At least two events in 1546 proved crucial for the development of a Louvain school of biblical scholarship. During its fourth session, on 8 April 1546, the Council of Trent had declared the Latin Vulgate to be the authentic version of the Catholic Church – authoritative because it conformed to sound evangelical doctrine – while at the same time expressing the hope that a critical revision be realized as soon as possible.1 Only a few weeks after the Council’s pronouncement, the Imperial authorities in the Low Countries, the Louvain Faculty of Theology, and the printer Bartholomew van Grave (Gravius) contracted an agreement with a view to the publication of a revised version of the Vulgate (and of both a Dutch and a French translation based upon it). The work of critically revising the Vulgate was entrusted to the Louvain theologian John Henten.

Also in 1546, Emperor Charles V appointed two so-called royal professors at the University of Louvain, one to lecture on Scripture and the other on scholastic theology. Instead of lecturing for six weeks a year, as was the custom for ordinary professors at the university, the holders of both new chairs had to lecture every day.2 There is much to be said for the suggestion

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that in so doing, Charles V again associated himself with the spirit of the Council of Trent. During their humanistically or even Erasmian-inspired fifth session, on 17 June 1546, the Council fathers had expressed their desire that biblical studies be made available in institutes for training the clergy: in this way priests would be able to base their preaching on biblical texts. And although the Council fathers had not forbidden Catholics to read the Bible in the vernacular themselves, a far greater benefit was expected from priests and preachers who were able to explain the Scriptures according to the Tradition of the Church to their flock. Recognizing the value of the Scriptures for the life of faith in the Church, while at the same time on its guard against an idiosyncratic reading of the Bible, the Tridentine Church emphasized the position of the priests and preachers as mediating figures between, on one hand, God’s Word preserved in the Church, and on the other hand, the laity. With this measure the Council fathers sought to respond to Protestant claims that the Bible was the sole, necessary and sufficient basis of the faith and that doctrine as formulated by the Reformers – and not by the ‘Old Church’ – agreed with the Scriptures.

The contract for the revision of the Vulgate by John Henten and the establishment of the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures at Louvain together led to both the development of textual criticism of the Latin Vulgate in the Louvain theological milieu and the appearance of qualitatively good and influential Bible commentaries, mainly during the period between 1550 and 1650. Louvain biblical scholarship was moreover shaped by another,
broader evolution. The renewed interest in Augustine at the end of the Middle Ages and in the early modern era, which thoroughly influenced the interpretation of the Scriptures by Luther, Calvin and other reformers, also led the Louvain theologians to a specific focus on the Church father, not least in their Bible commentaries. The interpretation of Augustine’s doctrine of grace and free will would even give rise to serious tensions within the Louvain theological milieu.

The first section of this chapter will be devoted to the results of the textual criticism of the Bible that issued from the work of theologians and philologists educated in Louvain. I will then focus on Bible commentaries and pay particular attention to appeals to Augustine’s works in the second half of the sixteenth century. A third section will be devoted to the development of an ‘Augustinian’ interpretation of the Bible in Louvain (and Douai) in the early seventeenth century. The last section will deal with the Bible commentaries that issued from the Augustinian-minded theological circles around Cornelius Jansenius of Ypres.

Textual Criticism of the Bible and Theology

As stated, the work of revising the Vulgate had been entrusted in 1546 to John Henten or Hentenius (1499–1566). Henten had lived as a Hieronymite monk in Portugal, but returned to Louvain around 1540 and joined the Dominican order in 1548. In addition to a knowledge of theology, he had


very good mastery of Greek and even Hebrew and had edited two Latin translations of commentaries assembled from the Church fathers (in particular the Greek), one on the Gospels, in 1544, and one on the remaining parts of the New Testament, in 1545. Henten prepared his revised version of the Vulgate under the supervision of the theologians Ruard Tapper and Peter de Corte (Curtius). He adopted many readings from Robert Estienne (Stephanus') Latin Bibles of 1532 and 1540 (which had previously been placed by Louvain theologians on the list of forbidden books). In his preface Henten pays extensive homage to the text-critical work of Estienne but also lashes out against those people who had inspired Estienne to compose his erroneous marginal notes and his prefaces. Henten further compared the text with more than thirty Latin manuscripts and two incunabula.\(^7\) The variant readings taken from the manuscripts were included in the margin of the new edition, with an indication of the number of manuscripts giving the variant in question, considered an important criterion for the validity of a reading. Henten's revision of the Latin Bible was completed in early November 1547, more than one year after he had begun the work. It was published by the Louvain printer-publisher Bartholomew van Grave. This *Biblia Vulgata Lovaniensis* was widely distributed and reprinted several times.

In the years 1568 to 1573 the splendid Polyglot Bible or *Biblia Regia* was published by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp; it contained biblical materials in five languages: Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Aramaic and Syriac.\(^8\) This work had been supervised and the proofs corrected by the Spanish scholar and

\(^7\) *Biblia. Ad vetustissima exemplaria nunc recens castigata ...* Joannes Hentenius (ed), Bartholomaeus Gravius, Leuven, 1547, ff. *ijv-*iijr. He used, amongst others, the fourteenth-century *Codex Bessarionis*, which had been a gift from Cardinal Bessarion (1403–1472) to the Louvain theologian Henricus van Zomeren (c. 1418–1472) and was subsequently preserved in the Holy Spirit College in Louvain, but which perished when the university library was burned in May 1940. Henten further consulted the so-called *Codex Atrebatensis Sericatus* or *Anjou Bible* (early fourteenth century), which is still preserved in the Maurit’s Sabbe Library of the Louvain Faculty of Theology. See Luc Dequeker, ‘The Anjou Bible and the *Biblia Vulgata Lovaniensis*, 1547/1574’ in *The Anjou Bible. A Royal Manuscript Revealed: Naples 1340*, Lieve Watteeuw and Jan Van der Stock (eds), Peeters, Leuven, 2010, pp. 127–138.

humanist Benito Arias Montanus (1527–98). He had been assisted by a number of Louvain theologians including Augustinus Hunnaeus and Cornelius Reyneri Goudanus, and by the Jesuit biblical scholar Johannes Wilhelmi Harlemius.9

An important contribution to the realization of the Polyglot Bible was also provided by Andreas Masius (1514–73),10 an alumnus of the Louvain Collegium trilingue and a diplomat, from 1538 to 1548 in the service of John of Weeze, bishop of Constance and, after Weeze’s sudden death, from 1548 to 1558 in the service of William V, duke of Cleves. In line with traditional and perhaps questionable ecclesiastical practices, he had striven in Roman curial circles for the acquisition of ecclesiastical privileges and prebends for his patrons. Sympathetic to the tradition of Catholic biblical humanism, however, Masius considered the biblical sources to be the driving force par excellence behind a pure practice of the Catholic faith, and he applied himself to the study of the biblical languages Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac. Three years after his marriage in 1558, he retired to a farmstead in Zevenaar, in the present-day Netherlands. As a married Roman Catholic lay scholar, he produced his most outstanding works far from the academic environment of his day, works that offer a permanent testimony to his dedication and skill. One of the pioneers of Syriac studies in western Europe, Masius’ Syriac grammar of 1571, which became part of Plantin’s Polyglot Bible, stands out as one of the great philological achievements of the sixteenth century. His commentary on the book of Joshua was published posthumously by Plantin in 1574. Its reconstruction of the Greek text of Joshua remains significant for textual criticism, particularly because Masius was able to make use of a valuable manuscript of the Syro-Hexapla that is no longer at our disposal. On the right-hand page, a literal Latin translation is included next to the Septuagint text. The left-hand page of the text edition provides the Hebrew text and a literal Latin translation, with the Aramaic (Chaldee) interpretation in the margin where it differs.

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from the Hebrew. At the bottom of both the right-hand and left-hand pages the Latin Vulgate translation is printed. In addition to this text edition, Masius offered a fairly noteworthy commentary on the book of Joshua, which grants him, as a layman, unique status during the Golden Age of Catholic biblical scholarship. His ongoing interest in the Talmud and the Kabbalah, his ability to relativise cultic exaggerations and place the emphasis on the discipleship of Christ, his criticism of the clergy’s pursuit of opulence and sensual pleasure etc., made him the object of suspicion in Rome and led to the censure of a number of passages in his work. Although he has been referred to as a liberal exegete, Masius remained loyal to, if critical of, the Catholic Church until the end and more than once expressed his hostility towards the Reformation, ‘pestilentissima illa pestis haeresis’.12

Since Arias Montanus considered the Vulgate a philological absurdity and only under pressure from the Spanish king Philip II was prepared to include its text in the Biblia Regia, the revision of the Catholic Church’s official version was again put on the scholarly agenda. A revised edition had to observe the stipulations of the Tridentine decree with regard to the authenticity of the Vulgate while at the same meeting the humanists’ concern for a philologically justified Latin text. The task of revising the Vulgate text was assigned in 1570–71 to Francis Lucas ‘Brugensis’ (1548/49–1619),13 a promising student of theology in Louvain with a particular interest in scriptural studies. Because of his orientation towards biblical studies, he also entertained good contacts with the aforementioned Johannes Wilhelmi Harlemius, professor of Scripture and biblical languages at the Jesuit college in Louvain. Harlemius taught him the sacred tongues and together with the professors Hunnaeus and Goudanus supervised the revision work.14 Francis Lucas’ mandate went further than that of John Henten more than twenty years earlier: in his prologue Henten had declared that he would not consider the problem of the Vulgate’s agreement with the

11 Joseph Perles, Beiträge zur Geschichte der hebräischen und aramäischen Studien, Theodor Ackermann, Munich, 1884, p. 205; ‘freisinniger Bibelforscher’.
12 Masius to Johann von Vlatten, 19 October 1559 (Lossen), p. 321; see also Masius to Octavius Pantagathus, 30 November 1546 (Lossen), nr. 20, pp. 21–23; Masius to Gerwig Blarer, 10 August 1548 (Lossen), nr. 24, p. 28.
Greek or Hebrew Bible; Lucas was assigned the explicit task of comparing the several readings of Henten’s edition with the ancient commentaries and the ‘original sources’ of the Bible, namely, the Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic texts of the Old Testament and the Greek and Syriac of the New Testament. Lucas made use of the textual material Plantin and Arias Montanus had collected with the intention of editing the *Biblia Polyglotta*.15

Since in 1569 a papal Vulgate committee had begun its activities with a view to the revision of the Vulgate and Francis Lucas wanted to avoid the impression of prejudging the committee’s conclusions, it was decided simply to adopt the text of the 1547 version but to include in the margin new variant readings, indicating their sources and not simply their number. These variant readings were the outcome of Lucas’ application of an important new principle of textual criticism: not the number of manuscripts but their quality grants plausibility to a certain reading. By 1574 the revised edition of the *Biblia Vulgata Lovaniensis* was complete and it was published by Plantin in Antwerp. Since space in the octavo edition of the Vulgate Bible was too limited to offer explanation of the preference for a particular reading, in 1580 Francis Lucas published separately the more extensive text-critical *Notationes*, which contained explanations of the variant readings of the Vulgate. In 1583 Plantin was able to publish a beautiful edition in folio of the revised *Biblia Vulgata Lovaniensis* that included the *Notationes*.

The text of the Louvain Vulgate Bible of 1583 served as a basis for the successive papal Vulgate committees in Rome, especially those established by Sixtus V (1590) and Clement VIII (1592). An exemplar of the 1583 *Biblia Vulgata Lovaniensis* is still preserved in Rome with a text containing deletions and the margins provided with handwritten variants, the printed marginal notes of the *Lovanienses* having been crossed out. The exemplar is obviously that used by the committee established by Sixtus V to put forward the results of its deliberations; as *Codex Carafianus* it is named after the committee’s chairman, Cardinal Antonio Carafa.16 The committees’ activities eventually led to the publication of the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate (1590–92).17 Notwithstanding the fact that the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate presented itself as the definitive version of the Vulgate and that Pope

Figure 1. *Biblia sacra. Quid in hac editione a theologis Lovaniensibus praestitum sit* [...], ed. Franciscus Lucas ‘of Bruges’, Christopher Plantin, Antwerp, 1583 (KU Leuven, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, Maurits Sabbe Library, P 22.053.2/Fo BIJB)
Clement VIII even prohibited editions provided with text-critical marginal notes. Francis Lucas – since 1581 member of the episcopal curia in Saint Omer and occasionally involved in the biblical education of future priests – continued to follow the work in Rome with a (text-) critical eye. In 1603 he published a list of the most important corrections introduced in the Vatican edition of the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate.

We must recognise, however, that the Louvain scholars in general, and Francis Lucas in particular, did not want to restrict themselves to mere text-critical studies but aimed at penetrating the content of Scripture. In 1606 Lucas published, with Plantin’s son-in-law John (i) Moerentorf or Moretus in Antwerp, two tomes of his commentary on the Gospels, the first containing introductory material in addition to a commentary on Matthew, the second commentaries on Mark, Luke and John, followed by a Notarum ... libellus duplex. In the latter work Lucas includes both the corrections to the Greek text made by the editors of the Biblia Regia and the corrections to the Vulgate made by the Vatican committee, while at the same time pointing out some variants that were thought to make the text conform even more closely to Jerome’s original text of the Vulgate. In 1612 the third volume of Francis Lucas’ commentary, containing supplementary material to the Gospels of Luke and John, was published by the widow and sons of John (i) Moretus. In 1616 the fourth and final volume appeared, containing some further additional material with regard to the Gospel of John and some concluding observations. Francis Lucas’ well-deserving commentary, however, has received scarce attention, let alone an investigation of its theological perspective. This contrasts with the reception his text-critical work has enjoyed.

Equally famous – at least from a text-critical point of view – are Lucas’ 1617 Concordance, an alphabetical list of words found in the Latin Bible and published with the assistance of the Antwerp printer-publishers John (ii) and Balthazar (i) Moretus, and his 1618 revised and enlarged edition of the Correctiones included in the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate. In the latter, Lucas prudently suggests that some additional passages are in need of correction ‘if the authority of the Supreme Pontiff agrees’. When Francis Lucas died in 1619, he left money and a corrected version of all his

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18 This leads Delville to observe: ‘On ne peut nier que le xvie siècle s’achève par une pérification du texte biblique en monde catholique et qu’il sera difficile de retrouver le goût de la recherche qui a marqué ce siècle’ (Delville, ‘L’évolution des Vulgates’, p. 80).
scriptural works to the executers of his will with a view to a re-edition of all his work on the Scriptures. Only in 1712, however, was such an edition published, through the efforts of Gerard van Velden, by Christian Vermey in Antwerp (possibly a false address, in place of Leyden).20

Most of the theologians studying and teaching the Bible as member of the Louvain faculty were secular clerics. It should be noted, however, that a Franciscan school of Bible exegesis had already been initiated in the 1520s by Francis Titelmans, in the Franciscan study house in Louvain that was incorporated in the university.21 Titelmans had published an *Elucidatio in omnes epistolas apostolicas* (1528), *Collationes quinque super epistolam ad Romanos B. Pauli Apostoli* (1529)—launching a debate with Erasmus on matters of textual criticism and biblical commentary22—*Elucidatio in omnes psalmos* (1531) and *Commentarii in Ecclesiasten Salomonis* (1536). In 1536 he had ceased his activities as lecturer and prolific writer on the Scriptures to become the first Capuchin friar in Italy to come from the Low Countries. Biblical work from his pen that existed in manuscript form was edited after his untimely death, in 1537, by his brother Peter Titelmans and was published as *Elucidatio in evangelium secundum Joannem* (1543), *Elucidatio in evangelium secundum Matthaeum* (1545), *Elucidatio in librum Job* (1547), and *Commentaria in Cantica Canticorum* (1547). Titelmans’ biblical work went through several reprints in all the important printing centres of western Europe.

Titelmans was succeeded in Leuven by Nicholas Tacitus Zegers (c. 1495–1559).23 Having lectured on the Scriptures for eleven years, from 1548...
Zegers lived in a series of convents, mostly executing the functions of guardian or vicar. During this latter period he completed and edited the scriptural works that he had prepared during his lectureship in Louvain, which entitles him to inclusion as an exponent of the Golden Age of biblical scholarship. In 1553 Zegers published with Arnold Birckmann in Cologne a three-volume *Scholion in omnes Novi Testamenti*, which explained with the help of several Greek and Latin writers the difficult or obscure passages of the New Testament. In 1555 he published with the heirs of Birckmann in Cologne his *Epanorthotes*, a collection of revisions of the Latin version of the New Testament in the light of the original Greek (and Hebrew) text and the commentaries of ancient writers. The ultimate aim of his exegetical and text-critical work was to arrive at a scholarly and sound revised version of Erasmus’ *Novum Testamentum*. And indeed, Zegers succeeded in publishing his *Novum Jesu Christi Testamentum* in 1559 with Stephanus Valerius in Louvain. Although this work has fallen into oblivion, with no extant copies, Zegers’ ambitions had been lofty: he hoped that the Pope would decide to prescribe his Latin edition, after thorough verification by erudite persons, as the sole authoritative text for the whole of Christianity and to the exclusion of all other editions that should deviate from it. In 1557, after Zegers had published his *Scholion*, his *Epanorthotes*, and, as the pinnacle of his exegetical and text-critical work, his *Novum Testamentum*, he also edited a concordance with Jan de Laet (Joannes Latius) in Antwerp. The works of Zegers, who died in 1559, excel in their succinctness and give lasting testimony to his acquaintance with the sacred languages Greek and Hebrew, his familiarity with ancient Christian writers and, in addition, to his thorough study of manuscripts.

Zegers was succeeded as a lecturer of Sacred Scriptures by Adam Sasbout (1516–53) – also a very fascinating figure – whose exegetical writings and homilies were edited after his death at the age of 36. Among his works are to be found a commentary on the Epistles of Paul and the other Apostles and a commentary on Isaiah, published for the first time through the efforts of his pupil and admirer Cornelius Verburch by the printer-publisher Anthony Mary Bergaigne in Louvain in 1556 and 1558.

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24 See the dedication to Pope Julius III in *Epanorthotes, Castigationes in Novum Testamentum, in quibus depravata restituuntur, adiecta resecantur, & sublata adijciuntur*, Nicolaus Zegerus (ed), Arnold Birckmann, Cologne, 1555, f. A3r-v: ‘... Si tamen digna et catholica uti speramus iudicabitur, adprobare, et apostolica autoritate roborare confijire, et pro germania atque authentica ubique terrarum legendam committere [hanc novi instrumenti editionem], posthabitis in editionibus, quae huic adversantur’.

respectively. It is attested, however, that these commentaries were largely based upon manuscript notes taken during lectures given by John Leonard van der Eycken, the first ever royal professor of Sacred Scriptures at the Louvain theological faculty; Sasbout had used this material, which he supplemented for his own courses, and its publication after his death under his name was not entirely justified.\(^{26}\) Although Sasbout is often labelled Augustinian-minded, a comprehensive treatment of his work remains to be undertaken.

Appreciation of the text-critical work of John Henten, Francis Lucas ‘Brugensis’, Andreas Masius, and Nicholas Tacitus Zegers crossed confessional borders. The London Polyglot of 1657, edited by Brian Walton,\(^{27}\) included in its appendix Masius’ annotations to the book of Joshua, the collations of the Latin Vulgate (both Old and New Testaments) with the text given by Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Latin and Syriac writers that had been produced by Henten, Lucas, and ‘aliis Theologis Lovaniensibus’, and Lucas’ work on the Greek and Latin variants of the Gospels. As a kind of supplement to this Polyglot, the *Critici sacri* were published in London by Cornelius Bee in 1660.\(^{28}\) The volumes were reissued in 1695 in Frankfurt. A new edition published in 1698 in Amsterdam included substantial additions to the original edition; these additions were also published in two separate supplementary volumes to the Frankfurt edition.\(^{29}\) In the *Critici sacri* we find Masius’ commentary and annotations to Joshua in addition to his annotations to Deuteronomy, Jeremiah and the Gospels, Zegers’ annotations to diverse New Testament books, and Lucas’ *Notationes* from 1580. Again, we must bear in mind that text-critical work was only one element of these scholars’ enterprise, which also embraced commentaries on the content of Scripture. To date these interpretative enterprises have received only scant attention and their theological slant awaits further investigation.

\(^{26}\) Cf. infra n. 31.  
\(^{28}\) *Critici sacri: sive annotata doctissimorum virorum in SS. Biblia Annotationes et Tractatus...* Cornelius Bee et al. (eds), Jacobus Flesher, London, 9 vols., 1660.  
\(^{29}\) *Critici sacri: sive Annotata doctissimorum virorum in Vetus ac Novum Testamentum... Edito nova...* Henricus & vidua Thedori Boom, Joannes & Aegidius Janssonii à Waesberge, Gerhardus Borstius, Abrahamus à Someren, Joannes Wolters, Amsterdam, 8 in 9 vols., 1698. To complete this major work, a *Thesaurus Theologico-Philologicus* was published in Amsterdam in 1701 in two volumes and a *Thesaurus novus Theologico-Philologicus* in 1732, also in two volumes, two valuable collections of text-critical and philological dissertations composed by the most important biblical scholars of that day.
Bible Commentaries and the Appeal to Augustine in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century

John Hessels, an Early Representative of an Overt Augustinian Bible Exegesis

It has been stressed that the institution of a royal chair of Sacred Scriptures at the Faculty of Theology in Louvain, in the wake of decisions at Trent, resulted in the production of biblical studies of a high quality. As the Scriptures were now taught every day for one hour by a qualified professor, in 1554 the faculty was able to eliminate the public lessons by the *bacca laurei biblici* for the *prae-baccalaurei*.30

Commenting on the Scriptures was the task of the successive occupants of the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures. The first scholar to occupy this position was John Leonard van der Eycken or Hasselius (†1552) who as a skilful student of the *Collegium trilingue* in Louvain was said to have an excellent mastery of the sacred languages. It was work by Hasselius that, edited and supplemented, was published posthumously under Adam Sasbout’s name.31 While Hasselius served as part of a delegation to the Council of Trent in 1551, his chair was entrusted to the young doctor in theology Michael Baius (1513–89), who had been president of the Pope’s College – one of the most important colleges for students of theology – since the previous year.32 After Van der Eycken died in Trent in 1552, his young substitute remained in his post for nearly four decades. Baius is renowned for underpinning his theological views regarding the radical depravity of human nature and the necessity of God’s grace with ample references to the Bible and Augustine’s anti-Pelagian writings – a methodology he regarded as the primary channel of communication between the opposing confessional camps in Europe. Moreover, Baius’ theological formulations bore the evident mark of Augustine’s mode of expression, which generated a tone that differed from the customary scholastic-theological language of his day. Accusations that Baius had deviated from confirmed

32 The Pope’s College was one of the major university colleges, exclusively destined for students in theology belonging to the secular clergy. It had been established by will of Adrian of Utrecht, pope since 1521 as Adrian VI, who had died in 1523. (Documents relatifs à l’université de Louvain (1425–1797), vol. 3: Collèges et pédagogies I, Edmond-Henri-Joseph Reusens (ed), Chez l’auteur, Leuven, 1881–85, pp. 197–228).
orthodoxy ultimately, in 1567, provoked Pope Pius V’s condemnation of several propositions taken from Baius’ writings (a condemnation repeated in 1580 by Gregory XIII), a judgement to which Baius and his like-minded colleagues submitted. Although Baius’ zeal for biblical education is attested, he left no printed Bible commentaries for posterity. Interesting Bible commentaries were, however, produced by Baius’ equally Augustinian-minded friend and colleague John Hessels (1522–66), who was successively lecturer of theology and Scripture at the Premonstratensian abbey of Park, ordinary professor at the Faculty of Theology, and from 1562 holder of the royal chair of scholastic theology. A few months before taking up this final position, Hessels had also become the first president of the ‘minor’ College of the Holy Spirit. It is ironic that Baius, royal professor of Sacred Scriptures for nearly four decades, left behind no printed

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37. The College of the Holy Spirit had been established in 1442 and was intended for students of theology who belonged to the secular clergy. In 1561 a new wing was added to the college buildings in order to offer housing to the ever-increasing number of students. This ‘minor’ College of the Holy Spirit had its own president and administration, distinct
Bible commentaries, whereas Hessels, his colleague in scholastic theology, did. It must, however, be noted that Hessels’ Bible commentaries were obviously the printed reflection of courses he had taught as ordinary professor and were only edited, by his younger colleague Henry Gravius, and printed, by John (i) Bogard (Joannes Bogardus) in Louvain, posthumously. 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 John were published in 1568; a commentary on the Gospel of Matthew followed four years later. The works contained manifold references to Augustine, underpinning an outspoken Augustinian theology of grace. This character has been demonstrated by analysis of Hessels’ commentary on the parable of the Workers of the Eleventh Hour (Matt 20:1–16), and of his way of dealing with the threefold temptation and the nature of concupiscence in 1 John 2:15–18a. Although never reprinted, Hessels’ commentaries continued to influence the biblical teaching of subsequent generations of Augustinian-minded theologians.

from the original or ‘major’ College of the Holy Spirit (Documents relatifs à l’université de Louvain (1425–1797), vol. 3, Reusens (ed), pp. 9–101).

38 See Jean-Pierre Delville, L’Europe de l’exégèse au XVIe siècle: Interprétations de la parabole des ouvriers à la vigne (Matthieu 20,1–16), University Press – Peeters, Leuven, 2004, pp. 468–474: In Hessels’ commentary on Matt 20:1–16, Augustine’s doctrine of grace is a dominant presence. Hessels for example comments on Matt 20:16b ‘Multi sunt enim vocati, pauci vero electi’, as ‘they are only few who, from the mass of perdition or the human race are separated by God’s grace, and predestined [praeordinati] to the eternal life, and elected [electi]’. Hessels’ insistence on the idea of election of the few is confirmed by including cross-references to Luke 13:23 and Rom 8:28, and to Augustine’s De praedestinatione. The Church father’s text even inspires Hessels to make a dig at the clerics, amongst whom just as few would be elected as amongst other Christians. Notwithstanding his emphasis on God’s predestinating decrees, Hessels also assumes that ‘from the saints, every individual will be accepted according to its capacity’, apparently not failing to involve man’s abilities in the process of justification. Comp. Joannes Hessels, In sanctum Iesu Christi Evangelium sec. Matthaeum commentarius, Joannes (i) Bogardus, Leuven, 1572, ff. 147–148.

39 See Wim François, ‘Augustinian Bible Exegesis in Louvain. The Case of John Hessels’ Commentary on 1 John 2,15–18a’, Augustiniana, vol. 57, 2007, pp. 399–424: 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 Hessels’ commentary on 1 John 2:16 it is even possible to recognize the two stages we also find in Augustine’s exegesis of the verse. In his discussion of the threefold temptation of 1 John 2:16, Augustine’s Second Homily on the First Letter of John and book ten of his Confessiones clearly plays an important role. When Hessels writes in more fundamental terms on concupiscencia, however, he makes abundant use of Augustine’s anti-Pelagian work Contra Iulianum, and the Church father’s vision of the sin of Adam and original sin is clearly evident. Hessels’ commentary on the passage, and in particular its second part, is formed in places by the stringing together 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 confirms that he was well acquainted with the Church father’s work and realm of thought. The Louvain master has also demonstrably consulted the Venerable Bede’s Commentary to the First Epistle of John, which is, in
Cornelius Jansenius of Ghent, a Catholic Biblical Humanist with Pastoral Concerns

Although he never held the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures, Cornelius Jansenius of Ghent (1510–76), a colleague of Baius and Hessels, proved to be Louvain’s major biblical scholar of the sixteenth century. Jansenius had studied arts and theology at the University of Louvain, where he lived in the Holy Spirit College. At the Collegium trilingue he had also devoted himself to the study of Greek and Hebrew. He was successively lecturer at the Premonstratensian abbey of Tongerlo (1540–47) and a parish priest in Courtrai/Kortrijk (1547–61). Having been awarded the degree of doctor of theology in 1562, he was appointed ordinary professor of theology at Louvain University and granted a prebendaryship at the chapter of the second foundation in the collegiate church of St. Peter in Louvain. In January 1563 he also became president of the ‘major’ College of the Holy Spirit, to be sent somewhat more than a month later to the Council of Trent, in the company of his colleagues Baius and Hessels (Summer 1563 – Spring 1564). On his return to the Low Countries, he was appointed the first bishop of Ghent. However, due to the revolt in the Low Countries he did not take possession of his episcopal see until September 1568; in the intervening period he was able to further the redaction of his foremost Bible commentaries.

passages, a summary of Augustine’s Second Homily on the First Epistle of John. Both Augustine’s and Bede’s approaches had been included in Thomas’ Summa Theologiae. Most striking, however, is that Hessels’ explanation of the threefold temptation is faithful to Augustine. Comp. Joannes Hessels, In primam B. Ioannis apostoli et evangelistae canonicae epistolam absolutissimus Commentarius, Joannes (i) Bogardus, Leuven, 1568, ff. 36–42.


41 Cornelius Jansenius is given the suffix ‘of Ghent’ because he would become bishop of Ghent after his professorship at Louvain. He should not be confused with Cornelius Jansenius ‘of Ypres’.

CONCORDIA
EVANGELICA,
IN QVA PRAETER QVAM
QVOD SVO LOCO PO-
NYNTVR QVAE EVANGELISTAE
non servato recente ordine, etiam nullius
verbum aliquod omittitur, literis autem om-
nia sic distinguishuntur, vt quid cuiusq; pro-
prium, quid cum aliis & cum quibus com-
mune, etiam ad singulas dictiones max de-
prehedatur, per CORNELIUM
JANSENIVM Hul-
stensem,
CVM TRIBUS INDICIBVS,
& eiusdem Concordiae Ratione.

LOVANII, typis Bartholomei Grauii
AN. 1549.
Vemundanturq; ibidem, & Antuo-
pia in pingui Gallina.

Figure 2. Cornelius Jansenius 'of Ghent', Concordia evangelica [...], Bartholomew van Grave, Louvain, 1549 (KU Leuven, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, Maurits Sabbe Library, P225.032 JANS Conc)
As early as 1549, when still a parish priest in Courtrai/Kortrijk, Jansenius published a so-called *Concordia evangelica* in collaboration with the printer-publisher Bartholomew van Grave in Louvain. This work consisted of a harmony text based on the four Gospels and even some parts of the Acts of the Apostles. Jansenius explicitly partook in the tradition of gospel harmonies initiated by Augustine’s *De consensu evangelistarum*. Jean Gerson’s *Monotessaron*, which since the end of the Middle Ages had been the most important representative of the genre, had been succeeded by Andreas Osiander’s *Harmonia evangelica* in 1537. Basing himself on the Augustinian intuition that notwithstanding their differences the Gospels did testify to a fundamental consensus, and aiming at aligning Osiander’s harmony with the Catholic Tradition, Jansenius saw it as his main task to draft an *ordo evangelicae historiae*, that is, to reconstruct as exactly as possible the sequence of events in and around Jesus’ life. A set of *sigla* was used to indicate which Gospel lay at the basis of his unified text and from which Gospel the variant readings in the margin were borrowed, an approach that testified to a degree of scholarly circumspection.43

Jansenius has also handed down commentaries on various Old Testament Wisdom Books, including commentaries on the book of Proverbs (edited in Louvain by John (i) Bogard in 1568), paraphrases of the Psalms and the Old Testament *cantica* that were sung during the divine office (Louvain, Peter de Zangre or Petrus Zangrius ‘Tiletanus’, 1569), and a commentary on *Ecclesiasticus* or Wisdom of Jesus Sirach (Louvain, Petrus Zangrius, 1569). His annotations on the Wisdom of Solomon appeared posthumously (Douai, John (i) Bogard, 1577).

In 1571–72 Jansenius’ most famous publication left the presses of the Louvain printer-publisher Petrus Zangrius: his commentaries on his earlier gospel harmony. These *Commentaria in suam Concordiam ac totam historiam evangelicam* made up a bulky work of more than 1100 folios printed in double columns. As an example, reference can be made to J.-P. Delville’s treatment of Matt 20:1–16 – the parable of the Workers of the Eleventh Hour44 – where it is demonstrated that Jansenius first took care

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to establish the correct reading of the Vulgate text on the basis of a study of the Greek (or, when the occasion required, the Hebrew) ‘original’ and the variants in the Latin manuscript tradition. In establishing the text and clarifying its direct sense through the insertion of all kinds of philological and historical annotations, Jansenius paid tribute to Erasmus, whose *Annotationes* on the New Testament he explicitly incorporated, although his editors cautiously eliminated Erasmus’ name and replaced it with ‘*quidam*’ in editions after 1586.45 This approach was, however, only a practical step, necessary in order for Jansenius to achieve his primary aim, to discern the so-called *scopus* of the parable, the intention of Christ and that of the inspired author. In Jansenius’ view, the *scopus* should be established by means of comparisons with possible synoptic parallel texts, from the direct context of the particular Gospel in which the text is found, and by confronting the interpretation of patristic writers such as John Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine, and even recent authors. Delville has demonstrated that with regard to the *scopus* of Matt 20:1–16 Jansenius found inspiration in Erasmus’ *Paraphrases*, in addition to the commentaries of Luther and other Protestant writers such as Martin Bucer and Philip Melanchthon, which he combined with the Catholic commentaries of, in particular, Alphonse Tostat and Thomas de Vio Cajetan. The *scopus* of Christ’s parable in Matt 20:1–16 was to teach how, on the last day, preference in the demonstration of God’s goodness would be given to those who came last in this life (pagans, as well as the humble and rejected), which could never be considered an injustice to those who came first (Jews and those who boast of their own works). Jansenius introduced in this instance the Augustinian idea (possibly indirectly via Luther) of trusting in God’s grace more than in man’s own works.46 It was only as a proof of the fertility of the text, and as subsidiary to its *scopus*, that Jansenius mentioned the spiritual senses of the Scriptures (allegorical, tropological and anagogical) that had so thoroughly occupied medieval Bible commentators.


In Jansenius’ Bible commentaries we seldom meet the animated debates with the Protestant adversary that we find in theological controversial literature of this period, including that of his Louvain colleagues. Incidentally, Delville observed in his study of exegesis in the sixteenth century that Protestant and Catholic Bible scholars not only read each other’s work but also freely borrowed ideas from each other.47

Jansenius’ *Concordia* and his commentary on the gospel harmony, along with his commentaries on various Old Testament Wisdom Books, in particular his paraphrases of the Psalms, were highly regarded and exercised a strong influence among Catholic exegesis scholars, pastors, and those training to be pastors. His works were reprinted in all the major printing centres of Europe – in Louvain, Douai, Antwerp, Paris, Lyons, Venice, and Mainz, for example – until late in the seventeenth century.48 It would seem that Jansenius associated himself with a tradition that had existed since the end of the Middle Ages, in which the Gospels and the Psalms were considered the primary sources for a biblical spirituality that was also accessible to the laity. Jansenius’ works were not destined for a lay readership but aimed to provide his clerical students and priests – necessary mediators between God’s Word and the faithful – with Bible commentaries that were both based upon a sound exegetical foundation and served a spiritual and pastoral-liturgical purpose. In this sense, Jansenius aligned himself with the Tridentine project of a genuine renewal of Catholic Church life. His *Concordia* and his commentary on the harmony of the Gospels were meant to provide an exegetical basis for the sermons priests were expected to give during Sunday mass. His paraphrases of the Psalms served a similar purpose, for the Psalms were the basis of the liturgy of the hours (in which many of the laity also participated), and a verse from the Psalms was also read or sung between the epistle and gospel readings during mass.

The combined exegetical and pastoral-liturgical motivations behind Jansenius’ work are also apparent in a range of homilies on the gospel readings of the Sunday mass that were selected by the German canon George Braun and published by Ioannes Gymnicus at Cologne in 1577, a year after Jansenius had died in his cathedral city of Ghent. The homilies had been developed from the *Commentaria* on the gospel harmony. Written in Latin, they were primarily intended for a readership composed

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of priests and preachers, who would be able to use them as a source of inspiration while preparing their homilies. As a bishop, Jansenius had made a point of preaching during Sunday mass in his cathedral or another church.

**Thomas Stapleton, Augustinian Bible Commentator or Crypto-Molinist?**

Another Bible commentator from Louvain to exert a strong influence, even until late in the seventeenth century, was Thomas Stapleton (1535–98). An English Elizabethan exile in Louvain since 1559, Stapleton studied theology at the university there and spent a period in Paris to perfect his knowledge of the sacred tongues. During the period from 1563 to 1569 Stapleton was active as a freelance controversialist who, predominately in English, attacked the Protestants and their doctrines.

In 1569 he moved to Douai, place of exile par excellence for English Catholics. In Douai, he promptly matriculated at the university, which had been founded only seven years earlier, and began to lecture on theology. Stapleton obtained a doctorate in 1571 and was subsequently appointed professor of Sacred Scriptures. For his controversial theological literature he began writing in Latin. He entered the noviciate of the Jesuits in 1585, but at the age of fifty his health was unable to sustain the harsh discipline and he left the order a year later to resume his former offices. Stapleton, however, maintained a warm relationship with the Jesuits, and after Leonard Lessius’ *Theses theologicae* had, at the instigation of Michael Baius, been censured by the theological faculties of Louvain (1587) and Douai (1588) because of its alleged semi-Pelagian doctrines, Stapleton sided with Lessius against the Louvain theologians and his Douai colleagues. Because of his standpoint, he was subsequently excluded from all the activities of the faculty and had to resign his teaching. The animosity towards Stapleton’s doctrinal position subsided for a while but regained momentum in the summer of 1590, when the Louvain theologians expressed concern about two sermons Stapleton may have given, entitled

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Contra praedestinationem ex solo Dei placito and Contra gratiam efficacem. The Douai Faculty of Theology had forbidden the publication of the contested sermons, but Stapleton was said to have tried to publish them in Antwerp. The nuncio in the Spanish Netherlands, Ottavio Mirto Frangipani, shared the theologians’ concerns and charged the bishop of Antwerp, Laevinius Torrentius, with attempting to prevent the publication of the sermons in his bishop’s town. The latter, however, found no single trace of the contested sermons.

Whether by coincidence or not, also in the summer of 1590, King Philip II signed the letter appointing the 55-year-old Stapleton to be royal professor of Sacred Scriptures in Louvain. Ironically, the Jesuits’ friend succeeded Michael Baius, one of his main theological opponents during the Louvain controversy of the preceding years. Attached to his professorship Stapleton also received a canonry in the chapter of the first foundation in St. Peter’s church in Louvain. Soon afterwards he was also made dean of Hilvarenbeek, in the diocese of ’s-Hertogenbosch, in the present-day Netherlands.

At the end of his stay in Douai and during his tenure as professor of Sacred Scriptures in Louvain, Stapleton published a series of Promptuaria. These books of sermons covered the gospel texts to be read at mass throughout the liturgical year and commented on this material from both a moral and a dogmatic standpoint. In 1589 Stapleton edited, in collaboration with the publisher Michael Sonnius in Paris, a so-called Promptuarium catholicum on the gospel texts that were to be read during mass on Sundays and holy days. Each Promptuarius begins by quoting the text in full and is followed by a short commentary of two or three pages at most. Stapleton hoped this book of commentaries would provide a useful manual for clerics who had to preach not only for the edification of their own people but also against the so-called heretics who claimed that Catholic doctrines could easily be refuted by reference to the Gospels themselves. In 1591, while Stapleton was teaching in Louvain, his Promptuarius morale super evangelia dominicalia was published by the widow of Christopher Plantin and John (I) Moretus in Antwerp. It had been divided into two separate volumes, which had both been published in 1591, first a pars aestivalis

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(literally: summer part), which comments on the gospel readings for the 24 Sundays after Pentecost and, later the same year, a *pars hyemalis* (literally: winter part), which covers the 28 remaining Sundays of the liturgical year. Stapleton’s *Promptuarium morale* was not openly controversial. The text of the Sunday gospel reading was followed, in a smaller letter-type, by a *Pericope moralis huius Evangelii* and then by ‘Stapleton’s immensely learned, verse by verse commentary, which might run to as many as ten pages and never less than five’. During subsequent years Stapleton continued in the polemical strain of the *Promptuaria catholica*. The *Promptuarium catholicum* on the gospel texts for the saints’ days was edited in 1592 and published together in one volume with the *Promptuaria* of the gospel texts for Sunday mass; that year an edition left the presses of Gottfried von Kempen in Cologne and another those of Peter (i) Beelaert or Petrus (i) Bellerus in Antwerp. In 1594 Stapleton completed the last of this series, the *Promptuarium catholicum* on the gospel texts of the mass on each weekday of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Maundy Thursday; it was published by the printing offices of the Birckmann family in Cologne. Stapleton’s *Promptuaria* were reprinted several times in important printing centres throughout Europe (in Antwerp, Paris, Lyons, Venice, and in Cologne and Mainz, German Catholic centres marked by a strong Jesuit presence, amongst others) up until the eighteenth century, providing great assistance to many parish priests in the preparation of their sermons.

Although Stapleton would always remain a genuine controversialist, having been entrusted with the courses on Scripture at Louvain, he had also to direct his mind to more scholarly objectives. Like many Catholic Bible commentators of the time, he gave priority to the literal sense of the text, but he also sought to put forward its correct interpretation, considered in light of the ongoing controversies of his age. He attempted to

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52 O’Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, p. 70.
53 In 1610 the third Synod of Antwerp decreed that pastors should possess in their personal libraries Stapleton’s *Promptuarium moralia* and *promptuaria catholica*. Cf. *Decreta synodi dioecesanae Antverpiensis, Mense Maio anni M. DC. X. celebratae ...* Ioannes Miraeus (ed), Ioannes (i) Moretus, Antwerp, 1610, p. 46. Comp. Robert Lechat, *Les réfugiés anglais dans les Pays-Bas espagnols durant le règne d'Élisabeth 1558–1603*, Bureaux du Recueil, Leuven, 1914, pp. 200–201. M. R. O’Connell incorrectly noted that both *Promptuarium moralia* and *catholica* were translated into Flemish (O’Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, p. 71); the error may be due to an erroneous interpretation of the passage in Lechat’s book or even based on a confusion with the High German translation of Stapleton’s *Promptuarium* on the gospel texts for Sundays and holy days, entitled *Kirchen- und Hausspostil, Oder Catholisches Zeughauss*, made by Aegidius Sturz and published in 1595 by Wolfgang Eder in Ingolstadt.
repudiate the scriptural interpretations of Calvin and his so-called ‘lackey’, Theodore Beza. Stapleton conceived of the lectures he gave at Louvain as ‘antidotes’ to the ‘poison of Calvin and Beza’. When they were published in 1595 by the printer John (i) van Keerberghen (Joannes Keerbergius), these lectures formed two distinct parts, the first of which, Antidota evangelica, included a study of each of the four Gospels. The second part, the Antidota apostolica, was itself divided into two volumes, which contained commentaries on Acts and commentaries on Romans respectively. In 1598, a third volume containing commentaries on First and Second Corinthians was added to the Antidota apostolica. In his Antidota, Stapleton passed over without further commentary any passage he judged to have been left untouched by the Protestants. When dealing with Bible verses that did play a part in the controversy between Catholics and Calvinists, however, Stapleton quoted directly from Calvin and/or Beza in order to advance his personal assessment of their arguments, reinforced by Augustine (and sporadically by other Church fathers). Judging by the modest number of reprints, Stapleton’s Antidota seem to have been far less popular than his Promptuaria.

It is worth mentioning that Stapleton also entered into a debate with the Cambridge theologian William Whitaker, whom he depicted as the ‘anglocalvinista’. Whitaker was anxious to demonstrate that the authority of Scripture was independent of the Church’s judgement. Stapleton, by contrast, emphasized the Church’s authority with regard to both the recognition of the canon and the explanation of the sacred books. Stapleton took up this issue in some parts of his Principiorum fidei doctrinalium demonstratio methodica (1578) in particular, launching the controversy with Whitaker, and it is also evident in his Principiorum fidei doctrinalium relectio scholastica & compendiaria (1596), which was a rejoinder to one of Whitaker’s responses to his views.

Analysis of key texts taken from Stapleton’s Antidotes on Paul’s Epistle to the Romans provides us with a good insight into his method and

54 Comp. O’Connell, Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation, pp. 72 and 73–74.
55 Thomas Stapleton, Antidota apostolica contra nostri temporis haereses ... In Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos: Tomus II, Joannes (i) Keerbergius, Antwerp, 1595. See among others p. 623: ‘toxico Calviniano suam Antidotum tribuemus’.
56 Comp. O’Connell, Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation, p. 73.
theological position with regard to Adam's fall and its consequences for posterity. The Louvain controversialist theologian accused the Protestants of having wrongly interpreted the apostle's words. (In the process he did away with all the nuances of Calvin's and Beza's thought). Stapleton sought to substantiate his interpretation of Paul's epistle by means of literal quotations, free allusions and formal references to Augustine, in particular to his anti-Pelagian writings, the Church father being also a preferred Protestant point of reference. Hence, in the course of his argumentation, he labels Augustine a 'sanior interpres Apostoli', more sane or judicious than Calvin or Beza. On one hand, Stapleton's abundant appeals to Augustine undoubtedly ingratiated him with the Augustinian-minded faction of the faculty. On the other hand, it is obvious that he shared neither the methodology ('Scripture and Church fathers only') nor the pessimistic view on post-lapsarian humankind, nor the theological ideas on justification, grace and free will of Baius and the radical Augustinian faction in Louvain. Probably Stapleton wanted to remain true to the later scholastic tradition represented by Thomas Aquinas, who was accused by the Reformers of having distorted the faith. To a large degree, Stapleton's theology was a return to the eclectic Augustino-thomistic spirit as represented by Ruard Tapper, who had also actively supported the Jesuits, when they established themselves in Louvain in 1542. Stapleton's affinity to the Jesuits was even more pronounced: his emphasis on the cooperation of man's free will in opting for the good, be it under God's grace, was undoubtedly marked by a Molinistic theology and eventually led him to the


59 Stapleton, Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos, p. 399.


affirmation of God’s ‘middle knowledge’, which was devised to save both
God’s omnipotence and human liberty. Stapleton’s abundant appeals to
Augustine while at the same time interpreting the Church father from
within a Thomistic interpretational framework and his affinity with the
Jesuits and their Molinistic theology are probably the keys to understand-
ing why Philip II chose him as a successor to Michael Baius. The king may
have been seeking to restore peace in the faculty after the turbulent years
dominated by Baius (and Hessels) by returning to the ‘old’ school of
Augustino-thomism represented by Ruard Tapper.

Although Stapleton may initially have supported the Jesuit project
of establishing a separate Louvain circuit of philosophical courses and
examens in parallel to the traditional pedagogies of the arts faculty, his
loyalties increasingly shifted to the theological faculty. In 1596 he was sent
as part of a delegation to the nuncio Frangipani, together with his theolo-
gian-colleagues Jacobus Jansonius and Joannes Clarius, in order to voice
the theological faculty’s opposition to the Jesuits’ aspirations. In January 1597, after only seven years as professor, Stapleton accepted
the offer of a proto-notaryship in Rome and prepared to commence his
new life at the Papal Court, where he was generally expected to receive the
cardinalate in succession to William Allen. However, Stapleton’s leave
from Louvain, as well as the requested travel allowance, was delayed, and
his health deteriorated. Stapleton never moved to Rome; he died on
12 October 1598 in Louvain.

In retrospect we can conclude that Jansenius and Stapleton were the
most significant Louvain Bible commentators of the sixteenth century,

63 In his Antidota to Rom 11:29 (comp. 9:31–13) Stapleton explicitly refers to Luis de
Molina’s Concordia Liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis in order to defend the idea of scientia
media (Stapleton, Antidota apostolica in Epistolam B. Pauli ad Romanos, pp. 756–758;
Michael Seybold, Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Thomas Stapleton, Bonifacius, Paderborn,
1967, pp. 296–297). It means that God has a knowledge of futuribilia, of all possible future
contingent – hypothetical – events or circumstances, and of the choice man would (condi-
tional) freely make under such or another circumstances, if man was offered God’s grace.
By middle knowledge God sees what each man would do with its innate freedom were it to
be placed in this or in that or, indeed, in infinitely many orders of things. It is upon this
foreknowledge that God founds his predestinating decrees and decides to create this or
that order of things and causes, with these or those circumstances... It is of course also God
who creates the grace necessary to effect the cooperative action of the individual (Comp.
Henry W Sullivan, Tirso de Molina and the Drama of the Counter Reformation, 2nd ed.,
to Stapleton to make their point (Comp. Seybold, Glaube und Rechtfertigung bei Thomas
Stapleton, p. 366).

64 Bruno Boute, Academic Interests and Catholic Confessionalisation: The Louvain
producing works that proved to be influential among Catholic exegetes and pastors for decades and even centuries after their first publication.\textsuperscript{65} Both scholars made an extensive appeal to Augustine, as was customary in the Louvain theological milieu, even if it be that Jansensius' reception of Augustine was kept in check by his biblical humanism or Stapleton's by an outspoken Thomistic, in this instance specifically Molinistic, interpretational framework. Both Stapleton's \textit{Promptuaria} and his \textit{Antidota} were intended to repudiate the biblical interpretations of Calvin, Beza and other reformers. Hence, Stapleton's approach differed from that of Jansensius, who was far less controversial and even built upon the insights of humanist and Protestant biblical scholarship. Whereas Jansensius and Stapleton belonged to the mainstream group within the faculty, John Hessels may be considered an early representative of (radical) Augustinian Bible exegesis, in line with his like-minded friend Baius. His Bible commentaries, however, although they were never reprinted, continued to have resonance among later generations of Augustinian-minded Bible commentators.

Interest in Augustine's theology and Bible commentary also went hand in hand with the publication of several of his works in the Louvain academic milieu. To mention only \textit{De doctrina Christiana}, Augustine's programmatic work on Bible hermeneutics and a matter of contention between Catholics and Protestants: it was printed in Louvain in 1561 and 1562 (by the printer Stephanus Valerius for John (i) Bogard) and in 1574 (Hieronymus Welle or Wellaeus). The theologians' ultimate ambition, however, was to publish an improved edition of the Church father's \textit{opera omnia}. The new edition was prepared by a group of sixty-four advanced students of the Louvain Faculty of Theology, under the supervision of ten editors and one final editor, John Molanus. It was published in the years 1576–77 by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp.\textsuperscript{66} In his dedicatory letter to cardinals Cristophoro and Ludovico Madruzzo, successive prince-bishops of Trent and hosts of the Council, Plantin stressed that the contemporary religious controversies could only be ended by 'the weight and authority


of the Holy Scripture’ and ‘its faithful interpretation by the holy fathers of the Church.’ Having successfully promoted the former (by the publication of the Polyglot Bible), Plantin’s aim was now to concentrate on the Fathers, with Augustine taking pride of place.67 Since the edition avoided controversialist items and even silently built upon parts of Erasmus’ censurae and marginal notes,68 it met the objectives of humanist Catholic scholarship to which most of the above-mentioned Bible exegetes and commentators also gave testimony. For these reasons the Louvain edition of Augustine’s works was used across the confessional spectrum throughout the seventeenth century.

**Augustinian Theology and Bible Exegesis**

**Guilielmus Estius and Augustinian Bible Exegesis in Louvain and Douai**

William Hessels van Est (1542–1613), or Guilielmus Estius,69 from a Catholic family in Gorinchem or Gorcum (Holland), had obtained the degree of master of arts at the Louvain Pedagogy of the Falcon in 1561,70 whereafter he started studying theology at the Pope’s College in Louvain. Michael Baius, the president of the Pope’s College, was among his most important teachers, together with John Hessels (both Baius and Hessels were
representatives of the outspoken Augustinian faction of the faculty), Josse Ravesteyn, or ‘Tiletanus’, (continuing the old Augustino-thomistic line of Ruard Tapper), in addition to Cornelius Jansenius of Ghent. As a student of theology, Estius had also contributed to the edition of Augustine’s works, in particular to the ninth volume.\footnote{This volume contains, amongst other works, In Evangelium Joannis expositio, In Epistolam Joannis expositio, De decem chordis, De pastoribus, De ovibus, De symbola fidei ad Catechumenos lib III, Tractatus de diversis XIII, Meditationum liber.} At the establishment of the Louvain King’s College by Philip II in 1579, founded in order to provide the country with a new generation of good priests, Estius was appointed as a professor of theology. On 18 April 1579 he received a prebend in St. Peter’s church in Louvain. On 22 November 1580, he was promoted to doctor of theology.

In 1582 Estius moved to the University of Douai,\footnote{It is not by coincidence that Francis Lucas left Louvain for Saint-Omer in 1581, whilst Guilielmus Estius moved to Douai in 1582. They joined the stream of professors, students and citizens fleeting the university town, particularly in the years 1578–85, impelled by the turmoil of war, the exactions of a Spanish garrison billeted within the city walls, and the plague epidemic that accompanied the situation of war. See Diederik Lanoye and Peter Vandermeersch, ‘The University of Louvain at the End of the Sixteenth Century: Coping with Crisis?’, History of Universities, vol. 20, 2005, pp. 81–107, esp. 87–91.} where Philip II had appointed him president of the Royal Seminary as well as professor at the theological faculty. In the latter capacity, he first occupied the chair of controversial theology, was subsequently charged to comment on the Sentences of Peter Lombard – he even worked through two cycles of a complete commentary – and eventually proceeded to the chair of Sacred Scriptures. Estius would occupy this chair until the end of his life, devoting most of his time and energy to the study of the Epistles of the Apostles, an activity that would gain him renown as a Bible commentator. His esteem for the Scriptures also emerges from the fact that as a president of the Royal Seminary he daily discussed the short passage from the Bible that had been read during the meal in the seminary refectory.

Estius revealed himself to be an markedly Augustinian-minded theologian. When the Louvain Faculty of Theology censored 31 propositions taken from Lessius’ Theses theologicae as semi-Pelagian in 1587, the Archbishop of Cambrai consulted the sister-faculty of Douai with the purpose of having them likewise pronounce their judgement. On 20 February 1588 the Douai faculty issued an even more developed and outspoken censure than Louvain, of which Estius was the principal author. It was on this occasion that Stapleton, who disagreed with his colleagues on the Lessius’ censure, was excluded from the activities of his faculty. A breve issued by
Pope Sixtus V on 15 April 1588, charging the Louvain theologians not to continue their quarrel with the Jesuits, was not published in Douai, where the Lessius controversy was soon followed by another, which concerned the teachings of the Jesuit Jean Decker and their alleged Molinistic slant.\footnote{Fleischmann, \textit{Die Gnadenlehre des Wilhelm Estius}, pp. 28–36. Comp. van Eijl, ‘La controverse Louvaniste’, pp. 217–271.} In 1595 Estius became provost of the chapter of St. Peter in Douai and as such chancellor of the university.

Estius died in 1613 in Douai at the age of 72. His most important works were edited posthumously. He is said to have himself commenced the edition of his commentary on the Epistles of Paul, with the help of his disciple and friend Bartholomew Peeters, to whom on his deathbed he entrusted responsibility for the work's completion. Estius had also intended to introduce the commentary with about twenty prolegomena but was unable to finish them.\footnote{Leuridan, \textit{Guillaume Estius}, p. 18, with a reference to Bartholomaeus Petrus, \textit{Candido lectori} in Guilielmus Estius, \textit{In Omnes Divi Pauli Apostoli Epistolae Commentariorum Tomus Posterior... accesserunt... in quinque epistolae catholicas commentaria}, Balthazar Bellerus, Douai, 1616, f. a3r.} Estius' commentary on the Epistles of Paul (to the Romans, Corinthians and Galatians) eventually appeared in 1614\footnote{Guilielmus Estius, \textit{In Omnes Divi Pauli Apostoli Epistolae Commentariorum Tomus Prior}, Balthazar Bellerus, Douai, 1614.} and a second part, including a commentary on the remaining Epistles of Paul, supplemented by one on the Catholic or Apostolic Letters, in 1616.\footnote{Comp. Salembier, ‘Estius’, col. 874.} Both volumes were published by Balthazar Bellère, or Bellerus, in Douai, under the supervision of Bartholomew Peeters, who even completed the commentary from 1 John 5:6 onwards, which had been left unfinished by the master himself, and thus included a commentary on 2 and 3 John from his own pen. The edition in question was reissued several times in Paris in the course of the seventeenth century. In 1631, the scholar Jacob Merlo Horstius had a revised edition published by Peter Henning in Cologne, which was corrected and supplemented on the basis of handwritten notes by Estius himself. Additionally, Merlo substituted the text of the \textit{Castigatio Lovaniensis}, used by Estius, with the more recent Sixto-Clementine version of the Vulgate.

The commentaries bear testimony to Estius' principal interest in establishing the most trustworthy reading of the (Latin) text by means of a thorough comparison with the Greek text and the reading of the Church fathers (both Greek and Latin), and, if necessary, the version included in diverse Latin manuscripts while at the same time integrating the achievements of
Figure 3. Guilielmus Estius, *Absolutissima in omnes beati Pauli et septem catholicas apostolorum epistolae commentaria*, ed. Jacob Merlo Horstius, Peter Henning, Cologne, 1631 (KU Leuven, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, Maurits Sabbe Library, 279.334.2 ESTI 1631)
humanist (in this instance, erasmian) text-critical scholarship. Estius’ aim was to establish the literal sense of the Scriptures, the sense intended by the inspired writers, which was considered an appropriate basis for the construction of a coherent theology. Estius also estimated highly the value of the living Tradition of the Church, as a means to establish a genuine Scripture-based theology. In this regard, Estius evidently also invoked the Church fathers, with Augustine taking pride of place, but not to the exclusion, however, of scholastic theologians such as Thomas Aquinas – which meant his methodology differed thoroughly from that of Baius – and the important Bible commentators of the late Middle Ages and early modern era. Estius’ extremely erudite Commentaries on the Epistles of the Apostles, in the version edited by Merlo Horstius, would bring him lasting fame as an exegete and theologian. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries they went through several reprints in diverse printing towns in Europe, but noticeably in the French-speaking Jansenist centres of Douai, Paris and Rouen. They were reissued in Louvain by J.-P.-G. Michel in 1778 and form the basis of the nineteenth-century Mainz editions by Franz Sausen (1841–45) and Johannes Holzammer (1858–59). A last edition of Estius’ commentary on the Epistles was published in Paris as late as 1892.

In addition to his commentaries on the Epistles of the Apostles, Estius’ wrote his Annotations to the Principal and More Difficult Passages of the Scripture (Annotationes in praecipua ac difficilia sacrae scripturae loca), which were published in 1621 by the widow and heirs of Peter Borremans in Douai through the efforts of Gaspard Nemius, a disciple of Estius and later archbishop of Cambrai. In the preface to the work, the circumstances in which it came into being are explained. In the Royal Seminary, where Estius was the president, it was customary for a chapter from Scripture to be read in the refectory. After the meal, Estius would choose a striking or at first sight obscure verse and would either ask a pupil to present his understanding of the text or himself formulate an objection to a certain explanation of the text as a starting point for a further clarification. Although it is beyond doubt that Estius prepared himself thoroughly for these discussions, his expositions, whose scope was mainly moral, were less elaborate and less well-considered than his regular courses on the Scriptures. Eight years after Estius’ death a summary of these conversations, which had been devoutly assembled by a pupil but not revised by Estius himself, was edited as a result of the efforts of the aforementioned

Gaspard Nemius. After a second edition had been edited in Cologne in 1622, a considerably enlarged and less defective third edition was published through the efforts of Bartholomew Peeters in Douai in 1629, by the printer-publisher Gerard Patté. Several other reprints saw light in the course of the seventeenth century.

As became evident in the course of the later Jansenist controversy, some of Estius’ commentaries and annotations on sufficient and efficacious grace could be considered questionable. As a point of departure let us take Estius’ famous annotation to John 10:15: ‘This passage shows that Christ has not died for all men, but only for the elected, so that they be saved’. In several places Estius denies that all men have been bestowed with the ‘auxilium’ of God’s sufficient grace, which might imply that Christ’s redemptory death granted all men the ability to be saved (posse) but was only efficacious for those who were granted another grace that predetermined and premoved them to be both willing and performing (velle and agere) the good, but remained inefficacious for those guilty of resisting God’s grace. Denying grace that might be merely sufficient,
Estius proposes instead a firm belief that Christ’s redemptory death and the grace it entails to those who are bestowed with it can only be thought of as efficacious. This position leads Estius to assert explicitly in other comments and annotations God’s predestination of the elect, absolutely independent of any preview of meritorious cooperation on the part of the elect. Estius did, however, in a very Bañezian way accept the cooperation of free will, in the sense that it was in such a way premoved and stimulated

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82 Estius, *Com. in Rom* 5:18: ‘SIC ET PER UNIUS IUSTICIAM IN OMNES HOMINES IN IUSTIFICATIONEM VITAE ... alii, ut universalitatem servent eandem in utroque membro, posterius sic exponunt; per unius iusticiam omnes homines justificari quantum ad sufficientiam attinet. Sed & hoc praeter mentem apostoli: qui comparat delictum Adae cum iusticia Christi quantum ad effectus utriusque, non quantum ad causarum sufficientiam’; *Annot. in Io* 6:37: ‘Omne quod dat mihi pater ad me veniet. Et infrà: Nemo potest venire ad me, nisi pater qui misit me, traxerit eum. Et iterum: Propertexa dixi vobis, quia nemo potest venire ad me, nisi fuerit ei datum a Patre meo ... consequens est, non omnibus dari auxilium simpliciter ex parte Dei sufficiens ad hoc, ut veniat ad Christum; quia non nonnes ad Christum veniunt, neque omnes a patre trahuntur, & quicumque non veniunt non trahuntur efficaciter; imo quicumque non trahuntur efficaciter ... non possunt venire sensu composito. Non enim simul consistunt, non trahi à Patre, & venire ad Christum ...’

83 Estius, *Com. in Rom* 2:4; *Rom* 8:28ff: ‘IIS, QUI SECUNDUM PROPOSITUM VOCATI SUNT sancti ... Dei, inquam, propositum, id est voluntas praevia, praedestinatio, ac decretum aeternum, Syrè praeordinatio; ut secundum propositum vocati seu vocaticii dicantur, qui non ex ullis suis meritis, sed solo Dei consilio ac beneplacito, eligentis ab aeterno quos voluit, ad salutem vocantur. Quae periphrasis est praedestinatorum. De hac vocatione quae fit secundum propositum Dei, sic Augustinus ... QUOS AUTEM PRAEDESTINAVIT, HOS ET VOCAVIT ... Haec enim vocatio semper efficac est, & electorum propria. Intelligitur autem hoc loco vocatio vel ad fidem, vel generatim ad iusticiam & sanctitatem vitae, & omnino ad salutem’; *1 Cor* 4:7: ‘Rectè proinde S. Augustinus hanc Pauli sententiam usurpat & inculcat adversus Pelagianos, ut doceat omne bonum quo quis ab alio discernitur, atque alium praecellit, à Deo dari: ideoque nec gratiam dari secundum merita; neque ex meritis praevisis quenquam à Deo ad vitam praedestinari: sed tam praedestinationis effectus est, quam praedestinationis effectus est, prorsus ac meee gratuitam esse ... Iam ex his etiam illi redarguuntur, qui dicunt, aequali dato vel oblato gratiae auxilio persaepae contingere ut hic agat, ille non agat; aut ut alius alio plus minusve; ut discretio sit ex libero hominis arbitrio, non ex gratia Dei. Quod apostolicae doctrinae contrarium esse non dubitamus’; *Phil* 2:13: ‘DEUS EST ENIM QUI OPERATUR IN VOBIS VELLE ET PERFICERE PRO BONA VOLUNTATE ... Deum in hominibus efficaciter per gratiam suam operari hoc quod est velle bonum salutare, & hoc quod est id ipsum exsequi, Dico, efficaciter; tum quia omnis operatio Dei efficac est ... nec velle nec operari consistit in vestris viribus, sed Deus est qui per suam gratiam utrumque in vobis operatur. ... Deum, non propter ullam meritum nostrum, sed pro suo beneplacito & gratuita voluntate bona erga nos, operari in nobis velle & perficere: ne quis gratiam hanc operantis Dei sibi ex meritis suis provenire existimet ...’; *2 Tim* 4:10; *Annot. in Io* 17:3; 17:20; comp. *Is* 54:‘... Unde non recte sumunt ex hoc loco argumentum, qui docent Deum omnibus hominibus dare sufficientia salutis auxilia. Non enim gratia Dei suspenditur ex hominum acceptatione, ut non sit gratia & praedestinatio hominis mere gratuita ... Unde non sequitur, si illi singularia illa praeSidia data sunt a Deo ergo omnibus hominibus data esse: Imo potius contrarium sequitur, non omnibus data esse’. 
by God that it was only prepared to opt for the good.84 Inversely, Estius emphasizes that many men are not drawn by God in an efficacious way to Christ, rigorously stressing that God from all eternity has rejected a part of humanity and that he has done so independently of any preview of man’s demerits, even before taking into account the corrupt nature of post-lapsarian mankind.85 In order to underpin his views, Estius makes abundance reference to Augustine (in particular his anti-Pelagian works), but also to Prosper of Aquitaine, Fulgentius of Ruspe, Jerome and other patristic authorities, in addition to Thomas Aquinas (whom he reads in a Bañezian sense) and early modern writers such as Cajetan, Jansenius of Ghent, Titelmans and Hessel – Baius’ friend – amongst other ‘recentiores’.86 As we might expect, Estius’ successors in Douai did not hesitate to point to propositions in his work that required correction – they identified the influence of Estius’ teachers Michael Baius and John Hessels – while at the same time acknowledging their author’s piety, erudition and good faith, at a time when the Holy See had not yet pronounced an infallible judgement on these doctrines. Only three decades later a proposition that was similar to Estius’ position and characterized as semi-Pelagian the statement that Christ died and offered his blood to cover the sins of all humanity would (allegedly) be discovered in Jansenius’ Augustinus and resulted in that statement’s condemnation by the papal bull Cum occasione (1653).87

84 Estius, Com. in 1 Cor 15:10: ‘ET GRATIA EIUS IN ME, VACUA NON FUIT … Hic autem illius gratiae significat quendam in se effectum … NON EGO AUTEM, SED GRATIA DEI MECUM … auxilium non est, nisi agente etiam eo qui adiuuvatur. Igitur hic insinuatur cooperatio gratiae & liberi arbitrii: sic tamen ut gratia principalius operetur. Nam gratia voluntatem adiuuvans non ab ea vicissim adiuuvatur: & quidem sic adiuuat voluntatem, ut faciat eam operari, movens ad operandum’; comp. 1 Cor 14:32; 2 Tim 2:10.

85 Estius, Com. in Rom 9:13: ‘… sicut scriptum est: iacob dilexi, esau autem odio habui … Iam hinc colligendum relictur apostolus, argumento à figura ad rem in figura ac mysterio significatam, neque electionem hominum ad aeternam salutem, neque reprobationem esse ex ulla opera meritis; sed Deum ex solo suae voluntatis arbitrio, alios eligere ad salutem; alios autem reprobare; non quod Deus aliquos damnare velit immemento sed quia sicut totus effectus praedestinationis non cadit sub merito, ita nec totus effectus reprobationis. Quod enim Deus aliquos permittit cadere in peccatum, cuius merito postea damnationem incurrant (quae quidem permissio primus est reprobationis effectus) non potest esse ex eorum merito … prorsus apparebit ex eius sententia, tam reprobationem quam electionem absolutè non ex ulla esse praevisis meritis;’ comp. 1 Cor 15:20.

86 Estius also boasts of having John Leonard Hasselius’ commentary on the Epistles of Paul at his disposal in manuscript form. See Estius, Com. in Rom 145.

Apart from his scriptural commentaries, which were brought together in the three-volume *Opera omnia Estii in sacram scripturam*, edited in Venice in 1739, Estius also left to posterity his commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, which appeared in a first edition in Douai 1616. As noted above, Estius integrated, in addition to the Bible and Augustine, the later scholastic tradition of Thomas Aquinas and his main modern commentator, Domingo Báñez, who starting from the primacy of divine motion stressed the intrinsic efficacy of God’s grace and predestination irrespective of foreseen merits. It has been said that Estius synthesized Augustinianism (Baianism?) and Bañezian Thomism. Some of the propositions with regard to free will, predestination and efficacious grace made by Estius in his commentary on the Sentences were characterised by later generations of theologians as needing to be read with circumspection, given the doctrinal decisions in the wake of the (anti-) Jansenist controversy; Estius’ rejection of Mary’s immaculate conception falls into the same category. The edition of Estius’ commentary on the Sentences that was published in Naples in 1720 even contains corrections to these issues.

Mention should also be made of the book published by Bartholomew Peeters one year after Estius’ death that contained a collection of fourteen theological discourses the professor had given in Douai. One of these discourses, of 21 July 1609, deals with *De Magdalena evangelica*, whom Estius distinguished from the sinful woman (Luke 7:36–50) and Lazarus’ sister. His discussion shows how thinking had evolved in Catholic theological milieus, for almost a century earlier, in 1519, the Paris theologians had issued a condemnation of this proposition that was then defended by, amongst others, Jacques Lefèvre d’Étapes. Another

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88 Fleischmann, *Die Gnadenlehre des Wilhelm Estius*, pp. 36–37 and 159: ‘Bañezianischer Thomismus und ein Augustinismus bajanischer Prägung haben in Estius eine gewisse Synthese eingegangen, wie sie wohl in der Theologie jener Zeit kaum ein eigen Gegenstück haben dürfte’. X. Ferrer, however, denies that Estius had intentionally tried to reconcile Bajanism and Thomism, emphasizing that the Douai theologian took a distant stance with regard to both the doctrinal fundamentals and the method of Baius’ theology (Ferrer, *Pecado original y justificacion*, pp. 197–198).
discourse, of 27 September 1612, deals with the question *An Scripturae sacrae plures sint sensus litterales?*, Estius defends a negative response.

Notwithstanding his reputation for being close to the ideas of Hessels and Baius, Estius was called ‘*doctor fundatissimus*’ by Pope Benedict XIV. He has been declared venerable and his feast day is 20 September.

*Jacob Jansonius, a Transitional Figure in Louvain*

Back in Louvain, Thomas Stapleton was succeeded as royal professor of Sacred Scriptures by Jacobus Jansonius (1547–1625). Originally from Amsterdam, Jansonius had studied arts at the Louvain Pedagogy of the Pig – one of the four pedagogies where the liberal arts were taught – and after his graduation in 1562 he devoted himself to the study of theology. He was a resident of the Pope’s College, which was at that time presided over by Michael Baius, whom Jansonius greatly admired and from whom he borrowed the strictly Augustinian theory of justification. Jansonius was also one of approximately sixty *baccalaurii* who worked on the new critical edition of Augustine’s works that Louvain theologians prepared between 1570 and 1576. Jansonius obtained a licentiate’s degree in theology in 1575. In 1578 – the year his hometown chose the side of the Reformation – he became president of a new college that Baius had founded and that was, quite aptly, named after Saint Augustine.

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90 Ceyssens, ‘Jacques Jansonius’, p. 287 assumes that under the supervision of professor Henricus Gravius, Jansonius contributed to a seventh part, which contains the treatises on grace.
However, because of the precarious political, military, and economic circumstances of the time, this college was soon closed down.

In 1580 Jansonius was appointed one of the five ordinary professors at the theological faculty and was granted a canonry of the second foundation in St. Peter’s church that was attached to his professorship. Having taught as an ordinary professor for about four years, in 1584 he obtained his doctoral degree. Jansonius gradually managed to occupy several key positions within the faculty and even within the university as a whole. Imbued with a Augustinian theology, he was one of the main movers behind the 1587 Louvain censure of Lessius’ theological model of grace and free will. It comes as no surprise that he succeeded his master Michael Baius as president of the Pope’s College in 1589 and he devoted himself to this office for the remainder of his life.91 A declared adversary of a Jesuit theology, in 1595–96 he was one of the protagonists within the Louvain academia of the successful opposition to the Jesuit plan to set up philosophical courses and examinations in competition with the traditional pedagogies of the arts faculty.92

In 1598 Jansonius was appointed royal professor of Sacred Scriptures. Disappearing from the forefront of academia for a while, he diligently devoted himself to the study of the Scriptures, without, however, attaining the heights of a Cornelius Jansenius of Ghent or even a Thomas Stapleton, partly as a result of his sketchy knowledge of Greek and Hebrew.93 Leaving the teaching of the courses to Henri Rampen in 1616, Jansonius continued to apply himself to study ... and to academic politics. Earlier, in 1614, Jansonius had also been appointed dean of the collegiate church of St. Peter in Louvain and vice-chancellor of the university. B. Boute has called Jansonius ‘the face of the University of Louvain in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, an academic oligarch without equal’.94 Jansonius managed to influence the Visitatio of 1617, a general revision of

91 One of his boarders was Cornelius Jansenius the younger. Consequently, it is sometimes said that the radical Augustinian justification theory was passed on from Baius through Jansonius to Cornelius Jansenius; in this sense Jansonius could be considered an intermediary figure between the two giants, Baius and Jansenius. This depiction of the course of events, which does insufficient justice to the complexity of relationships within the Faculty of Theology, has rightly been questioned in Boute, ‘Saint, Scholar, Exorcist? About Jacobus Jansonius’, pp. 85 and 109.


93 Ceyssens further proposes that Jansonius’ inclination for prayer and contemplation made him sensitive to the spiritual meaning of the biblical text precisely at a time when Catholic Bible commentators were primarily seeking the literal sense of a Bible passage within its broader context (Ceyssens, ‘Jansonius [Jacques]’, BN, vol. 37, 1972, col. 468).

the academic statutes of the languishing University of Louvain that was issued in the wake of a visitation by two commissioners endowed with apostolic and princely authority. One of the visitators was Joannes Drusius, the abbot of Park, and a friend and confidant of Jansonius who, operating as Drusius’ ghostwriter, drafted the entire 1617 Visitatio.95 The charter stipulated amongst other things that as a prerequisite for receiving an academic degree, prospective theologians had to have attended the courses of the three royal, in this instance archducal, professors at the faculty, one of Sacred Scriptures and two of scholastic theology,96 or a least prove they had followed a comparable trajectory in the study house of one of the religious orders incorporated in the university. By implication, attendance at the Jesuit courses was not considered sufficient basis for admission to examination and graduation by the faculty.97

Several works from Jansonius’ pen have been handed down, including his Liturgica (1604) and a range of Bible commentaries. Various course notes are preserved in manuscript form and a number of his commentaries also appeared in print; they include a commentary on the Song of Songs, first published in 1596 (Joannes Masius [John Maes] and Philippus Zangrius [Philip de Zangher], Louvain) and reissued in 1603 and 1605, further an Expositio or explanation of the Psalms and the cantica that were sung during the divine office, dating from 1597 (Joannes Masius and Philippus Zangrius, Louvain) and reprinted in 1617 – more or less the same work was also published under a different title in 1610, 1611 and 1622 – and finally a commentary on the book of Job from 1623 (Henry Lodewijcxsoon van Haestens [or Henricus Hastenius] and Philippus Zangrius, Louvain).

At the end of his career Jansonius also wrote In Evangelium S. Joannis expositio, an explanation of the Gospel of John that was inspired by the extensive treatise that Augustine had also devoted to this Gospel. Although the work was complete in 1625, Jansonius’ death delayed its appearance


96 In addition to the royal chairs established by Charles V, a second chair of scholastic theology had been established by Philip II in 1596, who at the same time stipulated that the Summa of Thomas Aquinas would from then on replace the Sentences of Peter Lombard (Van Eijl, ‘De theologische faculteit te Leuven in de XV° en XVI° eeuw’, pp. 99–102).

until, as a result of the influence of the Norbertines of Park, it was published in 1630 by the Louvain printer Bernardinus Maes. Ceyssens described this work as an ultimate testimony to Jansonius’ sustained Augustinianism. It is also interesting because John Maes, then subprior and later abbot of Park, prefaced it with an Elogium et vita Jacobi Janssonii, which remains an important source for all subsequent biographies of Jansonius.

In the dedicatory letter to Abbot Drusius of Park, Jansonius refers, not without some measure of pride, to a digression in his commentary on the twelfth chapter of the Gospel of John in which, in accordance with Augustine’s model, he has devoted a couple of pages to the topic of grace and free will. He also refers to the provincial chapter of the Premonstratensians of 1620 (not 1621, as he erroneously writes), which had unambiguously prescribed that the members of the order should remain faithful to Augustine’s doctrine on grace and free will. In this digression,
which is on the quotation in John 12:39–40 of Is 6:10, Jansonius elaborates on the origin of evil, stressing the overwhelming responsibility of man’s free will, on the predestination of the elect, and on God’s *gratia efficax*, which incites man’s will in such a way that it is able to accomplish efficaciously the good that God made it long for and willing to pursue. To underpin his views on efficacious grace Jansonius referred primarily to Augustine’s *De correptione et gratia*.104 He knew the works of Augustine very well and drew particularly from his books on grace and free will, written against the semi-Pelagian monks of Hadrumetum and the Provence. It would be fair to say that Jansonius’ commentary is in places nothing more than a chain of quotations from works in which Augustine elaborates on his theology of grace and free will.

In summary, around 1600, the chairs of Sacred Scriptures in Louvain and Douai were occupied by similar personalities. Jacob Jansonius and William Estius were both Catholic immigrants from Holland, a province that had opted for Protestantism in their younger years. Both were pivotal figures in the religious and academic politics of their universities, which had become bastions of confessional orthodoxy and educational centres for future labourers, according to Boute’s words, in the vineyards of the Lord in the Spanish Netherlands, in the missions in the Dutch Republic and in the British Isles.105 And most importantly for our topic, both were thoroughly influenced by an Augustinian theology and spirituality that gradually regained momentum after the debacle of Baianism and showed themselves adversaries of the theological model of grace and free will advocated by the Jesuits. In places the biblical commentaries of Jansonius and Estius take the shape of genuine theological treatises inspired by Augustinian theology. Estius, by far the more talented exegete, and one of the glittering stars of the theological faculty of Douai, wrote a commentary on the Epistles of Paul that would be reprinted once again even at the end of the nineteenth century. In addition to Estius’ works, the combination of Augustinian theology and Bible commentary would find sublime

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104 Jansonius, *In Evangelium S. Ioannis expositio*, p. 425: God’s grace operates as an inner spiritual force or inspiration that brings about such a strong desire and brilliant love in man that he effectively prevails over the conflicting desire represented by the will of the flesh or concupiscence. Thus, man’s will in *statu naturae lapsae* is incited by the Holy Spirit in such a way that it is able to accomplish efficaciously what is longed for and willed, and that man desires it so to be, is because God makes him do so (‘*dare etiam ut velit*’). Comp. Augustinus, *De correptione et gratia* 12, 38, ed. Georges Folliet (CSEL, 92), Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna, 2000, p. 266 l. 7–9.

105 Free after Boute, ‘Saint, Scholar, Exorcist? About Jacobus Jansonius’, p. 84.
expression and lasting influence through the works of Cornelius Jansenius of Ypres and his disciple Libertus Fromondus.\textsuperscript{106}

\textit{Augustinianism, Jansenism and Bible Commentary}

\textbf{Cornelius Jansenius of Ypres and the Apogee of Augustinianism in Louvain}

Cornelius Jansenius (1585–1638),\textsuperscript{107} also born into a Catholic family in Holland, studied arts at the Pedagogy of the Falcon in Louvain and graduated as a \textit{magister artium}, having passed, ranked first, the general examinations of the four pedagogies of the arts faculty. He studied theology whilst residing in the Pope's College, which was under the presidency of the aforementioned Jacob Jansonius, admirer of Augustine, pupil of Baius, and ‘academic don par excellence’.\textsuperscript{108} There he met two students from the prince-bishopric of Liège, Henry van Caelen (Calenus) from Beringen, and Libert Froidmont (Fromondus) from Haccourt, with whom he struck up a friendship that would last for the rest of his life.

Having obtained the degree of bachelor of theology in 1609, Jansenius left Louvain for Paris, where he hoped to find a university milieu that was more oriented to the skilful study of the sources of theology. In Paris, Jansenius studied in particular Hebrew and possibly also Greek. He also became close friends with Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, who as the abbot

\textsuperscript{106} Jansonius had tried to influence the choice of his successor as royal professor of Sacred Scriptures – acting against the statutes of his ‘own’ \textit{Visitatio} – by offering his resignation in 1624 in favor of his substitute Henry Rampen. The faculty, however, expressed its dissatisfaction at Jansonius’ démarches in a letter to the king. It first invoked that when 38 years earlier, in 1586, Michael Baius had submitted a similar petition in favor of his nephew Jacob Baius, who had acted as his substitute for several years, the faculty resolutely rejected the petition. Secondly, the faculty called to the king’s mind that no injury should be done to the Louvain theologians’ care that the professorship be granted to the candidate most skilled in biblical studies. Thirdly, candidates who were all equally competent should not be given the impression that the matter had been arranged in advance. Finally, attached to the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures was a canonicate, its collation being liable to strict ecclesiastical rules (\textit{Acta Facultatis Theologiae}, 10 July 1624, \textit{State Archives in Belgium}, Leuven, OUL, vol. 387, ff. 204–206).


of Saint-Cyran was to have a profound influence on Jansenius and the Jansenist movement. Attracted by a life of intense study, the friends shared a house in Paris from c. 1610, before establishing themselves on the country estate of Duvergier’s mother in Camp-de-Prats near Bayonne, in the French Basque Country, where they indulged themselves in an unremitting study of the sources of Christianity: the Bible, as well as the councils of the ancient Church, and the Fathers of both East and West. These investigations were intended to provide them with the materials required to establish ‘loci communi’ and were structured by means of a system of filing cards relating to the doctrines and the sacraments of the Church as well as to the more difficult scriptural passages. As far as the Scriptures were concerned, the two men included their literal, allegorical, moral and even political sense, amassed from the teachings of the Fathers without regard for all the various glosses and compilations that had nurtured the scholastic commentaries. Jansenius remained in Bayonne for five years, interrupted only by a visit to his sick father in 1614, an event that was also used as an opportunity for his ordination as a priest.

After the death of his father in early 1617, Jansenius was retained in Louvain and entrusted with the governance of the newly established Sancta Pulcheria College, a college intended for students from the diocese of Haarlem in Holland; he retained the presidency until 1624. Jansenius again matriculated at the University of Louvain, obtaining the degree of doctor of theology in October 1617. Only a half year later, he received an ordinary chair of theology at the university and an attached canonry in St. Peters in Louvain. This position required him to teach for six weeks during the summer holidays. His preference was to devote these courses to explanation of Scripture, beginning with a book of the Old Testament. Initially he was uncertain about the method he should follow, as he found unsatisfactory the most current scheme, allegoric interpretation, which made the works of the Jesuit Cornelius a Lapide a mine for preachers. When he was preparing his courses on the minor prophets during the late summer

110 In 1631 Jansenius would return to the college as provisor.
of 1619, he expressed the hope that the annotations that he and Duvergier de Hauranne had accumulated in Camp-de-Prats might be to some advantage, albeit he also realized that not too much was to be expected from them. In any case, his notebooks had not yet been sent from France.\textsuperscript{112} Teaching his courses on the Bible occupied him every year in the second part of the summer.\textsuperscript{113} In 1623 he examined the book of Proverbs. Having talked about this project to his friend the abbot of Saint-Cyran on the occasion of a meeting in 1623, the latter asked Jansenius to have the course notes copied, not only for himself but also for his like-minded friend Sébastien Bouthillier, the bishop of Aire, who strongly desired to see them. And although the author attached only limited importance to these course notes, which were destined merely for class instruction, and had no time to revise them, he recognised that they were sufficient for comprehension of the literal sense of the text (and any other senses did not matter very much in his opinion). In compliance with Saint-Cyran’s request, he sent his course notes on Proverbs to France in October \textsuperscript{114} In addition to his work as an ordinary professor, Jansenius also taught some extraordinary courses in the Pulcheria College, on Thomas Aquinas or a Hebrew language course, for example.\textsuperscript{115}

In Louvain, the issue of predestination, grace and free will had regained momentum in the years 1618–19, as the old controversy between the Faculty of Theology and the Jesuit Leonard Lessius flared up again.\textsuperscript{116} Jansenius, who had already studied Augustine, amongst other Church fathers, during his stay in Bayonne, was to have his attention specifically drawn to Augustine’s anti-Pelagian writings by Jacob Oly, a student from Holland. Jansenius had set himself the objective of studying Augustine, since as a result of the famous ‘Congregations de auxiliis’ (1597–1607), Pope Clement VIII had not only imposed silence on the discussion of grace and free will – after decades of passionate debate in the Catholic Church – but had also made Augustine, the ‘doctor gratae’, the arbiter in the matter.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{112} Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, [September 1619], Cor., nr. 15, p. 52.

\textsuperscript{113} See also Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, 15 October 1620, Cor., nr. 19, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{114} Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, 7 July 1623, Cor., nr. 63, p. 233; 1 September 1623, Cor., nr. 66, p. 244; 13 October 1623, Cor., nr. 68, pp. 247–248; Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, 17 November 1623, Cor., nr. 69, p. 231.

\textsuperscript{115} Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, 19 April 1618, Cor., nr. 9, p. 31; 3 July 1618, Cor., nr. 10, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{116} Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, [September 1619], Cor., nr. 15, pp. 52–53.

\textsuperscript{117} ‘Le reste de temps, [je l’employ la pluspart à la lecture de St Augustin que j’ayme uniquement, me semblant qu’il n’y a rien entre les anciens ou modernes qui en approche de cent lieux. Et tant plus le ly-je, tant plus beau je le trouve]’. See Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, 15
In 1624 Jansenius had just obtained a good prebend in Lille when he was entrusted by the University of Louvain with a special mission to the Spanish court. With the help of the archdukes Albert and Isabella, the Jesuits had succeeded in establishing public courses in philosophy in their study house in Louvain, which the university considered a straightforward assault on its privilege of supplying higher education. After Jansenius had returned from his mission, he went to Paris to pick up again his studies with Saint-Cyran, which he had abandoned several years earlier. His study was abruptly interrupted when he was sent again to Madrid, for in 1625 Philip III had established an extraordinary chair within the Louvain theological faculty for the Jesuits, a decision that had met with vehement opposition from the Louvain theologians who mostly belonged to the secular clergy. In Madrid, Jansenius was able to obtain a decision that was favourable to the Faculty of Theology.

After Jansenius’ return to Louvain during Lent 1627, he resumed his personal studies. His intention was to found a ‘nouvelle Sorbonne’, where scholars would devote themselves to positive theology. To this end, he rented a house and established himself there in the company of his friend Libert Froidmont; both theologians dedicated themselves to the study of the Bible and the sacred languages Greek and Hebrew, as well as to the Church fathers, with Augustine taking pride of place.

On 23 March 1630, Jansenius was promoted to the royal chair of Sacred Scriptures over two other candidates, Henry Rampen, who had previously taught the courses on Scripture in place of Jacob Jansonius, and William ab Angelis (Willem van Engelen). Although both Rampen and ab Angelis had actively lobbied the Council of State in Brussels, Jansenius was favoured because his knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, although elementary, stood out in contrast to the complete ignorance of his competitors. Moreover Jansenius had the support of Jacob Boonen, the archbishop of Malines. In a letter of 27 March, Jansenius informed Saint-Cyran about his appointment and observed that as a ‘lectio quotidiana’ the assignment required him to give some 145 classes a year, which would leave him with at least 220 days at his disposal to indulge in other kinds of research! As on earlier occasions, Jansenius indicated that he hoped the annotations from their period in Camp-de-Prats would prove to be very useful when it came

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October 1620, Cor., nr. 19, p. 65. Comp. Jansenius to Saint-Cyran, 7 July 1623, Cor., nr. 63, p. 234: writing about the theologians of Louvain, Jansenius exclaims that ‘... il n’y a lieu où Seraphim [=St.-Augustin] est tant revere comme icy’.
to the time-consuming teaching, but he also, however, continued to appeal to his friend of old to supply him with additional information that could be helpful for his courses, which were to begin with the book of Genesis and would eventually encompass the entire Pentateuch. He hoped to include some concise ‘political’ considerations, analogous to those he used to hear in person from his friend Saint-Cyran. He further declared that ‘the moral considerations were of little benefit, since he had to keep it brief’, which, he added, ‘induced him to limit himself to the literal sense of the books’. And he added that the supply of passages they had harvested from the works of the Fathers in Gascony, were very much of service, despite the fact that more than half concerned the mystical and allegorical senses. In his preface to Genesis, Jansenius pleads the case for the primacy of the literal sense, pointing to his conviction that the Mosaic books provide a historical account of events that really happened. According to Jansenius, the spiritual sense is legitimate in as far as it is sustained by the literal, historical reading of the books. In order to discover the latter, the sense that the inspired writer had in view or that is most favoured by the context (or at least not impeded by it), the Bible commentator may draw on human science and knowledge, albeit that human philosophy must be brought into accordance with the Scriptures’ sense (rather than the Scriptures’ sense being brought into accordance with philosophy).

In the commentary itself, Jansenius’ attention to the relationship between the literal and spiritual senses is limited and for the most part oriented to the patristic – that is, Augustinian – interpretation of the text. Jansenius was preoccupied with interpretation of the biblical text in the controversy with Calvin, and the reformer’s name frequently appears in the Louvain theologian’s commentary. He feels on home ground when the biblical verse concerns the role of faith in the process of justification, giving him the opportunity to argue against Calvin and the Protestants. It goes without saying that he repeatedly refers to Augustine in order to underpin his point of view.
Having completed his commentaries on the Pentateuch, at an unknown date, Jansenius started his commentaries on the Gospels. In addition to an even more pronounced predilection for the literal sense, in these commentaries we also encounter his preoccupation with opposing Calvinist doctrines by means of his own interpretations regarding the Church, the sacraments and, last but not least, the question of grace and free will. His appeal to Augustine, and in particular to the Church father’s anti-Pelagian writings, entices him to sporadic affirmations of the doctrines of predestination and efficacious grace. This is clearly the case in his commentary on John 10:15–16 and 26–27, where, taking the two texts together, Jansenius seems to accept that the good shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep died only for those who were predestined to be saved. On John 10:28, Jansenius asserts that those who are predestined to eternal life are not able to fall away from it through their own will, because God’s generous grace has bestowed on them the possibility and the will to persevere. And just like his teacher Jacob Jansonius, Jansenius refers in this regard to Augustine’s De correptione et gratia. In other words, the elect, who have received from God the indestructible will to long and strive for the good, will indeed never resist his grace. Efficacious grace taken in this sense did not simply deny man’s free will in the same way it did according to the Calvinists, who stressed the total incapacity of man’s will to resist divine grace. Affirmations of predestination – the foundation of efficacious grace – are also to be found in John 6:37, 39. The orthodoxy of Jansenius’ opinions with regard to predestination and efficacious grace was prone to suspicion.

122 Cornelius Jansenius, Tetrateuchus, sive Commentarivs in sancta Iesu Christi evangelia, Jacob Zegers, Leuven, 1639.
123 Jansenius, Com. in Io 10:15: ‘ET ANIMAM MEAM PONO PRO OVIBUS MEIS, id est vitam ipsam pro eis liberandis profundo...’; 10:16: ‘... Vocantur autem Oves, vel per anticipatio-nem, quia oves erunt, vel potius ratione praedestinationis Dei...’; 10:26: ‘... NON ESTIS EX OVIBUS MEIS, id est, ex praedestinatis ad vitam aeternam, sed potius ad interitum, prout exponit August.’; 10:27: ‘OVES MEAE, id est praedestinati, et mihi ad salvandum dati...’
Jansenius conceived his assignment as holder of the chair of Sacred Scriptures in line with the new statutes issued in the wake of the 1617 *Visitatio*. According to these statutes, the royal professor of Sacred Scriptures was encouraged to provide his audience with clear instruction and to avoid long and superfluous digressions. He had, in particular, to emphasize those biblical passages that the Protestant adversaries had diverted from their genuine sense. He had to explain the Scriptures not in the light of his own idiosyncratic opinions but according to the sense held by the Holy Church and established by the unanimous consensus of the Fathers, as the Council of Trent had required. When in combat with his Protestant adversaries, in particular Calvin, Jansenius appealed to Augustine, much revered in Louvain. His mastery of Hebrew and Greek seems to have been more than satisfactory and was only to improve as he advanced in his study of Scripture. Jansenius’ clarity and conciseness when explaining complex and obscure biblical passages was very much appreciated in an attestation registered in the *Acta Facultatis* at the end of his professorship, in December 1635. It was moreover said that he had gained great insight into sacred doctrine through his reading of the Church fathers, and in particular Augustine, as well as his knowledge of sacred history and his skillfulness in the biblical languages. These qualities were considered to be the reason why an ever-growing audience of Louvain students attended his courses.

Jansenius also became entangled in political affairs. He deplored the European political strategy of Cardinal Richelieu, the French chief minister, whose alliances with both the princes of Orange in the Low Countries and the Protestant princes of Germany meant that the Thirty Years’ War dragged on and the revival of Catholicism in Europe was eventually impeded. By way of criticism of Richelieu’s politics and with the support of the government in Brussels, Jansenius wrote in 1635 the *Mars Gallicus*,

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Figure 4. Cornelius Jansenius ‘of Ypres’, Tetrat euchus, sive Commentarius in sancta Iesu Christi evangelia, Jacob Zegers, Louvain, 1639 (KU Leuven, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, Maurits Sabbe Library, 2-004083/B)
to the great discontentment of Richelieu. This work undoubtedly contributed to the development of Richelieu’s determined anti-Jansenist policy in France.

Although appointed bishop of Ypres in October 1635, Jansenius was only able to take possession of his episcopal see the following year. He began making pastoral visitations in his diocese and rebuilding the episcopal palace. He maintained good relations with the clergy, secular as well as regular, including the Jesuits, whom he consulted when confronted with all kind of questions of conscience. This openness to the contribution of the Jesuits in the spheres of spirituality and pastoral care was not uncommon among Louvain theologians who became bishops, even though in the university context these men had fiercely opposed the Society’s attempts to organise public lectures on philosophy and, ultimately, theology in their own Louvain college and, with the exception of Thomas Stapleton, had generally rejected the Jesuits’ Molinistic theology. Jansenius brought his manuscripts with him from Louvain to Ypres: his commentaries on the Scriptures and his famous *Augustinus*, a study in three parts in which he treated the doctrine of grace and free will along the lines of Augustine’s thinking and which he conceived as a contribution to the settlement of the debate ‘de auxiliiis’ in the sense intended by Clement VIII. Although on 23 January 1638 Jansenius had obtained the necessary privileges for an edition of his commentaries on the Pentateuch and the four Gospels, these works would only be published posthumously, by his like-minded disciples and friends Libertus Fromondus, who would succeed him in the royal chair of Sacred Scripture, and Henry Calenus. Jansenius succumbed to the plague on 6 May 1638.

Jansenius’ *Tetrateuchus sive Commentarius... in Evangelia* eventually appeared with the Louvain printer-editor Jacob Zegers in 1639. The commentary was followed by *Series vitae Jesu-Christi juxta ordinem temporum*, a series of the successive events in Jesus’ life, with references to the scriptural passages dealing with the events in question, an exercise characteristic of the scriptural spirituality of the Jansenist milieu. Jansenius’ *Tetrateuchus* would prove to be very successful and went through some 25 reprintings by printing houses in Louvain, Paris, Rouen, Lyons and Brussels, giving testimony to their wide reception. Nineteenth-century editions followed in Malines (Pierre-Joseph Hanicq, 1825) and Avignon (F. Seguin, 1853), and a French translation was edited in 1863 by the Lyonese publisher Jean-Benoit Pélagaud. Jansenius’ *Pentateuchus sive Commentarius in quinque libros Moysis* was published by Jacob Zegers in 1641; some five editions of this work are known. The *Pentateuchus* was supplemented in
1644 by his *Analecta in Proverbia, Ecclesiasten, Sapientiam, Habacuc et Sophoniam*, most probably the notes for the courses he taught as an ordinary professor from 1618 onwards. The propagation of Jansenius’ commentaries was little hindered by the fact that some of the statements made in the commentary on the Gospel of John became the object of suspicion, in particular in the wake of the condemnation of Jansenius’ *Augustinus* and the ensuing attempts to eradicate Jansenism in France.129

*Libertus Fromondus: Augustinian Theology and Bible Commentary
Continued*

After Cornelius Jansenius had become bishop of Ypres, he was succeeded as royal professor of Sacred Scripture at the beginning of 1637 by his former student and like-minded friend Libertus Fromondus (1587–1653).130 Fromondus had met Jansenius for the first time in the Pedagogy of the Falcon in Louvain, where he had started his study of the liberal arts in 1604. Two years later, Fromondus had to interrupt his studies, evidently due to a lack of financial means, to work for three years as a lecturer of philosophy in the Premonstratensian abbey of St. Michael in Antwerp. After his return to the College of the Falcon, he successively taught rhetoric (1609–14) and (natural) philosophy, in particular mathematics, physics and astrology (1614–28). Meanwhile, he also studied theology, received a canonry in Tournai and completed his studies in 1628 with a doctorate.

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129 In 1660 Charles Mallet, doctor of divinity of the Paris faculty, grand vicar, canon and archdeacon of Rouen, being determined to do away with Jansenist influences from the diocese of Rouen and from the cathedral chapter in particular, pointed to ‘two horrible maxims. 1) The Son of God who died for his flock, only died for those predestined. 2) The predestined cannot resist the grace that will be given them and hence they cannot perish’. Mallet was even able to have the Tetrateuchus delivered to the fire by the executioner, at the order of the secular magistrate in Rouen. Mallet returned to the matter in his work *Examen de quelques passages de la traduction française du Nouveau Testament imprimée à Mons*, Rouen, 1676, pp. 299 ff., 328 ff., 333–338, 343 ff., 346, and 352. Antoine Arnauld stood up for Jansenius’ orthodoxy in his work *Nouvelle défense du Nouveau Testament de Mons contre le docteur Mallet* published in 1680. Comp. Órcibal, Jansénius d’Ypres, pp. 185–186 and 188–190.

In the months following his doctoral promotion, Fromondus continued
to share a large house in the town with Jansenius, their ‘nouvelle Sorbonne’,
where both men devoted themselves to the study of the sacred languages
and the Church fathers, in particular Augustine. After Jansenius had been
appointed royal professor of Sacred Scriptures in 1630, Fromondus suc-
cceeded him as an ordinary professor of theology, which only required him
to teach a six-week course during the holidays, and as such became a
canon of St. Peter’s church in Louvain. In addition, Fromondus became a
lecturer in theology in the abbey of Park, giving expression again to his
fondness for the Premonstratensians, with whom he had already become
acquainted in the abbey of St. Michael in Antwerp. He also left the ‘nou-
velle Sorbonne’, while at the same time resuming his studies and publica-
tions in the fields of mathematics, physics and astrology (1530–36).131

After Jansenius was appointed bishop of Ypres, Fromondus’ career took
a new turn: he left his teaching assignment in the abbey of Park to become
president of the Craendonck College in Louvain and eventually, in January
1637, succeeded Jansenius as professor of Sacred Scriptures. There had
been three candidates for the position: Fromondus and, again, Henry
Rampen and William ab Angelis, both of whom had been rivals of
Jansenius for the same chair in 1630. Jansenius personally intervened,
however, at the Council of State in Brussels in favour of Fromondus, who
was beyond doubt the most competent of the three candidates. Referring
to Fromodus’ knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, amongst other things, the
members of the Council of State voiced their preference for his candida-
ture. On 27 January 1637 he was officially appointed to the chair. In
November 1639, Fromondus became dean of St. Peter’s church in Louvain
and, in this capacity, vice-chancellor of the university.132 In 1640 Fromondus
exchanged the Craendonck College for the Collège de Liège, where he was
to remain president until the end of his life.

As royal professor, Fromondus was responsible for the daily classes in
Scripture at the Louvain Faculty of Theology. He obviously took as a point
of departure Jansenius’ commentaries on the Pentateuch and on other
Old Testament books and on the Gospels. Convinced of the immense
value of these works, Fromondus, together with Henry Calenus, put con-
siderable effort into ensuring their posthumous publication. Jansenius’
Tetrateuchus was brought onto the market in 1639, his Pentateuchus in 1641.
The titles are obviously aimed at establishing a link between the Torah of
Moses and the Gospels, the former being considered a prefiguration of the

events fulfilled in Jesus Christ; the title Tetrateuchus may have been devised by Fromondus, who was much more inclined towards a figurative interpretation of the Bible. In 1644 Fromondus and Calenus also published Jansenius’ Analecta on the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, Habakkuk, and Sophonias.\textsuperscript{133}

Fromondus – who also published and defended Jansenius’ Augustinus – made obvious use of Jansenius’ writings, continuing his teacher’s work by producing further biblical commentaries on the Song of Songs and, in particular, on several books of the New Testament: the Acts of the Apostles, the Apocalypse and the Epistles, both the Epistles of Paul and the Apostolic or Catholic Epistles.\textsuperscript{134} With the addition of Fromondus’ own commentaries, the whole New Testament had been covered.

Fromondus was in less of a hurry to publish his own lectures. He did request and receive, at the end of 1652, the patent for the publication of his short commentary on the Song of Songs, after he had also received an imprimatur on 22 November from his good friend and colleague, the book censor Jacob Pontanus, who had also given the approbatio to Jansenius’ works. The \textit{Brevis commentarius in Canticum Canticorum} was published in 1653 in Louvain by Hieronymus Nempeus (or Jerome Nempe), who had married the widow of the publisher Jacob Zegers.

Fromondus possibly had specific reasons for wanting to publish the short commentary on the Song of Songs, a biblical book that had always been popular among the mystics. He deliberately added the publication of the \textit{Divisio animae ac spiritus}, a work of the mystically endowed Capuchin father Joannes Evangelista of s’ Hertogenbosch, who lived in the Louvain monastery and had a fair amount of contact with Fromondus. As early as 1638, an attempt had been made to publish the \textit{Divisio animae ac spiritus}, but the work did not appear, possibly because there were doubts about its orthodoxy. Lucien Ceyssens has observed that Fromondus felt drawn to this sort of mystically endowed people.\textsuperscript{135} Fromondus was after all the spiritual director for the Carmelite nuns in Louvain, who included a number of mystically endowed sisters in their midst, such as Isabella of St. Paul (†1641) and Joan of St. Francis(†1650). When Fromondus included the \textit{Divisio animae ac spiritus} in the 1653 publication of his \textit{Brevis commentarius in Canticum Canticorum}, to be on the safe side, he also


\textsuperscript{134} A profound reading of Fromondus’ work has confirmed Forget’s assertion that his commentary on the Epistles is in places largely a summary of Estius’ long and learned commentaries (Forget, ‘Froidmont Libert’, col. 928).

\textsuperscript{135} Ceyssens, ‘Le janséniste Libert Froidmont’, pp. 17–19.
included his own *Notulae ad libellum de animae ac spiritus divisione*, as well as John Malderus’ *Iudicium de extasi perpetua*, in which the former bishop of Antwerp (r. 1611–33) had warned against the illicit sayings of the new mystics. Fromondus’ commentary on the Song of Songs was reprinted several times thereafter.

Ceyssens notes that with the exception of his commentary on the Song of Songs, Fromondus was not interested in the publication of his Bible commentaries. He draws this conclusion from the fact that when referring in his testament to his manuscripts, the Louvain theologian made no mention of the publication of his lectures on the Scriptures. The aged professor died on 28 October 1653, his death obviously accelerated by the growing pressure from the Church authorities on the adherents of Jansenism. Ceyssens notes that with the exception of his commentary on the Song of Songs, Fromondus was not interested in the publication of his Bible commentaries. He draws this conclusion from the fact that when referring in his testament to his manuscripts, the Louvain theologian made no mention of the publication of his lectures on the Scriptures. The aged professor died on 28 October 1653, his death obviously accelerated by the growing pressure from the Church authorities on the adherents of Jansenism. His Bible commentaries were published posthumously: the commentary on the Acts of the Apostles (In Acta apostolorum commentarius) in 1654, the commentary on the Apocalypse (Commentarius in Apocalypsum) in 1657, and finally the commentary on the Epistles of Paul and on the Catholic or Apostolic Epistles (Commentarius in omnes epistolas Pauli apostoli et septem catholicas) in 1663, all by Hieronymus Nempaeus in Louvain. It was again Pontanus who delivered the approbations for the printing of Fromondus’ works.

In his comprehensive biographical article of 1963, Ceyssens notes that these Bible commentaries saw little success, although the grounds for this statement are not entirely evident as all these commentaries, whether individually or collected in one volume, were reprinted several times, in particular in the Jansenist centres of Louvain, Paris and Rouen. The commentary on the Acts of the Apostles in particular, must have had some resonance; the last edition dates, to my knowledge, from as late as 1819 (Henry Baumans, Louvain).

**Conclusion: Biblical Scholarship in Louvain from Jansenius to Jansenius...**

Between 1550 and 1650 several biblical scholars in Louvain and Douai contributed to the Golden Age of Catholic Bible exegesis. They were inspired by the Tridentine Church’s aim to provide priests and preachers with a solid knowledge of the Scriptures, since these pastors were considered the

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139 Ceyssens, ‘Le janséniste Libert Froidmont’, p. 45.
necessary mediators between God's Word and the laity. With the help of the biblical tongues, Greek and even Hebrew and other oriental languages, and inspired by a concern for the establishment of the true text of the Bible, the biblical scholars who appear in this chapter were seeking the literal sense, the sense of the holy text intended by Jesus and the inspired writers. For their search they equipped themselves with the insights of the Church fathers, with Augustine taking pride of place. Some Lovanienses, namely, professors at the Faculty of Theology, at the study houses of the orders represented in Louvain, or alumni working elsewhere, distinguished themselves in textual criticism of the Bible, although they never set this enterprise apart from their commenting on the content of Scripture; these men included John Henten, Nicholas Tacitus Zegers, Andreas Masius, and Francis Lucas of Bruges. The most important Louvain Bible commentator of the sixteenth century was undoubtedly Cornelius Jansenius of Ghent, who in combining humanist biblical scholarship with an authentic pastoral concern may be considered an exponent of the endeavour to bring about genuine renewal of the Catholic Church. Thomas Stapleton's search for the right interpretation of the Scriptures took place in the context of confrontation with the ideas of Calvin, Beza, and other reformers. Strangely enough, Stapleton referred copiously to Augustine, while at the same time interpreting the Church father through a strident Thomistic and even Molinistic understanding. In so doing, Stapleton provided a counterbalance to the growing tendency to favour Augustine's anti-Pelagian theology of grace and free will, a development to which his outstanding colleague in Douai, Guilielmus Estius, gave testimony and that left its mark on Estius' biblical commentaries. In Louvain this evolution was represented by Jacob Jansonius and came to a head in the biblical commentaries of Cornelius Jansenius of Ypres and his like-minded friend and disciple Libertus Fromondus. The pronounced biblical humanist emphasis that characterised the first part of the Golden Age of biblical scholarship had given way to a far more theological (Augustinian) reading of the Scriptures. After the death of Fromondus, the chair of Sacred Scriptures in Louvain was awarded to Nicolas Du Bois, an anti-Jansenist who was appointed for Church-political reasons and was totally incompetent as a theologian and Bible commentator. With the appointment of Du Bois the Golden Age of Catholic Bible exegesis in Louvain came to an end.