

THE EARLIEST PHASE OF THE JANSENIST CONTROVERSY AMONG THE FLEMISH CAPUCHINS ||

Part I:¹

Hildebrand's interpretation and the case of Eugenius of Bruges*

Abstract

The last and most thorough treatment of the Jansenist controversy among the Capuchins of the Flandro-Belgian Province was published in 1951/1957 by Hildebrand of Hooglede (O.F.M.Cap.). The present article, which consists of two parts and is based on a large selection of unedited or previously neglected documents, assesses Hildebrand's methodology and (some of his) conclusions.

The first part shows that Hildebrand's account of the controversy depends to a high extent on the apologetic discourse that was used by one of the parties involved in the controversy and that is best illustrated by the *Compendiosa et historica enarratio miserrimi status Prouvinciae Flandro-Belgicae fratrum Minorum Capucinatorum* by Michael of Oudenbosch and Angelus of Antwerp (1700). In addition, it is shown that by using a purely formal definition of Jansenism, Hildebrand managed to deny the existence of any 'real' Jansenist among his predecessors of the 17th and 18th centuries. A detailed analysis of some works by Eugenius of Bruges (1680s) proves that the use of this purely formal definition has lead to historically untenable conclusions.

The article's second part (which will appear in the next issue of this journal) will examine a claim by Silvester of Hasselt in his *Ad enarrationem compendiosam et historicam responsio fidelis et sincera* (1700), according to which Augustinus of 's Hertogenbosch and especially Fulgentius of Maaseik were the first to propagate Jansenius' teaching within the Flandro-Belgian Province. It is shown against Hildebrand that the anti-Jansenist decree that was issued by Provincial Patricius of Hazebroek in 1668, had indeed been provoked by Fulgentius of Maaseik's theological course at Antwerp during the years 1665-1668. Just like his disciple Eugenius was to do in the 1680s, Fulgentius championed the doctrines presented in the *Augustinus*, the consequence being that Silvester of Hasselt and other anti-Jansenists, who were convinced that Jansenius' book was rightly condemned by Innocent X and Alexander VII, did have

* I thank Ernest Persoons, Toon Van Houdt, Michel Van Meerbeeck and Anthony Dupont for their comments on a first draft of this article. In what follows, the 10 volumes of the *De Kapucijnen in de Nederlanden en het prinsbisdom Luik* by Hildebrand of Hooglede (Antwerpen 1945-1956) will be referred to as Hildebrand I, II, III, etc.

serious theological (and not only personal or political) motives for accusing him of having been a Jansenist heretic.

1. Introduction¹

On 1 August 1641, the Roman Inquisition issued a decree which prohibited Cornelius Jansenius' *Augustinus* together with several Jesuit theses against this work. Following on this decree, which was not carried out in the Spanish Low Countries,² Joannes Jansenius, nephew of Cornelius, collected through a private inquiry the testimony of 56 persons in favour of the work of his uncle.³ One of these testimonies was written by the Provincial of the Flemish Capuchins Cassianus of Geldern (1641-1644),⁴ who claimed that in the *Augustinus* a candle was lit that should not be covered with a vessel, but put on a candlestick in order that everyone who entered might see the light (as it is said in Lk. 8:16:

¹ For a general synthesis of the Capuchin position towards Jansenism, see *Jansenismus*, in: *Lexicon Capuccinum. Promptuarium historico-bibliographicum Ordinis fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum (1525-1950)* (Romae 1951) cc. 789-790; Melchior a Pobladora, *Historia generalis Ordinis fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum. Pars secunda (1619-1761). II* (Bibliotheca Seraphico-Capuccina. Sectio historica 9, Romae 1948) pp. 246-262; *Pars tertia (1761-1940)* (Bibliotheca Seraphico-Capuccina. Sectio historica 10, Romae 1951) pp. 557-561; P. Carlini, *Francesco Maria Casini (1648-1719). Un restauratore dell'oratoria Italiana* (Bibliotheca Seraphico-Capuccina 25, Roma 1969) pp. 225-242; P. Stella, *Gli ordini religiosi e il giansenismo nell'Italia del '700. Il caso dei Cappuccini*, in: G. Ingegneri, *I Cappuccini nell'Umbria del Settecento* (Bibliotheca Seraphico-Capuccina 82, Roma 2008) pp. 7-43. For the Jansenist controversy in the Flandro-Belgian Province, see Hildebrand VI, pp. 333-556 (1951); *Les Capucins en Belgique et au Nord de la France. Synthèse historique illustrée* (Anvers 1957) pp. 42-57.

² See J. Carreyre, *Jansénisme*, in: *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 8.1 (Paris 1924) cc. 318-529 (esp. c. 451); L. Ceyssens, *Sources relatives aux débuts du jansénisme et de l'antijansénisme. 1640-1643* (Bibliothèque de la Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique 31, Louvain 1957) pp. XXXI-XXXIII (on the decree of 1 August 1641) and 171-175 (n° 169; edition of the decree); *Het theologisch denken en het Jansenisme. 1640-1730*, in: *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden*. VIII. *Nieuwe tijd* (Haarlem 1979) pp. 418-438 (esp. p. 423); *Que penser finalement de l'histoire du jansénisme et de l'antijansénisme?*, in: *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 88 (1993) pp. 108-129 (esp. p. 116); L. Cognet, *Le jansénisme (Que sais-je?)* 960, Paris 1961) p. 36; M. Lamberigts, *Il giansenismo nei Paesi Bassi meridionali nel XVII secolo*, in: L. Vaccaro, *Storia religiosa di Belgio, Olanda e Lussemburgo. I* (Europa Ricerche 6, Milano 2000) pp. 281-314 (esp. p. 290).

³ See L. Ceyssens, *L'enquête officielle faite en 1644 dans les diocèses des Pays-Bas sur le scandale causé par l'«Augustinus» de Corneille Jansénius. La part qu'y prirent les Franciscains*, in: *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 48 (1950) pp. 68-160 (esp. pp. 70-73 and 141-146); *Les Capucins belges et l'enquête de 1644 sur le scandale causé par l'«Augustinus» de Corneille Jansénius*, in: *Collectanea Franciscana* 21 (1951) pp. 186-210 (esp. pp. 186-190).

⁴ See Hildebrand VI, p. 559 (nos 26-28).

Nemo autem lucernam accendens operit eam uaso aut subtus lectum ponit, sed supra candelabrum ponit, ut intrantes uideant lumen) and those who still remained outside might enter. This candle, Cassianus stated, had been lit with the light of Saint Augustine's teaching:⁵

*R^{mus} D. Cornelius Jansenius, Episcopus Iprensis, in Augustino suo, in quo agit de haeresi Pelagiana, de statu naturae innocentis, lapsae, purae, reparaetae, de liberi arbitrii natura, de nutricis omnium gratiae diuinae uiribus, lucernam accenderat non ex proprio, sed ex ipsius theologorum omnium magistri S. Augustini lumine; qui unde lumen hauserit, luce meridiana clarius est. Vnde iure merito omnes pii et qui aequi ueritatis aestimatores sincerique amatores sunt et lumen in admirabili illo D. Jansenii opere clarissime uident, anhelant, optant, orant, obsecrant ut lucerna haec, tam feliciter indefesso labore accensa, non in abscondito et sub modio ponatur, sed super candelabrum, ut qui hactenus non ingressi, ingrediantur et lumen uideant. Hoc ego infra-scriptus opto, anhelō, oro, obsecro, qui aliud fateri non possum quam doctrinam D. Cornelii Jansenii esse doctrinam S. Augustini; quae a sanctis orthodoxa, caelestis, apostolica, euangelica, defaecatissima, saluberrima et indubitata [...] habetur et habita olim fuit.*⁶

The decree of 1 August 1641 was followed on 6 March 1642 by the bull *In eminenti*, which would be published in the Spanish Low Countries in 1651. Through this bull, Urbanus VIII confirmed the earlier bulls of Pius V and Gregory XIII against Michael Baius (*Ex omnibus afflictionibus* [1567] and *Prouisionis nostrae* [1579]), the decrees of 1611 and 1625 against the publication without the explicit authorisation of the Roman Inquisition of works *de Auxiliis*, as well as the decree of 1641. In addition, Jansenius' *Augustinus* was explicitly condemned for having caused scandal because of its defence of several propositions that had already been prohibited by the earlier bulls against Baius.⁷ In 1644, an official enquiry took place in several dioceses of the Spanish Low Countries concerning the scandal the *Augustinus* had caused according to the bull.⁸ Among the statements that were collected during

⁵ Compare Mt. 5:15; Mk. 4:21; Lk. 11:33.

⁶ See L. Ceyssens, *Les Capucins belges et l'enquête de 1644* [n. 3] pp. 189-190 (n° I); Hildebrand VI, pp. 340-341.

⁷ See J. Carreyre, *Jansénisme* [n. 2], c. 452; L. Ceyssens, *La première bulle contre Jansénius. Sources relatives à son histoire (1644-1653). I. (1644-1649)* (Bibliothèque de l'Institut historique belge de Rome 9, Bruxelles-Rome 1961) pp. VI-IX; *Het theologisch denken* [n. 2] pp. 423-426; *Que penser finalement* [n. 2] pp. 116-119; L. Cognet, *Le jansénisme* [n. 2] pp. 36-37; M. Lamberigts, *Il giansenismo* [n. 2] pp. 290-291.

⁸ See L. Ceyssens, *L'enquête officielle faite en 1644* [n. 3] *passim*; *Het theologisch denken* [n. 2] p. 425; *Que penser finalement* [n. 2] pp. 118-119; M. Lamberigts, *Il giansenismo* [n. 2] pp. 291-292.

this enquiry, several were written by Cassianus of Geldern and other Capuchin friars, most of them claiming that the *Augustinus* contained the doctrine of the bishop of Hippo and had not caused scandal.⁹ A nice example of such a testimony in favour of Jansenius was written by Marcellinus of Helmont, former *Sacrae Theologiae lector* and then Guardian of the convent at Kortrijk.¹⁰ Marcellinus claimed that, as long as the Holy See did not decide otherwise, he would continue to consider the *Augustinus* a monument of erudition and orthodox thinking that deserved to be printed in gilded letters. Stronger still, Jansenius himself deserved the honour of being remembered through the erection of a statue.¹¹ Six years earlier, in a letter of 1638, the same Marcellinus, who had been a disciple of Fromondus, one of the posthumous editors of the *Augustinus*, had already expressed his regret at the death of Jansenius († 6 May 1638) as well as his hope that Fromondus would succeed to the latter as bishop of Ypres.¹²

It should be mentioned also that Cassianus of Geldern's commitment to the cause of the *Augustinus* was not limited to his testimonies for the enquiries of 1641 and 1644. According to a letter that was written in Rome on 16 September 1643 by an anonymous Oratorian priest, Cassianus had presented 400 *approbationes* of Jansenius' book to Cardinal Protector Antonio Barberini during his stay in the City at the occasion of the General Chapter of May 1643.¹³

In spite of this early Capuchin support for Jansenius, a decree was issued by Minister General Fortunatus of Cadore (1650-1656) and

⁹ See L. Ceyssens, *Les Capucins belges et l'enquête de 1644* [n. 3] *passim*; Marcellien et Héliodore de Barea en face du jansénisme, in: *Collectanea Franciscana* 27 (1957) pp. 82-87; Hildebrand VI, pp. 341-343.

¹⁰ See Hildebrand V, p. 265; VIII, p. 534 (n° 20).

¹¹ See L. Ceyssens, *Les Capucins belges et l'enquête de 1644* [n. 3] pp. 206-207 (n° XVI): *His omnibus consideratis et attentis, quam diu aliud per Sedem Apostolicam non declaretur, censeo librum R^{mi} D. Jansenii Episcopi Iprensis, intitulatum Augustinus, esse opus admirandum, elaboratissimum, doctissimum, piissimum, doctrinam coelestem quae tamquam noua lux in tenebris lucet; ac proinde esse cedro dignum, aureis typis (ut ita loquor) merito mandandum; tale tandem esse opus pro quo Deo gratiae sint agenda; et auctori ipsi, intuitu D. Augustini, in aeternae memoriae monumentum statua sit erigenda; tantum abest ut eius memoria per exhumationem corporis (ut sparsum dicitur) sit oblitteranda.*

¹² See *Archivum Capucinatorum Belgii* I, 8733; Hildebrand VI, p. 345; P. Marcellinus Bogaerts van Helmond (1594-1656), in: *Neerlandia Franciscana* 2 (1919) pp. 85-93 (esp. pp. 91-92) = Hildebrand, *Miscellanea*. II (Leuven 2000) pp. 1005-1013 (esp. pp. 1011-1012).

¹³ See L. Ceyssens, *Sources relatives aux débuts du jansénisme et de l'antijansénisme* [n. 2] p. 537 (n° 532): [...] *Prouincialis Capuccinorum, uir perquam eruditus, qui librum Jansenii approbavit et quadringentorum religiosorum approbationes attulit e Belgio et Cardinali Barberino exhibuit.*

his Definitors General at the General Chapter of June 1650, in which Capuchin friars were prohibited to hold or teach the doctrine of Jansenius' *Augustinus*¹⁴ and this out of respect for the constitutions and decrees of Urbanus VIII (the decree of 1641 and the bull *In eminenti*) and those of his successor Innocent X.¹⁵ Moreover, after Innocent X had promulgated a new bull against Jansenius on 31 Mai 1653 (*Cum occasione*),¹⁶ in which he condemned five propositions that were said to express opinions advocated by the *Augustinus*,¹⁷ the Capuchin

¹⁴ See *Analecta Ordinis Minorum Capuccinorum* 6 (1890) pp. 342-343 (n° 117): *Vt reuerentiam et obedientiam Sedi Apostolicae in omni occurrentia profiteamur, inhaerentes constitutionibus et decretis Urbani VIII fel. rec. et SS^{mi} Domini Innocentii X: mandamus nostris omnibus, maxime lectoribus et concionatoribus, ut doctrinam in libro Jansenii Yprensii Episcopi, cui titulus est Augustinus, traditam, a S. Sede Apostolica damnatam et circumscriptam, tueri ac docere non praesumant; qui secus fecerint, praeter poenas in ipsis constitutionibus Apostolicis inflictas, si sint Superiores, officio suo, si lectores, facultate legendi, si praedicatores, concionandi potestate priuentur, et aliis poenis subjaceant arbitrio Superiorum infligendis. Datum Romae, die 25 Junii 1650.* Other editions of the decree are *Lettre d'un Capucin de Flandres* [see n. 23] pp. 3-4 and L. Ceyssens, *La première bulle contre Jansénisme. Sources relatives à son histoire (1644-1653). II. (1650-1653)* (Bibliothèque de l'Institut historique belge de Rome 10, Bruxelles-Rome 1962) p. 47 (n° 886). A handwritten copy of the decree is *Archium Capucinum Belgii* I, 1288.

¹⁵ Since the decree of Fortunatus of Cadore dates from 1650, it does not refer here to Innocent's bull *Cum occasione* (1653). However, Innocent confirmed his predecessor's measures against the *Augustinus* in several official documents that predate 1650. See, e.g., J. Carreyre, *Jansénisme* [n. 2] c. 454; L. Ceyssens, *La première bulle contre Jansénisme. I* [n. 7] pp. 193-199 (nos 193-203) and 203-204 (n° 208).

¹⁶ For an overview of the facts leading up to the promulgation of *Cum occasione*, see J. Carreyre, *Jansénisme* [n. 2], cc. 474-476; L. Ceyssens, *Het theologisch denken* [n. 2] p. 426; *Que penser finalement* [n. 2] pp. 119-121; L. Cognet, *Le jansénisme* [n. 2] pp. 48-61; M. Lamberigts, *Il giansenismo* [n. 2] pp. 292-295.

¹⁷ That the propositions express opinions defended by the *Augustinus*, is claimed by the words that open and close the bull: *Cum occasione impressionis libri, cui titulus: Augustinus Cornelii Jansenii, Episcopi Yprensii, inter alias ejus opiniones orta fuerit, praesertim in Galiis, controuersia super quinque ex illis, [...] Non intendentes tamen per hanc declarationem & definitionem super praedictis quinque propositionibus factam approbare ullatenus alias opiniones, quae continentur in praedicto libro Cornelii Jansenii* (text borrowed from Carolus du Plessis d'Argentré, *Collectio judiciorum de nouis erroribus, qui ab initio duodecimi saeculi post Incarnationem Verbi, usque ad annum 1735 in Ecclesia proscripti sunt & notati. III* [Lutetiae Parisiorum 1736] pp. 261-262). For a partial edition of *Cum occasione*, see H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Freiburg im Breisgau [...] Wien 2001³⁹) n°s 2001-2007. The claim of *Cum occasione* is contested by L. Ceyssens, *Que penser finalement* [n. 2] p. 121: 'A tout examinateur sérieux il n'aurait fallu qu'un quart d'heure pour se convaincre que la première proposition est entièrement inauthentique, et que l'attribution à Jansénisme est insoutenable et injuste, les quatre autres restant fort douteuses.' Compare also L. Ceyssens, *L'authenticité des cinq propositions condamnées de Jansénisme*, in: *Antonianum* 55 (1980) pp. 368-424. According to other researchers, the five propositions – the first,

decree of 1650 was reaffirmed and enlarged with a reference to *Cum occasione* at the General Chapter of June 1656. This new decree, which was signed by Minister General Simplicianus of Milan (1656-1662) and his Definitors General, prohibited Capuchin friars not only to adhere to the propositions that had been condemned by Innocent X, but also to interpret them ([...] *ne quis propositiones dicti Jansenii a fel. rec. D. Innocentii [sic] Papa X tanquam haereticas damnatas quomodolibet tuere [sic] nec etiam interpretare [sic] praesumant [sic]* [...]). The latter specification probably referred to the strategy of some of Jansenius' followers, who claimed that the five propositions could each have different meanings and that the meanings condemned by *Cum occasione* did not reflect the teaching of the *Augustinus*. This was the position of, among others, Antoine Arnauld,¹⁸ whose teaching was explicitly condemned at the very end of the Capuchin decree of 1656: [...] *sicut neque doctrinam Arnaldi et Arnaldistarum, itidem damnatam [...]*.¹⁹ The same strategy was to be condemned on 16 October of the same year by Pope Alexander VII in the bull *Ad*

which is the only that occurs (almost) literally in the *Augustinus* (tom. 3, lib. 3, cap. 13), as well as the other four – can all be interpreted in a sense that reflects the teachings of Jansenius. These authors also claim that this was the sense in which the propositions were condemned by *Cum occasione* and later bulls. See, e.g., the detailed analysis of J. Carreyre, *Jansénisme* [n. 2], cc. 476-494 and the claims of L. Kolakowski, *God owes us nothing. A Brief Remark on Pascal's Religion and on the Spirit of Jansenism* (Chicago-London 1995) p. 30 ('[...] both the popes and the Jesuits [...] were right in the matter-of-fact questions: the five propositions quite accurately summed up the sense of *Augustinus*; the Jansenists were right in their claim that *Augustinus* was perfectly faithful to its title'); G. Lettieri, *Il metodo della grazia. Pascal e l'ermeneutica giansenista di Agostino* (Roma 1999) p. 179; A. Richardt, *Le jansénisme. De Jansénius à la mort de Louis XIV* (Paris 2002) pp. 75-79.

¹⁸ See L. Cognet, *Le jansénisme* [n. 2] p. 64 ([...] il concluait que, si le pape avait justement condamné les Cinq propositions au sens hérétique, ce sens n'était nullement celui de Jansénius [...]); L. Kolakowski, *God owes us nothing* [n. 17] pp. 9-30. For the different possible meanings of the five propositions, see also G. Lettieri, *Il metodo della grazia* [n. 17] pp. 179-187 (on the so-called *Ecrit à trois colonnes*); P. Sellier, *Qu'est-ce que le jansénisme (1640-1713)?*, in: *Port-Royal et la littérature. II. Le siècle de saint Augustin, La Rochefoucauld, Mme de Lafayette, Sacy, Racine* (Paris 2000) pp. 43-76 (esp. pp. 67-71).

¹⁹ See *Analecta Ordinis Minorum Capuccinorum* 7 (1891) pp. 50-51 (n° 121), where the quotation of the decree of 1650 is followed by the following sentences: *Praedictum decretum emanatum et subscriptum ab A. R. P. Generali et Deffinitoribus Capituli Generalis anno quo supra, infrascripti Adm. RR. PP. Generalis et Deffinitores praesentis Capituli celebrati in eodem loco quo supra, die 3 Junii anni 1656 confirmarunt; addentes ulterius, ne quis propositiones dicti Jansenii a fel. rec. D. Innocentii [sic] Papa X tanquam haereticas damnatas, quomodolibet tuere [sic] nec etiam interpretare [sic] praesumant [sic]: sicut neque doctrinam Arnaldi et Arnaldistarum, itidem damnatam, sub poenis, quibus ut supra.*

sacram, which intended to safeguard the decisions of *Cum occasione* against some *iniquitatis filii*, who claimed that the five propositions could not be found in the *Augustinus* ([...] *praedictas quinque propositiones, uel in libro praedicto ejusdem Cornelii Jansenii non reperiri, sed fictas & pro arbitrio compositas esse* [...]) or at least had not been condemned in the sense intended by Jansenius (*uel non in sensu ab eodem intento damnatas fuisse*).²⁰ For this reason, Alexander defined in *Ad sacram* that the five propositions had not only been extracted from the *Augustinus*, but had also been condemned in the sense intended by Jansenius: *praeinsertam Innocentii praedecessoris nostri constitutionem, declarationem & definitionem harum seriè confirmamus, approbamus & innouamus, & quinque illas propositiones ex libro praememorati Cornelii Jansenii Episcopi Yprensis, cui titulus: Augustinus, excerptas ac in sensu ab eodem Cornelio intento damnatas fuisse declaramus & definimus*.²¹ Both the Capuchin decree of 1656 and the papal bulls against Jansenius do not seem to have been proclaimed immediately in the convents of the Flandro-Belgian Province. For as late as January/February 1658, Simplicianus of Milan still had to insist in two letters to Provincial Valentinus of Leuven that the bulls and the decree had to be proclaimed in all convents.²²

According to several sources, some of which will be investigated below, the decrees issued at the General Chapters of 1650 and 1656 did not have the intended effect, especially not in the Flandro-Belgian Province.²³ During the second half of the 17th and the first half of the

²⁰ *Cum autem, sicut accepimus, nonnulli iniquitatis filii praedictas quinque propositiones, uel in libro praedicto ejusdem Cornelii Jansenii non reperiri, sed fictas & pro arbitrio compositas esse, uel non in sensu ab eodem intento damnatas fuisse asserere magno cum Christi fidelium scandalo non reformident, [...]* (text borrowed from Carolus du Plessis d'Argentré, *Collectio judiciorum* [n. 17] p. 281; compare H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion* [n. 17] n° 2010).

²¹ Text borrowed from Carolus du Plessis d'Argentré, *Collectio judiciorum* [n. 17] p. 281; compare H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion* [n. 17] n°s 2011-2012.

²² See *Archium Capucinatorum Belgii* I, 4853 (2 January 1658; regarding the papal bulls): [...] *his praesentibus RPV. iniungimus ut omni diligentia & sollicitudine curet in sua Prouincia doctrinam Jansenisticam totaliter ubique radicitus abscindi nec ab ullo directe uel indirecte scriptis aut uerbis, seu colloquiis teneri, doceri aut insinuari permittat, aut ullo modo patiatur, bullasque ab Illustrissimo Domino Intermittio missas, si non adhuc publicauerit, quam primum publicari satagat, ne illi ob id aliqua conquerendi ansa praebeatur*; I, 4855 (24 February 1658; regarding the decree): [...] *decretum quantocyus fuit publicandum, ne [...] ob dilata remedia uirus Jansenisticum fere maiorem partem, et etiam ex nobilioribus & relligiosis, inficeret & corrumperet*; Hildebrand VI, p. 351.

²³ The first decree was contested as early as 2 March 1651 in the so-called *Lettre d'un Capucin de Flandres*, a pamphlet of 4 pages (*Archium Capucinatorum Belgii* III, 3006 is a copy of *Paris Bibl. Nat. D. 3731* [and not *D. 3791*]). This letter,

18th centuries, many Flemish Capuchins, including even some of their Superiors, were accused by fellow brothers of fostering Jansenist sympathies and even of spreading the ideas of the bishop of Ypres. In July 1668, these accusations lead to the promulgation by the Provincial *Definitorium* of a decree that prohibited the teaching of several suspected propositions, including the five propositions condemned by Innocent X as well as several propositions condemned in the bull *Ex omnibus afflictionibus* against Michael Baius (a critical edition of this decree as well as an analysis of its historical context will be offered below in §§5.1 and 5.3). Moreover, upset by the accusations, the Roman authorities repeatedly intervened in the government of the Flandro-Belgian Province, the most important of these interventions being the promulgation by Minister General Stephanus of Cesena of an enlarged version of the decree of 1668 (22 January 1674)²⁴, the visitations of the Province by the Austrian Definitor General Ildefonsus of Carlshoven (June–September 1682) and the Ex-provincial of Aragon Arsenius of Fuentes (1686–1687),²⁵ the (unsuccessful) promulgation by Minister General Bernardinus of Arezzo of Molina's views on divine grace and predestination (28 June 1691),²⁶ the imposed government of Definitor General Juvenalis of Nonsberg (1695–1697),²⁷ the appointment by the Roman authorities of (part of) the Flemish Superiors from

which was extensively quoted in the *Mémoires [...] sur l'histoire ecclésiastique du XVII^e siècle* of Godefroi Hermant (ed. A. Gazier, vol. 1 [Paris 1905] pp. 528–529) and the *Rémontrance aux Pères Jésuites, touchant un libelle, qu'ils ont fait courir dans Paris*, etc. of Antoine Arnauld (December 1651; *Œuvres de Messire Antoine Arnauld* 29 [Paris 1779] pp. 503–504), claimed that the decree of 1650 had not been issued by the General Chapter, but only by a restricted group of individuals consisting of Minister General Fortunatus of Cadore and his Definitors General. According to the anonymous author, the decree not only repudiated Jansenius' doctrines, but also implied a condemnation of the bishop of Hippo in favour of Molinism. Hildebrand VI, p. 348 rightly states that the anonymous Capuchin can not have been a member of the Flandro-Belgian Province. According to L. Willaert, *Bibliotheca Janseniana Belgica*. I. *Années 1476–1679* (Namur-Paris 1949) p. 208 (n° 2676) and L. Ceyssens, *Les progrès de l'antijansénisme aux Pays-Bas (1647–1656)*, in: *Jansenistica minora*. VII (Malines 1962) n° 54, pp. 106–107, it was written by Guillaume Le Roy, Jansenist abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Haute-Fontaine and acquaintance of Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole. This attribution can already be found in the 18th-century versions of Louis Moréri's *Le grand dictionnaire historique* (e.g., vol. 6 [Paris 1725] p. 219).

²⁴ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 356–358.

²⁵ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 379–383 (Ildefonsus of Carlshoven) and 397–412 (Arsenius of Fuentes).

²⁶ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 433–434.

²⁷ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 439–441.

1695 onwards,²⁸ the abolition by Clement XI of the *discreti* (28 August 1702),²⁹ etc.

2. Hildebrand's view of the Jansenist controversy in the Flandro-Belgian Province

The most thorough treatment of the Jansenist crisis within the Flandro-Belgian Province can be read in the 6th volume of *De Kapucijnen in de Nederlanden en het prinsbisdom Luik* by Hildebrand of Hooglede, archivist of the Flemish Capuchins in the years 1913-1958.³⁰ A synthesis of this extensive treatment was given by the same author in *Les Capucins en Belgique et au Nord de la France*. Although these texts were published in respectively 1951 and 1957,³¹ their interpretation of the crisis is still authoritative.³²

In Hildebrand's account, the words 'Jansenist' and 'Janse-nism' refer to someone who/a movement that refused to condemn the five propositions prohibited by *Cum occasione*. I will use the terms mostly to refer to someone who/a movement that claimed that Jansenius' *Augustinus* adequately presented Saint Augustine's purely Catholic teaching on divine grace and predestination. Only very few people could be called 'Jansenist' in Hildebrand's sense, but there existed many of the second type, even if the latter would have preferred to be called 'Augustinians' rather than 'Jansenists'. For the terms 'Jansenist' and 'Jansenism' properly belong to anti-Jansenist discourse rather than to the self-presentation of Jansenius'

²⁸ See Hildebrand's extremely complex chapters 7-11 (vol. VI, pp. 427-512).

²⁹ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 456-458. The *discreti* were reintroduced by Minister General Michael Angelus of Ragusa in 1717 (pp. 524-526). At the end of the above synthesis, it should be mentioned that no Capuchin is mentioned in the list of members of the Secret Society for the accusation of Jansenism that was founded at Louvain around 1680. This society counted, however, many Friars Minor amongst its members. See L. Ceyssens, *Een geheim genootschap ter bestrijding van het Jansenisme in België*, in: id., *Jansenistica. Studiën in verband met de geschiedenis van het Janse-nisme*. I (Mechelen 1950) pp. 343-397 (esp. 363-366).

³⁰ Hildebrand of Hooglede was the religious name of Julius Raes. See J. P. Tytgat, *Raes, Julius*, in: *Nationaal biografisch woordenboek*. VII (Brussel 1977) cc. 775-780.

³¹ See n. 1.

³² Compare the commentary by Mariano da Alatri in Philippus a Firenze, *Itinera Ministri Generalis Bernardini ab Arezzo (1691-1698)*. III. *Per Flandriam et Germaniam*. In lucem edidit Marianus ab Alatri (*Monumenta historica Ordinis Minorum Capuccinorum* 13, Romae 1970) p. 49 n. 79; G. Tirelire, *Antwerpen en de Kapucijnen* (Herentals 2006) pp. 44-45.

advocates.³³ So, when I will argue against Hildebrand that the Flemish Capuchins did count Jansenists amongst their number, I mean that some of them championed the doctrines presented in the *Augustinus* and that, by consequence, their anti-Jansenist fellow brothers, who were convinced that the *Augustinus* was rightly condemned by Innocent X and Alexander VII, did have theological (and not only personal or political) motives for accusing them of being Jansenist heretics.

Hildebrand sketched a picture of a Province that was highly divided by a controversy in which – paradoxically – theological and moral convictions only played a marginal role. According to the Capuchin scholar, his predecessors of the 17th and 18th centuries never counted Jansenists amongst their number. His main argument consisted in the thesis that all Flemish Capuchins condemned the five propositions ascribed to the *Augustinus* by Innocent X and Alexander VII, combined with a statement by Innocent XII in a breve of 6 February 1694, which prohibited stigmatizing as a Jansenist anyone who condemned the five propositions.³⁴

‘Un texte romain de 1694 affirme que quiconque rejette ces propositions ne peut pas être accusé de Jansénisme. De même celui qui prête le serment prescrit par le pape Alexandre VII, comme le font tous les Capucins, ne peut plus être suspecté. [...] Si on prend comme critère le rejet des propositions condamnées, on ne trouve chez les Capucins

³³ See L. Kolakowski, *God owes us nothing* [n. 17] p. 4 and *passim*; P. Sellier, *Qu'est-ce que le jansénisme (1640-1713)?* [n. 18] pp. 54-71.

³⁴ Hildebrand refers to the following words of the breve of 6 February 1694: *Quare praecipimus ut quemadmodum ii qui ad iuramentum adigendi sunt, illud praestare debent sincere absque ulla distinctione, restrictione seu expositione, damnando eas propositiones ex libro Jansenii excerptas in sensu obuiio, quem ipsamet propositionum uerba prae se ferunt, prout sensum illum damnarunt Summi Pontifices, praedecessores nostri, damnatumque haberi uoluerunt a Christi fidelibus, ita per Fraternitates Vestras ab iis qui formulario praescripto subscribent ac iuramentum praestabunt, praeter formulam ipsam traditam uerbaque in constitutione Apostolica praescripta quidquid aliud uel minimum declarationis, interpretationis, aut explicationis, uerbo uel scripto, non exigatur, [...]. Demum ad extinguenda theologorum jampridem inter sese excitata dissidia, Fraternitatibus Vestris, quantum in Domino possumus, praesentibus nostris mandatis injungimus ne ulla ratione quemquam uaga ista accusatione & inuidioso nomine Jansenismi traduci aut nuncupari sinatis, nisi prius suspectum esse legitime constiterit aliquam ex his propositionibus docuisse aut tenuisse, [...]* (text borrowed from *Œuvres de Messire Antoine Arnauld* 24 [Paris 1779] pp. 363-364). For more information on the breve, which interests us here only for the use Hildebrand has made of it, see L. Ceyssens, *Innocent XII et le jansénisme*, in: *Antonianum* 67 (1992) pp. 39-66 (esp. pp. 58-59); *L'accueil des documents romains relatifs au formulaire malinois (1694)*, in: *Augustiniana* 45 (1995) pp. 247-283 (esp. 248-251).

belges qu'un seul janséniste authentique, le P. Joseph d'Ath, mort dans son erreur à Namur en 1725.³⁵

By means of a narrow and purely formal definition of a Jansenist as someone who does not reject the five propositions – I call this a purely formal definition, since it does not take into account the meaning in which the propositions were rejected by individual Capuchins – Hildebrand was able to exclude from the number of the Jansenists all Capuchins who condemned the five propositions, even those who took the defence of the *Augustinus* by claiming either that the propositions were not present in Jansenius' work or that their condemned meaning did not correspond with the bishop's Augustinian and – at least in their view – purely Catholic views on divine grace and predestination. We will see below that the Flemish Capuchins did count such advocates of Jansenius amongst their number. The most famous of them was Eugenius of Bruges (1634-1692), who according to Hildebrand's own extensive description was a radical opponent of the Jesuits with strong sympathies for the bishop of Ypres.³⁶ Hildebrand did not consider Eugenius a Jansenist for the sole reason that – at least according to the archivist³⁷ – Eugenius did not accept the five propositions. Even the fact that Eugenius took the defence of Jansenius by claiming that the condemnation of the five propositions did not affect the doctrines contained in the *Augustinus*, did not turn him into a Jansenist: 'Le trop fameux tribun Eugène de Bruges, homme déséquilibré, ennemi des Jésuites, n'était au fond pas janséniste. Il rejetait les propositions condamnées, mais prétendait que Jansénius n'avait jamais enseigné ces théories.'³⁸

³⁵ See Hildebrand, *Les Capucins* [n. 1] pp. 45-47. Compare Hildebrand VI, p. 337: 'In een Romeinse tekst van 6 Februari 1694 zegt men uitdrukkelijk, dat niemand voor Jansenist mag worden gescholden, zo hij deze vijf proposities verwierpt. Op 21 April 1706 liet Clemens XI eveneens aan de Internuntius Grimaldi weten, dat al wie de eed van Alexander VII aflegde, niet meer van Jansenisme mocht worden verdacht. Alle Kapucijnen waren blij, aldus hun rechtgelovigheid te mogen belijden. / Als men alzo goed voor ogen houdt, wat men eigenlijk onder Jansenisme moet verstaan, dan vindt men er bij de Walen één aanhanger van, nl. Joseph van Aat. Bij de Vlamingen was er geen enkele.' For Joseph of Ath, see Hildebrand VI, pp. 526-528.

³⁶ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 413-426.

³⁷ For this restriction, see §3 of this article.

³⁸ See Hildebrand, *Les Capucins* [n. 1] p. 47. Compare Hildebrand VI, p. 337: '[...] zelfs de beruchte Eugenius van Brugge <is> geen Jansenist geweest. De Leuvense leraar bewonderde hij wel, [...]. Doch nooit heeft men hem verweten dat hij de vijf proposities aanvaardde en voor eigen rekening nam. Uit zijn schriften bleek eerder het tegenovergestelde. Hij verwierp deze stellingen, doch was er van overtuigd, dat Jansenius ze nooit had geleerd.'

In the next paragraph, I will readjust Hildebrand's characterization of Eugenius as someone who rejected the five propositions. The words just quoted may suffice, however, to illustrate how Hildebrand managed to deny the influence of Jansenism on the theological thinking of his 17th- and 18th-century predecessors by means of a rather narrow and purely formal definition of Jansenism (being a Jansenist = not condemning the five propositions). Moreover, Hildebrand denied that the rigorist stance that many Capuchins took on moral issues, was a token of Jansenist influence. According to him, it simply was a natural reaction against laxist doctrines promoted by Jesuits and other theologians:

'Le Jansénisme devint un état d'âme, une tendance générale dans les conceptions et la manière d'agir de ses adeptes. Théoriquement, ceux-ci se montraient très sévères et prétendaient réagir contre la morale des Jésuites et autres théologiens laxistes. Plusieurs Capucins manifestèrent également de l'aversion pour l'illustre Compagnie. Il était d'ailleurs inévitable, que plus d'un religieux (subissant inconsciemment l'influence du milieu, tout imprégné de la funeste erreur, dans lequel il vivait), ait professé des opinions risquées. [...]'³⁹

How to explain then the measures taken by the Roman authorities, if the Flemish Capuchins did not count any Jansenist amongst their number? Hildebrand's answer to this question was plain and simple:

'[...] Des tendances dangereuses se manifestèrent parfois; mais le plus grand mal fut causé par l'activité néfaste de quelques religieux ambitieux, se posant en inquisiteurs sans mandat. Les plus notoires furent au début le P. Fulgence de Nieuport et plus tard son homonyme de Bruxelles. / Induits en erreur par de continuelles intrigues, les supérieurs majeurs à Rome crurent de bonne foi toute la province infectée, sauf leurs correspondants occasionnels, [...]'⁴⁰

Both Fulgentii mentioned in this quotation occupied important positions within the Flandro-Belgian Province during the second half

³⁹ See Hildebrand, *Les Capucins* [n. 1] pp. 47-48. Compare Hildebrand VI, p. 338.

⁴⁰ See Hildebrand, *Les Capucins* [n. 1] p. 48. Compare Hildebrand VI, p. 336: 'Er waren er die verdachte stellingen voorhielden, te beginnen met Augustinus van 's-Hertogenbosch. Anderen, vooral Fulgentius van Nieuwpoort en zijn naamgenoot van Brussel, hebben nog veel méér kwaad gestookt door hun overdreven ketterjagerij, die overal dwalingen en mistoestanden meende te zien. Ze hebben veel vijandschap in de Provincie ontketend; en door hun onverantwoorde aanklachten te Rome maatregelen verkregen, die oneindig veel kwaad hebben gedaan en die enkele eierzuchtige elementen een welgekomen gelegenheid gaven, om zich op te werken...'.

of the 17th century and at the beginning of the 18th. The most important for my present argument is Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort (ca. 1628-1690), who had been *Sacrae Theologiae lector* in Ghent (1666-1668) and Brussels (1668-1669)⁴¹ before becoming Provincial Definitor in the years 1674-1687.⁴² Several documents have been preserved in which Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort tried to convince his Roman Superiors of the fact that the Flandro-Belgian Province had been infected by the venom of Jansenism, the most important being a long and detailed list of accusations which he compiled in 1685 and directed against 25 Flemish fellow brothers,⁴³ including prominent figures such as Joannes of Landen (Provincial in 1675-1678 and 1681-1684)⁴⁴ and Michael of Oudenbosch (Provincial in 1678-1681, 1684-1687 and 1690-1695).⁴⁵ The list, which will be referred to below as *FN*,⁴⁶ also included several fragments on Laurentius Neesen, president of the archepiscopal seminary at Mechelen and author of several theological handbooks, which were used by some Capuchin *lectores* for the preparation of their theological *dictata*.⁴⁷ Fulgentius' extensive list, of

⁴¹ See Hildebrand VII, p. 305 (n° 2118); VIII, p. 534 (n° 41).

⁴² See Hildebrand VI, pp. 561-562 (n°s 49-56). Fulgentius of Brussels (1655-1721) was Provincial Definitor in the years 1697-1701 / 1711-1717 and Provincial in 1701-1705. See Hildebrand VI, p. 562 (n°s 62-64 + 66); VII, p. 303 (n° 2109).

⁴³ Aegidius of Antwerp, Alexander of Ghent, Andreas of Peer, Angelus of Antwerp, Augustinus of Geldern, Augustinus of 's Hertogenbosch, Basilianus of Bruges, Bonaventura of Brussels, Bonaventura of Geraardsbergen, Dominicus of Ghent, Eugenius of Bruges, Felix of Bergues, Fidelis of Maastricht, Franciscus of Bruges, Franciscus of Weert, Fulgentius of Maaseik, Hubertus of Sint-Truiden, Joannes of Landen, Juniperus of Dendermonde, Michael of Oudenbosch, Norbertus of Bree, Norbertus of Hasselt, Reginaldus of Oudenaarde, Serenus of Brussels, Serenus of Sint-Truiden.

⁴⁴ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 561-562 (n°s 50-51 and 54-55); *FN*, cap. III (*De attritione et contritione atque confessione*), n°s 31-32; IV (*De summo pontifice*), n° 7; V (*In materia decretorum ac bullarum necnon Baij ac Jansenij*), n° 17.

⁴⁵ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 561-562 (n°s 52-53, 56 and 59-60); *FN*, cap. III (*De attritione et contritione atque confessione*), n° 27; V (*In materia decretorum ac bullarum necnon Baij ac Jansenij*), n° 18; VI (*De ueneratione sanctorum ac sacrarum imaginum*), n° 10; VII (*In materia indulgentiarum*), n° 1.

⁴⁶ For Fulgentius as author of *FN*, see pp. 25 and 30 of this document. For the date of *FN*, see Hildebrand VI, pp. 389-391, according to whom Fulgentius compiled the document, in order to present it at the General Chapter of 1685.

⁴⁷ For Laurentius Neesen and a list of his theological handbooks, see É. Amann, *Neesen Laurent*, in: *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 9.1 (Paris 1931) cc. 60-62. For the use of Neesen by Capuchin *lectores*, see Hildebrand VI, pp. 368, 372, 379 and 387. The file G.22.13.2 *Prou. Flandro-Belgica. De Jansenismo: propositiones edoctaelprouisiones Superiorum. 1668-1717* in the Roman *Archium Generale O.F.M.Cap.* contains several documents against Neesen that will play no further role in the present article.

which one copy has been preserved in the Roman *Archivum Generale O.F.M.Cap.* (G.22.13.2 Prou. Flandro-Belgica. *De Jansenismo: propositiones edoctae/prouisiones Superiorum. 1668-1717*) presented in eight thematic chapters the suspicious doctrines and propositions which each of the accused individuals was said to have sustained:

- I. *In materia de gratia et libero arbitrio* (33 fragm.);
- II. *De charitate et relatione operum in Deum* (17 fragm.);
- III. *De attritione et contritione atque confessione* (50 fragm.);
- IV. *De Summo Pontifice* (20 fragm.);
- V. *In materia decretorum ac bullarum necnon Baij ac Jansenij* (19 fragm.);
- VI. *De ueneratione sanctorum ac sacrarum imaginum* (12 fragm.);
- VII. *In materia indulgentiarum* (2 fragm.);
- VIII. *In materia ignorantiae et probabilitatis* (8 fragm.).

Since Fulgentius' list of accusations did not fit in with his apologetic framework, Hildebrand strongly minimized the relevance of the document by stressing that it only mentioned 25 names on a total of 600, that the propositions ascribed to individual Capuchins had been quoted out of their original context, and that some doctrines hinted at were part of a general spiritual climate and not typical of Jansenism, etc.⁴⁸

Hildebrand was not the first to present the above version of the Jansenist controversy within the Flandro-Belgian Province. According to Melchior of Pobladora in his *Historia generalis Ordinis fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum* (1948), many Flemish Capuchins had been accused of adhering to the teaching of Jansenius, but only one of them could be considered a Jansenist, viz. Eugenius of Bruges.⁴⁹ Following the authority of the *Epitome historica* by the Capuchin scholar Hierotheus of Koblenz (1750), Melchior of Pobladora simply claimed that all other accusations had been false: *confuso namque tempore amat innocens cum nocente confundi*.⁵⁰ More important for the present

⁴⁸ See Hildebrand VI, p. 390.

⁴⁹ See Melchior a Pobladora, *Historia generalis Ordinis fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum. Pars secunda (1619-1761)*. II [n. 1] p. 254.

⁵⁰ See Hierotheus Confluentinus, *Epitome Historica, in qua ab anno 1208. usque ad annum 1525. res Franciscanae generatim, dein uero solae Minorum Capuccinorum usque ad annum 1747. in serie chronologica positae fideliter repraesentantur* (Heidelbergae 1750) p. 456: *Aduertendum tamen ea in tempestate tam saecularibus clericis quam regularium institutorum alumni, etiam Belgicis nostris confratribus, affluxisse id mali quod uiri caeteroquin conscientiosi ac timorati nimis temere quandoque ac praecipitanter ceu Jansenistae fuerint traducti, proclamati, denunciati, quin et praeualente maleuolentia uel malitia a suis praebeendis, ab officiis, gradibusque*

argument are some texts by which Flemish Capuchins of the late 17th and early 18th centuries tried to convince the General authorities in Rome that their interventions in Flemish affairs were unjustified, since the Province had never been infected by the venom of Jansenism. According to these texts, the real problem was not the presence of heretic friars amongst their number – such friars simply did not exist – but the blind fanaticism of witch hunters such as Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort. The best example of such a document is the so-called *Compendiosa et historica enarratio miserrimi status Prouvinciae Flandro-Belgicae fratrum Minorum Capucinatorum*, that was presented by Michael of Oudenbosch (Provincial in 1678-1681, 1684-1687 and 1690-1695)⁵¹ and Angelus of Antwerp (Provincial Definitor in 1692-1695)⁵² to the Brussels Internuncio Giovanni Battista Bussi on 9 August 1700.⁵³ This document, of which two copies have been preserved in the *Archium Generale O.F.M.Cap.* (G.22.13.2 *Prou. Flandro-Belgica. De Jansenismo: II^{us} et III^{us} recursus ad S. Sedem. 1701-1702*) and one in the Provincial archives at Luzern, contains already most elements of Hildebrand's account of the Jansenist controversy. A few quotations, taken from the document's beginning and edited on the basis of the first copy preserved in the above mentioned file of the *Archium Generale O.F.M.Cap.*,⁵⁴ may suffice to prove this:

In Prouincia nostra Flandro-Belgica jam a multis annis quaedam turbae excitatae fuere a quodam P. Fulgentio Neoportano S. Theologiae lectore, dum alium P. lectorem taxauit de doctrina non sana. Verum Superiores nostri diuersis temporibus existentes, omni diligentia possibili adhibita, nihil unquam jure damnandum inuenire potuerunt; quod etiam duo Commissarii Generales, propter doctrinam expresse missi, (post diligens examen) clare declararunt. Primus R. A. P. Ildephonsus Austriacus, Definitor Generalis et Exprouincialis Austriae, declarauit se nullam damnatam doctrinam in Prouincia reperisse [...]. Secundus R. P. Arsenius a Fontibus, Hispanus, dixit in pleno Capitulo, postquam impenderat tredecim menses audiendis fratribus et omnibus in particulari examinandis, omnia esse problematica de quibus Prouincia taxabatur [...]. Quibus non obstantibus, cum R. P. Bernardinus ab

dejecti; confuso namque tempore amat innocens cum nocente confundi. Compare also Melchior a Pobladura, *Cappuccini*, in: *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione* 2 (Roma 1975) cc. 203-252 (esp. cc. 229-230).

⁵¹ See n. 45.

⁵² See Hildebrand VI, p. 562 (n° 60); VII, pp. 65-66 (n° 346).

⁵³ For the historical context of this document, see Hildebrand VI, pp. 452-454.

⁵⁴ I have not checked the Luzern copy (mentioned by Hildebrand VI, p. 453 n. 2). A partial edition of the document can be found in Philippus a Firenze, *Itinera Ministri Generalis Bernardini ab Arezzo (1691-1698)* [n. 32] pp. 394-401.

Aretio a.º 1691 foret in Ministrum Generalem Ordinis nostri electus, una cum Definitione Generali fecit decretum aliquod in quo Prouinciae nostrae praescribitur doctrina omnino contraria illi quam semper professus fuerat, et adimitur Prouinciae libertas constituendi lectores. [...] et in decreto [...] continetur doctrina plane Molinistica [...], quod decretum, cum ad Sacram Congregationem delatum esset, ab ea suppressum et cassatum fuit et deleri curauit ex registro Ordinis nostri, et consequenter reuocatum a Reu.^{mo} P. Generali antequam fuerit in Prouincia nostra promulgatum [...]. Et hinc originem sumpsit omne malum, sub quo usque nunc gemit et oppressa jacet Prouincia nostra. (f. 1^{rv})

Turning to the problem of the five propositions, one finds that also in this respect Hildebrand fell back on the apologetic discourse of some 17th- and 18th-century predecessors, who deduced the Province's purity in matters of doctrine from the simple fact that everyone condemned the five propositions. An important example of this position is an anonymous pamphlet that was written on 13 Mai 1687 by a confidant of the then Provincial Michael of Oudenbosch, the main author of the just quoted *Compendiosa et historica enarratio* of 1700.⁵⁵ The pamphlet, entitled *Admodum Reuerendis in Christo Patribus, Ministro Prouinciali, Definitoribus, Guardianis, Magistris nouitiorum, lectoribus ac caeteris de Ordine fratrum Minorum Capucinatorum Prouinciae Flandro-Belgicae religiosis*, aimed to answer the question as to why the Roman Superiors had sent Ildefonsus of Carlshoven (1682) and Arsenius of Fuentes (1686-1687) as Commissioners General to Flanders.⁵⁶ Since all members of the Province were orthodox, the anonymous author could think of no other reason than the false accusations that had been launched by Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort against Superiors, Guardians, lecturers and preachers.⁵⁷ In order to

⁵⁵ I have consulted a copy preserved in the Maurits Sabbebibliotheek (273.719/89) in Louvain. Hildebrand VI, p. 407-408 mentions the document, but dates it in mid-1686. According to him, the anonymous author may have been Eugenius of Bruges or Reginaldus of Oudenaarde.

⁵⁶ For the visitations of Ildefonsus of Carlshoven and Arsenius of Fuentes, see n. 25.

⁵⁷ See f. 1^{rv}: *Quod unus e Germania ab aliquot annis & alter modo ex Hispania Commissarius Generalis in Belgium missi fuerint, qui de uestra doctrina ac fide inquirerent, norunt omnes & obstupuerunt non intelligentes unde uestra fides, quam integram intemeratamque esse hactenus existimarunt, in aliquam suspicionem uenerit. / Inde nata libido sciendi quae unius & alterius hujusmodi extraordinariae Commissionis causa subsit: in quonam fides uestra deficere insimuletur & qui sint qui uos accusant. / Id penitus inquirentes tandem intelleximus graues in uos institutas esse accusationes: nempe quod apud uos nulla amplius uirtus christiana; nulla regularis disciplina uigeat; sed praeualeat fraus, potentia, uis &c. Quod omnes Superiores,*

prove this, he quoted a letter of Fulgentius to Definitor General Carolus of Macerata (9 February 1684)⁵⁸ as well as a letter of the anti-Jansenist canon Frans Van de Venne to Fulgentius (14 April 1684).⁵⁹ The latter's allegations were false, the anonymous author contended, for all Flemish Capuchins had condemned the five propositions and had always remained faithful to the *inconcussa sancti Augustini dogmata*:

Nostis quid sit macula ista Jansenistica; nostis quod eo nomine intelligatur haeretica quinque propositionum doctrina, quam non modo Apostolica Sedes, sed & tota Ecclesia jure merito damnauit ac damnat: nostis quid discriminis sit inter eam doctrinam, seu potius haeresin, & inconcussa Sancti Augustini dogmata, quae a uobis teneri ac propugnari sicut uestra religione ac pietate dignum est, ita ab illis deficere & haeticas sententias sequi & docere uestra fide prorsus foret indignum. (f. 3^{rv})

We will see below that there existed several Flemish Capuchins who condemned the five propositions, but contended at the same time that their condemnation did not affect the *Augustinus* of Jansenius, since the latter offered an adequate interpretation of the teachings of the bishop of Hippo. For the anti-Jansenist Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort, this argument in itself was a reason for branding these friars as heretics in chapter V of *FN* (*In materia decretorum ac bullarum necnon Baij ac Jansenij*). For others, the above definition of the *macula Jansenistica* made it possible to consider the supporters of this argument as orthodox and to deny the presence of Jansenists within the Flandro-Belgian Province.

It would lead us too far to present all other texts that offer a version of the facts that is comparable to that of the *Compendiosa et*

Majores, Guardiani, Magistri nouitiorum, lectores ac concionatores sint nouatores seminantes pessima zizania, quae suffocauerunt omne fere semen sanae, antiquae & auitae doctrinae; ac sint pessimae haereseos, scilicet Jansenisticae, labe infecti. Denique quod apud uos malum illud tam grande euaserit, uenenumque istud in uestra Prouincia ita serpat & tantas radices agat, diuisis, suppressis ablegatisque iis qui bonum promouere ac malo huic mederi poterant, ut ne ipsum quidem Capitulum Generale zizania haec eradicare jam ualeat. *Haec & alia horrenda in uos jactari audiuiimus & indoluimus: quae absit ut uera credamus, qui ne quidem crederemus ab ullo hominum ea in uos esse jactata, nisi epistolae, quarum originalia in manus Reuerendi Admodum Patris Ministri Prouincialis peruenerunt, nobis exhibitae fuissent, quae enormes istas accusationes continent & qui sint qui negotia ista Vobis & toti Ordini uestro facessunt, expressis nominibus indicant.*

⁵⁸ See ff. 1^v-2^r. Compare *Archium Capucinatorum Belgii* I, 5136 (handwritten copy) and Hildebrand VI, p. 388 (context of the letter).

⁵⁹ See ff. 2^v-3^r. See Hildebrand VI, pp. 388 and 398-401 (context of the letter).

historica enarratio and the anonymous pamphlet of 1687. It should be clear, however, that Hildebrand's interpretation of the Jansenist controversy within the Flandro-Belgian Province goes back to an apologetic account of the facts that was part of the controversy itself.

However, not all accounts of the controversy branded Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort as a witch hunter, whose blind fanaticism had invented an internal threat that in reality had never existed. E.g., when the *Compendiosa et historica enarratio* by Michael of Oudenbosch and Angelus of Antwerp was sent by the Brussels Internuncio Bussi to Silvester of Hasselt – an anti-Jansenist who had been appointed Provincial by Innocent XII for the years 1697-1701⁶⁰ – the latter reacted on 1 September 1700 with an extensive and detailed reply, entitled *Ad enarrationem compendiosam et historicam responsio fidelis et sincera, facta a Ministro Prouinciali fratrum Minorum Capucinatorum Prouincię Flandro-Belgicę*, in which he tried to weaken his adversaries' most important arguments. Two copies of this document have been preserved in the same file of the *Archium Generale O.F.M.Cap.* as the *Compendiosa et historica enarratio*. The first part of Silvester's account is directed against the conviction that Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort was the real cause of all troubles. Instead, the Provincial claimed that the controversy had started with the activities of two genuine Jansenists, viz. Augustinus of 's Hertogenbosch and Fulgentius of Maaseik. The following fragment has been edited on the basis of the first copy in the above mentioned file of the *Archium Generale O.F.M.Cap.*:

Fuerunt quidem in Prouincia nostra Flandro-Belgica difficultates uanę excitatę occasione doctrine, sed illarum auctor et fautor [...] non fuit P. Fulgentius Neoportanus iam defunctus, at primo causerunt illas et excitarunt eius nostrique aduersarij, quorum antesignanus fuit P. Augustinus Buscoducensis [...]. Tandem ille P. Augustinus inter alios ad suum sensum abduxit P. Fulgentium Mosęcanum [...]. Exemplo SS. Patrum contra hereticas quasque aut in fide periculosas aut schismaticas nouitates inuictissime sese opponentium stetit hic catholicus et apostolicus uir (et quidem de mandato sui Generalis) pro domo Dei: unde numquam satis laudandus de sua erga constitutiones Apostolicas et P. Generalis uoluntatem obseruantia, adeoque non calumniandus ut auctor et fautor turbarum, utpote ex nouis dogmatibus pullulantium, quas sedare conatus fuit uir tantopere meritis de Prouincia, in qua fuit per sexennium lector, inde ultimo anno sui

⁶⁰ See Hildebrand VI, pp. 441-442; 562 (n° 62). For the text of the papal decree, see *Archium Capucinatorum Belgii* I, 5228.

cursus theologici assumptus Magister nouitiorum et Guardianus Louanij, item Guardianus Gandau, Antuerpię, Brugis, Mechlinię, nec non Definitor Prouincię per annos quatuordecim, bis Custos Romam ad Capitulum Generale, in summa ęstimatione apud Episcopos etc. (f. 1^v)

It is true that both the *Compendiosa et historica enarratio* and the *Ad enarrationem compendiosam et historicam responsio* each offer a biased account of the controversy. Moreover, Hildebrand was certainly right, when he claimed that many accusations against so-called Jansenists had been motivated by personal ambitions. In spite of these considerations, it should be admitted, however, that the claims of Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort and Silvester of Hasselt were not unfounded either. For, if one defines a Jansenist as someone who was convinced that the *Augustinus* of Jansenius contained an adequate interpretation of Augustine's orthodox teaching on divine grace and that, by consequence, the work could not have been affected by the condemnation of the five propositions, the Flemish Capuchins counted several genuine Jansenists amongst their number.⁶¹ I will show this in what follows by means of an analysis of our sources concerning Augustinus of 's Hertogenbosch (§4), Fulgentius of Maaseik (§5) and Eugenius of Bruges (§3). In the case of Augustinus, these sources are all of anti-Jansenist origin (mostly *FN* and the *Ad enarrationem compendiosam et historicam responsio*), but for Fulgentius of Maaseik and Eugenius of Bruges, we have also documents that were not composed by their adversaries. Several of these documents have been neglected in Hildebrand's account of the controversy.

3. Eugenius of Bruges

Eugenius of Bruges was born Thomas de Gheldere in 1634 and took the habit in 1657. He was tonsured two years later in Mechelen and ordained priest in Antwerp in 1664. After a tempestuous career as a confessor and a preacher, which has been described in detail by

⁶¹ Compare the position of L. Ceyssens, *De Carmelitarum Belgicorum actione antijansenistica iuxta chartas P. Seraphini a Jesu Maria (1668-1688)*, in: *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum* 17 (1952) pp. 3-120 (esp. p. 3 n. 1) with regard to the discalced Carmelites (against an apologetic article of Marie-Joseph du Sacré-Cœur: *Les carmes déchaussés n'ont jamais versé dans le jansénisme*, in: *Études carmélitaines* 5 [1920] pp. 195-248 + 6 [1921] pp. 1-45).

Hildebrand and will not occupy us here,⁶² he died in the convent of Brussels in 1692.⁶³ Eugenius was the author of several tracts against Molinism and the Jesuit Order (*Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph. Dienende tot waerschauwinge van alle wel-hebbende ouders* [ca. 1685],⁶⁴ *Molinomachia inter Capucinos Prouvinciae Flandro-Belgicae per Jesuitas & Jesuiticos excitata* [written in 1687, but never published], *Vltima uox zelatricis Innocentiae indigna patientis siue libellus supplex ad Innocentium XI. Summum Pontificem* [1689]).⁶⁵ In this paragraph, I will focus on two documents that will inform us about Eugenius' position in regard to the *Augustinus* of Jansenius and the successive papal condemnations of the five propositions.

The documents in question are the anti-Jesuit tract *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph*, which was written in Dutch, but also contained passages in French and Latin, and a letter to the Flemish Augustinian Michel Van Hecke (24 December 1686),⁶⁶ who had been asked as counsellor at the Holy Office to judge *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* because of his knowledge of Dutch. In the letter, which afterwards was included in the apologetic *Vltima uox*,⁶⁷ Eugenius responded to the charge of being a Jansenist heretic, which Van Hecke had uttered shortly before in a letter to Eugenius

⁶² See Hildebrand VI, pp. 413-426. Other general publications on Eugenius are J.-N. Paquot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire littéraire des dix-sept provinces des Pays-Bas, de la Principauté de Liège, et de quelques contrées voisines*. XVIII (Louvain 1770) pp. 116-123; J. A. de Chalmot, *Biographisch woordenboek der Nederlanden*. V (Amsterdam 1799) pp. 26-31; J. de Mersseman, *Brugis (Le père Eugène de)*, in: *Biographie des hommes remarquables de la Flandre Occidentale*. III (Bruges 1847) pp. 112-115; C.-F.-A. Piron, *Algemeene levensbeschryving der mannen en vrouwen van België*. II (Mechelen 1862) pp. 27-28; A. Vander Meersch, *Eugène de Bruges*, in: *Biographie nationale publiée par l'Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*. VI (Bruxelles 1878) cc. 731-733; L. Ceyssens, *Eugène de Bruges*, in: *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*. 15 (Paris 1963) cc. 1360-1361.

⁶³ See Hildebrand VII, p. 247 (n° 1703).

⁶⁴ Tot Havre de Grace, by de fameuse Maets van 't Walleken [fictitious editor], 124 + 17 pp.

⁶⁵ *Coloniae*, apud H. Joannis Hamel [fictitious editor], 1689, 119 pp. This work, which can be consulted on Google books, was officially condemned by a decree of the Holy Office on 12 July 1689. See J. M. De Bujanda, *Index librorum prohibitorum 1600-1966 (Index des livres interdits* 11, Montréal-Genève 2002) p. 331. For a critical review of the *Vltima uox*, see H. Basnage de Beauval, *Histoire des ouvrages des savans*, May 1689, pp. 253-255.

⁶⁶ For a discussion of the date of this letter, see Hildebrand VI, p. 419 n. 5. For Michel Van Hecke, see L. Ceyssens, *Le P. Michel Van Hecke à Rome (1670-1687)*, in: *Augustiniana* 49 (1999) pp. 367-377.

⁶⁷ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 27-62.

(16 November 1686).⁶⁸ In both the anti-Jesuit tract and the letter to Van Hecke, the Capuchin friar defended his conviction that the condemnation of the five propositions by Innocent X did not affect the *Augustinus* of Jansenius.

Before dealing with the content of both texts, I would like to draw attention to a problem concerning the way in which *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* has come down to us. We know from several sources that the printing of this work was not finished when the whole stock was confiscated by the civilian authorities, which probably explains why the work is so rare today. Hildebrand admits that he never saw a copy of it,⁶⁹ but the work was kept in manuscript form in the pre-war library of the University of Louvain (*Opuscula Soc<ieta>tis* K 13³),⁷⁰ while printed copies have been preserved in the University library of Maastricht (*SJ B IV 77*) and the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris (*E- 10428 (4)*). More copies must have circulated: the Flemish Provincial Michael of Oudenbosch synthesized the work in a letter he sent to Rome in 1685/1686,⁷¹ the Roman counsellor Van Hecke read the work in 1686, and an anonymous sympathizer published a short pamphlet on *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* in the same year (*Epistola ministri Hollandi ad uirum nobilem Bruxellis*).⁷² The Maastricht and Paris copies of *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* do not contain the work in its entirety. For we know from the *Epistola ministri Hollandi* and Eugenius' *Vltima uox* that the work originally contained three parts,⁷³ while it is said at the end of both copies that the work's first part has almost been reached.⁷⁴ According to A. De Backer-C. Sommervogel, the above mentioned manuscript in the pre-war library of the University

⁶⁸ For the context of Eugenius' letter to Van Hecke, see *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 26-27; Hildebrand VI, p. 419.

⁶⁹ See Hildebrand VI, p. 416.

⁷⁰ See A. De Backer-C. Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*. XI (Paris 1932) cc. 115-116 (n° 784).

⁷¹ See *Archium generale O.F.M.Cap., G.22.11. Dimissiones, processus*, 1683-1925; Hildebrand VI, p. 416.

⁷² See *Epistola ministri Hollandi ad uirum nobilem Bruxellis*, s.l., s.d. [end of document: 25 Septembris 1686]. I consulted a copy preserved in the seminary of Bruges (W-10.750). The pamphlet was extensively reviewed in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* of November 1686 (pp. 1264-1278). The *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* can be consulted on Google books.

⁷³ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 17 ([...] *circa causam libelli a me compositi & in tres partes diuisi* [...]); *Epistola ministri Hollandi* [n. 72] p. 2 (*Legi, perlegi, & relegi illos libellos, quorum tertius mutilus, nec possum illorum lectione satiari* [...]).

⁷⁴ See p. 105. On 3 August 1686, only one of the three parts could be consulted in Rome. The other two arrived on 14 September. See Hildebrand VI, p. 418.

of Louvain contained a copy of the work's third part, which apparently was never printed: 'En face de ce titre de depart, on lit: "P. Eugenii de Geldere Capucini Brugensis Pars 3^a nondum impressa".'⁷⁵ Further research will maybe uncover copies that contain the other parts of *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph*; at this moment, however, the content of these parts is only accessible through what is said about them in the *Epistola ministri Hollandi* and the *Vltima uox*.

According to a Latin passage near to the end of the preserved copies of *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph*, Innocent X condemned the five propositions without sufficient indication of the precise meaning in which he disapproved of them. If the Popes had specified this meaning, the argument goes, it would have been possible to check if this meaning corresponded with the teaching of Jansenius. However, since Innocent did not do this and none of the five propositions literally occurs in the *Augustinus*, Eugenius wonders on which basis Alexander VII had been able to condemn the propositions *in sensu Jansenii*. This would have been possible only on the basis of a knowledge that is normally reserved for God alone, viz. that of Jansenius' innermost thoughts:

*Si isti tam laudati a Jesuitis Pontifices damnassent aliquem sensum particularem istarum propositionum, illico constitisset an ille sensus conuenisset cum sensu Ianssenij; sed cum hoc non fecerint & illae damnatae propositiones, pro ut jacent, non inueniantur in libro Ianssenij, merito dubitatur unde constiterit Alexandro VII. de sensu a Ianssenio intento, cum non soleat Ecclesia de internis judicare.*⁷⁶

Contrary to what he contends at the end of the first part of *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph*, Eugenius admits in his letter to Van Hecke that at least the first proposition (*Aliqua Dei praecepta hominibus iustis uolentibus et conantibus, secundum praesentes quas habent uires, sunt impossibilia; deest quoque illis gratia qua possibilia fiant*)⁷⁷ can be read in the *Augustinus*, viz. in chapter 13 of the 3rd book *De gratia Saluatoris*.⁷⁸ To this, he adds that the other four

⁷⁵ See n. 70.

⁷⁶ See *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* [n. 64] p. 110.

⁷⁷ See H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion* [n. 17] n° 2001.

⁷⁸ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 35 and *passim*. For the presence of the first proposition in the *Augustinus*, see Cornelii Iansenii *Episcopi Iprensis Augustinus*. tom. 3 (Louanii 1640) c. 334: *Haec igitur omnia plenissime planissimeque demonstrant, nihil esse in sancti August. doctrina certius ac fundatius, quam esse praecepta quaedam, quae hominibus non tantum infidelibus, excoecatis, obduratis, sed fidelibus quoque & iustis, uolentibus, conantibus secundum praesentes quas habea<n>t uires, sunt impossibilia; deesse quoque gratiam, qua fiant possibilia.*

propositions, which are not literally present in Jansenius' work, all depend on the first.⁷⁹ This, however, does not mean that the *Augustinus* fell subject to the condemnation of the five propositions by Innocent X. Eugenius' main arguments in favour of this claim are the following.

The part of the letter to Van Hecke that focuses on Jansenius' understanding of the first proposition,⁸⁰ starts by quoting the counselor's paraphrase of what he considers to be the condemned, Jansenist meaning of the first proposition:

[...] *juxta autem Jansenium & primos ejus discipulos Fromundum, Sinnichium & alios qui adhuc ambulant, Deus talibus justis, ex se uolentibus et conantibus, saepe, dum uult, gratiam omnem negat et datam subtrahit adeoque subtractione gratiae aperit ostium quo deprauata uoluntas in peccatum ruat, ut impie quidam de Deo loquitur. Hunc peruersum sensum Jansenii damnarunt Pontifices & omnis Catholica Ecclesia juste damnatum credit. Et qui non credit, damnatus est Jansenista.*⁸¹

In reply to this paraphrase, Eugenius first ironically exclaims that he is happy to have been informed finally about the exact meaning in which the first proposition has been condemned.⁸² However, so he continues, the meaning given by Van Hecke is not that of the first proposition in the *Augustinus*, which can be determined by simply reading the already mentioned chapter 13:⁸³

Quomodo enim Jansenius affirmet Deum negare omnem justis uolentibus & conantibus gratiam, qui in ipsis de facto & habitualement, quia justis, & actualement, quia conantes & uolentes – licet ad imperfecte tantum & non tam fortiter uolendum & conandum ut praeceptum effectiue impleatur uel tentatio superetur – agnoscit? Quomodo Jansenius dicat Deum jam datam gratiam subtrahere, cum eo casu nec uellent nec conarentur [...]? Quomodo denique Jansenius <dicat> Deum per talem subtractionem gratiae ostium aperire quo deprauata uoluntas

⁷⁹ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 32 ([...] *I. propositio, a qua caeterae, etiam fatentibus Jesuitis, dependent* [...]) and 45 ([...] *I. propositio, a qua caeterae dependent* [...]).

⁸⁰ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 45-59.

⁸¹ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 45.

⁸² See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 45: *Benedictus Deus! Quod tandem aliquando sciamus praecisum sensum Jansenii in quo proprie damnata est I. propositio, a qua caeterae dependent.*

⁸³ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 45-46: *Sed quando lego & relego & totas ingenii uires exerceo in perscrutando & penitus inuestigando illo praedicto cap. 13., ex quo ista propositio eruta est, ut ubi ejus sensus praecipue & unice deberet agnosci, ne hilum quidem talis sensus inuenio, sed plane contrarium.*

*in peccatum ruat, quod non esset aliud quam facere Deum causam, etiam positivam peccati?*⁸⁴

After a long and rather tortuous argumentation full of references to the works of Augustine, Eugenius ends his treatment of the first proposition with the following particularly clear description of what he considers to be the proposition's *sensus Jansenii* or orthodox sense:

*Reducatur ergo tota quaestio ad hunc casum metaphysicum: ponantur duo justī, seu etiam justissimi, circumdati tamen infirmitate sua, qui per gratiam actualem conentur & uelint, promittant, immo jurent seruare omnia mandata Dei et tentationes superare. Superueniat illis aliqua occasio enormiter alliciens ad peccandum uel offeratur actus plane heroicus mandatorum Dei, u.g. mori pro fide. [...] Certum est in isto illorum duorum casu, ad talem tentationem superandam uel opus praecepti adimplendum, illos ulteriori actuali et forti et omnino efficaci gratia indigere. Quaeritur ergo an hanc ulteriorem efficacem per se gratiam Deus teneatur dare. Si dicas quod ad hoc teneatur, illa gratia jam non erit gratia, utpote non gratis danda, unde nec gratia proprie nuncupanda [...]. Si dicatur quod Deus non teneatur illam dare, restat an non possit secundum beneplacitum suum uel, ut Ap. dicit, pro bona uoluntate [cf. Phil. 2:13], uni illam dare et alteri non dare et numquid non illa gratia sic data uel non data discernet istos duos? Numquid non necessitate infallibilitatis alter stabit & alter cadet? Alter praeceptum adimplebit, alter non adimplebit? Iste autem stabit uel adimplebit per uoluntatem suam, sed ulteriori gratia efficaci adiutam; ille cadet uel non adimplebit, itidem per uoluntatem suam, non spoliata gratia habituali uel etiam actuali, quam antea habuerat, per ipsummet Deum (uti Vestra Pat. aliquos blasphemare affirmat), sed abstractam & illectam a grauiori concupiscentia, cui superandae illa par non erat. Deum autem illum adjuuare, illum non adjuuare, apertissime declarat August., idque facere secundum beneplacitum suum, et causam illius discretionis ad arcanum ejus judicium semper justum et uerum, quoniam justificatum in semetipsum, pertinere [...].*⁸⁵

Since the first proposition in the sense of Jansenius states that a just man who thanks to God's actual grace wills and tries to fulfil His commandments, is not able to fulfil them if he is not given a further and stronger actual grace that makes him infallibly conquer the current assaults of concupiscence, the proposition can be considered to contradict the Molinist concept of sufficient grace that is given to

⁸⁴ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 45

⁸⁵ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 57-59. This description of the meaning of the first proposition corresponds with the description of Jansenius' meaning of the first proposition by J. Carreyre, *Jansénisme* [n. 2] c. 481.

everyone and is rendered efficient by an autonomous consent of the individual human will. This is stressed by Eugenius at several occasions: *Per illam quippe propositionem ejusdemque apud Augustinum indubitata fundamenta nihil aliud intendit Jansenius quam debellare superbam gratiam sufficientem Molinisticam, omnibus semper et ubique communem [...]*.⁸⁶

In the third part of *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph*, which has not been preserved in the Maastricht and Paris copy of the work, but has been partly synthesized in the *Epistola ministri Hollandi* and the *Vltima uox*,⁸⁷ Eugenius argued that the Roman Church had implicitly accepted the Catholicity of the first proposition in the sense of Jansenius when it inserted the following prayer for the feast of Saint Patrick (17 March) into the Roman Missal in 1684: *Deus, qui ad praedicandam gentibus gloriam tuam beatum Patritium confessorem tuum atque pontificem mittere dignatus es, eius meritis & intercessionem concede ut quae nobis agenda praecipis, te miserante adimplere possimus, per D. N. J. C.*⁸⁸ On the basis of the *Lex orandi, lex credendi* principle, which Saint Augustine himself had often recourse to,⁸⁹ Eugenius concluded that by inserting this prayer into the Missal, the Catholic Church admitted – in perfect agreement with the first proposition in the sense of Jansenius – that even the most pious believers sometimes lack the efficient grace that is necessary for the accomplishment of God's commandments and that the Molinist doctrine of sufficient grace was to be rejected as an offspring of Pelagianism:

Hic non inuitantur nec coguntur ad orandum infideles, obdurati & excaecati, sed omnes ecclesiastici, monachi, religiosi, moniales, maxime fideles, uolentes, conantes, immo & ad perfectionem spiritualem anhelantes. Et hi omnes jubentur orare & rogare & petere ut Deus, meritis et intercessionem beati Patritii, ipsis concedat gratiam, ut quae agenda idem ipse Deus praecipit, id est, praecepta Dei, ipso eodem miserante, ipso, inquam, qui cujus uult miseretur, & quem uult indurat

⁸⁶ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 46 (compare pp. 48-49).

⁸⁷ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 35 ([...] *sicut in 3. parte meorum opusculorum ad oculum, ut puto, & inuictissime probauit*).

⁸⁸ The argument is synthesized in *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 34-40; *Epistola ministri Hollandi* [n. 72] pp. 9-11; *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, November 1686, pp. 1272-1273.

⁸⁹ The principle was explicitly formulated for the first time by Prosper of Aquitaine (*auct. de grat.* 8 [PL 51, 209 C]), but its implicit use in anti-heretical texts is much older. See B. Studer, *Liturgy and the Fathers*, in: A. J. Chupungco, *Introduction to the Liturgy (Handbook for Liturgical Studies 1*, Collegeville [Minn.] 1997) pp. 53-79 (esp. pp. 60-63 [with examples from the works of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Basil the Great and Augustine]).

[Rm. 9:18], *adimplere possint. / Ex quo luce clarius euadit, quod aliqua Dei praecepta, aliquibus justis, quidni & omnibus [...] aliquibus temporibus & occasionibus tentationum, secundum praesentes quas habent uires, sint adimplerione impossibilia; quodque de facto gratia omnimodo illis desit qua adimplerione actiua omni loco, casu, tempore & constitutione possibilia fiant. / Et hic est ipsissimus sensus Ecclesiae Dei & S. Augustini defensoris gratiae, quem Jesuitae Jansenisticum & haereticum declamant, quia nempe sufficientem eorum gratiam Molinisticam – ad tales effectus semper, ubique & in quacumque occasione omnibus quantumcumque obduratis & excaecatis praesentem – tanquam Pelagianam respuit, rejicit & condemnat.*⁹⁰

In his letter to Van Hecke, Eugenius defended this interpretation of the prayer in very strong words against the Roman counsellor's criticism.⁹¹

*Ad haec respondeo [...] quod ista Oratio de S. Patritio apertissime primam Jansenii propositionem in sensu Catholico (sicut & ipse illam scripsit) continet, ad illum quippe sensum per singulas partes, aduocata in subsidium tota S. Augustini doctrina, propositionem illam praedicto l. 3 de gratia Saluat. c. 13 perspicuitate mirabili determinauit Jansenius [...].*⁹²

⁹⁰ See *Epistola ministri Hollandi* [n. 72] p. 10. Compare *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 39-40: *Ex his autem deduco quoad orationem istam de S. Patritio. I. quod per illam petamus aliquid quod de facto non habemus [...] Deduco 2. quod fateamur gratiam illam, quam poscimus quia non habemus, non nisi Deo miserante dari, sicut & iudicante, juste denegari, quippe qui [...] cujus uult miseretur, & quem uult indurat [Rm. 9:18]. Deduco 3., cum in eadem oratione petatur possibilitas, cum effectu scilicet, adimplendi quae nobis agenda praecipit Deus, quod hoc ipso fateamur nos illam non habere &, nisi obtineamus miserante Deo contentum illud orationis nostrae, illa quae Deus praecipit, nobis esse adimplerione actiua positue impossibilia. Alias frustra iusti & sancti gement, quasi illam gratiam non haberent; frustra peterent, si iam haberent; nec peccarent (iuxta nostram notionem efficacis per se gratiae) dum eam haberent.*

⁹¹ Van Hecke had strongly condemned it. See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 34-35: *Eximia P.V. dicit [...] Gloriaris in Oratione noua de S. Patricio, quasi sit confessio 1. propositionis in sensu D. Augustini & Jansenii intellectae. Sed errauit a uero sensu Augustini quisquis [...].*

⁹² See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] p. 35. The Jesuit and anti-Jansenist writer Jacques de la Fontaine considered this passage as one of the most clear expressions of Eugenius' Jansenist sympathies in the *Vltima uox*. See Cornelius a Cranebergh [= Jacques de la Fontaine], *Fraus quinque articulorum a pseudo-Augustini discipulis primum Alexandro VII. nunc iterum Alexandro VIII. obtrusorum, siue eorum cum Augustino Iprensi conuenientia demonstrata* (Coloniae 1690) p. 45 and Didacus de Oropega [= Jacques de la Fontaine], *Secunda pars difficultatum* (s.l., s.d. [= Leuven 1692]) p. 60. For both pseudonyms, see J. A. G. Tans., *Lexicon pseudonymorum Jansenisticorum. Répertoire de noms d'emprunt employés au cours de l'histoire du jansénisme et de l'antijansénisme* (Leuven 1989) pp. 62 and 160.

We may thus conclude that even if he accepted the condemnation of the five propositions by Innocent X, Eugenius denied on the basis of an analysis of chapter 13 of book 3 *De gratia Salvatoris* that the first proposition could have been condemned *in sensu Jansenii*, as pretended by Alexander VII. Eugenius was convinced that Jansenius' meaning of the first proposition, 'on which the other four all depend', was Augustinian and, by consequence, perfectly Catholic. This conviction explains why Eugenius was able to accept the bull *Cum occasione*, but affirmed at the same time that the five propositions had been a powerful weapon in Jansenius' struggle against Molinism. This emerges from a story transmitted by Paquot, but attested to in older sources, which tells that in a Lenten sermon pronounced in Louvain in 1679, Eugenius praised Jansenius as a new David, who had chosen from the limpid stream of Saint Augustine's writings five polished stones in order to slay the Goliath of Molinism.⁹³

Although Eugenius claimed to have a deep respect for papal authority,⁹⁴ he was convinced at the same time that the Pope was fallible in questions of historical facts.⁹⁵ Alexander VII, e.g., had been

⁹³ Hildebrand VI, p. 413-414 + p. 414 n. 1 borrowed the story from M. Paquot, *Mémoires* [n. 62] p. 116. Paquot himself took it from Jacques de la Fontaine, who in two virulent texts against Eugenius' *Vltima uox* tells us that he had been present at Eugenius' sermon of 1679: *Hic uir est Iansenianae haereseos praedicator feruidus, factionis intrepidus defensor. Hunc non ita pridem Louanii summo accademicorum concursu & applausu contra sensa & mores anti-Iansenistarum coram ipse audiui pro concione debacchantem? Hoc eum inter caetera effutiisse memini, fuisse illustrem in Ecclesia Episcopum (Iansenium designabat) qui ut superbum uictoris gratiae impugnatores (Molinam) prosterneret, se comparauerat ab ineunte aetate, et ut styllum acueret se contulerat in Galliam, ac dein quinque limpidissimos lapides uelut alterum Dauidem sibi selegisse ex torrente Augustiniano quibus superbum Goliathum (Molinam) dejiceret. Nollem meo testimonio hominem in crimen uocare, nisi suis scriptis et typo editis infamem se probasset omnibus Iansenistam.* See Cornelius a Cranebergh [= Jacques de la Fontaine], *Fraus quinque articulorum* [n. 92] p. 45. Compare Didacus de Oropega [= Jacques de la Fontaine], *Secunda pars difficultatum* [n. 92] pp. 58-59.

⁹⁴ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65], p. 29: *Certe numquam ego inueni nec legi in aliquibus scriptis Jansenii uel eius praetensorum discipulorum quod fuerit accusator uel docuerit accusare Summos Pontifices, sed bene quod tam ille quam hi impense illos uenerentur, zelose ament ac strenue defendant tamquam ueros ac summos Christi Domini in terris Vicarios.*

⁹⁵ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65], pp. 29-30: *Quod autem Pontifices non sint exempti a deceptionibus hominum fraudulentorum, tota ecclesiastica historia et quotidiana experientia clamant. [...] An autem Summi Pontifices in causa Jansenii fuerint reuera decepti, facti quaestio est, quae ex deceptorum confessione uel ex aliis exterioribus probationibus mere dependet.* These words are followed by a long exposition on the errors of Urbanus VIII, Innocent X and Alexander VII with regard to Jansenius' *Augustinus* (pp. 30-34).

mistaken when he defined that the five propositions had been condemned *in sensu Jansenii*.⁹⁶ Worse still: Eugenius was convinced that the Pope had been deliberately deceived. For Alexander once told to Van Hecke's fellow Augustinian Christianus Lupus that he had read the five propositions literally on one and the same page of the *Augustinus*.⁹⁷ According to Eugenius, this manifestly erroneous declaration proved that the Pope had been deceived by the Jesuits, who had given him a falsified version of Jansenius' book.⁹⁸

Eugenius' conviction that Alexander VII was mistaken in defining that the five propositions had been condemned *in sensu Jansenii*, explains why the Maastricht and Paris copies of *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* end in an appeal to Pope Innocent XI (1676-1689), who is asked, not to abolish the condemnation of the five propositions, but to declare – against the mistaken Alexander VII – that Jansenius' *Augustinus* was not affected by *Cum occasione*. Just as Innocent XI had corrected Alexander's mistake in the affair concerning the *Aduersus quorundam expostulationes contra nonnullas Jesuitarum opiniones morales* by Amadaeus Guimenius (pseudonym for the Jesuit author Mateo de Moya),⁹⁹ just so he had to correct his predecessor's errors regarding the *Augustinus* of Jansenius:

Sicut Alexander VII. per Jesuitas deceptus declarauit propositiones Amadaei Guimenij esse regulas actionum moralium & grauissimum

⁹⁶ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 31-32: *Quod Alexander VII. fuerit deceptus, ex eo constat quod liber Jansenii nunquam Romae rite fuerit examinatus & quod I. propositio, a qua caeterae, etiam fatentibus Jesuitis, dependent, quae sola in ipsius Augustino in propriis terminis est inuenibilis, desumpta ex c. 13. l. 3. de gratia Saluatoris, secundum indubitata principia doctrinae Augustinianae ab Ecclesia consecratae, ad quam juxta omnes suas particulas ibidem expresse reducitur, sit catholicissima, juxta declarationem Emin. Cardinalis de S. Clemente, Journal de S. Amore parte 4. c. 11. & etiam juxta judicium sanctissimorum pariter ac doctissimorum uirorum tam ex clero quam omnibus religiosis ordinibus.*

⁹⁷ For this (probably invented) anecdote, see also L. Ceyssens, *Chrétien Lupus. Sa période janséniste (1640-1660)*, in: *Augustiniana* 16 (1966) pp. 264-312 (esp. pp. 299-300; with further literature).

⁹⁸ See *Vltima uox* [n. 65], p. 33: *Apposui autem quod audiuerim ex uiro fide dignissimo [...] qui idipsum mihi referebat ex proprio ore Eximii Patris V. Lupi attestantis quod Alexander VII. ipsi protestatus fuerat illas ipsas 5. propositiones totidem uerbis se legisse in praedicto Jansenii libro in una et eadem pagina; quod certe sine apertissima deceptione & istius libri falsificatione omnino fuit impossibile.*

⁹⁹ This work of Amadaeus Guimenius was published in 1661 and censured by the Sorbonne on 3 February 1665. Since the latter censure also condemned Guimenius' views concerning the Pope's infallibility in matters of Faith and morals, the censure itself was abolished by Alexander VII on 25 June 1665. However, Guimenius' book was condemned by Innocent XI on 16 September 1680. Eugenius considers this condemnation a rectification by Innocent XI of a mistake made by his predecessor, but it

*scriptorum autoritate & perpetuo catholicorum usu niti, quas tamen Innocentius XI. melius informatus definiuit esse pestes morum, perniciosam illarum doctrinam & damnabilem illarum lectionem, usum & praxim, quid obstat quod econtra, licet idem Alexander VII. per eosdem Jesuitas deceptus definiuerit V. damnatas propositiones in damnato sensu apud Ianssenium in ejus libro qui dicitur AUGUSTINUS inueniri, Innocentius XI. uel alius quilibet Pontifex melius informatus declaret eundem librum nihil continere nisi purissimam S. Augustini doctrinam ab Ecclesia approbatam.*¹⁰⁰

In light of the above analysis, Fulgentius of Nieuwpoort seems to have been rather lenient towards Eugenius, since his list of accusations (*FN*) contains only a few short and rather allusive passages in which he accuses his fellow brother of questioning the Pope's infallibility¹⁰¹ and of adhering to Jansenius' doctrine of efficient grace.¹⁰² The other passages on Eugenius in *FN* fall outside our present interest and concern his critical stance towards the cult of the Holy Virgin,¹⁰³ miracles, the scapular,¹⁰⁴ religious confraternities,¹⁰⁵ the conduct of secular and regular clerics ('*Judas fuerit de Societate Jesu*')¹⁰⁶ as well

should be mentioned that Guimenius' book was put on the index during Alexander VII's own pontificate (10 April 1666). See É. Amann, *Laxisme*, in: *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 9.1 (Paris 1926) cc. 37-86 (esp. cc. 54-58); A. Fonck, *Moya* (*Mathieu de*), in: *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 10.2 (Paris 1929) cc. 2515-2516.

¹⁰⁰ See *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* [n. 64] pp. 123-124. The same argument is developed in *Vltima uox* [n. 65] pp. 31-33. In the letter mentioned in n. 71, Michael of Oudenbosch, Provincial of the Flandro-Belgian Province in the years 1684-1687, considered these words the most objectionable passage in *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* (ff. 1^v-2).

¹⁰¹ See *FN*, cap. IV (*De Summo Pontifice*), n^{os} 10 and 18: *P. Eugenius Brugensis Brugis in culina. 'Pontifex tam bene falli potest quam aliquis alius.'* Hanc Flandrice protulit a triennio [= 1682] adstante R. P. Alexandro Gandensi [also accused by Fulgentius: *FN*, cap. V, n^o 15 and cap. VI, n^o 4] *cum duobus alijs, quam etiam tunc audiuit f. Conradus Teneramundanus ibidem coquus. Loquebantur autem illi inter se de quibusdam propositionibus a Pontifice damnatis. / P. Eugenius Brugensis. 'Pontifex est fallibilis.'* Hanc ipsum saepius audiuit sustinentem P. Lucas Alostanus modo Hasseleti Guardianus et multa alia, prout constat ex ejus ad me litteris datis 15 Augusti 1682.

¹⁰² See *FN*, cap. I (*In materia de gratia et libero arbitrio*), n^{os} 28-29: *P. Eugenius Brugensis in concione Louanii. 'Gratia non datur semper nobis ubi opus est. Sine ea tamen non ualemus superare tentationes neque ullum opus bonum facere.'* / *Idem. Dixit pridem Pat. Liuius Menenensi hypocondriaco ac desperabundo: 'Non habes gratiam.'*

¹⁰³ See *FN*, cap. VI (*De ueneratione sanctorum ac sacrarum imaginum*), n^o 1.

¹⁰⁴ See *FN*, cap. VI, n^o 2. See also cap. V, n^o 1 (*Quoad Bullam Sabbatinam [...]: non credo*).

¹⁰⁵ See *FN*, cap. VI, n^{os} 2 and 6.

¹⁰⁶ See *FN*, cap. VI, n^{os} 2, 6 and 7.

as his interest in the *Causa Janseniana siue fictitia haeresis* by the French Jansenist Pierre Nicole.¹⁰⁷ Most interesting, on the other hand, is Fulgentius' claim that Eugenius made several portraits of the bishop of Ypres and distributed them within and outside Capuchin convents. He is also said to have produced some portraits of Jansenius and one of Saint-Cyran for the *pedagogium Falconis* in Louvain.¹⁰⁸

By using a purely formal definition of Jansenism, Hildebrand had been able to deny the presence of any Jansenist among his Flemish predecessors of the 17th and early 18th centuries. Even Eugenius of Bruges was no Jansenist according to this definition. The above analysis of *Den verleyden ende wegh-gevoerden Joseph* and the letter to Van Hecke has shown, however, that Eugenius' condemnation of the five propositions was only conditional, for he accepted them if they were interpreted *in sensu Jansenii*, and that he can be considered to have been a genuine Jansenist if a less formal meaning is ascribed to the term. For Eugenius was convinced that Jansenius' *Augustinus* offered an adequate presentation of the Augustinian – and in his view Catholic – doctrine of divine grace, and he defended the work against Alexander VII by stressing that the Pope was fallible in questions of fact. The characterization of Eugenius as a Jansenist is also justified by biographical details (his praise of Jansenius as a new David; the distribution of painted portraits of the bishop of Ypres). Revealing in this respect are also the following words of the French Jansenist Charles Lemaître in his *Relation de mon voyage de Flandre, de Hollande et de Zélande fait en mil six cent quatre vint et un*, in which Eugenius presents himself as a partisan of Port Royal in matters of divine grace and penance:

<A Bruges> nous poursuivîmes ensemble notre voyage aux Capucins ou j'eus la satisfaction d'entretenir avant et après la messe le bon Pere Eugene qui s'informa de moy de tout ce qui se passoit en France touchant le monastère de Port royal dont il avoit une estime bien

¹⁰⁷ See FN, cap. V (*In materia decretorum ac bullarum necnon Baij ac Jansenij*), n° 3. Fulgentius is referring to *Causa Janseniana, siue fictitia haeresis, sex disquisitionibus a Paulo Irenaeo [= Pierre Nicole] theologice, historice explicata et explosa* (Coloniae [apud Petrum Marteau: fictitious editor] 1682).

¹⁰⁸ See FN, cap. VI, n° 12: *P. Eugenius Brugensis. Imaginem Jansenij a se depictam uarijs, tam extra quam intra religionem, dono dedit. Item imagines ejusdem et abbatibus de St. Cyran regenti Pedagogii Falconensis Louanij, unde patet quanti illos faciat*. For Eugenius' pictorial talent, see also the letter of Antoninus of Antwerp quoted in n. 139; C. Lemaître, *Relation de mon voyage de Flandre, de Hollande et de Zélande fait en mil six cent quatre vint et un*. Texte établi et annoté par G. Van de Louw (*Annales littéraires de l'Université de Besançon* 213, Paris 1978) p. 358; Hildebrand VI, p. 415.

*particulière, aussi bien de tous ceux, qui étoient liez d'amitié et de sentimens avec ce monastère auxquels il me témoigna qu'il compatissoit, d'autant plus qu'il avoit sa part dans la persécution qui luy étoit commune avec eux pour les mesmes veritez de la grace et de la pénitence qu'il soutenoit; [...]*¹⁰⁹

To be continued

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¹⁰⁹ See C. Lemaître, *Relation de mon voiage* [n. 108] p. 357. Compare [C. Lemaître], *Voyage anonyme et inédit d'un janséniste en Hollande et en Flandre en 1681. Étude historique d'après un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque du Havre par C. Fierville* (Paris 1889) p. 37.