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obligation clearly demands a practical reason-based conception of action. And by now it should be becoming clear why.

Obligations, conceived in natural law-based terms, are justifications for action which are action-specific in their force. The existence of such justifications means, then, that our will or motivational capacity, the capacity to which the force of any justification for action performs applies, must itself be a capacity for action. And what makes it a capacity for action must be precisely its status as a faculty addressed by and responsive to justifications for action such as obligations. Actions of the will must therefore count as actions in practical reason-based terms—that is, they must count as actions because they are motivations addressed by and responsive to the force of practical justifications. The natural law-based conception of obligation as an action-specific force of rational demand and the practical reason-based model of action fit together as hand and tailor-made glove.

OBLIGATION: THE FORCE MODEL VERSUS THE FEATURE MODEL

How can we make sense of a force of reason which is not merely advisory but demanding? Consider how the force of reason ordinarily seems to work. It works purely and simply by justifying what it supports as more reasonable than any alternative. The other options are left less reasonable, or even as downright silly. But that particular kind of rational force, no matter how forcefully it comes—that is, no matter how silly other options are left—is simply a force of recommendation. We are still in the realm of advice, however forceful. We have not yet arrived at obligatoriness or demand; for to do even what is very silly is not *ipso facto* to breach an obligation and do wrong. It is tempting, therefore, to seek to characterize obligatoriness further. But that is not easy to do.

What of the idea, endorsed by Suarez, that the source of all obligation is to be found in the authority of a superior? We might take this idea and seek to use it to provide a reductive account of what obligatoriness is—an account which explains obligatoriness in other terms. Obligatoriness, on this view, consists in nothing other than the property of being commanded by a superior.

But this claim is not very plausible—nor I think is it really Suarez's. It is true that many obligatory actions are commanded by a superior—perhaps it may turn out to be true, as many theists suppose, that all of them are. But that being commanded is surely a feature of the action which generates a justification for performing it—it is not itself the action's obligatoriness,

which is surely something fundamentally different, namely the force with which that feature of being commanded justifies the action. And the features which justify an action are one thing; the force with which those features justify it is quite another. It is a category mistake to confuse the two.

Suppose it is claimed that all actions which are obligatory are so only because they are the subject of the will or command of a superior. To make that claim is not to say anything about what obligatoriness itself consists in. It is simply to say that all obligatoriness must have a very specific source—in the command of a superior. So in making this claim we may be doing no more than making a necessary link—between the justificatory force of obligatoriness or demand and the justification-generating feature of being commanded. And simply to make that link is not to say anything more about what the force of obligation comes to, let alone to reduce obligatoriness to nothing more than the feature which generates it.

Suarez certainly cannot be involved in any reductive account of obligatoriness. He cannot be seeking to explain obligatoriness in other terms. Far from claiming to explain what obligatoriness is in other terms, Suarez happily uses the notion in his specification of the content of the very legislative volition by which a superior imposes obligations. The content of the volition is, not that a given action be performed, but that a given action be obligatory. For Suarez, then, obligatoriness is not being reduced to something else. The notion is instead being assumed; it is presented simply as the justificatory force of demand—a distinctive justificatory force which is already being entertained and employed within the very legislative volition which generates it.

But what is that force? How does demand differ from mere recommendation? If we still seek to answer that question, we can appeal, as in effect Vasquez does, to the badness of not doing what is obligatory and the imputability of that badness to the agent. This is to understand the demandingness of an obligatory standard, plausibly enough, as lying in the fact that we can be held responsible for keeping to the standard, on pain of counting as bad for breaching it. The trouble with this account is that it threatens to render redundant what is central to the natural law theory: the thought that the force of obligation is a force of reason—one which it is irrational to disregard.

Vasquez does try to make the connection between obligation and reason. He ties the badness of performing the wrongful action to the incompatibility of that wrongful action with one's rational nature. But this connection of the badness of wrongful action to the irrationality of performing it is merely asserted. The appeal to rationality is not really doing any work in specifying what obligatoriness comes to. That work is instead being done by the thought that the agent would be bad not to do

what is obligatory. And that thought is all too easily detached from any structure of reason or justification. Wrongdoers can perfectly well be seen as bad for doing wrong, without *ipso facto* being viewed as irrational. This is why later on Hume was happy to characterize the obligatoriness of a moral standard in terms of the badness of breaching it—but precisely as part of his central ethical project of severing entirely the connection between obligation and rational justification. The idea of a force of reason or justification which is, however, not simply advisory or recommendatory, but which is still undeniably a force of reason, remains elusive.

I have said that this natural law-based theory of obligation depends on a specific theory of action—one which permits there to be such a thing as an action-specific justificatory force. We need to be able to conceive action in practical reason-based terms, as an exercise of a motivational capacity for rationality, a motivational capacity which is governed by and responsive to distinctively practical justifications.

In Hobbes, as I also said, we find a developed assault on this practical reason-based theory of action. The assault maintains that there are no special, action-constitutive motivations. The realm of elicited internal agency is abolished, and all we are left with are imperated external actions. This view of action was, eventually, to become a dominant orthodoxy within the English language philosophical tradition. It follows, on this new theory of action, that if all justifications for action must address motivation or the will, as they surely must, there can be no justifications with a force which is action-specific—there can be no justifications which apply to action and action alone. If they are to move us to act, all practical justifications must still address, with the same force, our motivations as well as the actions which those motivations cause and explain. But those motivations are now passions; they are not internal actions.

Even on this new theory of action, we can continue to adopt a superficially Suarezian theory of obligation—a theory of obligation which preserves certain immediately prominent Suarezian claims both about it and about action. Obligation can still remain a kind of law in the sense of being an action-specific standard. And action can still remain obligatory because commanded. And all action can still occur as something *volitus* or willed. But because on this new theory we are restricting agency to genuinely external, imperated acts—because, in other words, we are abolishing the category of internal, elicited motivational actions—we can only preserve these Suarezian claims at a cost. We will be forced to abandon a core element of Suarez's theory of obligation. Obligation can no longer address us as an action-governing force of our reason. We will have to transform obligation from an action-specific justificatory force into something quite different.

We must move from a Force model of obligation, where obligation is a justificatory force, to a Feature model of obligation as a justification-generating feature. Motivations now being passive, they had better not be obligatory, if obligation is to remain tied to action. So we must now identify obligatoriness with the feature of being commanded.²⁹ Only in this way can we have obligations on external actions which do not immediately translate into obligations on motivations to perform those external actions. And that is because being commanded is a feature which external actions can possess alone, without the feature attaching to motivation as well.

I can perfectly well command you to perform an external action, such as raising your hand, without *ipso facto* also commanding you to will or intend to raise your hand. The justificatory force generated by my command that you raise your hand must, like any such force, actually extend to the will; when my command to raise your hand gives you reason to raise your hand, it must also give you the same reason to intend to raise your hand. But my command to you to raise your hand need not likewise extend to the will. All I have commanded you to do is raise your hand—not intend to raise it. In which case, since being obligatory is now reduced simply to possessing the feature of being commanded, if you are unmotivated to do what I have commanded, you are no doubt indifferent to or even contemptuous of your obligations. But you have not yet actually breached any obligation. For that, you need actually to have failed to raise your hand.

Such a Feature model of obligation has its attractions. This is so especially if we consider, not obligation of a purely moral kind, but obligation in relation to positive law—that is, in relation to the laws passed by human states and legislators; for we use the language of obligation in describing these positive laws too. We talk of actions being made ‘legally obligatory’ or obligatory under positive law. And in this case obligatoriness does look like another justifying or reason-giving feature of an action. What else, we might wonder, is being ‘legally obligatory’ or obligatory under positive law but a legislatively created feature of actions—the feature of being decreed or commanded by a government—a feature which then serves to justify performing them?

On the other hand, on more careful reflection, even here it seems absurd to treat obligation as no more than an action-justifying feature. For

²⁹ Consider the account of obligation in Austin (1995), p. 22: ‘Being liable to evil from you if I comply not with a wish which you signify, I am bound or obliged by your command, or I lie under a duty to obey it. ... Command and duty are, therefore, correlative terms: the meaning denoted by each being implied or supposed by the other. ... He who will inflict an evil in case his desire be disregarded, utters a command by expressing or intimating his desire: He who is liable to the evil in case he disregard the desire, is bound or obliged by the command.’

if we do that, we have lost the idea of demandedness essential to obligation, which seems, as I have observed, to be, not a justification-generating feature of an action, but rather the peculiar force with which some features of an action justify its performance. Take an action such as paying one's taxes. It is not as if, besides its other features, this action has a further, additional feature—the feature of being obligatory—which simply recommends or makes it the more advisable to perform it. Rather, given the other features which the action has, including being commanded of us by the state, supporting the state's welfare services and the like, we *must* perform it: to fail to would be to do wrong. And the action's obligatoriness is the force of that justificatory *must* or demand—a force generated by the feature of the action's being decreed by the state, and so not that feature itself. And this sense of a demanding force arises even in relation to positive legality, as something generated by the decrees of positive law—certainly for those who accept that positive law's claim to impose obligations is genuine.³⁰

There is more than one way, then, of conceiving of obligation as a law on action—even of conceiving it as a law commanded by a superior. To conceive of it as a commanded law in the precise way that Suarez did, you will need very distinctive notions of obligatoriness and action— notions that you will share as common property with thinkers such as Vasquez, who do not see law as resting on the commands of a superior at all. You will need to conceive obligation as an action-specific justificatory force, and you will need to conceive of action as a practical mode of exercising rationality—and so as a motivational response to practical justifications. And these conceptions will just as clearly divide you from many others who might well share your particular belief that obligation comes only with a superior's command.

The idea of obligatoriness as an action-specific justificatory force is deeply intuitive. But it is a conception of obligation which has, as I have said, largely disappeared, at any rate from much Anglophone philosophy. And by now it is not hard to see why. The supposed force of obligation

³⁰ It is, of course, tempting, as does Austin, to relocate the missing justificatory force of demand in some sanction or 'evil' that will meet non-performance of the obligatory. But then a standard scholastic distinction, that between the directive force of obligatoriness, and the coercive force with which that directive force can be accompanied, is thereby abolished. The former, justificatory force comes to be identified with the sanctions which coercively enforce compliance—which is surely a mistake. For the issue of whether something is obligatory is quite distinct, as Suarez realises, from the issue of whether its doing is to be enforced by sanctions; see Suarez (1856–78), vol. 5, *De legibus*, p. 424: 'Ratio autem est, quia legislator potest simul sua lege obligare in conscientia, imponendo poenam transgressoribus, ut in superioribus ostensum est, et potest etiam obligare in conscientia sine adiectione poenae; ergo etiam obligare in conscientia solum ad debitum poenae ...' (My emphases)

seems to resist further analysis. It is very hard to show that it really is a force of reason. And this conception of obligation as an action-specific justificatory force rests on a theory of action which, at any rate, in the hands of Suarez or Vasquez, now seems profoundly strange. Action threatens to be dissociated from such familiar observable bodily activities as walking or raising a hand, and to be driven implausibly within, to be left an invisible motion of the mind. These are no small problems to resolve if such a theory of obligation and action is to be made credible again.³¹

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³¹ The ideas of obligation as an action-specific justificatory force and of action as a practical mode of exercising reason are explored further and defended in my books, *The Ethics of Action: Action and Normativity* and *The Ethics of Action: Action and Self-Determination* (Oxford forthcoming).

Michael Baius (1513–89) and the Debate on ‘Pure Nature’: Grace and Moral Agency in Sixteenth-Century Scholasticism

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Recent, if belated, interest among historians of philosophy in early modern ethics has served to uncover and clarify several features of the moral thought of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The cumulative effect of such study has been to ameliorate our current understanding of the genealogy of modern ideas about autonomy,¹ and our knowledge of the varied ancient and medieval sources which early modern thinkers used or rejected in their deliberations about the scope and point of morals.² Yet despite a developing appreciation of these previously ignored aspects of the history of philosophy, many elements of early modern moral thought are still unfamiliar to students of the subject or else are wholly ignored by contemporary scholars.

One area to suffer from general neglect is the subject of divine grace and the moral status of human beings after the fall.³ Believed by many historians of philosophy to be of ‘mere theological interest’, these topics rarely feature in treatments of early modern philosophy and ethics.⁴ To

¹ See Schneewind (1998).

² For the best available surveys in any modern language see Krayer (1988) and (1998).

³ Some of the issues relating to early modern views on grace and human nature are touched on, if only fleetingly, by Poppi (1988), esp. 661–67; and Sleight, Chappell and Della Rocca (1998), esp. pp. 1195–1206. Further to that there has been some coverage of grace in recent discussions of the work of Malebranche, Arnauld, and Leibniz. For a representative sample of writing in this area see Riley (1992), Kremer (2000) and (1994), pp. 219–39; Ndiaye (1991), pp. 217–263; Moreau (1999), pp. 268–99; and Sleight (1990), pp. 48–94 and (1996).

⁴ The subject of grace, though ignored by historians of philosophy, has received a great deal of attention from historians of theology, especially among Roman Catholic writers of the second part of the twentieth century. Chief among these was Henri de Lubac S.J. (1896–1991), whose influential historical study (1946), reprinted in two volumes (1965a) and (1965b), sought to recast then contemporary theological thinking about grace and nature. For a recent assessment of this work, and especially its historical theses on which so many of Lubac’s positive theological proposals might be said to rest, see Bonino (2001a). For other historical surveys of medieval and early modern ideas about grace and nature see *DTC* (1899–1953), VI, cols. 1554–1686; Vanneste (1996); and Lettieri (1999).

anyone with even the slightest understanding of the history of the period this omission may appear perverse. For in the earnest yet fractious religious culture of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Europe, different yet competing ideas about divine grace and opinions about the pre- and post-lapsarian condition of humankind served to condition several accounts of moral agency, practical reasoning and virtue.⁵ It is not difficult to understand why this should have been the case. According to the central doctrines of orthodox Christian theology—even as that teaching was understood by early modern thinkers on both sides of a newly established confessional divide—all men and women are born into the state of original sin by virtue of being descendants of the first human beings, Adam and Eve. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God through the sin of pride (*superbia*) and were cast out of the earthly paradise,⁶ they no longer enjoyed the benefits of their original created state, endowments which included free will, the virtues, as well as all the requisite powers of theoretical and practical reasoning.⁷

From the very earliest of times, Christian thinkers appreciated that the loss of such God-given gifts must clearly affect any conceptual description of human nature. What was, they asked, the extent of human freedom after the fall? Could sinful human beings become virtuous by their own efforts, or were they utterly dependent upon the grace of God? What, indeed, was the nature of such grace? What were the cognitive effects of original sin? And, what was the extent of the powers of practical reasoning in fallen humanity? From St Paul⁸ to Augustine of Hippo,⁹ and on to the scholastics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and late Middle Ages,¹⁰ Christian thinkers in the West debated these questions on the basis of an understanding of the essential characteristics of fallen humanity, arrived at different answers and formulated views about the human person and the limits of practical reasoning. This continued in the early modern period, especially in the second half of the sixteenth century, when the immediate stimulus of the events of the Reformation and the call for renewal in the Roman Catholic Church—a request heeded by the Council of Trent (1543–

⁵ These theories are fully discussed in Stone (forthcoming).

⁶ Genesis 3:1–24.

⁷ The full repercussions of humanity's fall from grace are spelt out by Augustine in his many writings on the Creation and Fall. See, in particular, *De Genesi ad litteram*; *De Genesi ad litteram liber imperfectus*; and *De Genesi adversus Manichaeos*. On these works see Pelland (1972).

⁸ Romans 1–3.

⁹ On Augustine see Vanneste (1996), pp. 21–48; Lössl (1997); Rist (2000), pp. 148–203; and Schulze (2002), pp. 11–34.

¹⁰ See Auer (1942–51); and Vanneste (1996), pp. 49–106.

63)—conspired to make the topics of grace and fallen human nature matters of pressing intellectual concern.¹¹

In what follows I propose to explain how notions of grace and ideas about fallen human nature—ideas and notions which derived from the anti-Pelagian writings of Augustine¹²—were treated by several important Roman Catholic thinkers around the time of the Council of Trent. My discussion will be restricted to two issues. First, I shall consider how these thinkers thought about moral agency in the light of their interpretation of fallen human nature; and second I shall attempt to uncover how their thinking about grace and the moral condition of pre- and post-lapsarian human beings helped them to reconsider several ideas about fallen human nature which were a feature of early sixteenth-century scholasticism. Further to these aims, I intend, by focusing on neo-Augustinian and Thomist writers, to shed some much needed light on the period immediately preceding the *De auxiliis* debate. A virulent and acrimonious dispute about grace, divine foreknowledge and human freedom, the *De auxiliis* debate was occasioned by the publication in 1588 of the infamous *Concordia* of Luis de Molina's (1535–1600).¹³ While the novel proposals set down by Molina would command the attention of scholastic and non-scholastic thinkers for a century and more, it is important to be aware that many of the questions he sought to resolve were already to the fore and deemed to be matters of controversy in the decades before, during and immediately after Trent.

Given the profusion of sources which constitute neo-Augustinian and Thomist thought in the second half of the sixteenth century, I shall advance my analysis by concentrating on a few individuals. Central to my story will be Michael Baius (1513–89) of the University of Louvain.¹⁴ The publication of Baius's *Opuscula theologica* in 1566 would embroil him in

¹¹ For an overview of these debates see Carro (1960). See also the informative article by Schmutz, (2000), pp. 215–36.

¹² These works were written between 411 and 421. They are: *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum*; *De perfectione justitiae hominis*; *De natura et gratia*; *Ad Simplicianum*; *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*; *Enchiridion*; and *Contra Julianum*. Theological interest in the anti-Pelagian writings of Augustine was by no means restricted to the sixteenth century, since commentary on these texts had been a staple feature of medieval theology, especially the period from the mid-fourteenth century onwards. One figure strongly associated with the neo-Augustinian movement was Gregory of Rimini (d. 1358). For further discussion of Gregory's use of Augustine's writings see Burger (1981). For an extensive discussion of the 'Augustinian movement' in late medieval theology see Saak (2002).

¹³ Molina (1953). For a discussion of Molina's views on freedom and grace see Royeyer (1942) and Queralt (1975–6).

¹⁴ The most recent account of the details of Baius's life is E. Van Eijl, 'Bay (Baius), Michel de', in *NBW* (1964–96), I, cols. 114–29. See also *DTC* (1899–1953), II, cols. 38–112.

near continuous controversy up to his death,¹⁵ and would win him a posthumous reputation as a Jansenist *avant la lettre*, with supporters such as the editor of his *Opera omnia*, Dom Gabriel Gerberon (1628–1711),¹⁶ and detractors such as the Jesuits Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621)¹⁷ and Juan Martínez de Ripalda (1594–1648),¹⁸ eager to extol the merits or otherwise of his distinctive theological position. A figure known mainly to historians of Post-Tridentine Catholic theology, Baius rarely intrudes into histories of early modern philosophy and has never been associated (at least to my knowledge) with the subject of ethics. In many respects this is unsurprising, since Baius was first and foremost a theologian whose own view of his *métier* would have been as a ‘humble servant of Scripture’, engaged in the defence of the heritage of his beloved Augustine. Yet despite the fact that Baius himself was removed from many of the philosophical debates of his day, his striking defence of a neo-Augustinian idea of fallen humanity, his parsimonious theory of *liberum arbitrium* and his outright rejection of the idea of the ‘pure state of nature’—a notion which had been gaining momentum in scholastic circles in the years before Trent—would serve to unsettle previously stable ideas about grace, human nature and moral agency which were characteristic features of scholastic philosophy before the *De auxiliis* controversy. This fact will be observed in my discussion of writers like Dominic de Soto (1499–1560).

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MICHAEL BAIUS

Michel de Bay, or Michael Baius, was born in 1513 at Melun, in the province of Hainaut in modern day Belgium.¹⁹ The beneficiary of a sound education in classical rhetoric, literature, philosophy and Christian

¹⁵ Baius (1566). For other documents relating to Baius’s life and teaching see Roca (1953).

¹⁶ A Benedictine monk of the Maurist congregation, Dom Gerberon was an historian of the Jansenist movement as well as one of its many apologists; see Gerberon (1701). For his main work of Jansenist apologetics see Gerberon (1676); see also his edition of St Anselm (1675). See Orcibal (1957) for a discussion of his work, and Lenain (1997), esp. pp. 122–9 on his motives for undertaking the task of editing Baius (1696). This volume is split into two parts: the first comprises the writings and letters of Baius, the second documents relating to his life and teaching. I shall refer to the first part of the volume as *Gerberon*, and the second (following accepted convention) as *Baiana*.

¹⁷ On Bellarmine’s criticism of Baius’s theology see Galeota (1966) and Biersack (1994).

¹⁸ On Ripalda’s objections to Baius see Aldama (1954) and Kaiser (1965).

¹⁹ For general studies of Baius’s work and its influence see Du Chesne (1731); Linsenmann (1867); Jansen (1927); Litt (1934), pp. 13–42; Abercrombie (1936), pp. 85–92; Van Dooren (1958); and Lubac (1965b), pp. 15–48.

theology, courtesy of the various colleges of Louvain University,²⁰ his first academic appointment, immediately after his ordination, was as principal of the Standonk College in 1541. Three years later he was appointed to the chair of philosophy there, a post he retained until 1550. In that year he took the degree of Doctor of Theology and was made President of the 'Pope's College', recently founded by a distinguished alumnus of the university, Pope Adrian VI (1459–1523, elected 9 January 1522).²¹ Further to that, Baius was appointed deputy to the professor of Holy Scripture, the holder of which was then absent at the Council of Trent, eventually becoming full professor some two years later at the titular's death. During this time, Baius formed a close friendship with John Hessels (1522–52),²² who not only influenced him in his study of Scripture and Augustinian theology, but also provided him with valuable personal support during his many clashes with the members of the theology faculty and other parties.²³

While the leaders of the university, especially Vice-Chancellor Ruard Tapper (1487–1559)²⁴ and Josse de Ravesteyn, Professor of Theology (c. 1506–70),²⁵ were away at the Council of Trent, Baius and Hessels profited from their absence by introducing new teaching methods and doctrines into a well-established course of theological studies.²⁶ Their approach to theology stood in marked contrast to earlier stalwarts of the faculty such as

²⁰ On the University of Louvain at the time of Baius's studies and during his tenure as a professor see De Jongh (1911) and Claeys-Bouuaert (1956). For a discussion of humanist studies see De Vocht (1951–5); and on the theology faculty of which he was a member see Van Eijl (1977).

²¹ On Adrian of Utrecht see *NBW*, iii (1964–96), cols. 5–19, and Vereecke (1978). On the foundation of the 'Popes's College', see Couttenier (1985); and on its constitution see Edward de Maesschalck, 'Normatieve Bronnen voor het Heilig-Geest en het Pauskollege in de XVI Eeuw', in Van Eijl (ed.) (1977), esp. 163–173.

²² On Hessels see *DTC* (1899–1953), VI, cols. 2321–4; Van Eijl (1974); and importantly, Lamberigts (1994).

²³ We have Baius's own testimony of the extent of Hessels's influence on him. In a 'Letter to Cardinal L. Simonete, March 16th 1568', see Baius (1696), *Baiana*, p. 124, he wrote: 'Ante annos octodecim, cum primum coepi publice et quotidie Sacram Theologiam in Scholis nostris profiteri, partim ob Haereticos, qui nihil audire volunt, nisi Scripturam sacram et veterum dicta Sanctorum, partim etiam ob consortium cum optimo quodam et eruditissimo viro Joanne Hessels, Sacrae Theologiae Professore, qui eandem docendi normam sequebatur in lectione, quam nunc plusquam octodecim annos continuous Deo me confortante quotidie prosecutus sum ...'

²⁴ On Tapper see *DTC* (1899–1953), XVI.2, cols. 52–54; De Jongh (1911), pp. 180–6; Fabisch (1987) and Schrama (1994).

²⁵ On Ravestyn see *DTC* (1899–1953), XIII.2, col. 1793.

²⁶ On the theological curriculum at Louvain at this time see Guelluy (1941) and Van Eijl (1977), esp. pp. 102–53.

Jacob Latomus (1475–1544),²⁷ Joannes Driedo (c. 1480–1535)²⁸ and the aforementioned Tapper. Insofar as these individuals can be grouped together, they were fully committed to the belief that a *theologus* must fully accept the *depositum fidei* contained in Scripture and tradition. Since the deposit of faith had been entrusted to the Church by Christ, it was to be faithfully transmitted by her authoritative representatives (*theologi*) to the *fideles* or ‘people of faith’. As they saw it, the consequent task of the theologian was to examine, specify and teach the doctrines of the Church by means of reason and argument according to the accepted practices of scholasticism.²⁹ Scripture and the Fathers were the primary expression of revealed doctrine, whose transmission to the Church was guaranteed by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Within this perspective, the Latin Bible or ‘Vulgate’ was particularly valued. Sanctified by tradition, it was believed to be an exact expression of revealed truth, and its interpretation was deemed to be essential to any theological education. While a careful determination of the original text and of its exact meaning by philological practices and historical methods was considered paramount, such labour was regarded as nothing more than a prolegomenon to a more exact study of revealed truths for which Scripture was a source. Such was the outlook of early sixteenth-century scholastic theology at Louvain.³⁰

By the close of the first half of the century this established method of theological practice no longer commanded universal allegiance, undoubtedly due to the influence of humanism, new methods in biblical scholarship and the doctrinal upheavals occasioned by the events of the Reformation.³¹ A younger generation of thinkers at Louvain, headed by Baius and Hessels, now argued that if the verities of the old religion were to be made persuasive and attractive to a new intellectual constituency, it was necessary to reconstruct the content of Christian faith with more

²⁷ Latomus was a renowned theologian who crossed swords with both Luther and Erasmus. See *DTC* (1899–1953), VIII, cols. 2626–8; De Jongh (1911), pp. 173–9; Verrucyusse (1983) and (1985).

²⁸ On Driedo see De Jongh (1911), pp. 156–160; Murray (1959); Fabisch (1986); and Gielis (1994).

²⁹ For a flavour of the scholastic culture in the Louvain faculty see De Jongh (1911), pp. 30–130; and Van Eijl (1977), pp. 71–100. One of the more influential fifteenth-century thinkers who helped to shape scholastic philosophy and theology at Louvain was Heymericus de Campo (van de Velde) (1395–1460). Heymericus was an eclectic thinker who synthesised ‘Thomist’, ‘Albertist’ and ‘Neoplatonic’ elements in his thought. See Hoenen (1990) and Korolec (1981). Another study that focuses on scholasticism at Louvain is Baudry (1950).

³⁰ For a very thorough survey of late medieval biblical exegesis and the manner in which it informed scholastic debates see Dahan (1999), esp. pp. 239–299. For a discussion as to how exegetes from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards came to question and abandon many of the principles of scholastic exegesis see Bentley (1983); and Reventhow (1997); pp. 9–67.

³¹ See De Jongh (1911), pp. 104–47, and Bentley (1979).

emphasis assigned to the teaching of Scripture and the Fathers.³² Then, and only then, could one demonstrate that the *depositum fidei* of the Church was consonant with the doctrines of the Bible and the early church. This is precisely what they did, with the consequence that they aimed to sever Catholic theology from many vestiges of its medieval past and sought instead to ground it in Scripture and the early Fathers of the Church, particularly the Father and texts of their choice: Augustine and his anti-Pelagian writings.³³

On their return from Trent in 1552 the *ancien régime* fought back. Tapper, in particular, sought to quash the methods favoured by Baius and Hessels, and called on Cardinal de Granvelle (d. 1558), Archbishop of Malines, to intervene. Granvelle succeeded for a time in restraining the efforts of the younger scholars; but Tapper's death in 1559 only served to precipitate conflict between Baius, in particular, and other senior figures in the faculty. After Tapper's demise, Ravesteyn assumed the mantle of Baius's most virulent opponent, although the latter was shielded from the worst effects of his displeasure by the patronage of Hessels, who had now been elected to the chair in Sacred Scripture in 1554.

Baius was not just adept at winning friends and making enemies within the theology faculty at Louvain. Within the Franciscan province of the Southern Lowlands there was likewise a split between supporters and opponents of his neo-Augustinian views. Some of the friars, opposed to his influence among their brethren, went so far as to present eighteen theses taught by one Franciscus Sablonius O.F.M. (d. 1563), a disciple of Baius, to the theology faculty of Paris, which responded by condemning most of them on 27 June 1560.³⁴ Baius took it upon himself to answer the censure in a memoir now lost, but his action only served to exacerbate the controversy. Wearied by the seemingly facile yet all too frequent accusations and counter-accusations of 'heresy' emanating from pulpits and faculty *disputationes*, Granvelle imposed silence on all parties to the

³² Needless to say, Baius was very mindful of the putative theological errors committed by those 'heretics' who advocated *sola Scriptura*; see his remarks in n. 23. For further discussion of the scholastic debate about Scripture and its influence on their work see Brett (2000), a paper that also treats Louvain thinkers.

³³ It is important to be aware of the general enthusiasm for Augustine's works among members of the theological faculty at that time. Thomas Gozeus (d. 1571), an associate of Baius, decided to make a critical edition of the saint's work, and before his death had collected a couple of hundred manuscripts and enlisted the editorial assistance of several members of the faculty. After his death, Joannes Molanus (1533–85) assumed responsibility and printing began in Antwerp in 1576. Ten volumes were completed by the following year, and the edition would become the most important edition of Augustine's works for a century, until the publication of the Maurist edition of 1679–1700. For discussion of the Louvain edition see Ceyskens (1982) and Petitmengin (1988).

³⁴ See Van Eijl (1958).

dispute until such time as the Council of Trent, now in recess, could render a decision on the matter.

When Trent was resumed in 1561, Baius and Hessels with some others were selected to represent the university at Trent.³⁵ The papal legate objected to the choice of the university, but Cardinal de Granvelle considered that the presence at the Council of the two young professors would be good both for them and the university.³⁶ Shortly before his departure, Baius published his first work containing three short tractates: 'On free will' (*De libero hominis arbitrio*); 'On justice and justification' (*De iustitia et justificatione*), and 'On the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist' (*De sacrificio*).³⁷ In 1563 they departed for Trent, not, however, as delegates of the university, but as theologians of the King Philip II of Spain. Unfortunately, the contents of Baius's tracts were not within the agreed programme of the last three sessions of the Council of Trent, so no public discussion of his views took place. It is known, however, that the views of Baius and Hessels were considered to be dogmatically unsound by some members of the Council, and it was only their association with the Spanish Crown which saved them from formal condemnation.³⁸

Baius and his colleagues returned to Louvain in 1564 and in the same year he published new tracts, which with the addition of the previous series, were collected in his *Opuscula omnia* of 1566, the year of Hessels's death. These works contained essays on the meritorious nature of good works (*De operum meritis*); on the original righteousness of the first man (*De prima hominis iustitia*); the virtues of non-believers (*De virtutibus impiorum*); an essay on the sacraments directed against Calvin (*De sacramentis in genere contra Calvinum*); and a tract which discussed the Trinitarian formula used in the celebration of the sacrament of baptism (*De forma baptismi*).³⁹

With the publication of his *Opuscula* many of the central themes of Baius's thought—so-called 'Baianism'—emerged in much clearer detail. An illustration of the subjects and themes dear to him can be found in the preface to *De prima hominis iustitia*. There, Baius asks what after the creation of the first human being was the 'righteousness' (*iustitia*) natural to him? Significantly, he argues that without a detailed answer to this

³⁵ On their invitation to the Council and their selection see De Ram (1841), pp. 46–58.

³⁶ Cardinal de Granvelle makes this point in a 'Letter to Cardinal Boromeo, 4 July 1563', in Granvelle (1877–96), I (Appendice), pp. 554–5.

³⁷ See Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 75–88; 103–52; 153–67.

³⁸ Further to their royal protection, some of the Fathers at the Council came to the aid of Hessels and Baius. One such was Martinus Boudewijns de Rythoven (Rythovius) (1511–83). See the 'Letter of Morillon to Cardinal Granvelle, 2 January 1568', in Roca (1953), p. 367, which makes it clear that Rythovius did not want to condemn the Louvain theologians.

³⁹ *Gerberon*, pp. 25–44; 45–73; 212–220; and 221–228.

question a theologian cannot begin to understand the original corruption of human nature (by Adam's sin) nor its eventual reparation by the grace of Christ which is so central to the Christian belief.⁴⁰ These thoughts give us the sequence of his mature theological speculations in which the separate yet related subjects of the state of pure nature, the moral condition of fallen humanity and the state of redeemed nature are examined with reference to the teaching of Scripture and the anti-Pelagian writings of Augustine. It would be his remarks on the so-called 'state of pure nature' which would bring him eventual notoriety as a Roman Catholic theologian.

Baius endeavoured to work out the state of pure nature in the following way. According to Scripture, the first man was created in the image and likeness of God and was adorned with all virtues.⁴¹ The righteousness (*justitia*) of Adam consisted not only in his complete knowledge of the divine law and full submission to his creator, but also in the fact that his lower powers (such as his animal inclinations) were subject to his higher faculties (such as will and reason), and all parts of his body and their movements were submissive to his will, which possessed genuine *liberum arbitrium*.⁴² Furthermore, Adam's initial *justitia* was not constructed from a 'supernatural' elevation of his nature. For, according to Baius, all perfections which pertain to any class of beings in their original state are 'natural' (*naturalis*).⁴³ Thus, he considers the lack of *justitia* in fallen man to be an evil, since for him what is 'evil' (*malum*) is a simple privation (*privatio*) of what is natural. Hence, the evils derived from original sin in Adam's posterity can be termed natural, but only in a very loose sense, that is, in as much as they are the result of the transmission through generation of a corrupt nature.⁴⁴ Conversely, if, and to whatever extent, the natural endowments (such as the virtues and *liberum arbitrium*) lost in Adam's sin are restored to fallen man through the saving agency of Christ, they can be called 'supernatural', but only in the sense whereby one may designate the term 'supernatural' to include anything derived from a special benefit of

⁴⁰ *De prima hominis justitia*, praefatio, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, p. 47: 'Tales autem quaestiones semper esse judicavi, quibus quaeritur: Qualis ab initio fuerit naturalis hominis integritas, et quid sentiendum sit de virtutibus impiorum, qui nulla unius veri Dei fide imbuti, multa honesta et apud homines laudabilia fecisse leguntur. Nam sine his quaestionibus non satis potest intelligi, neque prima humanae naturae corruptio, neque ejusdem per Christi gratiam reparatio; in quibus tamen duobus (si divo Augustino credimus) proprie fides Christiana consistit: neque enim aliud est corruptio quam quod vulgo dicimus malum.' For further discussion of the central ideas of this tract see Vanneste (1994).

⁴¹ *De prima hominis*, i–ii, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 49–53.

⁴² *Ibid.*, iii, p. 54; see Jansen (1927), pp. 49–52, 62–72.

⁴³ *De prima hominis*, iv, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, p. 55.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, v, p. 56: 'qua ad posteriorum hanc navitatem ex transgressione pracepti corruptam pertinet, ut libido, mors, et reliqua mala, quae per peccatum in naturam humanam invecta generatione trajicuntur in posteros'; cf. vi, p. 58.

God. Only in this sense is the restored *justitia* of humankind 'supernatural'.⁴⁵ Although Baius calls the endowments of man's original state 'natural', he does not mean that they emanate from the nature of man, in the manner in which essential human characteristics, such as body, soul, intellect and will might be said to do. Rather, he intends that they are directly granted by God and, as such, are divine gifts rather than human propensities or accomplishments.⁴⁶

Created in this state of natural *justitia*, Adam was obliged to obey his creator and thus to merit eternal life: the unending and immediate vision of God. Even as God's unchangeable wisdom established eternal death as the proportionate punishment for human disobedience and sin, the same wisdom established that the first man would have received eternal life as the natural and just recompense for his obedience to God. Thus, the reward of eternal life would have been humanity's natural end and would have been due solely to man's natural merit, and in no way to grace. Similarly, the good angels after their trial received eternal life not as a grace, nor as anything owed to them by God, but rather as a just reward for their obedience.⁴⁷ From this, Baius concludes that God could not have created man without endowing him with *justitia* and without destining him uniquely to the beatific vision. He therefore maintains that a 'pure state of nature' (*status naturae purus*) in which man would have been ordained by God to an end inferior to the direct and immediate vision of God (thereby lacking the perfection of *justitia*) is impossible and chimerical. Thus is set down one of the more infamous theses of early modern neo-Augustinian theology.⁴⁸

Baius has also much to say on the subject of sin. Through sin Adam forfeited his *justitia* and all possibility of attaining his unique end. His sin with these two consequences was transmitted to all his descendants by the 'vitiated and disordered generative act' (Baius has no time for the pleasures of the body!) whereby all human beings are conceived.⁴⁹ Original sin consists in the following phenomena: the malice of a will which does not love God and his righteousness; the act of rebellion occasioned by fallen man's lower nature; and in man's ignorance, which is a consequence of the

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, vii–x, pp. 58–61. For further discussion of this point see Alfrado (1952); De Lubac (1965b), pp. 25–33; and Colombo (1965).

⁴⁶ *De prima hominis justitia*, xi, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 62–3.

⁴⁷ *De meritis operum*, i–iii, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 25–8. For further discussion of scholastic views on angelology and their influence on early modern theology see Schmutz (2002a).

⁴⁸ For further discussion of Baius's thesis see Abercrombie (1936), pp. 88–92; De Lubac (1965b), pp. 25–38; Kaiser (1965), pp. 69–132, and Vanneste (1977).

⁴⁹ *De peccato originis*, i–ii, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 1–4.

cognitive depravity occasioned by hereditary sin.⁵⁰ Because of original sin, every type and station of human being is subject to the judgement of God and to eternal death. Even as Adam was created in God's favour through no merit of his own, so the newborn infant is the object of God's judgement. By virtue of being born into the state of original sin, and not because of any deeds and commitments on their part, newborn infants stand in opposition to God and his law.⁵¹ Seen in this way, sin for Baius is essentially opposition to God's law and disobedience to His divine commandments. The question whether sin is voluntary or involuntary has nothing to do with its essence, he thinks, for strictly speaking, true *liberum arbitrium* was lost at the fall. In his original state of *justitia* Adam could have fulfilled the law with true freedom of choice,⁵² but by his sin this power was lost completely.⁵³

Baius reserves his most trenchant criticism for the state of fallen nature. There is nothing more deplorable, he thinks, than the moral condition of post-lapsarian man. Even those human thoughts which are not acted upon, such as the odd moment of blithe fancy or a seemingly innocent pang of lust, are sins worthy of eternal punishment.⁵⁴ Furthermore, every sin deserves eternal punishment because all are by their nature mortal sins. Baius makes no room in his moral lexicon for merely venial acts, or even those which could be classified as 'indifferent'.⁵⁵ To make matters worse for Adam's descendants, Baius holds that even in the condition of their wretched fallen state, there is no certainty that God will grant them the power to perform what He commands. On the contrary, the opinion that God commands nothing impossible, Baius contends, finds no support in Augustine but derives instead from the 'heretic Pelagius'. The only possible end of man is to love God, since without charity there is only sin.⁵⁶ Baius thinks that one prominent scholastic view, formulated by authors like Thomas Aquinas, that love is a permanent gift of God which supports human fellowship with Him, is utterly mistaken.⁵⁷ The origin of love, he claims, is a transitory impulse received from God, and this is all

⁵⁰ Ibid., iii, p. 4.

⁵¹ Ibid., iv, p. 5: 'Quia sicut equum, aut servum quaerentes, non tam intuemur quis eum genuerit, ac fecerit; quam intuemur qualis sit: sic et Deus hominem judicans, non tantum intuebitur quis eum bonum aut malum fecerit: sed etiam an bonus an malus sit, sive proprio, sive etiam alieno opere talis sit.'

⁵² *De libero hominis arbitrio*, ix, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 81–2.

⁵³ Ibid., xi, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, p. 82; see Jansen (1927), pp. 44–8, 62–71.

⁵⁴ *De peccato originis*, ii, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 3–4.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

⁵⁶ Ibid., v–viii, pp. 66–71.

⁵⁷ On *caritas* as a permanent gift of God see *Summa contra gentiles*, III, c. 151; and *De caritate*, a. 2, ad 15. For further discussion of Thomas's ideas see Lavard-Keller (1929); Stévaux (1948); and Hughes (1975).

that matters, because such an impulse (indefinitely repeated) enables us to live in justice.⁵⁸ Thus, perfect charity is not to be understood by reference to any sacrament or settled moral dispositions such as the virtues, but rather is best thought of in terms of God's immediate, if fleeting, influence on the human person.⁵⁹

The denial of the significance, if not the existence, of habitual or sanctifying grace and its correlative notion of a propensity for virtue has an important bearing on Baius's notion of merit, which is solely and exclusively the execution of God's commands in terms of the fulfilment of the divine law. According to our Louvain theologian, human acts considered in themselves, that is, without regard to *liberum arbitrium* and the influx of grace or the infused virtues, merit either paradise or perdition: heaven if such acts proceed from charity (from a transitory impulse to God which is stronger than any evil inclination stemming from the corrupted will), and hell, if they proceed from the evil desires of *concupiscentia* which conspire to violate God's law. Significantly, Baius rejects out of hand one dominant scholastic view, stringently redefined by the Council of Trent, that it is the adoption by God of all human beings as living members of the body of Christ, sharing in His divine nature, which enables these same agents to merit eternal life by means of the use of their *liberum arbitrium*.⁶⁰ For Baius this view is simply erroneous, since there is no need for human beings to be in a state of grace in order that their actions may merit eternal life.⁶¹

The stark nature of Baius's neo-Augustinian theology, especially when judged against the prevailing mixture of scholasticism and humanism of mid-sixteenth century Louvain, could not go unnoticed. Unsurprisingly, the wily Ravesteyn saw in the publication of these writings an opportune moment to mount another attack on Baius, who was now in a more vulnerable position following the death of Hessels. Ravesteyn sent the *Opuscula*, a selection of theses excerpted from it and fifteen propositions *nondum scripto editae*—apparently borrowed from the *disputationes theologicae* of the faculty—to Philip II (then monarch of the Spanish Netherlands), who forwarded them on to the theological faculties of Alcalá and Salamanca for consideration. On 31 March and 8 August 1565

⁵⁸ *De charitate* ii, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, p. 90. For further discussion of Baius remarks on charity see Jansen (1927), pp. 89–94, and De France (1950).

⁵⁹ *De charitate*, ix, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, p. 101.

⁶⁰ See Denzinger (1953), 1525–1527 and 1574. See Tanner (1990), II, p. 680, for Canon XIV of the 6th Session: 'Si quis dixerit, iustitiam acceptam non conservari atque etiam non augeri coram Deo per bona opera, sed opera ipsa fructus solummodo et signa esse institutionis adeptae non etiam ipsius augendae causam.' On post-Tridentine accounts of grace and human freedom see Leahy (1963).

⁶¹ *De meritis operum*, ii, in Baius (1696), *Gerberon*, pp. 36–7; see Jansen (1927), pp. 85–9.

respectively, both faculties condemned most of the propositions sent to them for judgement.⁶²

When the news of the verdicts of the Spanish faculties reached Baius in Flanders he was outraged. In a fit of indignation he republished his *Opuscula* and expanded the volume by adding to it a few small tracts on the nature and effect of love (*De charitate*), original sin and its remission (*De peccato originis et ejus remissione*), indulgences (*De indulgentiis*), and prayers for the dead (*De oratione pro defunctis*). His opponents responded immediately by sending this new edition, along with forty theses taken from it, to Spain where, on 20 June 1567, the theologians of Alcalá pronounced yet another condemnation on these and a further sixteen additional theses.⁶³ At the request of Ravesteyn and other Louvain antagonists, Philip II sent the censures of 1565 and 1567 to Rome in the hope that the pope would once and for all condemn the teaching of Baius. Thus on 1 October 1567, Pope Pius V (1504–72, elected 7 January 1566) signed the Bull *Ex omnibus afflictionibus*, which condemned in global fashion 76 (or 79 according to another reckoning) propositions. Much to the displeasure of all and sundry, the saintly Pius did not mention Baius by name.⁶⁴

According to the tradition of the Roman Chancery, *Ex omnibus afflictionibus* was written without any punctuation, divisions or numbers. Again, as had been done before in several instances, the objectionable propositions were not censured severely, but various *notae*, containing phrases ranging from 'haereticos' to 'scandalosas', were applied to the whole series. These comments served to rally supporters of Baius, who asked a number of questions designed to blunt the force of the Pius's condemnation. What, they inquired, was the exact number of propositions? Were they 76, 79 or 80 in number? Were they, or were they not, propositions extracted from Baius's published works? And, why had not a copy of the bull been given to the individual whose reputation for orthodoxy it sought to impune?

The formal condemnation following the 76 or 79 theses proclaimed:

quas quidem sententias stricto coram nobis examine ponderatas quamquam nonnullae aliquo pacto sustineri possent in rigore et proprio verborum sensu ab assertoribus intento haereticas erroneas suspectas temerarias scandalosas

⁶² For contrasting interpretations of this event see Van Eijl (1953) and Roca (1955).

⁶³ See Van Eijl (1953), pp. 763–776; and Roca (1955), pp. 783–796.

⁶⁴ The bull is printed in Baius (1696), *Baiana*, pp. 49–58; see pp. 50–7, for the condemned propositions. Cf. Denzinger (1963), 1901–1980. See also Lemaître (1994), pp. 275–6, for a brief discussion of Pius's own feelings toward Baius.

et in pias aures offensionem immittentes respective ac quaecumque super iis verbo scriptoque emissa praesentium auctoritate damnamus.⁶⁵

According to whether a comma is placed after *possent* or after *intento* the condemnation has quite different meanings. When the comma is placed after *possent*, the passage reads: ‘After a close scrutiny conducted in our presence, we condemn as heretical, erroneous [etc.] ... in the sense intended by their authors and according to the strict use of the term employed, the aforesaid opinions, even though some [of them] might in one way or another be defended.’ If, however, the comma is placed after *intento*, then it reads: ‘we condemn as heretical, erroneous [etc.] ... the aforesaid opinions, even though some [of them] might in one way or another be defended in the sense intended by their authors and according to the strict use of the terms employed’.⁶⁶ This is the famous *comma pianum*, a dispute which throughout the later spats and recriminations of the Jansenist controversy was not settled to anybody’s satisfaction.⁶⁷

Baius did not embroil himself in the controversy at first; but when the papal bull was brought to the university and read aloud to the faculty in 1567, he subscribed (reportedly in tears) to its strictures with the all other professors.⁶⁸ When, however, the text of the bull was divulged by an indiscreet colleague, Baius at once began to find fault with it and wrote two lengthy apologies to the pope, in vindication, he said, not so much of himself as of the Fathers.⁶⁹ The tone of these apologies was more respectful

⁶⁵ Needless to say Gerberon reprints this controversial sentence with punctuation: Baius (1696), *Baiana*, p. 57; cf. Denzinger (1963), 1980.

⁶⁶ For further discussion of the dispute over the comma see Orcibal (1962). Modern commentators such as Van Eijl (1955), have argued that Pius did not wish to embarrass Baius any more than was necessary, and for this reason made the tone of his condemnation less strident. For a different position see Boissard (1962). A recent study, Quaghebeur (2003), based on research done in the archives of the Holy Office of the Vatican, corroborates Van Eijl’s interpretation.

⁶⁷ My own view on the *comma pianum* is that, philologically speaking, the comma must be put after *possent*. In classical and Neo-Latin, the word order in sub-clauses is more or less fixed: subject—object (adverbial complement)—adverbial complement (object) – verb. A construction in which the verb of the sub-clause is followed by another adverbial complement would be rather unusual. Moreover, there is an antithesis between ‘aliquo pacto’ and ‘in rigore’. On this basis, I am inclined to conclude that Baius and his supporters were disingenuous, if they held that the comma should be placed after *intento*. The concessive sub-clause does not diminish the sense of condemnation implied in Pius’s verdict.

⁶⁸ This story derives from Robert Bellarmine and is relayed by his modern biographer, Brodrick (1928), i, p. 28, based on the texts included in Le Bachelet (1911).

⁶⁹ See his *Apologia summo pontifici Pio V*, in Baius (1696), *Baiana*, pp. 79–80, esp. p. 79: ‘Metuimus ne quid Vestrae Sanctitatis existimationi detrahant, non tantum propter manifestas calumnias, quae videntur in eis contineri, sed etiam propter verba, et (ut apparet) etiam sensus quosdam Sanctorum Patrum, qui in iis damnari videntur: nam regio haec propter importunitatem haereticorum multos habet longe magis Scripturis Sacris et veterum

in appearance than in reality. In a papal brief dated 1579, Pius V answered that the case had been maturely examined and finally adjudged, and demanded submission.⁷⁰ After much hot air and indignation on the part of himself and his supporters, wherein Baius adopted a great deal of equivocation on the subject of the *comma pianum*, he finally abjured all the errors condemned in the bull to Cardinal Granvelle's vicar-general, but was not required to sign his recantation.

The absence of such a formality only contributed to revive the dispute. In 1570, at Ravesteyn's death, Baius became dean of the faculty, an event which blatantly attests to the fact that despite external condemnation he enjoyed the esteem of his Louvain colleagues. Once elected, however, the new dean had then to endure rumours, circulated by his enemies in the University, that he was by no means in accord with orthodox teaching. Followers and adversaries alike suggested that a clear statement of his views was needed. It came under the title of the *Explicatio articulorum*, in which Baius averred that, of the many condemned propositions, some were false and justly censured, some only ill expressed, while still others, if at variance with the terminology of the scholastics, were yet the genuine sayings of the Fathers.⁷¹ At any rate, he continued, more than 40 of the 79 articles had nothing to do with his work.⁷² Some have thought that even after two recantations Baius had not changed his position and was simply reverting to his original heterodoxy.⁷³ Still, the bull was published at Louvain and subscribed to by the whole faculty; and Baius accepted it again. His magnanimity even won him sympathy and helped to advance his career. In quick succession he was made Vice-Chancellor of the University of Louvain, Dean of St Peter's Collegiate Church, and 'conservator' of the university's privileges. Thus, for a short while, peace was restored to Louvain, and Baius was left to his duties.⁷⁴

Patrum sermonibus assuetos et addictos, quam Doctorum Scholasticorum: qui forte existimantes nonnulla in scriptis Sanctorum Patrum contenta propter eos damnari, qui non nisi sensibus et verbis doctorum Scholasticorum assueverunt, scandalizabuntur.'

⁷⁰ See Baius (1696), *Baiana*, p. 140.

⁷¹ *Explicatio articulorum*, in *ibid.*, pp. 141–6, see p. 141: 'eo quod in eis servatus non sit consuetus usus loquendi Scholae, videlicet secundum Scholasticos receptos; quum tamen aliquoties Patres reperiantur eodem modo loquuti.'

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 143–6.

⁷³ On this see Claeys Bouuaert (1954).

⁷⁴ Recent evidence, in the archives of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, has shed some light on Baius's activities at this time. We know, for instance, that he very generously donated money to the ailing Pope's College and was involved in many efforts to put the university on a sound financial footing. These documents, which await a formal study, will do much to change our existing portrait of Baius's character. I am grateful to Professor dr. Jan Roegiers, archivist of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, for bringing these documents to my attention.

Whether by design or by accident Baius's career was perpetually blighted by controversy, and in keeping with this trend his final years were by no means free of incident. His putative assertion of certain pejorative views at the expense of the authority of the Holy See, and even of the Council of Trent, and, on the part of his supporters, the hope that a new pontiff, Gregory XIII (1502–85, elected 13 May 1572),⁷⁵ might declare void all that had been done by his predecessor, bade fair to reopen the whole question. Proving himself just as obdurate as Baius, Gregory had no intention of disregarding the judgement of Pius V; and in 1579 promulgated the bull *Provisionis nostrae*, which confirmed the preceding papal acts.⁷⁶ The Jesuit theologian Francisco Toletus (1532–96) was commissioned to read the bull before Baius and the entire faculty at Louvain on 21 March 1580.⁷⁷ We have Baius's submission in a document named *Confessio Michaelis Baii*. There we meet sincere phrases, as when Baius says that he is 'convinced that the condemnation of all those propositions is just and lawful'. Moreover, he confesses that very many (*plurimas*) of '[the censured] propositions are in [his] books, and in the sense in which they are condemned, and he renounces them all, resolving never more to teach or defend any of them'.⁷⁸

Then, in the following years, when new complaints were received in Rome about statements by Baius and his admirers which were not in total agreement with the bull or the teaching of Trent, Gregory XIII charged the nuncio of Cologne and Jean Hauchlin (1527–89), Granvelle's successor as Archbishop of Malines, to bring the affair to an end. They requested that the faculty of theology compose a *corpus doctrinae*, which in due course was written by Joannes Lensaeus (1541–1593) and entitled *Doctrinae eius*. There, the faculty set down its position on the substance of the propositions

⁷⁵ Himself something of a scholar, Gregory XIII, or Ugo Buoncompagni, studied jurisprudence at the University of Bologna, from which he graduated at an early age as doctor of canon and of civil law. Later, he taught jurisprudence at the same university and had among his pupils the famous future cardinals, Alessandro Farnese, Cristoforo Madruzzo, Otto Truchsess von Waldburg, Reginald Pole, Charles Borromeo and Stanislaus Hosius.

⁷⁶ See Baius (1696), *Baiana*, p. 151.

⁷⁷ On Toletus's general influence on the affairs of Louvain at this time see Grisar (1946). Significantly, Toletus did broach the subject of the pure natural state in his own theological writings. For a discussion of these see Lubac (1965b), pp. 171–82.

⁷⁸ Baius (1696), *Baiana*, p. 152: 'Ego Michael de Bay ... iterato damnatis et prohibitus, ita movum et eo perductum esse et ut plane habeam mihi persuasum earum omnium sententiarum damnationem atque prohibitionem jure meritoque, ac non nisi maturo judicio, ac diligentissima discussione praemissis factam atque decretum esse. Fateor insuper plurimas ex iisdem sententiis in nonnullis libellis a me olim et ante emanatam Sedis Apostolicae super eis censuram conscriptis et in lucem editis contineri et defendi, etiam in eo sensu quo reprobantur. Denique declaro me impraesentiarum ab iis omnibus recedere, et damnationi a Sancta Sede factae acquiescere, neque post hac ullam earum docere aut defendere velle.'

condemned in the bull (1586). Most probably Baius also signed the document.

Not only did Baius have critics within the theology faculty, he also encountered opposition from members of the Jesuit Order. During his seven-year period in Louvain 1569–76,⁷⁹ the young Robert Bellarmine, who taught at the Jesuit College, attacked Baius's views on grace, nature and human freedom. Again, the target was Baius's seeming disregard for the scholastic consensus concerning the degree of *liberum arbitrium* remaining in human beings after the fall and his pessimistic views of merit and original sin. Bellarmine's opposition to the teaching of Baius was also crucial to the development of his own distinctive theological anthropology.⁸⁰ After Bellarmine's departure, a conflict arose in 1587 between members of the theology faculty and two professors at the Jesuit college, Leonardus Lessius (1554–1623) and Joannes Hamelius (1554–89). Among several other things, this dispute turned on questions about the relationship between grace and free will, and about the inspiration of Sacred Scripture.⁸¹ It is not clear how much Baius was involved in this dispute, as his declining health and loss of the powers of speech meant that he withdrew more and more from the affairs of the faculty from 1586 onwards. Many of his responsibilities were taken over by his nephew Jacobus Baius (1545–1614).⁸² On 16 September 1589 Baius died in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church,⁸³ a church which he thought he had helped to sustain in troubled times by severing it from its errant past, but one to which so many of his enemies considered he had rendered incalculable damage. After his death and in the ensuing debates of the Jansenist controversy, it would prove difficult for a more a sober analysis of his work and legacy to take place. For good or ill, the writings of Michael Baius would always elicit strong opinions from their readers.

If we review the main features of Baius's teaching we can understand why it so vexed his contemporaries, especially those like the Fathers of the Sorbonne in 1560 who, clinging to their mainstream scholastic principles, did not share his view on free will and sin. It is not difficult to appreciate just how far Baius departed from the scholastic consensus of his times, even though his enthusiasm for Augustine was by no means out of the

⁷⁹ For a discussion of Bellarmine's years in Louvain see Brodrick (1928), i, pp. 25–50, and Ceysens (1994).

⁸⁰ The fullest study of Bellarmine's Louvain lectures against Baius is Biersack (1989). See also Galeota (1966) and Biersack (1994).

⁸¹ On this dispute see Claeys-Bouuaert (1965) and Van Eijl (1994).

⁸² On Baius's nephew see E. J. M. Van Eijl, 'Jacques de Bay', *NBW* (1964–96), I, cols. 112–13.

⁸³ Some days later, on 3 October 1586, Jacob Baius read out a funeral oration to his dead uncle, the text of which has survived and has been edited by Van Eijl (1962–3).

place within the broader theological landscape of mid sixteenth-century Europe. First, he held that human beings are not free under the influence of grace. In addition, he was adamant that charity, which is the transitory impulse of God, is the only and infallible source of good works and merit. Next, he advanced the view that God may and does command human beings to do the impossible; while in another thesis he claimed that fallen human beings are determined to do evil when they are not drawn by charity into holiness. Lastly, Baius denied the idea of a pure state of nature, deriding it as a useless fiction and held that the *justitia* and merit of the first man in his original creation did not proceed from the grace of God.

Baius's resolute attempt to set up the anti-Pelagian treatises of Augustine against the prevailing wisdom of his day bequeathed an account of moral agency which is at best rather thin and overtly pessimistic.⁸⁴ The redemptive grace of God is only realized in the fleeting impulse of charity and, as such, is not a part of free human action. Under no circumstances, then, are human beings equipped with anything like the requisite dispositions and abilities to espy and procure the good at the level of action, unless they are transformed by the influence of charity. Yet even within the loving embrace of their creator, an agent's deliberative abilities as a moral agent are somewhat circumscribed. An agent can only act on a divine commandment, purely and simply because it is a divine injunction; he does not possess the means to appreciate rationally the binding force of a moral command other than by acknowledging that it derives from God.

Here, then, is so-called 'Baianism', and one sees in it close affinities with the teaching of another famous son of Louvain, Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638). Of paramount importance to our present study is not just Baius's neo-Augustinian remarks on free will and sin, significant as they are for gauging the tone of his theory of moral agency, but his denial of the state of pure nature. This is especially revealing as it brings to our full attention Baius's description of the extent of the corruption, moral and cognitive, which is endemic to human agents in their fallen state. For Baius's rejection of the state of pure nature is meant to capture a thought so central to early modern Augustinianism: that the very wickedness and conceit expressed in the sinful rebellion of the first man against God is realized in the permanent state of sinfulness endured by all his descendants. An implication of this bleak position is that the moral and spiritual restoration of Adam's posterity can be effected only by God's (selectively given) charity and not by any means or disposition 'natural' to humankind.

If we are to understand the impact of these ideas on early modern moral discourse, something more must be said about the concept of pure nature, and why Baius's denial of it takes us to the heart of then current

⁸⁴ Cf. Denzinger (1963), p. 427, who says that Baius was 'rigido Augustinismo addictus'.

thinking about the nature and extent of human agency. For this reason we need to examine other sixteenth-century discussions of the pure state of nature in order to locate Baius's rejection of it in a clearer context. How, then, did the concept come to dominate subsequent discussion? The answer to this question concerns the manner in which early modern scholastics addressed their medieval inheritance and the fact that they came to view and appropriate that intellectual legacy in very different ways.

THE CONCEPT OF 'PURE NATURE'

The concept of 'pure nature', as it was recognized by sixteenth-century thinkers, was constructed from three sources.⁸⁵ In its first sense, it derived from the widespread adoption in late medieval theology of the distinction between *potentia Dei ordinata* and *potentia Dei absoluta*.⁸⁶ Central to this division was the idea that one could always appeal in any discussion of God's omnipotence to the idea that He could perform a task, that is, something within the province of His 'absolute power', even if He had not performed such a task, that is, the proposed action was not within the realm of His actual deeds (or 'ordained power'). In light of this definition, many late medieval thinkers held that God, by His absolute power, could have created a rational creature worthy of *beatitudo* and without mortal sin.⁸⁷

Secondly, the concept arose out of a discussion of the case of children dying unbaptized. This issue concerned individuals to whom the beatific vision could not be granted, since they were not in receipt of the grace of baptism, and whom the theologians felt unable to declare damned (*reprobati*) in quite the same way as persons who had lived and abused their natural span.⁸⁸ In order to resolve this problem, medieval theologians advanced the idea of an intermediate state. By analogy, the case was envisaged in which the first human being could have died before receiving the infusion of sanctifying grace, and consequently before having to make the first moral choice which resulted in original sin. Thomas Aquinas had envisaged both cases,⁸⁹ as indeed did fourteenth-century theologians such

⁸⁵ For general overviews of sixteenth-century discussion of pure nature see Roudet (1948); Lubac (1965b), pp. 183–213; and Schmutz (2001).

⁸⁶ On this distinction and its different formulations in medieval philosophy see Courtenay (1990); Moonan (1994); and Fumagalli Beonio Brocchieri (2000), pp. 13–24.

⁸⁷ For further discussion see Alfaro (1952), pp. 355–7.

⁸⁸ For a very full discussion of the medieval theology of baptism, see *DTC*, (1899–1953), II, cols. 250–96; and for the development of Catholic teaching about dead infants, *ibid.*, cols. 364–78.

⁸⁹ For Thomas's account of Baptism see *Summa theologiae*, III, qq. 66–71.