has as little in common with true Augustinianism, as Jansenism has.

Cfr.: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06710a.htm> - APA citation. Pohle, J. (1909). Controversies on Grace. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved July 9, 2010 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06710a.htm> - MLA citation. Pohle, Joseph. "Controversies on Grace." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 6. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909. 9 Jul. 2010 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06710a.htm> - Transcription. This article was transcribed for New Advent by Sean Hyland. Ecclesiastical approbation. Nihil Obstat. September 1, 1909. Remy Lafort, Censor. Imprimatur. +John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York.

### Viatora Coccaleo

A Capuchin friar, so called from his birthplace, Coccaglio in Lombardy, date of birth unknown; d. 1793. For a time he was lector in theology and wrote several works that give him a place among the noteworthy theologians in a period of theological decline. These are: "Tentamina theologico-scholastica" (Bergamo, 1768-74); "Tentaminum theologorum in moralibus Synopsis" (Venice, 1791); "Instituta moralia" (Milan, 1760). His defence of papal supremacy, "Italus ad Justinum Febronium" (Lucca, 1768; Trent, 1774), is one of the principal apologies against Febronius. Besides writing several works against Jansenism, he took part in the discussion concerning the devotion to the Sacred Heart and the sanctification of Holy Days, made famous by the Synod of Pistoja (1786), and published: "Riflessioni sopra l'origine e il fine della divozione del S. Cuore di Gesù" (Naples, 1780); "Riposta sul dubbio, se la sola Messa basti a santificare le feste" (Bologna, 1781). To these may be added his studies on the text and meaning of the poem of Prosper of Aquitaine, "Contra Ingratos" (2 vols., Brescia, 1756 and 1763) and his work on the philosophic spirit of Prosper's epigrams (Brescia, 1760).



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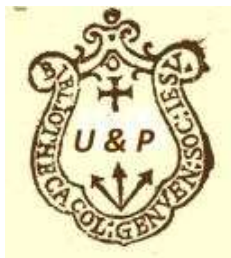
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La fama dell'abate don Celso Migliavacca dei canonici di San Salvatore è legata alle sue *Animadversiones in Historiam Theologicam* nelle quali attaccò Scipione Maffei dicendo che questi rendeva eretico sant'Agostino, resuscitava gli errori del Pelagianesimo ed errava integralmente sulle problematiche della Grazia e della Predestinazione.

Il benedettino Costantino Rotigni (1696-1776), da Trescone (Bergamo), è uno degli iniziatori del movimento giansenistico in Italia. Notevoli, tra i suoi scritti: 1) *Della necessità dell'amor di Dio per esser con lui riconciliati nel sacramento della penitenza, e della natura della penitenza soddisfattoria*, II ed., Vicenza 1750, pubblicato in I ed. con lo pseudonimo di "Roveredo". 2) *Istruzioni pastorali e mandamenti di Mons. Rastignac, fu Arcivescovo di Tours, sopra la penitenza e la giustizia cristiana*, I ed. parziale, Venezia 1751, completa, Brescia 1759. 3) *Il Trattato della confidenza*, comparso insieme alla I ed. delle *Istruzioni pastorali*, è traduzione e rifacimento di un'opera di G. B. Pavie de Fourquevaux (1693-1767), *Traité de la confiance chrétienne, ou de l'usage légitime des vérités de la grace*, Paris 1728. Oltre al testo del Fourquevaux l'opera del Rotigni contiene: 1) "Compendio delle verità della grazia di G. C. secondo la dottrina di S. Tommaso" (p. 1-93), estratto da A. Touron O.P. (+ 1775), *Vie de St Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris 1737, nella traduzione italiana di B. de Meaux, Venezia 1747. 2) "Lettera di Mons. Bossuet, Vescovo di Meaux, sullo stesso soggetto" (p. 94-100), "Sul mistero della predestinazione", 3 febbraio 1688. 3) "Lettera di un teologo sopra la speranza cristiana" (p. 228-250), cioè G. G. Duguet (1649-1733), *Lettres sur divers sujets de morale et de piété*, 10 voll. pubblicati a diverse riprese tra il 1708 e il 1782, V, Lett. I. 4) "Osservazioni teologiche sopra la formola di un atto di speranza che leggesi in un moderno catechismo" (p. 255-330). 5) "Osservazioni sopra l'ottavo Capo della 'Regolata divozione' da aggiungersi alla nuova edizione di Firenze del medesimo libro di Lamindo Pritanio (p. 313-360), contro l'opera di L. A. Muratori, *Della regolata divozione dei cristiani* (1747). Le aggiunte del Rotigni, ad eccezione dell'ultima, ripetono, ripetono i termini e gli autori di una polemica agitata in Francia (1734-1739) tra giansenisti rigidi e giansenisti moderati intorno al libro del Fourquevaux. Nel 1734 Nicola Petitpied (1665-1747), uno dei più accesi appellanti dalla Bolla "Unigenitus", pubblica nove *Lettres sur la crainte et la confiance*, nelle quali denuncia come erronea, falsa, pericolosa la seguente proposizione estratta dal libro del Fourquevaux: "Il timore dell'inferno in quanto può divenire nostro è contrario alla confidenza; il timore è per rapporto alla confidenza ciò che la è cupidità per rapporto alla carità". Ne nasce, in proposizioni ridotte, una disputa analoga a quella delle cinque proposizioni di Giansenio: gli uni ritrovano la proposizione nel libro del Fourquevaux, altri ve la ritrovano solo ad sensum, altri, infine, per niente. Nella polemica entrano, per l'uno o per l'altro dei contendenti, l'abate d'Etemare, N. Le Gros, l'oratoriano F. Mariette e i cronisti delle *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* di Utrecht, organo del giansenismo europeo, con scritti numerosi e vivaci, nei quali le autorità, inevitabili, di S. Agostino e



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di S. Tommaso sono poste accanto a Bossuet, Duguet, Nicole e Quesnel. La disputa si affievolisce intorno al 1739 con uno scritto conciliante di E. Boursier, *Lettres sur l'espérance et la confiance chrétienne* (1739). E' questo lo stato di cose che il Rotigni trasportava in Italia, nel 1751, con la sua traduzione corredata di "giunte". Di suo c'è l'attacco contro il Cap. VIII della Regolata divozione del Muratori, dove questi discorre della speranza. Il Rotigni tiene ad opporgli la dottrina dei suoi colleghi appellanti, con parole che passano da un'ammirazione discreta al tono derisorio: "E questi libri si stampano, e ristampano? Diligam te, Domine, fortitudo mea; e per vostra misericordia guardateci, o Signore, da questa pretesa Regolata divozione" (p. 360). Una prima risposta comparve nell'opera, pubblicata anonima ma dell'agostiniano Ambrogio Manchi, *Lamindi Pritani redivivi Epistola parenetica ad P. Benedictum Piazza e Societate Jesu, censorem minus aequum libelli Della regolata divozione de' cristiani, Venetiis 1755*. Tre appendici chiudono la diatriba: la seconda contro *Le glorie di Maria* (1750) di S. Alfonso, abbastanza riguardosa nella prima parte, ma alquanto aspra nella seconda, dove l'autore prende di mira la *Theologia moralis*, "ob multam nimiamque benignitatem, quae certe, ipsomet iudice, nauseantissima est" (p. 422). La terza appendice (p. 431-459) contro il Rotigni: "scrupuli excutiuntur Aleotophili sacerdotis". Singolare la posizione di S. Alfonso: contro il Manchi dovette difendere la sua critica garbata alle innovazioni del Muratori, ma in pieno accordo con lui scrisse l'opuscolo sulla speranza contro il Rotigni. Quest'ultimo, a sua volta, rispose con uno scritto, *Responsio ad auctorem appendicis positae ad calcem 'Epistulae paraeneticae'*, pubblicato in calce ad un'opera doppia, anonima, ma del carmelitano Federico di S. Antonio, I, *Avvertimenti teologici, storici e morali a spiegazione del trattato Della regolata divozione*; II, *Brevi osservazioni sopra un volume intitolato 'Lamindi Pritanii redivivi Epistola paraenetica'*, Venezia 1757. Alla fine del volume, con paginazione propria, la *Responsio* del Rotigni. Altro aspetto di questa polemica strana: il carmelitano ospita nel suo volume il Rotigni, del quale conosce l'indirizzo giansenistico e difende nello stesso tempo S. Alfonso, "uomo, come ho inteso, di piissima vita" (p. 397-399), il quale non era certo favorevole alle teorie morali dell'ospite.

(Giuseppe Cacciatore in *Opere Ascetiche*, II, Roma 1962, pp. XXXVI-XXXIX)

Cfr.: [http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ITASA0000/\\_PIK.HTM](http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ITASA0000/_PIK.HTM)

Le terme péjoratif 'jansénisme' – que les jansénistes n'ont jamais reconnu – trouve son origine dans le nom d'un théologien flamand de XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Cornelius Jansen, ou Jansénius, qui passe ses années de maturité à l'université de Louvain et meurt évêque d'Ypres en 1638. Son legs le plus controversé est un gros manuscrit qui porte le titre d'*Augustinus*, publié à titre posthume en 1641, et qui vise à réaffirmer sous une forme systématique la théologie du saint évêque du V<sup>e</sup> siècle, Augustin d'Hippone, et à étudier en particulier la question très discutée de la grâce divine et du libre arbitre. *Augustinus* est le fruit de l'intérêt de toute une vie porté à la réforme de l'Eglise catholique que partage Jansen avec un certain Jean du Vergier de Hauranne, avec qui il étudie à Paris et chez qui il passe à Bayonne les années 1611 – 1616 à lire la théologie patristique. Mieux connu sous le nom de 'Saint-Cyran' dont il devient l'abbé en 1620, Du Vergier de Hauranne est plus tard, quant à lui, le directeur spirituel du couvent cistercien réformé de Port-Royal, où il met en oeuvre une théologie pénitentielle rigoureuse marquée par la pratique consistant à différer l'Eucharistie jusqu'à ce que soit accompli un renouveau intérieur, ou 'conversion'. Après avoir pris chacun leur voie en 1616, les deux initiateurs du jansénisme poursuivent leur amitié par correspondance. [...] C'est la controverse sur l'*Augustinus* des années 1640 qui va... diviser les catholiques français en deux camps bien définis et hostiles. Cette controverse commence sérieusement quand le philosophe-



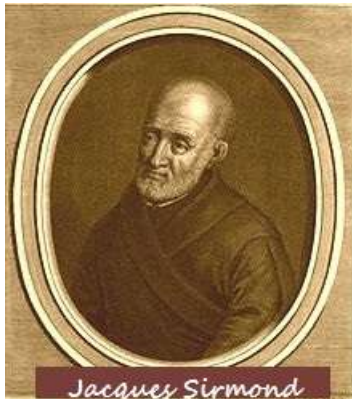
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théologien... Antoine Arnauld présente la théologie pénitentielle de son maître défunt Saint-Cyran dans *De la fréquente communion* et entreprend la défense de l'*Augustinus* en réaction aux attaques portées par Isaac Habert, théologien de Notre-Dame, et par le théologien jésuite Jacques Sirmond.

Cfr.: Dale K. Van Kley *Les origines religieuses de la Révolution française. 1560 - 1791* Paris: Seuil, 2002, p. 98-100



La première rencontre entre l'absolutisme français et le 'jansenisme' de Jansen se fait sous la forme d'un livre intitulé *Mars Gallicus*, publié en 1635. Son auteur est en fait Cornelius Jansen, sujet des Habsbourg espagnols. C'est un catholique contre-réformiste ou dévot, guère favorable à la récente entrée de la France dans la guerre de Trente Ans aux côtés des Hollandais calvinistes et des Allemands luthériens contre les Habsbourg d'Espagne et d'Autriche... La menace que représente *Mars Gallicus* pour Richelieu n'est pas seulement une menace 'étrangère', car son point de vue de catholique ardent a emporté

l'adhésion d'un group important en France, le parti dévot du chancelier Michel de Marillac, au sein duquel le cardinal de Bèrulle et l'abbé de Saint-Cyran sont très en vue. Le parti dévot représente une force puissante dans le gouvernement de régence de Marie de Médicis à la suite de l'assassinat d'Henry IV... et tente d'empêcher Richelieu de prendre le pouvoir. Allié à Marie, la mère de Louis XIII, le parti dévot a bien failli détrôner Richelieu de sa position encore précaire au cours de la journée des Dupes, le 10 novembre 1630. Avec l'aide de la reine Anne d'Autriche, la soeur du gouverneur des Pays-Bas espagnols, certains membres du parti dévot menacent encore indirectement le pouvoir de Richelieu en 1637, lorsque le confesseur jésuite de Louis XIII, Nicolas Caussin, trouble la conscience du roi à propos de l'alliance 'pécheresse' avec les puissances protestantes contre les Habsbourg catholiques dans la guerre de Trente Ans. Richelieu parvient à expédier le jésuite gêneur dans les verts pâturages de la lointaine Bretagne, mais le 'contritionnisme' continue de le hanter quand Louis XIII découvre la même théologie rigoureuse de la pénitence exposée dans le traité sur la virginité du théologien oratorien Claude Séguenot. Richelieu y voit la marque de la doctrine de Saint-Cyran, l'ami de Jansen, et le fera emprisonner en 1638. Alors que les opinions et les alliances de Jansen rappelaient jusqu'alors la Ligue catholique et ses avatars politiques en France, en d'autres termes le parti dévot, la pratique pénitentielle de la suspension de l'Eucharistie et les orientations théologiques des cinq propositions 'infâmes' supposées tirées de l'*Augustinus* de Jansen rappellent le défi du protestantisme français. Il est vrai que les cinq propositions<sup>1</sup> ne se trouvent pas en fait dans le livre de Jansen et représentent un ensemble fort préjudiciable élaboré par les lectures molinistes. Il n'y a pas de raison de suspecter la sincérité des jansénistes quand ils les jugent eux-mêmes hérétiques ou tout au moins susceptibles de l'être. Mais elles sont indiscutablement dans la logique de la sensibilité religieuse du jansénisme et représentent des conclusions qui pourraient être déduites des principes augustiniens. Dans ses écrits contre les calvinistes des années 1670, Antoine Arnauld ne discute pas les quatre premières

<sup>1</sup> Le proposizioni a cui si fa riferimento sono quelle che, per la loro problematicità, Nicolas Cornet nel 1649 presentò alla Sorbona per farle esaminare e condannare. Si possono così sintetizzare:

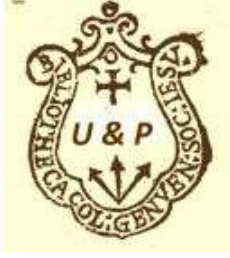
“1 alcuni comandamenti sono impossibili anche agli uomini giusti, che si sforzano di eseguirli, in quanto anche a loro manca la grazia;

2 nello stato di natura decaduta non si resiste mai alla grazia interiore che viene da Dio;

3 per meritare nello stato di natura decaduta non è necessario che ci sia nell'uomo una libertà da necessità; basta la libertà da costrizione;

4 è eretica, perché semipelagiana, l'affermazione dell'esistenza di una grazia sufficiente a cui la volontà può resistere;

5 è semipelagiano affermare che Cristo è morto per tutti gli uomini senza alcuna eccezione” [da Wikipedia “Giansenismo”]



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propositions énoncées par le synode calviniste de Dordrecht en 1618-1619, mais combat énergiquement la doctrine de la persévérance des saints. Quoi qu'il en soit, le fait important est que l'absolutisme français perçoit là une nouvelle forme de calvinisme... et la menace du calvinisme français proprement dit est toujours vivante, et même bien vivante en 1642.  
[ibid. p. 108-110]

D'une part, la théologie augustinienne janséniste et l'anti-jésuitisme des curés rapellent la doctrine calviniste et l'anti-jésuitisme puritain, tandis que les assemblées diocésaines des curés, tout comme celles des calvinistes, et la revendication de leur indépendance comme gouverneurs spirituels de leurs paroisses respectives font penser à une sorte de presbytérianisme clérical. Les curés recherchent par ailleurs l'aide du pape, qui soutient les revendications du cardinal de Retz concernant son siège et l'accueille à Rome. Ils attendent avec impatience que Retz excommunie Mazarin, ou, mieux encore qu'il impose un interdit sur l'archevêché. Ils expriment aussi leurs espoirs dans la victoire de l'armée espagnole du prince de Condé, frondeur contre le cardinal Mazarin et le roi, essaient par intermittence d'harmoniser leurs actions avec des curés d'autres villes, ceux de Rouen en particulier, et tirent réconfort de miracles reliquaires comme celui de la Sainte Epine. Tout cela, et plus encore, paraît reproduire le comportement des curés parisiens pendant la Ligue. Pas même encore leur recours gallican à la Sorbonne pour condamner la casuistique morale des jésuites ou leur appel à l'autorité de Jean Gerson pour défendre leur droit à se constituer en ordre ecclésiastique propre ne sont totalement indépendants des alliances à la Ligue. Des prêtres partisans de la Ligue n'ont-ils pas fait avec succès appel à ces deux autorités? L'accusation célèbre de Colbert en 1657: 'Les jansénistes, les amis du cardinal de Retz, de l'archevêque de Sens [Gondrin], s'en meslent bien avant et entraînent les dévots; les malintentionnés s'y joignent et presque tout suit', montre que les curés jansénistes sont perçus comme de nouveaux ligueurs. [ibid. p. 113-114]

