



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

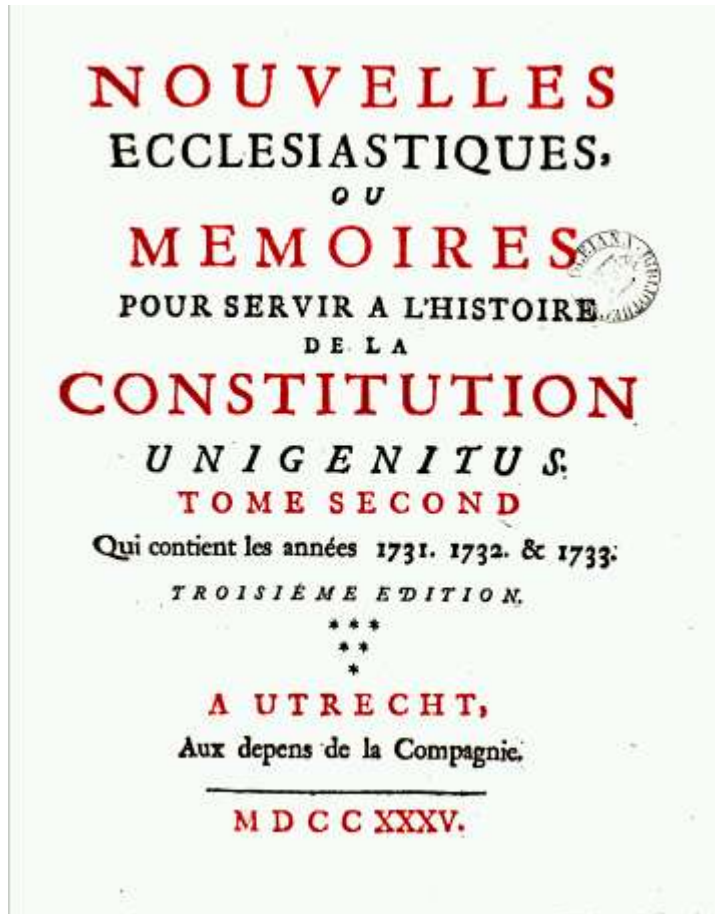
di A. Pisani

Schede opere Sotto attacco

### *Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques*

La production livresque des [jansénistes](#) fut toujours abondante, mais, à la grande époque de Port-Royal, elle touchait un public relativement restreint: des ouvrages comme la Fréquente communion d'[Arnauld](#) ou les *Provinciales* de Pascal reçurent un accueil enthousiaste; cependant, leur audience se limitait à une élite cultivée. Les choses changèrent avec la promulgation de la bulle *Unigenitus*, et la mort de Louis XIV en septembre 1715: les passions longtemps contenues se libèrent; des gens de toutes classes – clercs, nobles, bourgeois, artisans... – s'engagèrent avec frénésie dans les controverses théologiques. Chacun se déclarait, avec une égale conviction, pour ou contre la bulle. Le désir d'être informé se traduisit par une étonnante fièvre folliculaire; une multitude d'ouvrages, d'opuscules, de libelles, souvent bien documentés mais animés d'une agressivité sans frein, fut consacrée aux querelles du temps: ainsi les *Anecdotes ou Mémoires secrets sur la constitution Unigenitus* de Bourgoing de Villeflore, ou les *Etrennes* jansénistes.

Aucune publication pourtant ne surpassa, par sa durée, sa régularité, sa continuité, la sûreté de son information et la vigueur de son rayonnement, les *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. Aucune ne bénéficia d'un secret si parfaitement gardé dans la rédaction et les modes de diffusion. Dès la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, circulaient à Paris des billets manuscrits [NOTA curatore U&P-1], composés par des jansénistes, mais sans périodicité: ils donnaient des nouvelles d'intérêt très divers et citaient des extraits de journaux. Cette production s'amplifia considérablement avec la publication de la bulle *Unigenitus* [NOTA curatore U&P-2], et dans le climat de liberté, souvent anarchique, favorisé par la Régence. Un événement marquant dans la vie du jansénisme devait transformer ces bulletins manuscrits en un hebdomadaire imprimé: la réunion du «concile» d'Embrun, décidée par [Fleury](#) pour juger l'évêque de Senes, Jean Soanen, l'un des opposants les plus irréductibles à la bulle. La condamnation du prélat, son exil à l'abbaye de la Chaise-Dieu firent de lui un martyr. Ses amis décidèrent d'alerter l'opinion, en décrivant «la constitution, qui ne saurait l'être autant qu'elle le mérite», et en détournant les fidèles de s'y soumettre: ainsi naquirent les *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*.





## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

[Schede opere Sotto attacco](#)

Elles parurent sans interruption de 1728 à 1803, clandestinement jusqu'en 1791, ensuite de façon ouverte.

Les mémoires anciens et surtout les études récentes nous permettent de connaître d'une façon précise la vie, les occupations et l'emploi du temps des hommes attachés à cette forme de propagande. Créées pour mener une lutte sans trêve contre la bulle, les *Nouvelles* donnèrent à ce programme une interprétation très large: les anedoctes les plus piquantes s'y mêlaient aux notices nécrologiques, aux analyses de thèses, aux comptes rendus d'ouvrages, aux informations politiques, et aux multiples évocations des méfaits généreusement prêtés aux jésuites. Les événements relatés concernaient toutes les régions de la France, ils venaient parfois de l'étranger, mais le foyer d'intérêt constant, le «tissu affectif» du public janséniste, se circonscrivait plus spécialement dans quelques paroisses parisiennes: Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas, Saint-Médard, Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, Saint-Séverin, Saint-Antoine. Ce «bastion» s'étendit d'ailleurs au cours du siècle: vers 1740, il débordait largement sur la rive droite, englobant Saint-Eustache, Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Saint-Leu, Saint-Gervais. Des changements de curés étaient à l'origine de ces variations géographiques. Le mouvement eut, la plupart du temps, son centre administratif au cœur de ces quartiers: il fut au début, animé et financé par les frères Desessarts, personnages fortunés, aux relations multiples et influentes, installés au voisinage de Port-Royal de Paris. La première équipe de rédaction comprit surtout des prêtres issus de l'Oratoire [NOTA 3] ou formés par lui: Duguet, d'Etémare, Boursier, Boucher... Assez vite, Boucher passa en Hollande et fut remplacé par un jeune ecclésiastique nommé Jacques Fontaine, plus connu sous le nom d'abbé de La Roche: de 1732 à sa mort, en 1761, il déploya une prodigieuse activité, occupant la totalité de ses journées à rédiger seul les *Nouvelles*, sans que jamais la police parvint à découvrir son identité ni son refuge. A sa mort, l'abbé Claude Guénin, dit de Saint-Marc, lui succéda.

Outre la rédaction, deux opérations requéraient des précautions de tous les instants. Pour préserver le secret de l'entreprise, on la diluait «en cascade» dans les mains de plusieurs personnes, de manière qu'une arrestation ne pût faire découvrir l'ensemble de l'organisation. Chaque semaine, à une heure matinale, l'abbé de La Roche attendait, dans l'intimité de sa retraite, les visites successives de trois «correspondants»; à chacun d'eux, il remettait un tiers du manuscrit d'un numéro, après avoir pris soin de jeter au feu les mémoires et notes envoyés par les informateurs locaux. Rentré chez lui, chaque correspondant recopiait son texte puis brûlait la minute. Le lendemain, une troisième personne – un «sous-corrépondant» - portait cette copie chez l'un des imprimeurs; la composition typographique commençait immédiatement. Chacun des intéressés ignorait la chaîne complète des intermédiaires.

Le nombre des imprimeurs n'est pas connu avec précision, mais il était élevé: sans doute atteignit-il la douzaine. [...] Le plus souvent [...], ils ne disposaient pas de véritables ateliers, trop faciles à surveiller, mais d'un groupement improvisé de petites presses, aisément transportables. Elles étaient installées dans des chambres d'appartements particuliers, dans des caves ou des greniers, parfois sur des chantiers ou dans des cabines de bateaux: une issue de secours – porte dérobée, trappe, escalier secret – permettait un repli immédiat et une évacuation rapide du matériel. [...]

Le journal imprimé, restait à régler sa distribution: elle s'opérait selon les mêmes procédés. Il existait dans Paris une vingtaine de «bureaux», installés, eux aussi, dans des demeures privées. Des porteurs, le plus souvent des femmes [...] acheminaient les feuilles, des imprimeries aux bureaux. [...] La comptabilité et les manipulations d'argent étaient réduites au minimum: chaque



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede opere Sotto attacco

colporteur pagava lui-même ses exemplaires à l'imprimeur, et, par la vente, rentrait dans ses fonds. Chaque quartier était ainsi régulièrement approvisionné.

Un système de protection, simple mais efficace, mettait à l'abri de la surveillance ou des enquêtes intempestives. La règle première de ce système était d'éviter toute liaison «horizontale», c'est-à-dire qu'au mêmes maillons des différentes chaînes les correspondants s'ignoraient. [...]

Le délai nécessaire entre la remise du manuscrit à l'imprimeur et la diffusion du périodique est difficile à préciser: un rapport de police de 1731 révèle cependant que la colporteuse Marie Rea Bourg, arrêtée le 10 mai à la barrière d'Enfer, sortant d'une imprimerie clandestine, transportait 900 exemplaires des *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* du 25 avril. Si l'on se reporte à ce fait divers, deux semaines paraissent donc nécessaires pour l'impression et la distribution du journal.

Quelle fut l'audience des *Nouvelles*? Le secret entourant leur diffusion empêche de répondre avec certitude. Leur tirage fut d'environ six mille, mais l'usage de faire circuler le journal de main en main rendait beaucoup plus élevé le chiffre véritable des lecteurs. Ceux-ci étaient pour la plus grand part constitués par des ecclésiastiques, des gens de robe, des marchands ou artisans, c'est-à-dire par des représentants de la classe moyenne, marqués par la Réforme catholique.

**Cfr.:** René TAVENEAU *La vie quotidiennes des jansénistes aux XVII et XVIII siècles* Paris: Hachette, 1973; p. 234 ss. [BUG Cont.II.618.24]

[NOTA curatore U&P-1] «È indubbio, come la ricerca più recente ha sottolineato, che l'avvento della civiltà tipografica non abbia annullato in breve tempo la tradizione di far circolare testi manoscritti nei quali, sottratti più facilmente di quelli a stampa al controllo delle autorità, era anche più agevole e sicuro esprimersi con maggior autonomia. La pratica della trasmissione manoscritta favorì la diffusione di testi che per un'ampia serie di ragioni diverse dovevano rimanere clandestini, senza che questo incidesse profondamente sulla loro circolazione all'interno di circoli ristretti ma influenti. Inoltre, la circolazione dei testi in forma manoscritta conservò agli autori una supervisione più completa del testo, che non solo la censura preventiva ma anche le diverse fasi della lavorazione tipografica sottraevano loro. È altrettanto chiaro tuttavia che furono la stampa e i profondi cambiamenti che questa generò nel sistema produttivo, distributivo e ricettivo dei testi a segnare una cesura profonda nell'atteggiamento delle élite alfabetizzate nei confronti della circolazione del sapere in generale. »

**Cfr.:** Edoardo TORTAROLO *L'invenzione della libertà di stampa. Censura e scrittori nel Settecento* Roma: Carocci, 2011; p. 33-34 [BUG D 363.3109033 TORTE 1]

[NOTA curatore U&P-2] Con la bolla *Unigenitus* del 1713 papa Clemente XI (1700-1721) condannò 101 proposizioni, per la maggior parte desunte dalle *Reflexions morales* dell'oratoriano [Pasquier Quesnel](#), successore di Arnauld alla guida dei giansenisti. Con la trasformazione, nel 1730, della bolla *Unigenitus* in legge di Stato venne segnato il definitivo declino del giansenismo francese, ormai ridotto a frangia di ben poco rilievo.

[NOTA 3] ORATORIANI «Nel secolo XVI svolse a Roma la sua instancabile attività di confessore, amico e consigliere dei grandi come degli umili, san Filippo Neri (1515-1595), uomo ilare, che all'originalità sapeva unire saggezza e prudenza. La società degli oratoriani da lui fondata (1564) non era un ordine religioso vero e proprio, ma un'unione di sacerdoti senza voti. La



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

*IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)*

di A. Pisani

Schede opere Sotto attacco

congregazione si dedicò specialmente alla cura d'anime individuale. Ebbe l'approvazione di Gregorio XIII nel 1575. Uomo non particolarmente dotto, Filippo Neri diede vita a numerose iniziative. Il suo discepolo Cesare Baronio pubblicò nel 1588 il primo volume degli *Annali*, con cui la storia della Chiesa cominciò a essere documentata in senso moderno [...] Filippo Neri fu il primo a risvegliare l'attenzione dei dotti e dei devoti sulle catacombe romane. Fu legato da profonda amicizia a [Ignazio di Loyola](#), finché questi visse (m. 1556), e più tardi con un laico cappuccino, elevato agli onori degli altari: Felice da Cantalice [...] Altro amico di Filippo Neri fu san Camillo de Lellis, fondatore di un ordine di chierici regolari per l'assistenza spirituale e materiale degli ammalati e dei moribondi. La croce rossa, che san Camillo e i suoi portavano sul petto per farsi riconoscere negli ospedali civili e sui campi di battaglia, diventò con il tempo il simbolo dei servizi sanitari, specialmente in guerra.»

**Cfr.:** Ludwig HERTLING – Angiolino BULLA *Storia della Chiesa* Roma: Città Nuova Editrice, 2001; p. 359

L'11 novembre 1611 Pierre de Berulle (1575-1629) istituì a Parigi la *Congregazione dell'Oratorio di Gesù e di Maria Immacolata di Francia*, ispirata alla *Congregazione dell'Oratorio* di Filippo Neri con la quale, però, non intrattenne alcun tipo di legame.

Si vedano anche:

[http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oratorio\\_di\\_Gesù\\_e\\_Maria\\_Immacolata\\_di\\_Francia](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oratorio_di_Gesù_e_Maria_Immacolata_di_Francia)

<http://www.oratoriosanfilippo.org/costituzioni.html>

[http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederazione\\_dell'oratorio\\_di\\_San\\_Filippo\\_Neri](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederazione_dell'oratorio_di_San_Filippo_Neri)

[http://it.cathopedia.org/wiki/Confederazione\\_dell'Oratorio\\_di\\_San\\_Filippo\\_Neri](http://it.cathopedia.org/wiki/Confederazione_dell'Oratorio_di_San_Filippo_Neri)

<http://www.oratoire.org/lhistoire-de-loratoire>

[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Société\\_de\\_l'oratoire\\_de\\_Jésus](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Société_de_l'oratoire_de_Jésus)

[http://archive.org/stream/histoiredelduc00lalluoft/histoiredelduc00lalluoft\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/histoiredelduc00lalluoft/histoiredelduc00lalluoft_djvu.txt)

### **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



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

*IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)*

di A. Pisani

Schede opere Sotto attacco

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.

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 *finis 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 *finis 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 Parliamentarians, 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 Sorbonne — 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



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

[Schede opere Sotto attacco](#)

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 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 Pasquier 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



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede opere Sotto attacco

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.

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 de clare themselves and to apply their Gallican and royalist principles, continued for a long time to refuse to receive the Bull "*Unigenitus*". They even made it the occasion



## Universalitas & Pervasivitas

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede opere Sotto attacco

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.

### About this page

APA citation. Forget, J. (1910). Jansenius and Jansenism. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved December 15, 2013 from New Advent: Retrieved December 14, 2013 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. 15 Dec. 2013. Retrieved Dec. 2013. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08285a.htm> .

Transcription. This article was transcribed for New Advent by Tomas Hancil.