

AUGUSTINIAN BIBLE EXEGESIS IN LOUVAIN, (THE CASE OF JOHN HESSELS' COMMENTARY ON 1 JOHN 2,15-18A

I. Renewed biblical and Augustinian studies

In reaction to the widespread corruption of Church and clergy and the failure to bring about institutional reform by means of Councils, the late medieval believer was inclined to concentrate on his or her individual fate. In other words, the individual believer's own salvation or damnation increasingly became the focus of attention. Inspiration for personal conversion was to be found, in the first instance, in the Scriptures as well as the early Church Fathers. Authors such as Eugene F. Rice and Berndt Hamm have stressed that Jerome, who promoted an ascetic life of prayer and penance together with a Bible based spirituality, had become the paradigm for Christian living for the wealthy and educated elite, for citizens and religious men and women around 1500¹. Anthony David Wright has pointed out, however, that it was rather Augustine's concern for sinful humanity's need for a merciful God that attuned him to the spiritual questions of the (coming) Modern Era, a concern for which the Church Father had progressively sought support in biblical sources and Paul in particular². Interest in Paul and Augustine, however, was originally restricted to the universities and the *studia generalia* of the religious orders. Nevertheless, a number of monastic and canonical orders gradually tried to implement

* I wish to thank our colleague, prof. Brian Doyle, for his invaluable assistance in translating the text.

¹ Eugene F. RICE, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, Baltimore – London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985; Berndt HAMM, *Hieronymus-Begeisterung und Augustinismus vor der Reformation: Beobachtungen zur Beziehung zwischen Humanismus und Frömmigkeitstheologie (am Beispiel Nürnbergs)*, in Kenneth HAGEN (ed.), *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology (1300-1650). Essays Dedicated to Heiko Augustinus Oberman in Honor of his Sixtieth Birthday*, Leiden, Brill, 1990, 127-235.

² Anthony D. WRIGHT, *The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World*, 2nd ed., Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005, pp. 1-33, 163-164, 232-241. See also Heiko A. OBERMAN, "Tuus sum, salvum me fac": *Augustinréveil zwischen Renaissance und Reformation*, in Cornelius Petrus MAYER – Willigis ECKERMANN (eds.), *Scientia Augustiniana: Studien über Augustinus, den Augustinismus und den Augustinerorden. Festschrift Adolar Zumkeller OSA zum 60. Geburtstag* (Cassiciacum, 30), Würzburg, Augustinus-Verlag, 1975, 349-394; William J. BOUWSMA, *The Two Faces of Humanism: Stoicism and Augustinianism in Renaissance Thought*, in Heiko A. OBERMAN – Thomas A. BRADY (eds.), *Itinerarium Italicum: The Profile of the Italian Renaissance in the Mirror of its European Transformations. Dedicated to Paul Oskar Kristeller on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday* (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, 14), Leiden, Brill, 1975, 3-60.

a stricter observance of Augustine's rule. Augustinian spirituality likewise found its way from the pulpit to a broader public, such that his theology of grace was no longer confined to an exclusively academic world, but became a pastoral and even existential concern. A fine example of this Augustinian renaissance is to be found in Johann von Staupitz, vicar general of the observant Saxon congregation of the Augustinian Hermits, who distanced himself from the scholastic approach and established a biblical theology and piety based on Paul and Augustine³. The model of Augustine as bishop of Hippo also inspired a few reform-minded bishops, particularly in southern Europe. The latter endeavoured to improve clerical formation and behaviour as well as the catechetical formation of the faithful. Biblical studies and the study of Augustine and other Church Fathers were supported at the time by a wave of new text editions. In the years 1503-06, for example, the Basel based publisher Johannes Amerbach edited Augustine's *Opera Omnia*, 11 parts in nine volumes⁴.

During his youth in his native Netherlands, Erasmus (1466/69 – 1536)⁵ had extensive contact with the Brethren of the Common Life, who cherished a 'Jeromian' spirituality and were thus referred to as *Hieronymiani*, and later entered the monastery of the Augustinian Canons Regular in Stein near Gouda. In one of his letters, Erasmus writes that, as a young canon, he read and copied all of Jerome's letters. In the said institutions, which had their origins in the *Devotio Moderna*, the Bible and the Church Fathers took pride of place. This education undoubtedly left a mark on the young Erasmus, who was later to emerge as the leader of the biblical humanists. Erasmus sought to draw from God's original Word as it had been expressed in the words of Scripture. To this end, he published successive editions of his

³ Adolar ZUMKELLER, *Johannes von Staupitz und seine christliche Heilslehre* (Cassiciacum, 45), Würzburg, Augustinus-Verlag, 1994, pp. 25-27; Franz POSSET, *The Front-Runner of the Catholic Reformation: The Life and Works of Johann von Staupitz* (St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003. See also Richard WETZEL, *Staupitz Augustinianus: An Account of the Reception of Augustine in his Tübingen Sermons*, in Heiko A. OBERMAN – Frank A. JAMES – Erik Leland SAAK (eds.), *Via Augustini: Augustine in the Later Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation. Essays in Honor of Damasus Trapp, O.S.A.* (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, 4), Leiden, Brill, 1991, 72-115.

⁴ On the Amerbach edition see Joseph DE GHELLINCK, *La première édition imprimée des "Opera omnia S. Augustini"*, in Henry BAILLIEN – Arm. J. JANSSENS (eds.), *Miscellanea J. Gessler*, vol. 1, Deurne, Impr. C. Govaerts, 1948, 530-547.

⁵ A general introduction can be found in Jan DEN BOEFT, *Erasmus and the Church Fathers*, in Irena BACKUS (ed.), *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, vol. 2, Leiden, Brill, 1997, 537-572.

Latin-Greek New Testament, beginning in 1516. In the same year, Amerbach edited Jerome's *Opera Omnia*. Erasmus was in charge of the first four (of nine) volumes containing letters, *apologiae*, and treatises written by the Church Father. Erasmus considered Jerome, next to Origen⁶, as the patron of a renewed biblical theology⁷. Needless to say, he was also open to those works of Augustine that contributed to his project⁸. In his *Annotationes* on the New Testament, he abundantly quotes from Augustine's Bible commentaries. More fundamentally, however, Erasmus appeals to Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* as an important source of his biblical humanist principles. In the said work, Augustine states that a moderate knowledge of the liberal arts is necessary for a Christian in interpreting and preaching the Bible. Erasmus borrows this argument from Augustine and, as a consequence, the Church Father's book is consistently present in works from the beginning to the end of the humanist's career, particularly in his *Antibarbari* (1503), *Methodus* (1516) and the *Ratio verae theologiae* (1518), but also in his later work on the art of preaching, the *Ecclesiastes* (1535)⁹. Augustine's *De civitate Dei* played a role in the *Encomium moriae* (Praise of Folly, 1511), the *Querela pacis* (1517), the *Consultatio de bello Turcico* (1530) and even *De vidua Christiana* (1529)¹⁰. Augustine's views on grace and free will, which echoed throughout John Colet's Oxford lectures on the Pauline Epistles, also found its way into the central chapters of Erasmus' *Enchiridion* (1503), a work that, in its turn, exercised an enormous influence on the piety of the sixteenth century¹¹. The humanist was

⁶ André GODIN, *Érasme lecteur d'Origène* (Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 190), Genève, Droz, 1982.

⁷ For an introduction to the relationship between Erasmus and Jerome see RICE, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, pp. 116-136; see also John C. OLIN, *Erasmus and Saint Jerome: The Close Bond and Its Significance*, in *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society. Yearbook* 7 (1987) 33-53; Mark VESSEY, *Erasmus' Jerome: The Publishing of a Christian Author*, in *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society. Yearbook* 14 (1994) 62-99.

⁸ On Erasmus and Augustine, see Robert D. SIDER, *Erasmus*, in Allan D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge, Eerdmans, 1999, 312-315; see also Charles BÉNÉ, *Érasme et Saint Augustin ou influence de Saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Érasme* (Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 103), Genève, Droz, 1969; Peter Iver KAUFMAN, *Augustinian Piety and Catholic Reform: Augustine, Colet, and Erasmus*, Macon, GA, Mercer University Press, 1982, pp. 111-141; Viviane MELLINGHOFF-BOURGERIE, *Érasme éditeur et interprète de Saint Augustin*, in Kurt FLASCH – Dominique DE COURCELLES (eds.), *Augustinus in der Neuzeit. Colloque de la Herzog August Bibliothek de Wolfenbüttel 14-17 octobre 1996*, Turnhout, Brepols, 1998, 53-81.

⁹ BÉNÉ, *Érasme et Saint Augustin*.

¹⁰ MELLINGHOFF-BOURGERIE, *Érasme éditeur et interprète de Saint Augustin*.

prepared to accept the priority of God's grace as it appeared in the Church Father's earlier works, before his controversy with the Pelagians. This view was more appropriately reconciled with his own (Neo-Stoic) humanist conceptions, stressing the intrinsic possibilities of humanity's will to perform acts that were worthy of God's grace and thus contributed to human salvation. In his debate with Luther, Erasmus fully recognizes his debt to Augustine (although it is possible that he depended on late medieval Augustinian theologians such as Hugolinus of Orvieto)¹². Nevertheless, the humanist could not conceal that he had problems with Augustine's later, anti-Pelagian, works in which the necessity of grace was over-emphasized to the detriment of free will (*De libero arbitrio* [1524] and the two *Hyperaspistes* [1526, 1527]). In his editions of the Church Fathers, Erasmus evidently gave a place to the works of Augustine (as simply one Father among the others). He was assisted in his endeavours by Maarten Lips and the Augustinian Canons Regular of the monastery of Sint-Maartensdal in Louvain, and was able to elicit the collaboration of Juan-Luis Vivès for his edition of *De civitate Dei*. Erasmus' ten folio volumes were published in 1528-29 by the printer-editor Johannes Froben in Basel.

There can be little doubt that Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)¹³ enjoyed a prominent place in the Augustinian renaissance of the early

¹¹ P.I. Kaufman has advanced the thesis that John Colet's soteriology, formulated in his Oxford lectures on the Pauline Epistles, comes very close to that of Augustine. It remains difficult to determine whether Colet was conscious about his debt to Augustine. Kaufman believes nevertheless that Colet's views influenced Erasmus and that they became characteristic of early sixteenth-century Catholic reform (KAUFMAN, *Augustinian Piety and Catholic Reform*, pp. vii-viii, 52-54, 69-73, 118-128, 143-148). The view that Augustine was "Colet's favourite Latin Father", is confirmed in John B. GLEASON, *John Colet*, Berkeley, CA – Los Angeles – London, University of California Press, 1989, p. 70, also pp. 201-202 and p. 205. Wayne J. Hankey adds that "we might account for Colet's Augustinianism in this way, *provided* that we recognize all that is implied in his acceptance of the Pseudo-Dionysius as the most privileged interpreter of Paul" (Wayne J. HANKEY, *Augustinian Immediacy and Dionysian Mediation in John Colet*, Edmund Spenser, Richard Hooker and the Cardinal de Bérulle, in FLASCH – DE COURCELLES [eds.], *Augustinus in der Neuzeit*, 125-160, p. 134).

¹² See, for example, Christoph P.M. BURGER, *Augustinus' betekenis voor Erasmus' opvatting van de vrije wil*, in Johannes VAN OORT (ed.), *De kerkvaders in Reformatie en Nadere Reformatie*, Zoetermeer, Boekencentrum, 1997, 21-34; Christoph P.M. BURGER, *De receptie van Augustinus' genadeleer: Gregorius van Rimini, Hugolinus van Orvieto, Erasmus en Luther (tot 1518)*, in Paul VAN GEEST – Johannes VAN OORT (eds.), *Augustiniana Neerlandica: Aspecten van Augustinus' spiritualiteit en haar doorwerking*, Leuven, Peeters, 2005, 413-425, pp. 420-422. Comp. KAUFMAN, *Augustinian Piety and Catholic Reform*, pp. 134-141.

¹³ A general introduction can be found in Manfred SCHULZE, *Martin Luther and the Church Fathers*, in BACKUS (ed.), *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, vol. 2, 573-626, pp. 576-578.

sixteenth century. As a member of the observant Saxon congregation of the Augustinian Hermits and as the spiritual son of Johann von Staupitz, he not only imbibed Augustine's rule but also a significant portion of his other writings. While studying theology in Erfurt, however, Luther only read *De Trinitate*, *De civitate Dei*, the *Confessiones*, and some of the Church Father's sermons, and did not become acquainted with Augustine's anti-Pelagian works¹⁴. Augustine's theology was particularly influential at the University of Wittenberg, where he was considered the preferred interpreter of the Scriptures. Luther himself, *doctor bibliae* at Wittenberg, advanced the thesis that Scripture was the sole necessary and sufficient access to the divine Truths. Characteristic of the era, he revealed himself a radical defender of the centrality of the Scriptures. Luther further admitted that Augustine had played a crucial role in his reformational breakthrough (winter 1518/19?). On the basis of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, as elucidated by the Church Father's anti-Pelagian works (particularly *De spiritu et littera*, but also *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, *Contra Iulianum* and *De nuptiis et concupiscentia*) he came to the conviction that it was impossible for any fundamentally sinful human being to earn his righteousness by doing good works¹⁵. Luther even

¹⁴ On the debated question of Luther's dependence (or lack thereof) on late medieval Augustinian theologians in general and Staupitz in particular, see David C. STEINMETZ, *Luther and Staupitz: An Essay in the Intellectual Origins of the Protestant Reformation* (Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 4), Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1980; Markus WRIEDT, *Gnade und Erwählung: Eine Untersuchung zu Johann von Staupitz und Martin Luther* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz. Abteilung Religionsgeschichte, 141), Mainz, Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1991; see also Adolar ZUMKELLER, *Erbsünde, Gnade, Rechtfertigung und Verdienst nach der Lehre der Erfurter Augustinertheologen des Spätmittelalters* (Cassiciacum, 35), Würzburg, Augustinus-Verlag, 1984, pp. 461-502; Lothar GRAF ZU DOHNA, *Staupitz and Luther: Continuity and Breakthrough at the Beginning of the Reformation*, in OBERMAN – JAMES – SAAK (eds.), *Via Augustini*, 116-129; ZUMKELLER, *Johannes von Staupitz und seine christliche Heilslehre*, pp. 217-229.

¹⁵ For an introduction to the relationship between Luther and Augustine, see Philip D. KREY, *Luther, Martin*, in FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, 516-518. See also Rosemarie MÜLLER-STREISAND, *Zur Rezeption Augustins bei Luther*, in *Evangelische Theologie* 22 (1962) 602-615; Charles BOYER, *Luther et sa doctrine*, Rome, Presses de l'Université Grégorienne, 1970, pp. 15-44; Leif GRANE, *Augustins "Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistola apostoli ad Romanos"* in *Luthers Römerbriefvorlesung*, in *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 69 (1972) 304-330; ID., *Divus Paulus et S. Augustinus, interpres eius fidelissimus: Über Luthers Verhältnis zu Augustin*, in Gerhard EBELING – Eberhard JÜNGEL – Gerd SCHUNACK (eds.), *Festschrift für Ernst Fuchs*, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1973, 133-146; Reinhart STAATS, *Augustins „De spiritu et littera“ in Luthers reformatorischer Erkenntnis*, in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 98 (1987) 28-47; Bernhard LOHSE, *Zum Wittenberger Augustinismus:*

developed a more radical conception of the continued effect of sin as an aversion to God than Augustine. It was only through faith that baptized Christians could hope to be saved by God's graceful initiative. Luther's absolute denial of the idea that a person had the capacity to contribute to his or her own salvation, and hence the debate surrounding Augustine's interpretation, eventually led to a rift between Luther and Erasmus. Nevertheless, Luther also took his distance from Augustine (and *a priori* from the other Church Fathers). He was convinced in principle that the Fathers could err and effectively had done so. Their opinions had to be tested by the divine and absolute authority of God's Word in Scripture.

II. Augustinianism in Louvain

In Louvain, specific interest in Augustinian studies (as part of a broader revival of patristic studies) dates back, at least, to the last quarter of the fifteenth century. At the request of the students, and after having sought the advice of the professors and doctors of the Faculty of Theology, the town magistrate of Louvain created a new extraordinary course destined to explain the treatises of Duns Scotus and those of Augustine, beginning in 1479. The lecturer in charge of the course agreed to read and explain the treatises *De doctrina Christiana* – Augustine's work on biblical hermeneutics –, *De civitate Dei*, or another of the Church Father's works on Sundays and feast days¹⁶. John of Westphalia, the University's 'in-house' printer, edited Augustine's *De civitate Dei* (with commentary by Thomas Waleys and Nicholas Trivet) in 1488, in addition to a few of the Church Father's other works (e.g. *De consensu evangelistarum* [1481/83] and *De Trinitate* [1495])¹⁷.

Augustins Schrift De Spiritu et Littera in der Auslegung bei Staupitz, Luther und Karlstadt, in HAGEN (ed.), *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology*, 89-109; Johannes VAN OORT, *Augustin, le Moyen Âge, Luther: Augustin et son influence, spécialement sur Luther*, in *la Revue Réformée* 51/3 (2000) 42-56; BURGER, *De receptie van Augustinus' genadeleer*, pp. 422-423.

¹⁶ Joseph WILS, *Les professeurs de l'ancienne Faculté de théologie de l'Université de Louvain*, in *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 4 (1927) 338-358, pp. 340-341.

¹⁷ *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, vol. 3, Leipzig, Karl W. Hiersemann, 1928, nos 2886, 2898, 2930; M.-Louis POLAIN, *Catalogue des livres imprimés au quinzième siècle des bibliothèques de Belgique*, vol. 1, Brussels, Société des Bibliophiles & Iconophiles de Belgique, 1932, nos 363, 374, 419.

The correct interpretation of *De doctrina Christiana*, and hence the position of the Bible within theological studies, was at stake in the debate between the biblical humanists and the scholastic theologians who included the Louvain 'magister' Jacobus Latomus (c.1475 – 1544) among their number¹⁸. In a later phase of the controversy – dealing with Luther – Latomus stressed that Scripture had always to be interpreted according to the *regula fidei*, the Catholic faith as it was defined by the Church over the course of Tradition. The Fathers of the Church and the scholastic theologians were called to be the most important witnesses of the Tradition. Augustine was not only considered a Church Father, he was taken to be the first scholastic theologian¹⁹. Pointing to the 'correct' interpretation of the Bible, Augustine (and the other *doctores*), Latomus rejected Luther's central assertion and insisted that after baptism, given the help of divine grace, free will was capable of believing the Gospel and of doing good works that pleased God and were meritorious for the afterlife²⁰. Latomus' appeal

¹⁸ On Augustinianism at the Faculty of Theology in Louvain, see especially Matthijs LAMBERIGTS – Leo KENIS (eds.), *L'Augustinisme à l'ancienne Faculté de théologie de Louvain* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 111), Leuven, University Press Peeters, 1994. The absence of this work in A.D. Wright's revised bibliography represents a significant lacuna.

¹⁹ Marcel GIELIS, *L'augustinisme anti-érasmien des premiers controversistes de Louvain Jacques Latomus et Jean Driedo*, in LAMBERIGTS – KENIS (eds.), *L'Augustinisme à l'ancienne Faculté*, 19-61, pp. 19-32. This article is based for the most part on the author's excellent doctoral dissertation: Marcel GIELIS, *Scholastiek en Humanisme: De kritiek van de Leuvense theoloog Jacobus Latomus op de Erasmiaanse theologiehervorming* (TFT-Studies, 23), Tilburg, Tilburg University Press, 1994. See also Charles BÉNÉ, *Saint Augustin dans la controverse sur les trois langues à Louvain en 1518 et 1519*, in [Joseph COPPENS (ed.),] *Colloquium Erasmianum. Actes du Colloque International réuni à Mons du 26 au 29 octobre 1967 à l'occasion du cinquième centenaire de la naissance d'Érasme*, Mons, Centre Universitaire de l'État, 1968, 19-32; Erika RUMMEL, *Erasmus' Conflict with Latomus: Round two*, in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 80 (1989) 5-23; ID., *Erasmus and his Catholic Critics* (Bibliotheca humanistica et reformatrica, 45), vol. 1, Nieuwkoop, De Graaf, 1989, pp. 72-87; Wim FRANÇOIS, *Ad divinarum rerum cognitionem: Petrus Mosellanus and Jacobus Latomus on Biblical or Scholastic Theology*, in *Renaissance and Reformation/ Renaissance et Réforme* 29 (2005) 13-47.

²⁰ Leopold VINKEN, *Jacobus Latomus en Maarten Luther: De botsing van twee visies op theologie*, in Edmond J.M. VAN EIJL (ed.), *Facultas S. Theologiae Lovaniensis 1432-1797: Bijdragen tot haar geschiedenis. Contributions to its History. Contributions à son histoire* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 45), Leuven, Leuven University Press, 1977, 299-311; Rudolf HERMANN, *Studien zur Theologie Luthers und des Luthertums*, ed. Horst BEINTKER (Gesammelte und nachgelassene Werke, 2), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981, pp. 256-268; Erwin ISELOH, *Kirche – Ereignis und Institution: Aufsätze und Vorträge. Band II: Geschichte und Theologie der Reformation* (Reformationsgeschichtliche Studien und Texte, Supplementband 3/II), Münster, Aschendorff, 1985, pp. 70-87; Jos E. VERCRUYSSSE, *Jacobus*

to the Bible and Augustine was embedded to a large extent within a preformed scholastic framework. In the thirties and forties of the sixteenth century, however, Augustinianism in Louvain grew to full stature through the works of John Driedo (1479/80 – 1535). In line with Latomus, Driedo emphasized both Scripture and the traditions of the Church as sources that gave access to the divine Truth. More than Latomus, however, he stressed the importance of biblical studies, appealing in this regard to Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*²¹. In the field of justification doctrine, Driedo dissociated himself from the scholastic frame of thought and is likely to have studied the works of Augustine. He finally developed a strict Augustinian theology that was closer to Luther than to Erasmus, the latter having been accused of Pelagianism²². A third leading theologian who deserves our attention is Ruard Tapper (1487 – 1559), although he was evidently more attached to the Thomistic tradition than to strict Augustinianism²³.

The Louvain Theological Faculty continued nevertheless to develop into an independent centre of Catholic Augustinianism, even after the Council of Trent. The decrees of the latter, whether on the sources of faith or on justification, were in any case a careful search for expressions that could do as much justice as possible to every legitimate form of existing Catholic thought²⁴. In the course of the sixteenth century, Augustinian theology in Louvain reached its pinnacle in Michel de Bay or Baius (1513-89), who continued and even

Latomus und Martin Luther: Einführendes zu einer Kontroverse, in *Gregorianum* 64 (1983) 515-538; ID., *Die Stellung Augustins in Jacobus Latomus' Auseinandersetzung mit Luther*, in LAMBERIGTS – KENIS (eds.), *L'Augustinisme à l'ancienne Faculté*, 7-18; Anna VIND, *Ein Streit um Worte: Luther versus Latomus*, in *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 46 (2004) 448-466; ID., *The Use of Augustine by Latomus und Luther*, in Ulrik NISSEN et al. (eds.), *Luther between Present and Past: Studies in Luther and Lutheranism* (Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft, 56), Helsinki, Luther-Agricola-Society, 2004, 132-150.

²¹ Wim FRANÇOIS, *Augustinus als 'De onweerlegbare vertolker van de theologie': Johannes Driedo over Schrift, Augustinus en de katholieke traditie (1533)*, in VAN GEEST – VAN OORT (eds.), *Augustiniana Neerlandica*, 427-446. See also John L. MURPHY, *The Notion of Tradition in John Driedo* (Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana. Facultas Theologiae. Dissertatio ad lauream), Milwaukee, WI, Seraphic Press, 1959.

²² GIELIS, *L'augustinisme anti-érasmien des premiers controversistes de Louvain*, pp. 32-61.

²³ Valentine J. PETER, *The Doctrine of Ruard Tapper (1487-1559): Regarding Original Sin and Justification* (Pontificia Universitas a S. Thoma Aq. in Urbe. Facultas Theologiae. Pars dissertationis ad lauream), Rome, s.n., 1965; Martijn SCHRAMA, *Ruard Tapper und die Möglichkeit gute Werken zu verrichten: "Non omnia opera hominis mala"*, in LAMBERIGTS – KENIS (eds.), *L'Augustinisme à l'ancienne Faculté*, 63-98.

²⁴ Comp. WRIGHT, *The Counter-Reformation*, pp. 20-21.

radicalized the strict Augustinian stance of his master, John Driedo. Augustine's doctrine of grace and salvation was regarded as the primary channel of communication between the opposing confessional camps in Europe. Accusations of deviation from reaffirmed orthodoxy ultimately earned Baius a papal condemnation in 1567. He and his like-minded colleagues submitted²⁵. Interest in Augustinian theology in Louvain also went hand in hand with the endeavour to publish an improved edition of the Church Father's work. In the years 1576-77, a new edition of Augustine's works (ten volumes), thoroughly revised by Louvain theologians, was published by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp²⁶.

III. Augustinian Biblical exegesis in Louvain and John Hessels

The existence of an Augustinian school of Catholic biblical exegesis in Louvain is a little known fact. In 1546, two so-called 'professors royal' were appointed at the University of Louvain by Emperor Charles V, one in the Sacred Scriptures and the other in Scholastic Theology. There is much to be said for the suggestion that Charles V associated himself in so doing with the spirit of the Council of Trent. Inspired by the humanism of the day, the Council's fifth session (June 17, 1546) expressed the desire that biblical studies be made available in institutes for training the clergy to allow the latter to base their preaching on biblical texts²⁷. The newly appointed professors taught

²⁵ From the abundant literature available on M. Baius, we refer to Xavier-Marie LE BACHELET, *Baius, Michel*, in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 2-1 (1905) 38-111; Henri DE LUBAC, *Augustinisme et théologie moderne* (Théologie, 63), Paris, Aubier, 1965, esp. pp. 15-48; Vittorino GROSSI, *Baio e Bellarmino, interpreti di S. Agostino nelle questioni del soprannaturale* (Studia Ephemeridis "Augustinianum", 3), Rome, Augustinianum, 1968; Alfred VANNESTE, *Nature et grâce dans la théologie de Baius*, in VAN EIJL (ed.), *Facultas S. Theologiae Lovaniensis 1432-1797*, 327-350; Alfred VANNESTE, *Le "De prima hominis iustitia" de M. Baius: Une relecture critique*, and Manfred BIERACK, *Bellarmin und die "Causa Baii"*, in LAMBERIGTS – KENIS (eds.), *L'Augustinisme à l'ancienne Faculté*, 123-166, and 167-178; Martin W.F. STONE, *Michael Baius (1513-1589) and the Debate on 'Pure Nature': Grace and Moral Agency in Sixteenth-Century Scholasticism*, in Jill KRAYE – Risto SAARINEN (eds.), *Moral Philosophy on the Threshold of Modernity*, Dordrecht, Kluwer, 2004, 51-90.

²⁶ Lucien CEYSSENS, *Le "Saint Augustin" du XVIIe siècle: L'édition de Louvain (1577)*, in *XVIIe Siècle* 34 (1982) 103-120. Also Léon VOET, *The Plantin Press (1555-1589): A Bibliography of the Works Printed and Published by Christopher Plantin at Antwerpen and Leiden*, vol. 1, Amsterdam, van Hoeve, 1980, 205-218.

²⁷ The text of the decree: *Sessio quinta: Decretum de lectione et praedicatione*, in *Concilium Tridentinum: Diariorum, actorum, epistularum, tractatum nova collectio*. T. V. *Actorum Pars IIa*, ed. Stephanus EHSSES, Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 1911,

every day (while the *professores ordinarii* only taught on a daily basis for six weeks of the year). This was a new evolution, since it meant that the Sacred Scriptures as a whole, or at least the greater part thereof, and systematic theology in its entirety were now in the hands of qualified professors²⁸. It gave an important impetus to what has been called the Golden Age of Catholic Bible Exegesis during the period between 1550 and 1650.

The first professor royal of Sacred Scriptures was John Leonard van der Eycken (or Hasselius). He served as part of a delegation to the Council of Trent in 1551 while his chair, in the meantime, was entrusted to the young doctor Michel de Bay, or Baius. When Van der Eycken passed away in Trent in 1552²⁹, his young substitute remained in his post and before long had gathered a considerable following in Louvain. Baius found an ally in his younger yet equally intelligent colleague John Hessels (1522-66)³⁰, who taught theology and Sacred

pp. 241-243. On the origin of the Tridentine decree on Bible study and preaching, see Arthur ALLGEIER, *Das Konzil von Trient und das theologische Studium*, in *Historisches Jahrbuch im auftrage der Görres-Gesellschaft* 52 (1932) 313-339; Hubert JEDIN, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient*, Band II: *Die erste Trienter Tagungsperiode 1545/47*, Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 1957, pp. 83-103; Leopold LENTNER, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache: Geschichte einer Lebensfrage bis zum Ende des Konzils von Trient* (Wiener Beiträge zur Theologie, 5), Vienna, Herder 1964, pp. 264-274; Frederick J. MCGINNESS, *An Erasmian Legacy: Ecclesiastes and the Reform of Preaching at Trent*, in Ronald K. DELPH – Michelle M. FONTAINE – John Jeffries MARTIN (eds.), *Heresy, Culture, and Religion in Early Modern Italy: Contexts and Contestations* (Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies, 76), Kirksville, MO, Truman State University Press, 2006, 93-112.

²⁸ Edmond J.M. VAN EIJL, *De theologische faculteit te Leuven in de XV^e en XVI^e eeuw: Organisatie en opleiding*, in VAN EIJL (ed.), *Facultas S. Theologiae Lovaniensis 1432-1797*, 69-153, pp. 95-98, 152. See also Victor BARONI, *La Contre-Réforme devant la Bible: La question biblique* (doctoral dissertation Faculty of Theology Lausanne), Lausanne: La Concorde, 1943, pp. 235-237, 287-296; Robert DE LANGHE, *Les recherches bibliques à l'Université de Louvain*, in Joseph COPPENS – Albert DESCAMPS – Édouard MASSAUX (eds.), *Sacra Pagina: Miscellanea biblica congressus internationalis catholici de re biblica* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 12-13), vol. 1, Gembloux, Duculot, 1959, 28-40, pp. 29-30.

²⁹ Petrus Franciscus Xaverius DE RAM, *Mémoire sur la part que le clergé de Belgique et spécialement les docteurs de l'Université de Louvain, ont prise au Concile de Trente* (Académie Royale de Belgique. Nouveaux Mémoires, 14), Brussels, Hayez, 1841, pp. 32-35. In addition to Van der Eycken, other Louvain theologians sent to the Council included Ruard Tapper, Franciscus Sonnius and Josse Ravesteyn from Tiel (or Tiletanus).

³⁰ On Hessels' life and works, see, for example, Edward VAN EVEN, *Hessels (Jean)*, in *Biographie Nationale de Belgique* 9 (1886-87) 320-322; J. FORGET, *Hessels, Jean*, in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 6 (1920) 2321-2324; André DUVAL, *Hessels (Jean)*, in *Catholicisme* 5 (1957) 699-700.

Scripture to the young Norbertines of the Premonstratensian abbey of Park, just outside the city walls, between 1551 and 1559, and assisted abbot Ludovicus van den Berghe (r. 1543-58) in his endeavour to restore the strict observance of the rule and community life, efforts that were continued by his successor Charles Van der Linden (r. 1558-1576)³¹. Largely due to the facilities and material support offered by the abbey, Hessels simultaneously continued his own studies at the Faculty of Theology³². He was appointed professor at the Faculty in 1554 and awarded the degree of Doctor in Theology in 1556. In 1562, Hessels was ultimately appointed to the chair of professor royal in Scholastic Theology. Both 'royal chairs' – Sacred Scriptures and Scholastic Theology – were thus entrusted to a new generation of professors. The 'old guard', which still consisted of the disciples of Adrian of Utrecht and was represented by Ruard Tapper, lost a considerable degree of influence in the process. The irony of the situation, however, is that Baius, professor royal of Sacred Scriptures, did not publish any significant Bible commentary, whereas Hessels, his colleague in Scholastic Theology, did produce some interesting commentaries. It should be remembered, however, that another colleague of Baius and Hessels, namely Cornelius Jansenius of Ghent, ordinary professor of theology and later bishop of Ghent, would prove to be Louvain's major biblical scholar of the Early Modern Era. While Hessels may not

³¹ "Ludovicus Van den Berghe, abbas Parchensis ab anno 1543 ad annum 1558, perpetuam sui memoriam Parchensibus reliquit, monasterium illud laboribus Joannis Hessellii lectoris in eum statum reformans, ut multis aliis in sanctitate et studiorum exercitiis sit exemplar" (Joannes MOLANUS, *Historiae Lovaniensium*, liber XI, ed. Petrus Franciscus Xaverius DE RAM [Collection de Chroniques Belges inédites, 9/2], Brussels, Hayez, 1861, p. 691. Comp. Emile VALVEKENS, *L'Ordre de Prémontré et le Concile de Trente: Le chapitre national néerlandais de 1572*, in *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 6 [1930] 74-97, pp. 75-76; Norbert Joseph WEYNS, *La réforme des Prémontrés aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles particulièrement dans la circonscription de Brabant*, in *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 46 [1970] 5-51, pp. 14-15). This is an early testimony to the cooperation between the Louvain theologians belonging to the Augustinian faction of the Faculty and the abbots of the (rich and powerful) Brabant Premonstratensian abbeys. Louvain theologians not only spent some years teaching the young Norbertines, but eventually contributed to the Premonstratensians' clear-cut option for a strict Augustinian theology of grace. This would become even more manifest in the course of the seventeenth century (See Norbert Joseph WEYNS, *De Brabantse Norbertijnen en het Jansenisme*, in *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 29 [1953] 5-66).

³² "... summa cum laude sacro illi Collegio locoque [Parchensi] ... in quo tot ille annos sacras est literas interpretatus; cuiusque liberalitate ac munificentia et in studiis fatus, et ad summum est Doctoratus gradum evectus" (Henricus GRAVIUS, *Epistola dedicatoria Carolo Lindano Monasterii Parchensis ... Abbati*, in Ioannes HESSELS, *In priorem B. Pauli apostoli ad Timotheum epistolam Commentarius/a Henrico Gravio, Lovanii: apud Ioannem Bogardum*, 1568, [8], 193, [1] f.; in -8°, f. A7v).

have enjoyed the fame of Cornelius Jansenius, he can still be considered an early representative of a Louvain school of Augustinian Bible exegesis.

As we know, Augustine's anti-Pelagian works led both Baius and Hessels to like-minded conceptions regarding Adam's fall, the consequences thereof for posterity, and the relationship between grace and free will. Their positions on these matters came suspiciously close to those of Luther, Calvin and the other reformers. Concerns about their orthodoxy and the hope that close contacts with the Apostolic See and the Catholic bishops would bring both theologians into line with Catholic tradition contributed to their selection as Louvain's representatives at the Council of Trent. This is evident from the letters written in June and July 1561 to Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga by Bishop (later Cardinal) Gianfrancesco Commendone who was actually sent to the north to invite the Catholic and Protestant Estates of Germany to participate in the Council of Trent³³. On the occasion of a visit to Louvain earlier that year, the nuncio had cautioned Hessels and his colleague Judocus Ravesteyn of Tielt (Tiletanus), insisting on the need to preserve the unity of doctrine. In a letter to Commendone dated May 1561, Hessels remembers the event and confirms his undivided engagement in the fight against heresy, basing himself "on the ancient and solid foundations of the faith"³⁴.

The theological method, on which both Baius and Hessels based themselves, is also explained in a frequently quoted letter written by the former to Cardinal Ludovico Simoneta in 1568. Their theology was characterised by a radical return to the Scriptures and the Church Fathers, both of which enjoyed a degree of credit among the Protestants and were thus the best way to tackle the "heretics". Baius, however, did not conceal the fact that he and Hessels made particular reference to the work

³³ G. Commendone to E. Gonzaga, 9 June 1561, in *Concilium Tridentinum: Diariorum, actorum, epistularum, tractatum nova collectio*. T. VIII. *Actorum Pars Va*, ed. Stephanus EHSES, Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 1919, p. 224 l. 3-20; *Idem*, 15 June 1561, pp. 226-227; *Idem*, 24 July 1561, pp. 234-236. Baius and Hessels, together with Jansenius of Ghent, were at the Council from the summer of 1563 to the spring of 1564.

³⁴ "... attenta exhortatione, qua me et magistrum nostrum Tiletanum in collegio societatis Iesu generaliter super unitate doctrinae exhortari dignatus es ... Nobis etiam praecipue incumbere putamus, ut studendo, docendo, disputando ex antiquissimis et solidissimis nostrae religionis fundamentis studeamus nostri temporis erroribus occurrere" (J. Hessels to G. Commendone, 27 May 1561, in *Concilium Tridentinum*. T. VIII. *Actorum Pars Va*, ed. EHSES, p. 215 l. 19-21, 25-27; comp. G. Commendone to E. Gonzaga, 9 June 1561, in *Concilium Tridentinum*. T. VIII. *Actorum Pars Va*, ed. EHSES, p. 223 l. 8-18).

of Augustine³⁵. The letter in question was written a few months after Pope Pius V had rebuked Baius with an official condemnation (1567), which was provoked in its turn by an earlier censure of excerpts from Baius' works by various foreign theological faculties. Hessels himself escaped condemnation, partly because he was considered more moderate than Baius³⁶ and partly because he died in 1566 at the youthful age of 44 years. In his letter to the Cardinal Simoneta, Baius nevertheless expresses his conviction that the condemnation also affected his like-minded colleague and friend John Hessels³⁷.

John Hessels enjoyed a profound familiarity with the works of Augustine. A text has also been preserved in the Louvain University archives in which Hessels questions the authenticity of a number of works attributed to Augustine in Erasmus' Froben edition, which might have made his colleagues aware of the problems associated with the said corpus and have evoked the need for a new and improved edition of Augustine's writings³⁸. A revised and improved

³⁵ "Ante annos octodecim, cum primum coepi publice et quotidie sacram Theologiam in Scholis nostris profiteri, partim ob Haereticos, qui nihil audire volunt, nisi Scripturam sacram et veterum dicta Sanctorum, partim etiam ob consortium cum optimo quodam et eruditissimo viro Joanne Hessels, Sacrae Theologiae Professore, qui eandem docendi normam sequebatur in lectione, quam nunc plusquam octodecim annos continuos Deo me confortante quotidie prosecutus sum; post lectionem Petri Lombardi et alicujus Doctoris Scholastici, conatus sum sacrae Theologiae studium statim revocare ad Scripturam sacram, et veterum scripta Sanctorum, Cypriani, Ambrosii, Hieronymi, Augustini, Leonis, Prosperi, Gregorii, et similium, quos etiam Haeretici saltem aliqua ex parte venerantur ... nos totos ad horum Veterum, et praesertim D. Augustini (qui in tractandis quaestionibus omnium diligentissimus fuit) imitationem formare conamur ..." (M. Baius to L. Simonete, 16 March 1568, in [Michael BAIUS,] *Michaelis Baii ... Opera: Cum Bullis Pontificum et aliis ipsius causam spectantibus ... opuscula aucta*/studio A.P. theologi [Gabrielis Gerberon], Coloniae Agripinae: sumptibus Balthasaris ab Egmont et Sociozum, 1696, 2t. in 1 v. [xviii, (2), 492, 248 p.]; in-4°, t. 2, pp. 124-125).

³⁶ G. Commendone to E. Gonzaga, 24 July 1561, in *Concilium Tridentinum*. T. VIII. *Actorum Pars Va*, ed. EHSES, p. 234 l. 17-18: "... l' Hessels, ch' è il più moderato ..."; p. 235 l. 30-31: "... il Bay solo come più pericoloso..."

³⁷ M. Baius to L. Simoneta, 16 March 1568, in [Michael BAIUS,] *Michaelis Baii ... Opera*, ed. GERBERON, t. 2, pp. 125-126.

³⁸ The two page text is part of a compilation consisting of orations, consultations etc. written by John Hessels and other professors of the Faculty. The handwriting reveals that the compilation was copied at the end of the sixteenth century by John Molanus, who was one of the promoters of the Louvain Augustine edition. The said text, with the number 32, belonged among the items preserved in the Archives of Ghent Seminary until they were brought back to the University Archives in Louvain. See Ferdinandus CLAEYS-BOUÛAERT, *Inventaire de documents relatifs à l'ancienne Université de Louvain (Faculté de Théologie) conservés au Grand Séminaire de Gand*, in Léon VAN DER ESSEN (ed.), *L'Université de Louvain à travers cinq siècles: Études historiques*, Brussels, A. Lesigne, 1927, 273-308, p. 279.

Louvain edition of Augustine was only to appear ten years after Hessels' death, in 1577. In his introduction to this extensive work, the editor, John Molanus or Van der Meulen, admits to having had the "manuscript censures that John Hessels made on nine volumes"³⁹ at his disposal in the process of deliberating on the authenticity of Augustine's works.

John Hessels left a number of theological and polemical works to posterity. His famous *Catechismus*, a systematic exposition of dogmatic and moral theology, was published posthumously in 1571⁴⁰. Although he was holder of the royal chair in Scholastic Theology, Hessels also left a number of Bible commentaries, three of which were edited after his death by his younger colleague Henry Gravius and published by Jean (I) Bogard (Joannes Bogardus) in Louvain in 1568: A commentary on the First Letter of Paul to Timothy, a commentary on the First Letter of Peter and a commentary on the First Letter of John⁴¹. In the preliminary pages of the commentary on the Epistle to Timothy, we find a dedication written by Gravius to Abbot Charles Van der Linden of Park Abbey, who had been one of Hessels' students when the latter lectured in the abbey and who had maintained amicable relations with his professor. Hessels' commentary on the Gospel of Matthew was published in 1572, again thanks to the efforts of Henry Gravius⁴². In what follows, we will examine Hessels' discussion of 1 John 2,15-18a, a pericope that is not without importance for Augustinian theology.

³⁹ "Quae vero manifeste deprehensa constat Augustini non esse, ea praemissis censuris in Appendice sui tomi reponenda censui. In his autem censuris Erasmus aliquoties; saepius autem Indiculus Possidii; citationes Bedae: censura manuscripta doctissimi theologi Ioannis Hesselii in novem tomos; et reverendi patris Martini Lipsii in tomum decimum, magno nobis adiumento fuerunt" ([Aurelius Augustinus,] *Opera D. Aurelii Augustini ... tomis decem comprehensa...*/per theologos Lovanienses... [Ioannem Molanum], Antverpiae: ex officina Christophori Plantini, 1576-77; in -f°, [introduction] f *4v).

⁴⁰ Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, *The Place of Augustine in the First and the Second Books of Hessels' Catechismus*, in LAMBERIGTS – KENIS (eds.), *L'Augustinisme à l'ancienne Faculté*, 99-122.

⁴¹ Ioannes HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis apostoli et evangelistae canonicam epistolam absolutissimus Commentarius*/a Henrico Gravio, Lovanii: apud Ioannem Bogardum, 1568, [8], 121, [1] f.; in -8°.

⁴² See Jean-Pierre DELVILLE, *L'Europe de l'exégèse au XVI^e siècle: Interprétations de la parabole des ouvriers à la vigne (Matthieu 20,1-16)* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 174), Leuven, University Press – Peeters, 2004, pp. 468-474.

IV. John Hessels' commentary on 1 John 2,15-18a

15 Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof: but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever. 18a Little children, it is the last hour ...

1. Love of the world and love of God

In his commentary on verse 15⁴³, Hessels insists that the concept "world" should be taken literally, but that it also refers to the 'worldly' people who opt for the created world instead of the law of the Creator. Hessels implores his readers and listeners not to love the world as such, arguing on the basis of Matt 6,24 that anyone who loves the world cannot love God at the same time. The 'worldly' people to whom the concept refers, however, are to be loved and removed from the world according to the will of Christ. A connection is made at this juncture with John 15,19⁴⁴. Hessels' description of the contrast between love of the world and love of God sounds particularly Augustinian⁴⁵ and is reminiscent of the Church Father's second sermon on

⁴³ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 36v.

⁴⁴ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 36v: "Diligi prohibetur hic mundus inquantum mundus est sive impius: Nam quatenus sunt homines, diligendi sunt, et eruendi de mundo ..."

⁴⁵ The contrast between heavenly and earthly things plays an important role in almost all ethical questions touched upon by Augustine in his *Sermones ad populum*, *Enarrationes* etc. Prompted by his pastoral preoccupations, however, the Church Father also stresses the gradual conversion from the love of the world to the love of God. This represents the basic idea of all the conversion schemes in the *Confessiones*: Aversion from the earthly and conversion to the heavenly. The contrast is also present in Augustine's doctrinal writings (e.g. *De civitate Dei*) where the ethical distinction has even been built upon an ontological distinction. Human persons are at liberty to make use of the world but not to enjoy it on its own account. People were to love God and their fellow human beings, to the extent that the latter refer to God (Comp. Dany DIDEBERG, *Saint Augustin et la première épître de Saint Jean: Une théologie de l'agapé* [Théologie Historique, 34], Paris, Beauchesne, 1975, pp. 175-181; also Raymond F. CANNING, *The Unity of Love for God and Neighbour in St. Augustine*, Leuven, Augustinian Historical Institute, 1993). It is clear that this is also related to the Augustinian topic of *uti* and *frui* (Anthony DUPONT, *Using or Enjoying Humans: Uti et Frui in Augustine*, in *Augustiniana* 54 [2004] 475-506; the bibliography gives a list of studies consecrated to the theme of love, albeit from the perspective of *uti* and *frui*).

the First Letter of John⁴⁶, although this is not mentioned as such in the margins of his book.

2. The threefold temptation

1 John 2,16 provides the reason why the world should not be loved: It is rampant with the *concupiscentia carnis* or the *desire of the flesh*, the *concupiscentia oculorum* or the *lust of the eyes* and the *superbia vitae* or the *ambitions of the present life*, none of which is 'of the Father'. Hessels' commentary⁴⁷ stands completely in line with the interpretation Augustine offers of the same verse. The Church Father had initially related this threefold temptation from 1 John 2,16 with his threefold understanding of the passions, which still had its roots in Antiquity: *voluptas*, *curiositas* and *superbia* or *ambitio saeculi*. We find a detailed meditation on 1 John 2,16 in the second part of the tenth book of Augustine's *Confessiones* (*Conf.* X, 30 [41] – 39 [64]), from 397, which even derives its structure from the threefold temptation as described in the said verse. The Church Father also elaborates on *concupiscentia carnis*, *concupiscentia oculorum* and *superbia vitae* in his second sermon on the First Letter of John (406-407)⁴⁸. Hessels' commentary on the first temptation is particularly reminiscent of the latter work, although – as we noted above – no direct reference is made to his source in the edition of 1568. In a paraphrase of Augustine's second sermon on the First Letter of John⁴⁹, Hessels considers the *concupiscentia carnis* to be an unordered desire for the things of the flesh whereby natural life is maintained, and he explicitly alludes to food and drink in this regard, as well as the *concubitus* or the 'shared bed'⁵⁰. In line with Augustine⁵¹, Hessels understands the *concupiscentia*

⁴⁶ Augustine, *In Iohannis epistolam ad Parthos tractatus* tract. II., 11-12, ed. Paul AGAËSSE (SC, 75), Paris, Cerf, 1961, p. 174.

⁴⁷ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 37r-v: "Tria explicat Ioannes quibus universa comprehendit quae habent impii quibus Deo adversantur..."

⁴⁸ For further commentary on these passages, see DIDEBERG, *S. Augustin et I Jean*, pp. 182-186; James J. O'DONNELL, *Augustine: Confessions*. Vol. III: *Commentary on Books 8-13*. Indexes, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992, pp. 150-154, 199-249.

⁴⁹ Augustine, *In Iohannis epistolam ad Parthos tractatus* tract. II., 12 (SC, 75), p. 176: "Hoc ergo, ait nobis: 'desiderium carnis est', id est, desiderium earum rerum quae pertinent ad carnem, sicut cibus et concubitus, et cetera huiusmodi".

⁵⁰ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 37r: "Concupiscentiam carnis vocat inordinatum desiderium earum rerum quae pertinent ad carnem, quibus natura sustentatur, cuiusmodi sunt cibus ac potus, et concubitus, quo humani generis species conservatur, et alia consimilia".

⁵¹ Augustine, *In Iohannis epistolam ad Parthos tractatus* tract. II., 13 (SC, 75), p. 176: "... desiderium oculorum dicit omnem curiositatem. Jam quam late patet

oculorum as *curiositas*. In contrast to our contemporary understanding of the term, curiosity has a negative connotation in Hessels' commentary. Among the cherished objects of curiosity, Hessels includes⁵² the acquisition of unusual and godless arts, the observation of vain and immoral spectacles etc. Hessels then goes on to interrupt his line of thought, which exhibits a considerable degree of influence from Augustine's second sermon on the First Letter of John, dwelling further on the difference between the *concupiscentia carnis* and the *concupiscentia oculorum*, evidently on the basis of elements borrowed in this instance from the tenth book of Augustine's *Confessiones*. Hessels argues that one should understand the *concupiscentia carnis* to embrace every form of desire for whatever gratifies the senses by its very nature. He refers by way of example to attractive colours that please the eye, and sweet odours that indulge our sense of smell. They serve as a supplement to the aforementioned food, drink and shared bed, although Hessels remains far-removed from Augustine's "sense-by-sense exploration of the temptations of the flesh: Touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight"⁵³, which we encounter in the tenth book of his *Confessiones*. Hessels distinguishes between the *concupiscentia carnis* and the *concupiscentia oculorum*, basing himself on the observation that the latter does not long for things that are desirable by nature, but for things considered to be desirable by human fantasy, which are sometimes even offensive to the senses⁵⁴. With *Confessiones* X, 35 in mind, he adds that this is rightly called the "ocular desire", because it refers to a hunger for knowledge, and the eyes enjoy pride of place among the five senses when it comes to the acquisition of knowledge⁵⁵. As we already noted, the insertion of elements borrowed from *Confessiones* X interrupts Hessels' structured discussion of 1 John 2,16 to some degree, although they appear to have been necessary, nevertheless, for clarifying his distinction between the *concupiscentia carnis*

curiositas? Ipsa in spectaculis, in theatris, in sacramentis diaboli, in magicis artibus, in maleficiis ipsa est curiositas".

⁵² HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 37r: "Concupiscentiam oculorum appellat omnem curiositatem, quae valde late patet, ut in addiscendis curiosis ac nephariis artibus; in vanis aut turpibus contuendis spectaculis, in conquirendis magnis opibus, in dinoscendis carpendisque proximorum vitiis".

⁵³ O'DONNELL, *Augustine: Confessions*. Vol II: *Commentary on Books 1-7*, p. 211.

⁵⁴ Hessels may be alluding to Augustine's *Confessiones* X, 35 (55), ed. Lucas VERHEIJEN (CC SL, 27), Turnhout, Brepols, 1981, pp. 184 l. 21 – 185 l. 25.

⁵⁵ This is a clear allusion to Augustine's *Confessiones* X, 35 (54) (CC SL, 27), p. 184 l. 7-9. Comp. Hans BLUMENBERG, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought), Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1995, pp. 309-323.

and the *concupiscentia oculorum*. Hessels returns to Augustine's second sermon on the First Letter of John in his discussion of the *superbia*⁵⁶. Augustine prefers to refer to the *superbia* as the *ambitio saeculi*, a concept Hessels does not borrow from the Church Father. According to the Louvain theologian, the *superbia* stirs an unordered desire in a person to tower above other people and even to hand himself over to difficult tasks, to elicit praise and consider himself exalted, on account of his wealth or power or intellect and science, or even personal virtue⁵⁷.

Following his discussion of the threefold temptation in 1 John 16, on the basis of texts from Augustine, Hessels goes on to argue that Adam himself was subject to the same three temptations and was overcome by them⁵⁸. It should be noted for the sake of clarity that this idea is not to be found in the works of Augustine! From Hessels' perspective, Adam was tempted by the *concupiscentia carnis* when the enemy persuaded him to eat the forbidden fruit; by the *concupiscentia oculorum* when he suggested: "You will acquire knowledge of good and evil and your eyes shall be opened", and by the *superbia* when he said: "You shall become like gods". Hessels adds that Adam's descendants will be confronted by the same [three] temptations in an immense variety of forms as long as they are part of this world⁵⁹. In the margins of the 1568 edition of Hessels' book, reference is clearly made at this point to Augustine's *Confessiones*, book X, from chapter 28 to the end. For the first time, reference is explicitly made to a work of Augustine⁶⁰.

By way of contrast with Adam and his descendants, Hessels points out that Jesus was also subject to the same temptation but was not overcome by them (Matt 4,1-11)⁶¹. He was tempted by the

⁵⁶ Augustine, *In Iohannis epistolam ad Parthos tractatus* tract. II., 13 (SC, 75), p. 178: "Ambitio saeculi superbia est. Jactare se vult in honoribus; magnus sibi videtur homo, sive de divitiis, sive de aliqua potentia".

⁵⁷ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 37v: "Superbia est, qua quis inordinate quaerit excellere, et ardua tentat, qua quis ambit honores, et magnus sibi videtur, sive ob divitias, sive ob potentiam, sive ob ingenium et scientiam, sive etiam propter ipsam virtutem".

⁵⁸ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 37v: "Per haec tria tentatus et victus est Adam ..."

⁵⁹ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 37v: "Per eadem haec innumeris modis tentatur posteritas Adae quamdiu in hoc mundo vivit ..."

⁶⁰ Although Hessels' text is particularly reminiscent of *Conf.* X, 35 (54-55), the Louvain theologian refers in a more general way to the famous passage of Augustine, *Confessiones* X, 28 (39) – 43 (70) (CC SL, 27), pp. 175-193.

⁶¹ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 37v – 38r: "Ab iisdem vitiis tentatus est et dominus Iesus, sed non item superatus ..."

concupiscentia carnis when Satan suggested that he “tell the stones to become bread”. He was lured by the *concupiscentia oculorum* when Satan advised him to throw himself to the ground from the highest point in the temple and see if God’s angels would guard him. At first sight, this is not an obvious connection, but it is completely in line with Augustine who even saw the servants of God tempted by curiosity “so that they wish to work a miracle, to test whether God listens to them in regard to miracles”⁶². Finally, Jesus was tempted by the *superbia* when Satan promised him all the kingdoms of the world with all their magnificence if he would fall down in worship before him. It would also appear that Hessels was inspired by Augustine’s second sermon on the First Letter of John in the composition of this passage, although the 1568 edition still contains no explicit reference to the said work⁶³. As a matter of fact, Augustine is one of the few Church Fathers (if not the only one) to relate 1 John 2, 16 to the narrative of Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness⁶⁴. Hessels goes on to argue that Christ proposed three forms of antidote to these three evils in the gospel⁶⁵. As an antidote to the *concupiscentia carnis* he proposed fasting, to the *concupiscentia oculorum* the giving of alms and charity towards one’s neighbour, and to the *superbia* of this life humble prayer (Matt 6,1-18). In similar fashion, the apostle Paul proposed moderation, justice and piety (Titus 2,1-15).

Hessels notes in passing that John’s words in the passage in question were not intended as an explanation of every sin but rather of the evil roots of every sin⁶⁶. He makes explicit reference in this regard to Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*, the first and only time he does so in his discussion of this pericope. More specifically, Hessels refers to Thomas’ explanation with reference to the *concupiscentia oculorum*. The fact that Thomas in turn explicitly refers to Augustine’s *Confessiones* X, 35 with regard to this point has the effect of turning Hessels’ reference to Thomas into an indirect reference to Augustine⁶⁷.

⁶² Augustine, *In Iohannis epistulam ad Parthos tractatus* tract. II., 13 (SC, 75), p. 176. Comp. Augustine, *Tractates on the First Epistle of John*, tract. 2, trans. John W. RETTIG (The Fathers of the Church: A new translation, 92), Washington, D.C., C.U.A. Press, 1995, p. 156.

⁶³ Augustine, *In Iohannis epistulam ad Parthos tractatus* tract. II., 14 (SC, 75), pp. 178-180.

⁶⁴ DIDEBERG, *S. Augustin et I Jean*, p. 186.

⁶⁵ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 38r: “Adversus tria haec mala proponit Christus in Euangelio tria item antidota ...”

⁶⁶ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 38r.

⁶⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 77, art. 5 (ed. Leonina, 7), Rome, Typographia de Propaganda Fide, 1892, pp. 66-67.

3. The nature of *concupiscentia*

Hessels continues by stating that he wishes to elaborate on John's allusion to the fact that the threefold temptation does not come from God but rather from the world. Without further ado, however, the Louvain professor passes over the threefold temptation and goes on to offer a number of observations with respect to *concupiscentia* as such. In so doing, he follows completely in the footsteps of Augustine, who focuses on the nature of *concupiscentia* in the second stage of his exegesis of 1 John 2,16, during the controversy with Julian of Aeclanum. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that Hessels cites *Contra Iulianum* IV, chapters 13 and 14 (421/422) in some detail at this juncture⁶⁸. In line with Augustine⁶⁹, Hessels considers *concupiscentia* in the first instance as a fundamental deficiency of human nature after the fall and in this sense as a punishment for original sin (*poena peccati*). At the same time, however, it is a particularly compelling incitement or stimulus to sin. In Augustine's opinion, all human beings, even those who have been baptised, are subject to the temptations of the flesh, which runs counter to the spirit and lures men and women into taking revenge, for example, or the pursuit of wealth, or the imposition of one's own will, or the pursuit of honours. Sexual desire is clearly the manifestation par excellence of *concupiscentia*, although it does not have a prominent place in Hessels' argumentation. Given the fact that *concupiscentia* directs human desire in an unordered manner in all sorts of erroneous directions, human beings come to love the very things they should avoid and avoid the things they should embrace. It goes without saying that Hessels also makes reference to the particularly Augustinian theme of the struggle between *concupiscentia* and *continentia*, the latter understood by the Church Father as nothing other than a gift of God.

⁶⁸ DIDEBERG, *S. Augustin et I Jean*, pp. 187-189.

⁶⁹ According to Augustine, concupiscence indicates a longing both for what is good and what is bad. The Church Father recognises that there is a spiritual concupiscence for wisdom, for example, and a natural longing for happiness. Due to the injured will of man, concupiscence usually has a pejorative connotation, and bears on every desire of the flesh hostile to the spirit. It is therefore referred to as *concupiscentia carnis*. Comp. Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, *A Critical Evaluation of Critiques of Augustine's View of Sexuality*, in Robert DODARO – George LAWLESS (eds.), *Augustine and His Critics. Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner*, London – New York, Routledge, 2000, 176-197; see also Gerald BONNER, *Concupiscentia*, in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, ed. Cornelius MAYER, vol. 1, Basel, Schwabe & Co. AG, 1986-94, cc. 1113-1122; Gerald BONNER, *Libido and Concupiscentia in St. Augustine*, in Frank Leslie CROSS (ed.), *Studia Patristica. Vol. VI: Papers Presented to the Third International Conference on Patristic Studies Held at Christ Church, Oxford, 1959*. Part IV: *Theologica, Augustiniana*, Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1962, 303-314.

As we already noted, Hessels elaborates in the first instance on the Johannine observation that *concupiscentia* (in its threefold form) does not come from God but comes rather from the world⁷⁰. Indeed, God can never be the cause of sin, to which human beings submit themselves and give their consent. Hessels goes on to argue that even the *concupiscentia* of infants prior to baptism, to which the latter do not grant their consent and which one cannot thus describe as sinful, does not come from the Father. Together with Augustine, he adds: "If such *concupiscentia* were to come from God, everything it desires would have to be granted it... If we ourselves are unable to grant it whatever it desires, the Father would have to be asked to satisfy the *concupiscentia*, which he has ultimately given"⁷¹. In support of Augustine, Hessels makes reference to the Venerable Bede's commentary on the First Letter of John⁷². Hessels also insists that this *concupiscentia* should not be loved, rather it should be approached with hatred and even persecuted when it manifests itself among the righteous. It ensnares people in a life that runs counter to the Spirit, prevents them from doing good, and tempts them to act in violation of God's commandments. A large number of biblical quotations are used in support of this idea, taken in particular from Paul's Epistles (e.g. Col 3,5, Rom 7,15 and 18-19, Gal 5,17) and from the Letter of James (1,14). Two further quotations from Augustine are likewise used in support of this idea, one from his commentary on Psalm 118⁷³ and the other from *De civitate Dei*⁷⁴.

Hessels also deals with an associated question, namely whether it is possible to argue that death does not come from God but from the world⁷⁵. He responds by insisting in the first instance that God did not

⁷⁰ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 38r – 39v: "Porro manifestum est tria haec dum nobis dominantur, eisque consensum praebemus, ex Deo non esse... Ista igitur concupiscentia secundum Ioannem non est diligenda, sed odio habenda et persequenda etiam in iusto ... Displicet enim Deo haec concupiscentia, ut quae non ex ipso, sed ex mundo est orta ...".

⁷¹ A chain of quotations from Augustine's *Contra Iulianum*, IV, ca. 13.64; ca. 14.65 and 73, ed. Jacques-Paul MIGNE (PL, 44), Paris, Migne, 1841, cc. 769 l. 28-39; 770 l. 11-15 and 775 l. 10-19.22-27.

⁷² Beda Venerabilis, *In epistulas septem catholicas. Lib IV (in I Io)*, cap. II, 16, ed. David HURST (CC SL, 121), Turnhout, Brepols, 1983, p. 294 l. 191-196. With references to Qoh 7,30; Jas 1,13.

⁷³ Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps. CXVIII*, s. VIII, 4, ed. Eligius DEKKERS – Iohannes FRAIPONT (CC SL, 40), Turnhout, Brepols, 1956, p. 1688 l. 34-41.

⁷⁴ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XI, 28, ed. Bernhard DOMBART – Alphonsus KALB (CC SL, 48), Turnhout, Brepols, 1955, p. 348 l. 11-17.

⁷⁵ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 39v – 40v: "... Deus (inquit Sapiens) mortem non fecit: creavit enim hominem talem, qui posset nunquam

make death a part of human nature, rather he made human beings in such a way that they could never die. Hessels adds, however, that God has stricken humanity with death as a punishment for sin. He supports his ideas for the most part with references to the Scriptures: Wis 1,13, Sir 11,14, Deut 32,39, Jas 1,13. Hessels thus distinguishes between death, which ultimately comes from God, and *concupiscentia*, which cannot have God as its origin or source. While death is to be understood as an evil, it is used by God as an instrument of his justice in order to punish sin. It goes without saying that *concupiscentia* is also to be understood as an evil, but in contrast to death, it is completely opposed to justice and thus implies an incitement to sin. In a brief digression, Hessels adds nevertheless that God has also been able to turn *concupiscentia* into a punishment for sin and that it thereby came to serve justice. This leads him to the realisation that righteous people could also make use of *concupiscentia* in a good way, citing the sixteenth chapter of Augustine's *Contra Iulianum* V⁷⁶ in support of his argument. In the passage in question, Augustine appeals to Prov 10 sec. LXX, and in particular to 1 John 2,15-16⁷⁷, in order to demonstrate that it was possible to make use of something evil in a good way, such as the *concupiscentia carnis* within marriage. According to Augustine, therefore, human persons are at liberty to make use of the world but not to love the world. Returning to the comparison with death, Hessels repeats that he is fundamentally convinced that death, as opposed to *concupiscentia*, is not from the world. By way of decisive argument, he points out that Christ freely subjected himself to death, as the Father had commissioned him (with a reference to John 10,17-18), arguing that it would have been impossible for Christ to embrace something that was of this world. The Louvain theologian concludes by making reference to a number of Greek Church Fathers, namely Methodius of Olympus, Epiphanius of Salamis, Gregory of Nazianzus and Irenaeus of Lyon, each of whom had argued that death was created by God so that the evil of *concupiscentia* in humans would not

mori: eam tamen in poenam peccati Deus infligit ... At prava concupiscentia, quae nullum bonum, sed malum omne concupiscitur, Deum non habet autorem ... Quare nullo unquam casu eligenda est prava concupiscentia, aut ei consentiendum, quemadmodum mortem aliquando optare et eligere licet ..."

⁷⁶ Augustine, *Contra Iulianum*, V, ca. 16.60, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (PL, 44), Paris, Migne, 1841, c. 817 l. 13-26.

⁷⁷ "Thus, the Apostle John does not tell us not to use the world, but says: 'Do not love the world', in which he also puts the concupiscence of the flesh" (Augustine, *Against Julian*, V, ca 16.60, trans. Matthew A. SCHUMACHER [The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation, 35], Washington, D.C., C.U.A. Press, 1977, p. 299).

be immortal. God used death in order to prevent humans from sinning forever⁷⁸!

⁷⁸ [In margine: In haeresi Origenis. In oratio de Pascha Lib. 3 c. 35]. John Hessels first refers to Methodius of Olympus (also named Methodius Martyr) who reacted in his work *De resurrectione* (or the *Aglaophon*) against Origen's spiritualism and defended the identity of the earthly body with the heavenly, glorified body. The positive view of death, which is said to prevent humans from sinning, is to be found in Methodius Olympius, *De resurrectione* I, 38, 5; 39, 5-7; particularly I, 40, 4 - 44, 5; also I, 45, 6; II, 6, 3, ed. G. Nathanael BONWETSCH (CGS, 27), Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1917, pp. 281 l. 14 - 282 l. 2; 283 l. 13 - 284 l. 8; particularly pp. 284 l. 22 - 294 l. 5; also pp. 295 l. 6-12; 339 l. 17 - 340 l. 1. It is improbable that Hessels had direct access to the works of this Church Father. Methodius' *De resurrectione* I, 20 - II, 8, however, had been copied in its entirety by Epiphanius of Salamis, in his *Panarion haer.* 64, 12-62. The passages in Methodius' works to which we referred, are more specifically to be found in Epiphanius, *Panarion haer.* 64, 30, 8; 31, 8-11; particularly 64, 32, 4 - 36, 5; also 64, 37, (6.3); 64, 60, 3, ed. Karl HOLL - Jürgen DUMMER (GCS, 37), Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1980, pp. 449 l. 10-12; 450 l. 20 - 451 l. 7; particularly pp. 451 l. 21 - 457 l. 21; also pp. 458 l. 18 - 459 l. 3; 495 l. 17-19. Editions of Epiphanius' works were available in sixteenth century. In 1542, Janus Cornarius published his self-made Latin translation of the *Panarion*, the *Contra ogdoaginta haereses opus* (followed in 1544 by a Greek edition). This edition had been reprinted several times, complementing it with other books of Epiphanius' (see, for example, Paul Oskar KRISTELLER et al. [eds.], *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum. Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries. Annotated Lists and Guides*, vol. 7, Washington, D.C., C.U.A. Press, 1992, pp. 43-46). Furthermore, Hessels also discovers the concept of death as an antidote to sin in the work of Gregory of Nazianzus. He undoubtedly refers to Gregorius Nazianzenus, *Oratio XLV. In sanctum Pascha II^a*, VIII, ed. Jacques-Paul MIGNE (PG, 36), Paris, Migne, 1858, c. 633 l. 14-17. The same passage is also to be found word for word in Gregorius Nazianzenus, *Oratio XXXVIII. In Natiuitatem uel In Theophania*, 12, ed. Claudio MORESCHINI - Paul GALLAY (SC, 358), Paris, Cerf, 1990, p. 130 l. 27-30. *Oratio* '38' belongs to the collection of nine *Orationes* that Rufinus of Aquileia translated into Latin. Gregory's *Oratio* '45' *de Pascha* was also translated into Latin, after Rufinus' time, by an anonymous translator. It was attested for the first time in cod. Laurent. San Marco 584, dating from the ninth century. It is possible that this translation of *Oratio* '45' was adapted by Willibald Pirckheimer and inserted in his edition of 1531, which contains 37 *orationes*. These translations were also integrated into later editions (KRISTELLER et al. [eds.], *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum*, vol. 2, 1971, pp. 46-48, 53-55, 134-135, 151-153). To illustrate his point, Hessels finally refers to Irenaeus Lugdunensis, *Adversus haereses* III, 23, 6, ed. Norbert BROX (Fontes Christiani, 8/3), Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 1995, p. 290 l. 14-23. This Latin translation, made by an anonymous and dating back before 400, was edited and printed by Erasmus for the first time in 1526 and enjoyed several reprints (KRISTELLER et al. [eds.], *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum*, vol. 7, 1992, pp. 17-23, 32-37). In the margin of the text, reference is made to Lib. 3 c. 35, but the passage to which Hessels (or his editor) intends to refer, stems from c. 37. In some of Erasmus' Irenaeus editions, the numbering of c. 36 and c. 37 has been dropped and the text of these chapters has simply been printed under the heading of c. 35. In these editions, the numbering immediately goes from c. 35 to c. 38. This is the case with respect to the 1534 edition, for example, but further research needs to be done in order to determine whether there are still other editions of this kind. It is clear, nonetheless, that Hessels made use of one of them. 'Good' prints included the *editio princeps* from 1526 and the reprints of 1548 and 1560.

Hessels was thus convinced that *concupiscentia* did not come from God but from the world, and as a consequence it should not be loved. In his reading of 1 John 2,17, however, Hessels observes a second reason why the world and its associated *concupiscentia* should not be loved⁷⁹, namely *the world is finite*⁸⁰. Inserting cross-references to other Bible passages, he explains this as follows: Bad people perish – together with all other temporal things – so that there can be no further opportunity to satisfy any sort of evil temptation on the Day of Judgement⁸¹. Hessels adds at this juncture that what we can expect at the end of time happens on a daily basis at the death of an individual godless person, to those who have indulged themselves in the satisfaction of worldly desires⁸². The person who does God's will and loves him above all temporal things, however, shall not perish but shall remain. The holy desires the said person cherished in this life will not have been in vain, rather they will be fulfilled in eternity. Although the saints became finite and mortal on account of original sin, they will nevertheless taste immortality in the hope granted them by Christ. Hessels supports his argument once again with a literal quotation from Augustine's second sermon on the First Letter of John⁸³. Although reference is made to the Church Father as his source, Hessels or his editor do not indicate the precise work from which the quotation has been taken, in spite of the fact that Hessels quotes repeatedly from Augustine's second sermon on the First Letter of John.

Although the pericope 1 John 2,15-17 is taken to be a unity, Hessels also makes reference to verse 18a in his commentary, in which he observes a third reason why we should not love the world: *Children, the final hour is at hand*⁸⁴. The Louvain theologian underlines the fact that he and his contemporaries were experiencing the end of time, in which the coming of Christ in judgement was nearby, in which false prophets and those who indulge their wicked desires were in abundance. The closer the coming of the Lord and the more abundant the masters of

⁷⁹ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 40v – 41v: “*Et mundus transit. Addit Ioannes aliam rationem cur mundus non sit diligendus, nec eius concupiscentia ...*”

⁸⁰ As a Bible passage expressing the same idea, Hessels is referring to 1 Pet 1,24.

⁸¹ Rev 18.

⁸² PsG [VUL] 145,4.

⁸³ Augustine, *In Iohannis epistolam ad Parthos tractatus* tract. II., 10 (SC, 75), p. 170.

⁸⁴ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 41v – 42r: “*Tertiam adjicit rationem cur non debeamus diligere mundum: quia videlicet nunc extremum tempus est, quo Christi ad iudicium imminet adventus, quo abundant pseudoapostoli, et pravarum concupiscentiarum imitatores ...*”

injustice, the more the righteous should strive to avoid the temptations of this world. Hessels refers in this instance to Rom 13,11, Matt 4,17, PsG [VUL] 11,2 and PsG [VUL] 118,126-27. It was not unusual in the sixteenth century to believe that the final hour had dawned and to interpret the various phenomena of the turbulent times (the schism between Protestants and Catholics, the advance of the Turks etc.) in the light of the Scriptures. Hessels mitigates his statement, however, and avoids creating anxiety with respect to the end of time by distancing himself from endeavours to establish a concrete moment in the proximate future. In his opinion, Augustine rightly countered those who took the reference to "an hour" in the Scriptures to imply a specific moment in time. Hessels refers in this instance to Augustine's Letter to Hesychius on the end of time (i.e. letter 199)⁸⁵. The individuals in question maintained that six-thousand years represented a single day and that five hundred years – a twelfth of six-thousand – had to represent an hour.

Hessels concludes his commentary on 1 John 2,15-18a with a note on the term of address *Children* or *Filioli*⁸⁶, which he considered to be both flattering and exhortatory at the same time. He alludes in this regard to Augustine – probably his commentary on Psalm 38⁸⁷ – who considered the term of address to be a recommendation to continue in one's spiritual growth and to develop manly strength, precisely because the inescapable final hour was at hand.

V. Conclusion

We may conclude, therefore, that Hessels' commentary on 1 John 2,15-18a is full of references to the Bible and the Church Fathers, with Augustine taking pride of place. In addition to the quotations referred to explicitly in the margins of his book, several other allusions to Augustine are evident in his work. In his discussion of the threefold temptation from the text of 1 John, Augustine's commentary on the First Letter of John and chapter ten of his *Confessiones* clearly play an important role. When Hessels writes in more fundamental terms on *concupiscentia*, however, he makes abundant use of Augustine's anti-Pelagian work *Contra Iulianum* so that the Church Father's vision of the sin of Adam and original sin is clearly evident. In fact, it would be fair to say that the second part of Hessels' commentary is

⁸⁵ Augustine, *Ep. CXCIX. De fine saeculi*, ed. Alois GOLDBACHER (CSEL, 57), Vienna, Tempsky – Leipzig, Freytag, 1911, p. 258 l. 4-7.

⁸⁶ HESSELS, *In primam B. Ioannis ... Commentarius*, f. 42r.

⁸⁷ Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps. xxxviii*, 3, ed. Eligius DEKKERS – Iohannes FRAIPONT (CC SL, 38), Turnhout, Brepols, 1956, p. 405 l. 69-72.

nothing more in places than a chain of quotations from Augustine's book. Nevertheless, the Louvain theologian seems to be fully aware of the two stages of Augustine's exegesis of 1 John 2,16, which permits us to presume that he was well acquainted with the Church Father's work and realm of thought. It is also striking that Hessels refers only once to the great medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas, in spite of the fact that the Louvain professor was professor royal of Scholastic Theology from 1562. The precise date of origin of Hessels' posthumously edited and published Bible commentaries remains a question, although it is possible that they stem from the period in which he served as a lecturer in Park Abbey.

Wim FRANÇOIS