

## THE *UNIGENITUS* OF CLEMENT XI: A FRESH LOOK AT THE ISSUES

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THERE IS an enigma about *Unigenitus*, the ill-fated bull issued by Pope Clement XI (1713) against the resurgence of Jansenism. If the Jansenist movement in general has continued to attract scholars, whose recent contributions are changing perspectives,<sup>1</sup> the constitution that condemned 101 "Jansenist propositions" extracted from the *Réflexions morales* was until recently left scrupulously untouched. It seemed taken for granted as an inevitable pivot—either a *terminus ad quem*, the logical conclusion of a century of theological and political disputes, or a *terminus a quo*, the origin of a movement of rebellion that eventually developed into a revolution.<sup>2</sup> In other words, it was considered more a catalyst or an excuse for a latent social and political conflict than its real cause; hence the interest manifested in its prolegomena or later development rather than in the document itself.

It was the document itself, however, the solemn exercise of the papal magisterium, that stimulated what was then perceived as the major crisis in Catholic history. The animosities, the political schemes, and the negotiations which accompanied its preparation, the uproar, the renewed negotiations, and the conflicts which followed its publication, suggest that there was more to this document than a collection of 101 condemned extracts from a spiritual book. But what was *Unigenitus* all about?

In what appears to be a healthy reaction to a quasi-exclusive emphasis on the social and political elements of the conflicts surrounding the bull, major scholars of Jansenism have lately advocated an approach that

<sup>1</sup> See the review article by William H. Williams, "Jansenism Revisited," *CHR* 63 (1977) 573–82; also idem, "The Significance of Jansenism in the History of the French Catholic Clergy in the Pre-Revolutionary Era," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 7 (1978) 289–306.

<sup>2</sup> Williams, "Jansenism Revisited" 579–80, quoting A. Latreille, *L'Eglise catholique et la révolution française* 1 (Paris: Hachette, 1950) 107. An illustration of the first perspective can be found in A. Sedgwick, *Jansenism in Seventeenth Century France: Voice from the Wilderness* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977). The books of D. Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France, 1757–1765* (New Haven: Yale University, 1975); *The Damiens Affair and the Unraveling of the Ancien Régime, 1750–1770* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1984), and of B. Robert Kreiser, *Miracles, Convulsions and Ecclesiastical Politics in Early Eighteenth Century Paris* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1978), represent the second one.

throws a clearer light on the subject. Granted that theology and politics were closely associated in this period of French history, this does not mean that the religious and theological elements can be reduced to a mere context; the scholars in question have focused on these neglected elements. While their perspectives are somewhat different, Lucien Ceyssens, Bruno Neveu, and others converge in their suggestion that, although there were matters of personal interest and political achievements, the issue was primarily one of theological differences; it represented clearly a major crisis, since it dealt with two opposite visions of the Catholic Church.

Ceyssens' procedure is an original and intelligent one: rather than choosing to reconstruct the facts from one perspective—either the “Roman or ultramontane,” or the “Jansenist or Gallican”—he approaches the papal condemnation from the viewpoint of the major participants: Pope Clement XI, Cardinal Carlo Fabroni, Cardinal Louis-Antoine de Noailles, Fr. Pasquier Quesnel, Fr. Michel Le Tellier, Fr. Guillaume Daubenton, Fr. Timothée de la Flèche, Madame de Maintenon, and the Duke of Saint-Simon.<sup>3</sup> This multiple approach, combined with the diffi-

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the publication of sources mentioned below (n. 31), the works considered are: L. Ceyssens, “Autour de la bulle ‘Unigenitus’: Son acceptation par l’Assemblée du Clergé,” *RHE* 80 (1985) 369–414, 732–59, hereafter abbreviated *Assemblée*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: Les essais d’accommodement (1714–1715),” *Antonianum* 60 (1985) 343–95, abbreviated *Accommodements*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: le P. Damascène Bragaldi, conventuel (1665–1715),” *Bulletin de l’Institut historique belge de Rome* 51 (1981) 144–65, abbreviated *Bragaldi*; “Autour de l’*Unigenitus*: Le pape Clément XI,” *ibid.* 53–54 (1983–84) 253–302, abbreviated *Clément XI*; “Autour de la bulle ‘*Unigenitus*’: Le P. Guillaume Daubenton, S.J. (1648–1726),” *Augustiniana* 33 (1983) 330–82, abbreviated *Daubenton*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus* V: Le P. Doucin S.J. (1652–1726),” *Antonianum* 58 (1983) 448–73, abbreviated *Doucin*; “Autour de l’*Unigenitus*: Le Cardinal Charles-Augustin Fabroni (1651–1727),” *Bulletin de l’Institut historique belge de Rome* 52 (1982) 31–82, abbreviated *Fabroni*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: Fénelon,” *Antonianum* 59 (1984) 482–540, abbreviated *Fénelon*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus* IV: Jacques-Philippe Lallemant, champion de l’antijansénisme,” *Antonianum* 56 (1981) 750–803, abbreviated *Lallemant*; “Autour de l’*Unigenitus*: Le P. Michel Le Tellier (1643–1719),” *Augustiniana* 34 (1984) 263–330, abbreviated *Le Tellier*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: Louis XIV,” *Bulletin de l’Institut historique belge de Rome* 55–56 (1985–86) 123–66, abbreviated *Louis XIV*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: L’Abbé Guillaume de Margon (+1760), ‘Agent secret’ du P. Le Tellier,” *LIAS: Sources and Documents Relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas* 10 (Amsterdam: Holland University, 1983), abbreviated *Margon*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: Madame de Maintenon,” *Augustiniana* 36 (1986) 101–54, abbreviated *Maintenon*; “Autour de l’*Unigenitus*: Le cardinal de Noailles (1651–1728),” *LIAS* 11 (1984) 169–252, abbreviated *Noailles*; L. Ceyssens et J. Tans, “Pasquier Quesnel (1634–1719): Autour de l’*Unigenitus*,” *ETL* 59 (1983) 201–66, abbreviated *Quesnel*; L. Ceyssens, “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: Le duc de Saint-Simon,” *Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire* 63 (1985) 513–53, abbreviated *Saint-Simon*; “Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: Le P. Timothée Pescherard de la Flèche, capucin,” *Collectanea franciscana* 53 (1983) 281–300, abbreviated *Timothée*;

culty of access to the some of the articles,<sup>4</sup> can therefore excuse a presentation that wishes to be more than a review, by combining Ceyskens' research and conclusions with those of others who have recently dealt with the same questions.

#### WHY UNIGENITUS?

The renewal of the struggle against Jansenism at the end of the 17th century is generally ascribed to Louis XIV's desire for complete religious uniformity in his realm. A "Case of Conscience" submitted to the faculty of theology of Paris in 1701 made it clear that the "Peace of the Church" established by Clement IX in 1669 had allowed for the survival of a resistance to the previous condemnations of Jansenius, based on the now famous distinction between *droit* and *fait*, the right to condemn these propositions and their actual existence in *Augustinus*. In 1703 the confiscation of Pasquier Quesnel's documents and correspondence showed the existence of a network of "Augustinians" who were trying to influence religious life in Rome as well as in France.<sup>5</sup>

For Ceyskens, these well-known facts are of major importance when they are analyzed in their original context; for, as he has repeatedly shown, Jansenism cannot be explained without its ideological opposition, anti-Jansenism, which predates it.<sup>6</sup> In this case the breach of peace must not simply be ascribed to the foolishness of some extreme Jansenists, but one must take into account the will of their opponents not only to destroy the heresy but to impose their own vision. As early as 1695, contrary to Innocent XII's clear admonitions, the fight had been renewed

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"Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*: La bulle *Pastoralis officii*," *Antonianum* 61 (1986) 340-80, abbreviated *Pastoralis officii*; "L'*Unigenitus* et sa préparation à Rome," *Antonianum* 59 (1984) 219-307, abbreviated *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation*.

<sup>4</sup> Under the general title *Autour de l'Unigenitus: Recherches sur la genèse de la constitution* (Louvain: Leuven Univ., 1986), L. Ceyskens and J. A. G. Tans have published a first volume compiling the major articles: *Les jugements, Les votes, l'Unigenitus et sa préparation, Fabroni, Daubenton, Le Tellier, Lallemand, Doucin, Bragaldi, Timothée, Fénelon, Quesnel, Noailles, Clément XI*, with the text of the constitution. A second volume should follow, but it is not anticipated yet. I wish to thank Prof. Ceyskens for his kind help in providing information for the preparation of this research.

<sup>5</sup> Sedgwick, *Jansenism in Seventeenth Century France* 138-39; L. Ceyskens, "Les papiers de Quesnel saisis à Bruxelles et transportés à Paris en 1701 et 1704," *RHE* 44 (1949) 508-9 (*Jansenistica minora* 1 [Malines: John Benjamins, 1951] n. 5.); "Suites romaines de la confiscation des papiers de Quesnel," *Bulletin de l'Institut historique belge de Rome* 29 (1955) 5-31 (*Jansenistica minora* 3 [Malines: John Benjamins, 1957] n. 26); *Clément XI* 285-287; *Le Tellier* 279.

<sup>6</sup> L. Ceyskens, "Pour une histoire plus poussée et plus explicite de l'antijansénisme," in *Actes du colloque sur le jansénisme organisé par l'Academia belgica, Rome, 2 et 3 novembre 1973* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de la Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, 1977) 1-25 (*Jansenistica minora* 13 [Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1979] n. 1).

by the most extreme anti-Jansenists.<sup>7</sup> In Ceyskens' eyes, this renewed attack was a reaction to several of the positions defended by the Jesuits and their friends: suspicion of their missionary methods, condemnation of laxist morality, and condemnation of the quietist doctrine of Molinos. All these actions had been presented as victories against the Society of Jesus; to this "antijésuitisme maladroit" a stronger anti-Jansenism had to respond.<sup>8</sup> From this perspective the conflict appears to have been not only a theological dispute on the matter of grace but an irreducible opposition between two ideologies, two visions of the Church and the world.<sup>9</sup> The battle was complicated by the more personal motivations of success and revenge, as is patent in the case of Fénelon, who never forgave the disciples of St. Augustine for their participation in the condemnation of his spiritual principles.<sup>10</sup>

Another factor must be taken into account that will modify any interpretation of Jansenist opposition. According to Ceyskens, the five propositions attributed to Jansenius are not to be found in the latter's *Augustinus*: "Fifteen minutes of an attentive reading [of col. 334, cap. 13, lib. 3, vol. 3 of *Augustinus*] would have convincingly showed the nonexistence of these five propositions."<sup>11</sup>

Ceyskens ascribed this complication to the influence of a ferocious anti-Jansenist, Cardinal Francesco Albizzi, who had committed a forgery,<sup>12</sup> and suggests that Rome was aware of it, but since the only solution would have been to abrogate the bulls of Alexander VII, silence was "the

<sup>7</sup> In a brief to the bishops of the Spanish Netherlands (Feb. 6, 1694), Innocent XII, while renewing the former papal condemnations, had stressed the politics of silence, and forbidden that anyone be accused of Jansenism unless their guilt was legitimately proven (*Doucin* 456; *Le Tellier* 282). Text in Ch. Du Plessis d'Argentré, *Collectio judiciorum* 3 (Paris: A. Cailleau, 1732) 390-92; see also Ph. Dieudonné, "Fragilité de la Paix de l'église," in *Chroniques de Port-Royal* 29 (Paris: Vrin, 1980) 17-33.

<sup>8</sup> *Fabroni* 66 and n. 159; *Le Tellier* 290; *Lallemant* 751. On this renewed anti-Jansenism, see the important note in H. Hillenaar, *Fénelon et les jésuites* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967) 124-25.

<sup>9</sup> L. Cognet, in *RHE* 60 (1965) 919 (reviewing Ceyskens' work). See also M. de Certeau, "De Saint-Cyran au jansénisme," *Christus* 10 (1963) 412-14; and P. Hurtubise, "Jansénisme ou jansénismes," in *Modernité et non-conformisme en France à travers les âges*, ed. M. Yardeni (Leiden: Brill, 1983) 79.

<sup>10</sup> *Fénelon* 495-99.

<sup>11</sup> *Fabroni* 66; L. Ceyskens, "L'Authenticité des cinq propositions condamnées de Jansenius," *Antoniarum* 55 (1980) 377-79. This interpretation could, of course, be nuanced; one notes, e.g., that some very staunch Jansenists did not challenge this attribution, e.g. L. Habert, author of the *Theologia dogmatica et moralis* 2 (Paris, 1709) 332; see R. Taveneaux, *Le jansénisme en Lorraine* (Paris: Vrin, 1960) 181.

<sup>12</sup> "The Louvainists, and after them all Jansenists, conclude that Albizzi exceeded the popes's will, and even altered the bull" (L. Ceyskens, "Les cinq propositions de Jansenius à Rome," *Jansenistica minora* 11, 451; *Clément XI* 289).

minimum that could be offered to the Jansenists."<sup>13</sup> But despite these difficulties a new condemnation was perceived as a way to strengthen a weak case and, more importantly, to serve as an indisputable affirmation of the final authority of the Roman pontiff.

The *Cas de conscience* was first condemned by a Roman brief (*Cum nuper*, Feb. 12, 1703); its hurried redaction manifested both the desire of the papacy not to permit a resurgence of Jansenism, and an affirmation of authority. This intention was perceived in France; as Neveu notes, it accounts for the fact that the document was never made official there:

Such a measure, the precipitation of which indicated the importance attached to it by the Curia, was contrary both to episcopal and to parliamentary Gallicanism. Many bishops . . . felt deprived of their immediate jurisdiction over the faithful and became, they thought, the apostolic vicars of a universal bishop. At the same time, the Sorbonne, glory of the University of Paris, mother of sciences, took its rank behind a handful of Roman consultants and judges. As for the members of Parliament, this pontifical intervention in the National Church, even though through an act devoid of the terms "ex certa scientia, et motu proprio," seemed inconsiderate, and more than vain.<sup>14</sup>

This first failure was perceived in Rome as proof of the Jansenists' ability to resist condemnation by associating themselves with anti-Roman principles.<sup>15</sup> Henceforth the condemnation of Jansenism will be associated totally with the question of Gallican principles,<sup>16</sup> Rome will be more interested in being solicited to assert her authority, "infallibility, the great dogma in dispute,"<sup>17</sup> and the Jansenists will find natural allies in the defenders of the "Maxims of France."

When Louis XIV asked for another papal document condemning the "obsequious silence" that would be formulated in compliance with Gallican terminology, he was requesting a tool to destroy the last Jansenist protection and give theological support to his will to homogenize French religious life.<sup>18</sup> After serious hesitations, the Holy See complied with a bull, *Vineam Domini* (1705); worded in terms acceptable to Gallican

<sup>13</sup> Fénelon 503.

<sup>14</sup> B. Neveu, "Histoire de relations diplomatiques," *Annuaire de la IVe Section de l'École pratique des hautes études 1975-1976* (Paris-Geneva: Droz, 1976) 781-82.

<sup>15</sup> See the letter of Clement XI to Cardinal Gualterio, June 14, 1703, quoted by Neveu, "Histoire des relations diplomatiques," *Annuaire de la IVe Section de l'E.P.H.E. 1976-1977* (Paris-Geneva, Droz, 1977) 817.

<sup>16</sup> *Clément XI* 290; *Le Tellier* 296.

<sup>17</sup> *Fabroni* 68.

<sup>18</sup> *Assemblée* 373.

susceptibilities, it only confirmed former condemnations.<sup>19</sup> But the inevitable reception of this constitution by a General Assembly of the French Clergy, meeting at that time under the presidency of Cardinal Louis-Antoine de Noailles, the archbishop of Paris, blocked what was from a Roman perspective the essential point.<sup>20</sup> Against an affirmation of ultimate authority of the papacy, the three propositions added by the representatives of the Gallican Church manifested very clearly that the last word on this matter was to remain with the National Church.<sup>21</sup> Such a reception, however, accomplished more. It amalgamated the "Third Party" of moderate Augustinians but staunch Gallicans, such as the archbishop of Paris himself, with hard-core Jansenists. For that matter, to resist the authority of Rome became equivalent to holding bad doctrine.<sup>22</sup> Once again it became clear that Rome judged "the four [Gallican] articles worse than the five [Jansenist] propositions."<sup>23</sup>

#### UNIGENITUS IN ROME

The failure of *Vineam Domini* to cut clearly between the defenders of good doctrine and its opponents cannot simply be ascribed to the Gallican reception of the documents<sup>24</sup> but, as Ceyskens insists, must be laid to the "original sin" of anti-Jansenism, the attribution of the five propositions. This was what made assent to the papal condemnation considerably difficult.<sup>25</sup> The king, nevertheless, did not give up; he soon became convinced of the necessity of another attempt and again requested from Rome a new document that would, he promised, be received with proper respect and succeed. The influence of Louis' new Jesuit confessor, the "fierce" Father Le Tellier, was undoubtedly primary.<sup>26</sup> Ceyskens suggests

<sup>19</sup> B. Neveu, "Histoire des relations diplomatiques," *Annuaire de la IVe Section de l'E.P.H.E. 1978-1979* (Paris-Geneva: Droz, 1981) 745-53, shows the personal part taken by Clement XI in the drafting of the document. It appears that the terms of the condemnation were carefully negotiated through the diplomacy of Nunzio Gualterio.

<sup>20</sup> *Assemblée* 373; *Clément XI* 291-92; *Daubenton* 337; *Noailles* 208.

<sup>21</sup> "Bishops have the right, by divine institution, to judge matters of doctrine. Papal constitutions are binding on the entire Church [only] after their acceptance by the body of pastors. This acceptance on the part of the bishops is always made by way of judgment" (*Assemblée*, 372-73; *Noailles* 208).

<sup>22</sup> *Noailles* 209.

<sup>23</sup> J. Orcibal, "Jansenius et Rome," in *Actes du colloque sur le jansénisme* 27.

<sup>24</sup> This of course, as Neveu aptly suggests, was the result of Louis XIV's irrational desire to "reconcile irreconcilable matters" by combining appeals to Roman authority with the affirmation of Gallican regalism and episcopalism ("Louis XIV et la papauté: Versailles, Rome et Saint-Cyr (1686-1693)," *Studies in History and Politics* [Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec] 4 [1985] 57).

<sup>25</sup> *Clément XI* 289.

<sup>26</sup> *Le Tellier* 289.

a convergence of other interests as well;<sup>27</sup> they account for the choice of a new target for pontifical censure, the *Réflexions morales sur le Nouveau Testament* of the exiled Oratorian Pasquier Quesnel. One may wonder why this book was singled out, when other more dogmatic works would have presented a stronger expression of the doctrine of Jansenius. After all, if the presence of the famed five propositions in *Augustinus* was for some a matter of discussion, they were to be found in some of the best authors of the Party. With a perseverance that was not to be rewarded, Fénelon suggested the "Théologie de Châlons" of Louis Habert.<sup>28</sup> The aim was clear: to put in a difficult position the former bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, now cardinal-archbishop of Paris; but the text was considered inappropriate. The more accessible *Réflexions morales* was preferred for its author's association with the old Jansenism. Inevitably the denunciation of this book would unite in hostility the king (advised by Fr. Le Tellier) and the pope (driven by the all-powerful Cardinal Fabroni) against the prelate who had approved it.<sup>29</sup>

As he had already done with the earlier anti-Jansenist pronouncements,<sup>30</sup> Ceyskens, here in collaboration with J. A. G. Tans, has painstakingly reconstructed the elaboration process of the papal document.<sup>31</sup> He mentions that, as early as 1692–93, Parisian anti-Jansenists had denounced the *Réflexions* to Rome and "probably had produced a series of 'perverse propositions' to support their action."<sup>32</sup> The *Problème ecclésiastique* of 1698, aimed at Noailles, had noted about 60 propositions susceptible of condemnation, but Bossuet had justified them in his *Avertissement*, published after his death in 1710. Ceyskens mentions

<sup>27</sup> A desire for retribution and for the destruction of Jansenism (*Louis XIV* 154–56).

<sup>28</sup> L. Habert, *Theologia dogmatica et moralis ad usum Seminarii Catalaunensis*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1707–12); see n. 11 above; *Fénelon* 517; *Lallemant* 766.

<sup>29</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 220.

<sup>30</sup> L. Ceyskens, "L'Origine romaine de la bulle 'In eminenti,'" *Jansenistica: Etudes relatives à l'histoire du jansénisme* 3 (Malines-Amsterdam: John Benjamins 1957) 7–110; "Les cinq propositions de Jansenius à Rome," *RHE* 66 (1971) 449–501, 821–86 (*Jansenistica minima* 11, 94).

<sup>31</sup> L. Ceyskens et J. A. G. Tans, "L'Unigenitus à Rome (1712–1713): Les jugements théologiques portés sur les 155 propositions de Quesnel dénoncées au Saint-Office," *LIAS* 8 (1981) 3–77, 269–306, abbreviated *Les jugements*; "L'Unigenitus à Rome (1713): Les votes in extenso du pape Clément XI," *Jansenius et le jansénisme dans les Pays-Bas*, ed. J. van Bavel and M. Schrama (Leuven: University Press, 1982) 209–33, abbreviated *Les votes*. The article *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* offers a general commentary on these documents.

<sup>32</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 224, referring to J. F. Thomas, *La querelle de l'Unigenitus* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950) 42, who quotes Quesnel's *Entretiens*; but this is only a conjecture. In Vol. 19/1 of Fliche-Martin's *Histoire de l'église* 221, E. Preclin indicates that in 1693 "about 200 propositions" had been extracted from the book by a Dr. Fromageau.

other evidence of this focusing on Quesnel's book, but it appears that the real attack started in Rome in 1702, when Guillaume Daubenton, S.J., the confessor of King Philip V of Spain, directed the pope's attention to the book.<sup>33</sup> Another step was taken in 1703, when the Capuchin Timothée de la Flèche presented the pontiff with a number of propositions he deemed heretical.<sup>34</sup> In 1705 the future confessor of Louis XIV affirmed in his *Quesnel hérétique* that the book contained more than 100 erroneous propositions.<sup>35</sup>

All these elements must have been taken into account for the condemnation in July 1708 of the book by *Universi dominici gregis*,<sup>36</sup> but the first direct attack came in 1710 from the bishops of Luçon and La Rochelle, who noted 33 damnable propositions;<sup>37</sup> another list of 103 was sent in the summer of 1712 (probably by Le Tellier), then another 19—a total of 155 propositions that were to be examined.<sup>38</sup> Ceyskens judges the number "excessif et vain," since most of the problems they touched had already been dealt with. In this decision to delineate the errors that could be found in the *Réflexions morales*, contrary to a Roman tradition that ordinarily does not offer any justification for censuring a book, he sees the will to obtain a massive condemnation.<sup>39</sup>

Paralleling the process of Quesnel's condemnation with that of the five propositions, Ceyskens observes a disturbing similarity: in the same manner in 1651 Albizzi, the assessor of the Inquisition, had removed the affair from the competence of the Holy Office and submitted it to a special commission, and in 1712 Cardinal Fabroni was able to entrust to a group of theologians of his choice the "qualification" that is the assessment of the propositions.<sup>40</sup> These nine theologians were directed to prepare the work for the sessions of the committee of cardinals that met with the pope. One was an Augustinian from Belgium, another a Spanish Jesuit, the rest Italians: two Dominicans, two Franciscans, a

<sup>33</sup> Daubenton 333–34.

<sup>34</sup> Timothée 285–86, quoting the *Mémoires et lettres du P. Timothée de la Flèche, évêque de Berythe, sur les affaires ecclésiastiques de son temps, 1703–1730*, ed. P. Ubald d'Alençon (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1907).

<sup>35</sup> Le Tellier 280; *L'Unigenitus à Rome* 226.

<sup>36</sup> Noailles 210; Clément XI 295.

<sup>37</sup> Noailles 217; Clément XI 296.

<sup>38</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 227, quoting Thomas, *La querelle de l'Unigenitus* 55. Unfortunately, we do not know which propositions were denounced first. This list of 155 propositions with Clement's judgment was "copied by M. Silvy in 1814, when the Roman archives taken by Napoleon were still in Paris" (A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement janséniste* 1 [Paris: Champion, 1923] 243).

<sup>39</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 229.

<sup>40</sup> "being obliged nevertheless to maintain at least the appearance of impartiality" (*L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 231).



Benedictine, a Vincentian, and a Barnabite. Ceyskens presents them in detail, and with a few exceptions he considers them unsuitable for the task.<sup>41</sup> The commission of cardinals comprised six members. Ceyskens notes that, except for one Dominican prelate, the others were "bent towards anti-Jansenism."<sup>42</sup>

The "qualificators" met by themselves 22 times, from June 6 to December 22, 1712. The commission met 23 times the following year, from February 9 to August 8.<sup>43</sup> Since the members of the Holy Office were present at these sessions, Ceyskens considers them "as general congregations."<sup>44</sup> The meetings followed the usual procedure: the qualificators repeated their judgments, followed by the cardinals, who presented their opinions and expressed a general conclusion. The pope then read his personal *votum*, a carefully prepared opinion, and after discussion gave his final sentence, which was recorded. With a few omissions the *vota* of Clement XI have been preserved,<sup>45</sup> as well as those of some of the members of the commission and its official conclusions. This allows for a study of the composition of the pontifical document that is very enlightening.

Ceyskens observes that, even though it appears that they were studied within the context of the book in which they were presented, the 155 propositions were evaluated as excerpts from an a priori suspect book written by a disciple of Jansenius. In that perspective the *Réflexions morales* were judged "in the sense of Jansenius."<sup>46</sup> Oftentimes he sees the examiners practicing an odd principle of interpretation: "Even though he did not say it, I understood what he meant."<sup>47</sup>

Since Ceyskens publishes the text of the 155 propositions, with references to their original place in the *Réflexions morales*, as well as the consultors' qualifications, the cardinals' *vota*, and Pope Clement's own remarks and decisions, it is now possible to follow step by step the process of elaboration of what was to become the bull *Unigenitus*. First of all, the seriousness of the participants must be remarked, especially the pontiff's meticulous preparation and his attentive listening to the opin-

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* 232-33; *Les jugements* 3-7.

<sup>42</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 232-33; *Les jugements* 3-7.

<sup>43</sup> *Les jugements* 3, 7-9, and 10-20 (tables).

<sup>44</sup> The eight theologians (the Belgian had left), the five cardinals, and the assessor were joined by the consultors of the Congregation (*L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 251).

<sup>45</sup> *Les votes* 213-33.

<sup>46</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 243; but more perhaps in the sense of Baius, as J. A. G. Tans suggests, "Quesnel et Jansenius," in *L'Image de Cornelius Jansenius jusqu'à la fin du XVIII siècle*, ed. E. J. M. van Eijl (Louvain: Leuven Univ., 1987) 137-49.

<sup>47</sup> "S'il ne l'a pas dit, j'ai compris ce qu'il voulait dire" (*L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 259). J. Carreyre, in *DTC* 15, 2143-45, justifies this principle.

ions of others. Consider, for instance, the 33rd of the original 155: "Under the dominion of grace, when one is driven by the Spirit, one infallibly does good." Of this spiritual commentary on Gal 5:9, Clement had noted: "As it stands, as well as from the context, at least suspect of heresy," but he added: "but since all the lords/cardinal but one [Fabroni] dismissed it, after better consideration [the pope] thought that it could immediately be dismissed."<sup>48</sup>

Some discrepancies are manifest, however, between these decisions and the text of the bull: it appears from the documents presented here that a certain number of propositions should not have appeared in the final version. A significant example is the 14th of the 155 propositions: (Lk 5:13) "When God wants to save a soul and touches it with the interior hand of His grace, no human will resists Him." As this was a quasi-textual citation of St. Augustine (*De correptione et gratia*, PL 44, 942), the qualifiers were divided: the cardinals considered it suspect, but Clement decided to suspend his judgment, "since it could be interpreted in a Catholic sense," but the proposition became the 13th of the 101 condemned in *Unigenitus*.<sup>49</sup> Similar is the case of the 18/155 proposition that became 23/101: the pope hesitated to condemn it, since it was a patristic reference: (Rom 4:17) "God Himself conveyed to us the concept of the almighty operation of His grace, signifying it by the operation which produces creatures out of nothing and gives life back to the dead."<sup>50</sup> Or consider 46/155 that became 33/101: (Gal 2:20) "How much one ought to have renounced earthly goods and oneself to have the confidence of appropriating, so to speak, Jesus Christ, his love, his death, and his mysteries, as St. Paul does, when he says 'He loved me and gave Himself for me.'" All the theologians but one wanted to condemn it; on the other hand, all the cardinals but Fabroni suggested deleting it. Clement first noted "posse omitti,"<sup>51</sup> then concluded "ideo dimittenda," but according to Ceysens he must have yielded to Fabroni, since the proposition found its place in the final document.<sup>52</sup> Propositions 100/155 = 63/101 and 29/155 = 12/101 offer similar examples; in the latter case, since Quesnel had uncharacteristically mentioned his patristic source (St. Prosper, PL

<sup>48</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 270–71; *Les jugements* 41; *Les votes* 220–21. The English translation is mine; it tries to be faithful both to the official Latin text and to the original French. In the case of the propositions condemned by *Unigenitus*, reference is given to Denzinger-Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum* (33rd ed.; Freiburg: Herder, 1965).

<sup>49</sup> DS 2413; *Les jugements* 29; *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 267.

<sup>50</sup> "Bisogna andar cauto in condannarla": *Les votes* 213; *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 268. Cf. Chrysostom, *Hom. 8, Rom. 4* (PG 60, 460).

<sup>51</sup> *Les jugements* 49.

<sup>52</sup> DS 2433; *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 272.

51, 116), the pope corrected his prepared *votum* "suspect of heresy" with "unless these are the very words of St. Prosper, which remains to be seen."<sup>53</sup> Even what was to become the famous proposition 90 (123/155 = 90/101): (Mt 18:17) "It is the Church that has the authority to excommunicate, so that she may exercise it through the chief pastors, with the consent, at least presumed, of the whole body," produced some hesitation. Even though it was considered "scandalosa, seditiosa, schismati favens, erronea,"<sup>54</sup> the pope expressed his concern that its condemnation could provoke a Gallican rejection of the bull, but he eventually agreed to retain it.<sup>55</sup>

Ceyskens strongly suggests that the final choice of the 101 propositions, the redaction of the papal document, and its technical "dressing" (*habillement*) were all the work of Cardinal Fabroni and his Jesuit adviser Daubenton. He quotes a confidence of Clement reported by Saint-Simon in his *Mémoires*<sup>56</sup> to support his interpretation that again, as in the case of the bull *Cum occasione*, the manoeuvres of an anti-Jansenist cardinal pushed (he even says "extorted from") the pope to go further in his condemnation than he originally wanted.<sup>57</sup> However, contrary to the memorialist's suggestions, he stresses that Clement reviewed the document and carefully revised its style before the official promulgation.<sup>58</sup> Despite the wise suggestions of Fénelon,<sup>59</sup> the 101 propositions were not individually condemned, but the different theological notes were given *in globo*, all together. This may appear as a strange decision: "What would we say of a judge who would condemn one hundred different culprits to being respectively burnt, quartered, impaled, scourged, imprisoned, and condemned to the galleys? The officer of justice who would have to deal with such a sentence would well be at a loss."<sup>60</sup> Yet this attitude must be understood as a plain desire to keep the condemnation at a general level, as was usual for Roman documents. This is why no direct references were given to the book itself, or allusions made to the context of the propositions. The *Réflexions morales* as a whole (in its

<sup>53</sup> DS 2463 and 2412; *Les votes* 218; *Les jugements* 39; *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 270.

<sup>54</sup> DS 2490; *Les jugements* 285.

<sup>55</sup> *Les jugements* 285; *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 276-77.

<sup>56</sup> *Saint-Simon* 541-52.

<sup>57</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 293; *Clément XI* 303.

<sup>58</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 259; Duc de Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. G. Truc (Paris: Gallimard, 1966) 237. L. von Pastor, *History of the Popes* 25 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957) 218, gives examples of last-minute corrections by Clement XI.

<sup>59</sup> *Fénelon* 528; *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 290, quoting a letter from Fénelon to Daubenton (June 8, 1713), in F. Fénelon, *Oeuvres* 8 (Besançon: Outenin, 1852) 167.

<sup>60</sup> *Mémoires* of H. Serry, O.P., quoted in *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 291.

different editions) was condemned, and through the 101 propositions extracted from it, "Jansenism" in every conceivable form.

UNIGENITUS IN PARIS

The reception of the papal document in France was a perfect illustration of the strength and variety of Gallican principles. Because of the precautions and meticulous redaction, the bull was able to pass the first of the several tollgates raised by national traditions against papal encroachment. The text was cleared by the king's jurists for reception by the bishops and registration by Parliament.<sup>61</sup> In order to make the former easier, the king and his counselors opted for an extraordinary assembly of the bishops "present at court," under the chairmanship of the archbishop of Paris.<sup>62</sup> Despite his association with the censured book, Noailles had been able to maintain his status, since he had revoked his approbation as the Roman condemnation appeared inevitable.<sup>63</sup> But in his mind the process of reception was more than a mere formality; it represented the equivalent of a conciliar approbation, the bishops judging together with the first bishop. Ceyssens notes that even as undaunted an adversary as Fénelon did not challenge this interpretation: "The Pope does not want to prevent the bishops judging with him and after him in this cause [ . . . ] as the last of bishops judges in a council, in union with the 400 ones who have already decided. This is independent of the question of papal infallibility."<sup>64</sup> In this case the "verification" meant a complete study of the 101 condemned propositions.<sup>65</sup> This, of course, was exactly what Rome, after the experience of *Vineam Domini*, had wanted to avoid, and now rejected absolutely: "It would not be the bishops who would submit to the pope's judgment, but the pope who would be submitted to the judgment of the bishops."<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 291.

<sup>62</sup> *L'Assemblée* 377-84.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* 382; *Noailles* 228.

<sup>64</sup> Fénelon 534, quoting a "Mémoire sur la forme et les solemnités avec lesquelles il convient de recevoir la bulle," sent by Fénelon to Lallemand (September 1713), in *Oeuvres* 8, 189; *Lallemand* 780. It must be stressed, however, that in Fénelon's mind the "judgment after the pope" could only be one of approbation. The sentence omitted by Ceyssens specifies it: "The only thing to which the pope is opposed is that the bishops of France who are inferior to him erect themselves as a superior tribunal to his, to judge his judgment, and to decide if his judgment is in conformity with or contrary to faith."

<sup>65</sup> Ceyssens considers that there was a triple examination by the assembly: of the "authenticity" of the papal document, of its theological content, and of the documents that were to accompany its publication (*L'Assemblée* 391-92, 392-97, 407-14).

<sup>66</sup> Dom V. Thuillier, quoting the Secretary of State, Cardinal Paulucci (Oct. 23, 1713): *Histoire de la constitution Unigenitus*, ed. A. M. P. Ingold (Paris: Picard, 1901) 207-14; *L'Assemblée* 399-400.

The *Instruction pastorale* prepared by the majority of the bishops aimed at presenting the "genuine meaning of the constitution,"<sup>67</sup> but together with seven other bishops Noailles wanted more. They demanded "authentic and definitive" papal explanations that would provide the necessary elements for a correct interpretation of the bull.<sup>68</sup> This opposition was taken very seriously by Louis XIV, who decided to force the archbishop of Paris and his colleagues to accept *Unigenitus*. Banished from Versailles, Noailles was in danger of being "denaturalized" and abducted to Rome, where he would be "decardinalized," i.e. successively deprived of his character as a subject of the French king and of his cardinalatial dignity. He would then be tried and deposed from his archiepiscopal see;<sup>69</sup> candidates were already in line for the double succession.<sup>70</sup>

Finally, after four different attempts to settle the matter,<sup>71</sup> the most Christian king resolved on the convocation of a national council that, despite Roman repugnance to this other proof of Gallican vitality, would solemnly depose the "opposing bishops."<sup>72</sup> A "lit de justice," the formal meeting of Parliament in the king's presence, was first to be assembled in order to ensure the registration of the bull as law of the state.<sup>73</sup> Louis' death and the regency of Philippe d'Orléans changed all these projects. Under the new reign the opposition to *Unigenitus* increased. It peaked with the solemn appeal to the general council by four bishops, soon

<sup>67</sup> "Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée du clergé du 5 fevrier 1714," in L. Mention, *Documents relatifs aux rapports du clergé avec la royauté, de 1705 à 1789* 2 (Paris: Picard, 1903) 42. This was a reference to the reception of *Cum alias* in 1699, when the Assembly of the ecclesiastical province of Paris had wished to express "le véritable sens" of the papal document. See L. Ellies du Pin, *Histoire ecclésiastique du XVIIe siècle* 4 (Paris: Pralard, 1714) 46; *L'Assemblée* 403-4. This document was published only on March 21 1714, after the defection of the "minority" bishops; unsurprisingly, it failed to obtain the approval of the pope, who made little distinction between the attitude of the two groups (*L'Assemblée* 756-57; *Accommodements* 350; *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 305).

<sup>68</sup> *L'Assemblée* 749; *Fénelon* 534.

<sup>69</sup> *Fénelon* 538; *Le Tellier* 311-12; *Noailles* 228.

<sup>70</sup> *L'Assemblée* 756; *Fénelon* 537-38.

<sup>71</sup> Ceyssens considers that there were four consecutive attempts: (1) with Rome (Jan.-Feb. 1714), terminated by the publication of Noailles's *Mandement* expressing his reservations on accepting the constitution (*Accommodements* 344-53); (2) between French cardinals, through the mediation of Cardinal de Polignac (March-Aug. 1714), but they could not agree on the terms of Noailles's acceptance of the bull (*ibid.* 353-68); (3) through the intervention of Chancellor Voysin, a new acceptance was drafted (Aug.-Oct. 1714) but deemed unacceptable by him (*ibid.* 369-74); (4) with Rome again, when the question of a national council came to be negotiated by Amelot (March-July 1715) (*ibid.* 373-89).

<sup>72</sup> *Le Tellier* 313; *Margon* 143; *Saint-Simon* 546.

<sup>73</sup> *Saint-Simon* 546-47.

joined by others.<sup>74</sup> The bull became a standing feature of French life; the crisis it provoked was to poison both religion and politics during the entire century.<sup>75</sup>

#### THE CRISIS OF *UNIGENITUS*

It seems quite possible that, had history allowed for it, the survival of King Louis XIV would have secured the unanimous acceptance of *Unigenitus*. Noailles and the other opposing bishops would have been condemned and punished; anti-Jansenism would then have been victorious. But would Jansenism have disappeared?

The answer to this hypothetical question has to be negative. The bull represented more than a simple condemnation of theological errors; the fact that the crisis it produced erupted at such different levels shows that a conflict could not easily be avoided or even circumscribed. With their own nuances of interpretation, Ceysens and Neveu concur in assessing the condemnation of Jansenism/Quesnelism as a way for Rome to resolve another and more crucial question, that of papal authority, against Gallican principles, in favor of the personal power of the Roman pontiff.<sup>76</sup> This goal was unrealistic, for it did not take into account Louis' faithfulness to a "Gallicanism" which he did not perceive as contradictory to his desire to see the eradication of Jansenism.<sup>77</sup> The bull consequently was flawed *ab initio* by an association of anti-Gallicanism with anti-Jansenism that was much more striking than the Jansenists' appeal to Gallican principles.<sup>78</sup> Instead of resolving in one single stroke a double opposition, one ecclesiological, the other methodological,<sup>79</sup> Clement by associating

<sup>74</sup> *Saint-Simon* 551-52.

<sup>75</sup> In the significant words of B. Neveu, "The monarch [had] engaged his kingdom and his dynasty in a blind alley from which they will only emerge to fall into revolution" ("Louis et la papauté" 57). On this development see the works of Kreiser and Van Kley.

<sup>76</sup> From a Roman perspective *Vineam Domini* and *Unigenitus* did not really add anything to the condemnation of Jansenism already secured by *In eminenti* (1642), *Cum occasione* (1653), and *Ad sanctam* (1656); but they were to be proofs of the necessity and ultimate authority of the papacy. "For the Romans, the confusion of Jansenists is important only if they establish papal infallibility; anything else is worth nothing in comparison with this prerogative" (Daubenton to Fénelon, July 13, 1707; *Oeuvres* 7, 626; *Daubenton* 345; *Fabroni* 71).

<sup>77</sup> *Clément XI* 300; *Louis XIV* 148.

<sup>78</sup> Contrary to the influential indications of J. Dedieu, "Le désarroi janséniste pendant la période du Quesnellisme," in V. Carrière, ed., *Introduction aux études d'histoire ecclésiastique locale* 3 (Paris: Picard, 1940) 575, the "identification" between the appellants' cause and that of the Gallican Church was not a misapprehension (*malentendu*), but was indeed inevitable.

<sup>79</sup> "A confrontation between Gallicanism and ultramontanism, between the old theology (Augustinianism) and the new theology (Molinism)" (*L'Assemblée* 376).

them had provoked a "crystallization"<sup>80</sup> that hindered any sensible resolution.

The crisis of *Unigenitus* can be perceived at four different levels of interpretation, which sometimes overlap: it was a crisis of authority, a theological crisis, a political crisis, and a religious one. The last two elements have been rather satisfactorily surveyed. That the political aspect was important appears evident from the beginning. The fact that the bull was registered by Parliament in February 1714, then became law of state in March 1730, made opposition to it a political statement as well as a religious offense.<sup>81</sup> Conversely, the same association shows that religious conflicts were fought at a high political level, as is patent in the opposition to the Society of Jesus that eventually led to its suppression.<sup>82</sup>

Similarly, three influences of the crisis cannot be denied: the growing anticlericalism, the strengthening of deism, and the negative attitude of the French Enlightenment toward religion.<sup>83</sup> However, these general observations will not be fully appreciated without reference to the central themes of the conflict: at its core the question remained theological, a complicated matter of authority and dogma.

#### *Unigenitus as a Crisis of Authority*

In a dramatic manner Louis-Antoine de Noailles, the pious but vacillating archbishop of Paris, epitomizes the complex crisis of *Unigenitus*. From the beginning of the process of condemnation of the *Réflexions morales*, he had been given the opportunity to vindicate his cause and destroy his enemies, but did not take advantage of it.<sup>84</sup> Though he did not enjoy an excellent relationship with the pope he had helped to elect,<sup>85</sup> he always expressed his deep respect for the Holy See. Why would he take the risk of losing everything, including the respect of a beloved monarch,<sup>86</sup> by rejecting the bull?

Ceyssens' interpretation, which might seem weak at times, acquires some strength when put in the later context of the appeals during the regency of the Duke of Orleans. The appeal to a general council, inaugurated in March 1717 by four bishops, soon followed by other members of the episcopate (including Noailles) and of the lower clergy, must be perceived as much more than a simple "conciliar reaction" typical of

<sup>80</sup> J. Le Brun, Introduction to F. Fénelon, *Oeuvres* 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1983) xxv.

<sup>81</sup> Kreiser, *Miracles* 102.

<sup>82</sup> Daubenton 358-78; Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France, 1757-1765*.

<sup>83</sup> Van Kley, *ibid.* 233-35.

<sup>84</sup> Noailles 217; *Le Tellier* 295-301, what Ceyssens calls "The Bochard Affair."

<sup>85</sup> Noailles 201.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* 219-20.

Gallicanism,<sup>87</sup> or the spontaneous re-enactment of an earlier opposition to Rome provoked by Louis XIV against Innocent XI.<sup>88</sup> It appears to have been the expression of a genuine dissatisfaction, even distress, with the role of the papacy and its inability to acknowledge the seriousness of the situation. For these men who were always accustomed to finding precedents in history, what the pope had been doing in the case of Quesnel's book was simply wrong, since the judgment he presented to the universal Church with the purpose of imposing it could be proven erroneous.<sup>89</sup> These manifest errors scandalized the French, not because of the question of infallibility, since they did not accept the notion, but for their deep ecclesiological meaning. The problem was not the pope's error but his refusal to acknowledge and repair it; for papal authority is for the edification of the Church, not its destruction.<sup>90</sup> If his text was not satisfactory, he should have simply reconsidered it and offered some corrections after being respectfully asked by the very bishops who (theoretically) solicited his intervention in the first place. To refuse to do so after it had become evident that the earlier judgment, far from fulfilling its purpose, was at least unclear, if not opposed to the tradition of the Church, was to place the personal interest of the pontiff before the Church's welfare, and to manifest an attitude of *obstinatio* unbecoming to his responsibilities.

The bishops' opposition to *Unigenitus*, and later their appeals to a general council, expressed therefore more than a general dissatisfaction or an appeal to public opinion. They manifested their desire to resolve a crisis which, after the pope's refusal to revise his document, could then be dealt with only at the level of the Catholic Church as a whole. Though it remained extremely abstract, and practically impossible since they represented a minority, this solution, if extreme, was a consistent one.<sup>91</sup> In other times a general council could well have decided to censure a pope who so evidently did not observe the traditions of the Church and seemed to change ecclesiastical structures by claiming a boundless authority.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>87</sup> D. Hudson, "Les Nouvelles ecclésiastiques: Jansenism and Conciliarism," *CHR* 70 (1984) 389-91; Van Kley, *The Damians Affair* 172-73.

<sup>88</sup> J. Orcibal, *Louis XIV contre Innocent XI* (Paris: Vrin, 1949) 86-87.

<sup>89</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 303; *Fabrioni* 77-78.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. 2 Cor 13:10; Y. Congar, "La 'réception' comme réalité ecclésiologique," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 56 (1972) 390-91.

<sup>91</sup> Hudson, "Les Nouvelles ecclésiastiques" 392.

<sup>92</sup> In *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 303, Ceyskens notes, not very convincingly, that after *Unigenitus* Clement himself could have been censured for the content of his homilies, which contradicted his own magisterium. This remark applies more to the broader case of the bull.



This attitude was clearly perceived in Rome, but though he now confided that he had been wrong to follow the extreme advices of Fabroni and Le Tellier,<sup>93</sup> Clement XI did not think it possible to disavow or even to "explain" his solemn document. Because of the claims of the papacy to ultimate authority and personal infallibility, he was condemned to forge ahead, with the hope that a successor would be better able to control the situation.<sup>94</sup> In 1718 a new bull, *Pastoralis officii*, "too apologetic to be effective,"<sup>95</sup> expressed the papal stalemate, affirming his authority against a minority that "fears that [*Unigenitus*] destroys Catholic dogmas [ . . . ] which would be the same as to fear that *Peter's faith should have failed* and that the whole Church of Jesus Christ had strayed from the way of truth and salvation."<sup>96</sup> Short of excommunicating his detractors, the pope "excluded them from his communion."<sup>97</sup>

The "crystallization" provoked by *Unigenitus* was first an opposition between two models of the Church, Gallican and ultramontane. For the ultramontanes, the case was finished when the supreme pastor had decided, whereas for the Gallicans, only "reception" by the local Church could assure the authority of the pontifical document. An outline of this particular conception will help to understand the difficulties fully.

For Gallican theorists, even Fénelon, as has been seen above, the magisterium of the Roman pontiff is always exercised in conjunction with the bishops. The problem of Jansenism, with the necessity it created to invoke the solemn authority of the pope, had forced the French to consider a precise pattern of reception of the papal pronouncements that would maintain that premise. It was essentially devised by Pierre de Marca, the archbishop of Toulouse, and based itself on the historical precedents of the African Church.<sup>98</sup> This is how it was conceived: the local Church raises a question (and proceeds to a first condemnation), then requests Rome to study the same question (and sanction their decision); the solemn conclusion of the papacy is verified (and compared with the local censure) and officially approved by provincial councils. It is only with this last step that it receives its "catholic" or universal

<sup>93</sup> *Clément XI* 303; *Daubenton* 378-79.

<sup>94</sup> If Clement had given the interpretation of *Unigenitus* offered by Benedict XIV, notes Ceysens, "there would be no history of *Unigenitus*" (*Saint-Simon* 527).

<sup>95</sup> *Saint-Simon* 527.

<sup>96</sup> *Pastoralis officii* 373-74, in *Bullarium Romanum* 21 (Turin: Vecous, 1871) 810.

<sup>97</sup> *Pastoralis officii* 375. As Carreyre, *Le jansénisme durant la régence* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de RHE, 1932), shows, this exclusion was meant as a less drastic measure than excommunication, since it did not deprive the opposing bishops of their jurisdiction.

<sup>98</sup> F. Gacquère, *Pierre de Marca* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1932) 134-37; A. G. Martimort, *Le gallicanisme de Bossuet* (Paris: Cerf, 1953) 212-14; P. Jansen, "L'Assemblée du clergé de 1655 et l'affaire janséniste," *Chroniques de Port-Royal* 32 (Paris: Vrin, 1983) 161-77.

value.<sup>99</sup>

According to these principles, therefore, the fact that *Unigenitus* had not received unanimous episcopal approbation did not qualify the document to be presented as an official teaching of the Catholic Church. What was needed in this situation was nothing but "conciliar unanimity":

Whether one stops with France or looks at the other national churches, everywhere the constitution is considered a mere judgment by the pope. Nowhere does one see the unanimous and canonical consent that alone can confer on the judgments of the supreme pontiff the grades of authority and strength that are needed to transform them into laws of the Church. . . . The question is whether the bull *Unigenitus* that condemns 101 propositions on matters important to religion is consistent with the doctrine and the tradition of the Church. The natural way to make sure of it is first to fix the common sense (*sens populaire*) of each of these propositions, then to compare them with Scripture and tradition. This is the way councils have always proceeded.<sup>100</sup>

### *Unigenitus as a Theological Crisis*

If the opposition consolidated by *Unigenitus* clearly dealt with questions of authority in the Church, it appears evident that the core of the matter remained essentially theological.<sup>101</sup> Even more than the process of its elaboration and reception, it was the content of the papal document that caused problems. What was seen in Rome as "false, captious, pernicious [ . . . ] and finally heretical" was perceived in France as authentically Catholic. The question of authority—who defines the Catholic truth, the pope alone or the bishops with the pope—became compounded with another: How does the Church assure herself of this truth? In this context the pope's claim to ultimate authority and infallibility was perceived by the Gallicans as the basis for a dangerous "evolution of dogma" that actually changed, and therefore betrayed, Catholic faith. The polarization of issues—Molinist-ultramontane vs. Jansenist-Gallican—supported this interpretation, but it was the contents of the bull that made the conclusion inevitable.

<sup>99</sup> This process was applied in an exemplary manner in the case of the condemnation of Fénelon's *Maximes des saints* (1699). In that sense it seems that the reception of *Cum alias* was intended to complete the Gallican pattern: analysis by provincial Assemblies of bishops, and promulgation of the text together with their observations; registration by Parliament with inclusion of the jurists' remarks; finally, inscription in the registers of the French clergy in the following General Assembly (1700). See L. Ellies du Pin, *Histoire ecclésiastique du XVIIe siècle* 4, 34; Martimort, *Le gallicanisme de Bossuet* 685–86.

<sup>100</sup> [J. B. Cadry and J. B. Louail,] *Histoire du livre des Réflexions morales* (Amsterdam: Nicolas Potjieter, 1723) 314–15.

<sup>101</sup> As L. Cognet has suggested in his review of Ceysens' work, there is always a certain temptation of "reductionism" that dismisses too easily the doctrinal content of the Jansenist crisis: *RHE* 60 (1965) 919–20.

It seems that in collecting over one hundred damnable propositions the Roman censors had the desire to circumscribe "modern errors" and therefore protect the truth by using the *Réflexions morales* to condemn "a great number of the most pernicious errors, either already condemned or recently invented."<sup>102</sup> In that sense the constitution was a "syllabus of errors," established from the perspective of the Roman schools of theology.<sup>103</sup> And here lay the major difficulty to its full acceptance in France. For one could not but notice a certain partiality in the choice of members of the examining commission,<sup>104</sup> quite similar to what happened for the first official condemnations of Jansenism; it confirmed the conclusion that the bull endorsed a limited and "new" version of Catholic theology against the real tradition of the Church. The problem had existed since the early censures: "If *Augustinus* was faithful to the Doctor of Grace, why was it censured? Can Rome condemn the mind of St. Augustine, since the Jansenists maintain that they simply follow it?"<sup>105</sup>

The defenders of the Roman position found this an unacceptable dilemma,<sup>106</sup> since the ideas of the Church Fathers have always to be considered in the larger context of Catholic tradition, the unanimity of the Fathers expressed by the magisterium. Responding indirectly to Antoine Arnauld, who had written, "One has to interpret by St. Augustine the definitions of the Council of Trent and the decisions of the popes,"<sup>107</sup> Lallemand significantly wrote: "The Council of Trent has explained and collected the true sense of Augustine."<sup>108</sup>

From this example it appears evident that theological conclusions were not elaborated the same way in Rome as in France. Neveu in his in-depth commentary suggests on the French part an "Augustinian fundamentalism" that treated the Church Fathers as theological sources nearly

<sup>102</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 259–60.

<sup>103</sup> *Daubenton* 369–70.

<sup>104</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 259–60.

<sup>105</sup> B. Neveu, "Juge suprême et docteur infaillible: Le pontificat romain, de la bulle *In eminenti* (1643) à la bulle *Auctorem fidei* (1794)," in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen-âge-Temps modernes* 93 (Rome, 1981) 240.

<sup>106</sup> The 30th proposition condemned by Alexander VIII in 1690 read: "When anyone finds a doctrine clearly established in Augustine, he can absolutely hold and teach it, disregarding any bull of the pope" (DS 2330).

<sup>107</sup> A. Arnauld, *Apologie pour M. Jansenius*, in *Oeuvres* 17, 88–89.

<sup>108</sup> *Le Tellier* 283. Ceysens keenly develops this opposition in "La 5ème des propositions condamnées de Jansenius," *Jansenius et le jansénisme dans les Pays-Bas* (Louvain: Leuven Univ., 1982) 52. See his "Le drame de conscience des premiers jansénistes," *Augustinus magister* 2 (Paris: Etudes augustiniennes, 1955) 1069–76 (*Jansenistica minora* 3, no. 25); also P. Stella, "Augustinisme et orthodoxie, des congrégations *De auxiliis* à la bulle *Vineam Domini*," *XVIIe siècle* 34 (1982) 169–89. J. Plainemaison, "Qu'est-ce que le jansénisme?" *Revue historique* 283 (1985) 130, seems to miss the importance of this point.

equal to the Scriptures.<sup>109</sup> The positive method used in the Gallican Church, the attraction of the early Christian centuries, the experience of religious controversy, all supported a theological construction that considered the origins of Christianity as the only acceptable reference point.<sup>110</sup> The Roman conception, on the other hand, with its stress on the authority of the papacy, declared the official pronouncements the last words on the matter, since they represented the living tradition.<sup>111</sup> The dilemma started by *Augustinus* became evident to many in the case of the *Réflexions morales*, where 101 propositions extracted from the book could be supported by direct patristic quotations or references.<sup>112</sup> In its very theological content the document that was expected to serve the cause of papal infallibility could be advertised by its opponents as "the proof of papal fallibility."<sup>113</sup>

#### UNIGENITUS AS A GALLICAN DRAMA

The fight for one "truth" over another represented in fact a confrontation between two conceptions of Catholicism. In the Roman perspective the struggle against Jansenism was perceived as a way to influence the evolution of ecclesiology in a sense favorable to a post-Tridentine conception of the Church. But in France during the same period the political interests of the monarchy encouraged the elaboration of an alternative that adapted the old conciliarist model. By 1713 this "ecclesiastical Gallicanism," as it is conveniently styled, was a coherent doctrine taught in opposition to the conception of the Church presented by the ultramontane schools. In this sense, even before the publication of the

<sup>109</sup> B. Neveu, "Augustinisme janséniste et magistère romain," *XVIIe siècle* 34 (1982) 209.

<sup>110</sup> Neveu, *ibid.* 194; *idem*, "Archéolatrie et modernité dans le savoir ecclésiastique du XVIIe siècle," *XVIIe siècle* 33 (1981) 173. See also G. Tavard, *La tradition au XVIIe siècle en France et en Angleterre* (Paris: Cerf, 1969) 19–238, and M. Cottret, "Aux origines du républicanisme janséniste: Le mythe de l'église primitive et le primitivisme des Lumières," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 31 (1984) 99–155.

<sup>111</sup> But without a clear conception of the "evolution of dogma": "The sovereign pontificate itself adheres to fixist views" (Neveu, "Augustinisme janséniste" 196).

<sup>112</sup> *La constitution Unigenitus en quatre colonnes, avec les jugements des saints Pères et quelques remarques* (n.p., n.d. [1713]); *L'Assemblée* 397; L. Boursier et al., *Hexaples, ou les six colonnes sur la constitution Unigenitus* (Amsterdam, 1714); *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 302–3. Some of the 31 "rigoristic propositions" condemned by Alexander VIII in 1690 (DS 2301–32) were direct quotations from the Fathers, a fact that had not been overlooked by the Jansenists. See S. Pera, "Historical Notes concerning Ten of the Thirty-One Rigoristic Propositions Condemned by Alexander VIII (1690)," *Franciscan Studies* 20 (1960) 94–95; L. Ceysens, "Les jugements portés par les théologiens du Saint-Office sur les 31 propositions rigoristes condamnées en 1690," *Antonianum* 56 (1981) 451–54.

<sup>113</sup> *L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 306, quoting the Procureur-Général D'Aguesseau: "I found myself saying that, as Procureur-Général, it was my interest to ask for the registration by Parliament of the bull, as a durable proof of the fallibility of the popes."

constitution a conflict was in existence, but it was fought within the theoretical context of the "freedom of schools" at the level of specialists; the papacy was not directly involved.<sup>114</sup>

The promulgation of *Vineam Domini*, then of *Unigenitus*, changed the debate because, despite their cautious redaction,<sup>115</sup> the two bulls clearly associated the office of the pope with extreme anti-Jansenism, as well as ultramontanism. Here the evidence offered by Ceyskens must be accepted: Cardinal Fabroni and his Jesuit associates went too far and exerted a regrettable influence over a less extreme pontiff. Similarly, Ceyskens' insistence on a parallel between the early condemnations of Jansenism and the elaboration of *Unigenitus* must be appreciated; if the similarity strikes such a specialist, we may understand why the opponents of the constitution had noted it too. Familiar with the history of the first condemnations,<sup>116</sup> they were aware of the pressure exerted by the French Court and by some influential clerics to obtain a Roman condemnation of Quesnel's book. They themselves had a good experience of Roman politics,<sup>117</sup> and through their connections in the Eternal City had followed the details of the preparation of the new document.<sup>118</sup> They judged the condemnation an evident abuse of the office of the papacy. Ceyskens adopts their conclusions entirely.<sup>119</sup>

In defending the Jansenist interpretation of the origins of the bull, Ceyskens does not approve their errors; he simply points to the real issues. *Unigenitus* was unrealistic because, in its desire to destroy the root itself of Jansenism and at the same time prove the ultimate authority of the pope, it challenged the entire theological methodology of the Gallicans as well as their ecclesiology. The question had been in the background since the condemnation of *Augustinus*, but in this case no distinction, no alternative was imaginable. To many the situation furnished a very clear proof not only of the validity but of the necessity of

<sup>114</sup> "The Holy See always kept a somewhat equal balance, striking on the right and on the left the friends of Port-Royal or the clergy of the Low Countries, but also the Jesuits in Europe and in China" (Neveu, "Le pontificat romain" 271). Even after *Unigenitus* the papacy claimed to respect this "freedom of schools" (Clement XI in *Pastoralis officii* and Benedict XIV in 1754).

<sup>115</sup> This is why the qualifications of the 101 propositions had been given *in globo* (*L'Unigenitus et sa préparation* 290).

<sup>116</sup> J. H. Serry, *Historia congregationum de auxiliis* (Louvain: Denique, 1700); L. Ellies du Pin, *Histoire ecclésiastique du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Pralard, 1714); [H. Robillard d'Avrigny,] *Mémoires chronologiques et dogmatiques* (n.p., 1720).

<sup>117</sup> B. Neveu, *Sébastien du Cambout de Pontchâteau (1634-1690) et ses missions à Rome* (Paris: De Boccard, 1969); "La correspondance romaine de Louis-Paul du Vaucel," in *Actes du colloque sur le jansénisme* 105-84.

<sup>118</sup> *Quesnel* 261-63.

<sup>119</sup> *Daubenton* 378.

the Gallican model of the Church, which would protect the papacy, the *sedes*, against the errors of—or, to be more respectful, the bad influence over—the pope, the *sedens*. The debate then became harsher because what was at stake appeared clearer, a different conception of Catholicism: not only the ecclesiological articulation of the papacy and the episcopate, but a much larger theological construction, with all its social and political ramifications. To the association, at least perceived as such, of Molinism and ultramontanism, a Jansenist-Gallican coalition had to offer resistance. It already was in the making and even existed in some instances, as certainly in the *Réflexions morales*, but it acquired a new strength after the promulgation of the constitution and Rome's refusal to consider any modification.

When the bull arrived in France, the staunch Gallicans then associated with the Jansenists in some of the condemnations resisted for theological reasons. The conclusion they reached on "essential truths" was different, if not exactly opposite.<sup>120</sup> They considered that they not only had the right but the duty to do so. Exception to their attitude was taken by the king, who, not conversant with these matters, wanted a total conformity. He thus associated his political power not only with the defense of papal authority but with a theological system that was different in its method and conclusions from the Gallican one he had inspired. The polarization was then completed: Molinist + ultramontane + royal. To blame the Jansenists for their "mentality of opposition" is to forget that they were forced into a resistance that because of the monarch's attitude had to be political as well as theological.

The process continued to escalate after the death of Louis XIV (1715)—inevitably, since Rome refused any explanatory modification. During the first years of the new reign, both the bishops opposed to and those in favor of the constitution tried again to reach a solution by agreeing upon a common interpretation of the papal document, but they were unable to obtain Roman support.<sup>121</sup> In this dramatic confrontation with the papacy<sup>122</sup> Gallican principles were seriously shaken and probably

<sup>120</sup> The major theological divergences are developed at length in the ponderous quantity of books and pamphlets published during the period; cf. J. Carreyre, "Unigenitus," *DTC* 15, 2157–62. Noailles's *Instruction pastorale*, published in February 1714, points to those issues: "the difference between the two covenants, the grace of Jesus Christ, the characteristics of faith, the nature of the Church, the love of God, the fear of punishment, the rules for administration of penance, excommunication, the reading of Scripture, persecutions and suffering, i.e. the major points of doctrine, discipline, and Christian morality" (*Accommodements* 360).

<sup>121</sup> *Accommodements* 389; *Pastoralis officii* 356; Carreyre, *Le jansénisme durant la régence*.

<sup>122</sup> That Jansenism stirred up a "Gallican drama" was suggested by L. Cognet, "Le jansénisme, drame gallican," *L'Année canonique* 10 (1966) 75–83, and J. A. G. Tans, "Port-

irremediably weakened, allowing more extreme interpretations to develop.<sup>123</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

How pivotal *Unigenitus* is to an understanding of Catholicism between the Council of Trent and the French Revolution should be apparent by now. The bull was in the continuity of all the post-Tridentine papal utterances that aimed at asserting Rome's final authority as well as condemning particular theological errors. But it did not take seriously enough the cohesion of the alternative "Gallican model" that had grown precisely as a reaction against this progress of ultramontanist. The conflict started as a clash between two conceptions of theology, two visions of authority in the Church, and for lack of resolution it exploded in many directions, theological, social, and political, that reveal the depth of the impact.

For that matter, one should take seriously contemporaneous judgments claiming that the ill-fated bull was "one of the major events since the apostles' time."<sup>124</sup> For those who were involved in it, in France, Rome, and elsewhere, the crisis must indeed have been experienced as a great challenge to Catholic identity.<sup>125</sup> *Unigenitus* did not create what could be termed "Catholic resistance to Rome" (instances of a similar attitude can be found throughout the 17th century<sup>126</sup>), but the long struggle "about the bull" certainly gave it greater consistency.

Historians generally consider that, properly speaking, the crisis of *Unigenitus* stretched from the bull's reception in France (1714) to the registration as a law of state by Parliament (1730).<sup>127</sup> By that date what

Royal entre le reveil spirituel et le drame gallican: Le rôle de Pasquier Quesnel," *LIAS* 4 (1977) 99–114.

<sup>123</sup> The "Richerism" described by E. Préclin (*Les jansénistes du XVIIIe siècle et la constitution civile du clergé* [Paris: Gambier, 1929]) and the "Convulsionaries Movement" were not inevitably written in the development of Jansenism. It is only because the orthodox Gallican model was in a stalemate that these deviations became prominent. See L. Mezzadri, *Fra giansenisti e antigiansenisti: Vincent Depaul e la Congregazione della missione (1624–1737)* (Florence: Nuova Italia, 1977) 6.

<sup>124</sup> "M. [Matthieu] Ysoré [d'Hervault, archbishop of Tours] often told the abbé d'Étemare: 'This constitution is the most important affair since the apostles' time. It will destroy Rome'" (B. Neveu, "Port-Royal à l'âge des Lumières: Les pensées et les anecdotes de l'abbé d'Étemare, 1682–1770," *LIAS* 4 (1977) 142.

<sup>125</sup> A perception that remains to be analyzed, but note, e.g., the remarks made by C. L. Maire, in *Les convulsionnaires de Saint-Médard* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985) 192–97, on the distress expressed by the convulsionaries.

<sup>126</sup> Fliche-Martin, *Histoire de l'église* 18, 361–70.

<sup>127</sup> J. Carreyre, "Unigenitus," *DTC* 15, 2133; G. Hardy, *Le cardinal de Fleury et le mouvement janséniste* (Paris: Champion, 1925); Thomas, *La querelle de l'Unigenitus*, sees the end of the "quarrel" with the Provincial Council of Embrun (1727–28).

the crisis had produced was clear enough. First, it offered a precise object to what before had been only a sporadic or episodic reaction. *Unigenitus* now typified the autocratic attitude of the Romans; its rejection had become an appeal to an ideal conception of authority in the Church. Second, it provided an agenda of reforms; the very pastoral attitudes censured by the constitution could not be abandoned but had to be carried out nevertheless. Third, it exacerbated the differences between schools or "parties" in the Catholic Church. Despite the slow and ambiguous emergence of a "Third Party,"<sup>128</sup> Catholicism was to be weakened by the nonresolution of the crisis, and the Church's ability to answer more serious challenges atrophied considerably.<sup>129</sup>

From the Appellants to the Synod of Pistoia and probably the Civil Constitution of the French Clergy, historians have noted the ripple effect of this extraordinary crisis. In French history the papal document remains such a landmark that one might well call the 18th century "the century of *Unigenitus*,"<sup>130</sup> not only, it appears, for its social and political results, which were certainly of influence, but in what was the source of everything, a major dilemma, *the* major dilemma of post-Tridentine Catholicism, the struggle between two conceptions of Western Catholicism. By their meticulous research and penetrating analysis, Ceysens and Neveu have certainly fostered a better understanding of what the bull *Unigenitus* was about. Placing it within the larger context of Catholic life and history, they have convincingly shed a new light on the years of the actual religious crisis. Conversely, their work should stimulate further studies applying their conclusions to a renewed assessment of Catholicism as it developed from the Council of Trent, which strengthened it, to the French Revolution, which seemed to mark its abolition.

<sup>128</sup> E. Appolis, *Le "Tiers parti" catholique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Picard, 1960).

<sup>129</sup> Neveu, "Le pontificat romain" 273.

<sup>130</sup> Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair* 99.