

# Theological Disputation Presenting the Doctrine of Original Sin, Asserted Against Pelagian Errors

Which, under the presidency of **Jo. Ernestus Schubert**, Doctor of Sacred Theology, Abbot of the Monastery at St. Michael's Stone, Public Ordinary Professor in the Julia Carolina Academy, and Director of the Theological Seminary, will be publicly defended in the Great Julian Hall on September 1, in the year of our salvation 1751, by the respondent, **Joannes Albertus Stolberg** of Helmstedt, Candidate of Sacred Theology and Subsenior of the Theological Seminary. Printed in Helmstedt by Joannes Drimborn.

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To the most distinguished candidate of theology, **Joannes Albertus Stolberg**, Subsenior of the Theological Seminary of Helmstedt, a prosperous greeting from **Jo. Ernestus Schubert**.

The knowledge of vindicating theological matters from the sophisms of adversaries has never been more necessary than in these our times. For new impostors arise daily, who exhaust all the force of their intellect to shake the foundations of the faith handed down to us by Christ, and, if it were possible, to utterly subvert them. And lest this impiety lack merit, they falsely claim to be acting for the cause of reason, than which nothing greater or more excellent has been given to man by God. Therefore, cultivators of Theology are worthy of great praise, who not only acquire for themselves a systematic knowledge of theological matters, but also learn a sounder philosophy in such a way that they can demonstrate the conformity of faith and reason, whenever the discord of the two is objected by adversaries.

I know well enough that you are of this number, Most Distinguished Master Stolberg, we who have often heard your sacred orations in the public assembly of Christians and have seen other specimens of your intellect. Therefore, I can promise you now the same praise that you have always carried away, since you are now in a position to enter into debate with me, to defend a doctrine which the enemies of truth have been least of all able to bear. I congratulate you, therefore, on this new specimen of your erudition, which you are soon to publish, and I implore the immortal Deity to sanctify your mind, rightly imbued with the knowledge of divine things, ever more and more for His worship, and to one day use your ministry effectively to promote the glory of His Name and to defend the truth against the attacks of the wicked.

Given at Helmstedt on the 27th of August, 1751.

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## §. I.

### *What is Original Sin?*

Since the sin of origin must be considered before the other errors of the **PELAGIANS** can be refuted, let this be the first topic of this treatise. It is that first sin in any given person, descending from the first humans to every individual through natural generation. (a)

(a) This evil, which was formerly called **NATURAL**, **AUGUSTINE**, having changed the name, called **ORIGINAL**. When **JULIAN** objected to this, he replied: "We call original sin more significantly than natural sin, so that it may be understood not as a divine work, but of human origin; especially to signify that which entered into the world through one man." See **AUGUSTINE**, Book V of the *Unfinished Work against Julian*, chap. IX, Opp. Tom. X, p. 1227-1228.

## §. II.

### *How many kinds?*

It is divided into **ORIGINATING** and **ORIGINATED**. (b) The former is the lapse of the first humans itself, imputed to all their posterity. The latter, however, is the disposition of the whole nature to desire evil and to be averse to good. (c)

(b) Although the latter is called original sin in a specific sense and by way of eminence (ἐξοχήν), our theologians admit that both evils can be called by this name, for whom the denomination of originating and originated original sin is not unusual. See **B. IO. GERHARD** in *Dispp. Isagog.*, Disp. XXIV, chap. I, §. 2, p. 858; **ABR. CALOVIUS** in *Syst. Theol.*, Tom. V, Art. III, chap. I, p. 166; **IO. ANDR. QUENSTEDT** in *Syst. Theol.*, Part II, chap. II, Sect. I, Th. 29, p. 914; **IO. FECHTIUS** in *Comp. Theol.*, chap. VIII, §. 16, p. 199. seq.

(c) There is a twofold definition of originated original sin: one by which it is described privatively through the defect of the divine image, the other by which it is declared positively through evil concupiscence. The latter is that of **AUGUSTINE** himself, while the former is that of **ANSELM**. Certain of the Scholastics rightly judged that both should be conjoined. Our blessed Confessors also retained both in the **AUGSBURG CONFESSION**, Art. II., where they say: "They teach that after the fall of Adam all men propagated according to nature are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence." And the **APOLOGY** in Art. II, p. 88, Rein. edition, rightly notes that the confession expressed both ancient definitions with these words. The blessed **MARTIN CHEMNITZ** discusses its particulars excellently in his *Loci* on Original Sin, chap. II, LL. Theol. Part I, p. 209, seqq., which the revered **IO. FRANC. BUDDEUS** reduced to a compendium in his *Inst. Theol. Dogm.*, Book III, chap. II, §. 14, note, p. 569, seq. When we said that Original Sin is the disposition of the whole nature to evil, this definition contains not only evil concupiscence

but also the impotence to do good, i.e., the defect of the divine image, as will become more apparent from what follows.

### §. III.

For this disposition to be rightly understood, it must be known that it pertains to the essence of the soul by its moral nature that it ought to desire what one judges to be man's good, and to be averse to what one deems to be evil.

### §. IV.

*Man can desire evil under the appearance of good, and be averse to good under the appearance of evil.*

However, it can happen that a man is utterly ignorant of true goods and evils, or persuades himself that what is truly evil is good, and what is good, is evil. If this should happen, he can desire evil and be averse to good, although in general he ought to will the good and not will the evil. For he desires evil under the appearance of good, and is averse to good under the appearance of evil. Wherefore the former is wont to be called **APPARENT EVIL**, and the latter **APPARENT GOOD**.

### §. V.

*The same can happen even if he recognizes good and evil correctly.*

Secondly, a person can will evil and not will good, even if he is not ignorant that the one is evil and the other is good. For it happens that, while a man knows from certain principles that a certain thing is truly evil, and therefore to be condemned and avoided, he at the same time feels a sensual pleasure, which he either foresees will arise from the perception of that thing, or remembers that it is accustomed to arise. That sense, by which that thing is judged to be good because it creates great pleasures, is not rarely far more vehement, and affects the mind more, than the opposite consideration of the true quality of the thing, which is present in the intellect. Therefore, just as from the latter depends the rejection of the object as evil, so from the former—namely the sense of future pleasures—depends the good pleasure in the same object as good, and the desire for it. And since the cause of this inclination operates more strongly than the cause of that reclination, it is thus not difficult to recognize that reason is obscured or utterly suppressed by sense, and the rational appetite is conquered by the sensitive. From this it comes about that we desire evil, long for it, and acquiesce in it, although it is not utterly unknown that it is evil. In the same way, we can be averse to truly known goods, if they happen to be troublesome, and produce tediousness and sensual pains. For then that good is believed to be evil in another respect, and what we persuade ourselves to be evil in it appears far greater than the known goodness in the same. Thus, in this case also, the intellect is conquered by sense and imagination, and the rational appetite by the

sensitive. That is, we are averse to the good, although we know well that it is good.

#### §. VI.

*When can this not happen?*

But if both all error in the intellect, and all predominance of sensual pleasure and tediousness were absent from man, it could not happen that he would not always desire the true good and always be averse to the true evil. For if anyone were to will evil and not will good, being seduced by no error, carried away by no sensation of pleasure or tediousness by which things are feigned to be good and evil which are not such, he would certainly have evil as such in his delights, and abhor good as such. But this itself would destroy the immutable essence of man (§. 3.). Since this cannot happen, no one can desire evil or be averse to good, unless he either errs in his intellect, or feels stronger impulses of sensual pleasure and tediousness than that a better knowledge of things suffices to repel them.

#### §. VII.

*Corruption of the lower appetitive faculty.*

Since sensual pleasures and tediousness are no less necessary than the senses and imaginations themselves, which man cannot lack, they would not be evil in themselves, nor would they entice the mind to evils, unless the sensations themselves labored under a great corruption. For he whose sensations are correct and agree with the quality of the objects, he feels good things to be good, and evil things to be evil. Therefore, he is delighted only in the true good, nor does he feel tediousness unless a true evil is present. But when the senses are corrupt, and they represent objects to us differently than we experience them to be by the guidance of reason or of some clearer light, what wonder is it that sensual pleasures and tediousness, which flow from that source, are contrary to right reason and cause men to rush into forbidden things? Therefore, when the predominance of sensual pleasure and tediousness is the cause why someone desires evil and is averse to good, this always presupposes that the lower appetitive faculty lacks its integrity, which it certainly ought to have.

#### §. VIII.

*A fuller description of Original Sin.*

He who is wholly engaged in desiring evil and being averse to good, his intellect is first obscured by great ignorance and many errors concerning the morality of things (§. 4.); secondly, he depends more on sensual pleasure and tediousness in desiring and being averse than on right cognition (§. 5.); and finally, his lower appetitive faculty must be greatly corrupted (§. 7.). And if the whole nature of anyone is disposed to desire evil and be averse to good, in him all these evils

must be habitual. But such a disposition of the whole nature is called by Theologians originated original sin (§. 2.). Therefore, this evil brings with it: 1. habitual ignorance of good and evil, and a habit of erring when judgment must be made concerning the morality of things; 2. the habitual predominance of sensual pleasure and tediousness, by which right cognition of things is weakened, and all propensities to the true good are suppressed; 3. the corruption of the whole lower appetitive faculty. (d)

(d) Theologians teach that both a privative and a positive aspect pertain to original sin, by which they reject the opinion of the Roman Catholics, who maintain that original sin is nothing but the privation of original justice, which they imagine to have been some supernatural gift. See **BELLARMINE**, Book V of *On the Loss of Grace*, chap. V, Dispp. Tom. IV, p. 289, seqq.; **MART. BECANUS** in *Manual of Controversies*, Book I, chap. XIV, p. 381. But that privative aspect is the ignorance in the intellect and the impotence of the will depending on it to desire the true good, which in one word is called the defect of the divine image; and the positive aspect is the predominance of sensual pleasure and tediousness, by which man is snatched into forbidden things, as well as the corruption of the lower appetitive faculty, which they are otherwise accustomed to call concupiscence. For "positive" in this place is not taken strictly (ἀκριβῶς) for reality itself, but for a vicious habit, or a vice inherent in a positive thing. See **B. IO. GERHARD** in *Dispp. Isag.*, Disp. XXIV, §. 10, p. 880, and **GISB. VOETIUS** in *Select Disputations*, Part I, p. 1084, seqq. Cf. *Meine Gedanken von dem Fall der Menschen und der Erbsünde* (My Thoughts on the Fall of Man and Original Sin), chap. V, §. 145, p. 218, seq. And that this inordinate conversion of the powers of the soul, which is called by the common name concupiscence, is materially original sin itself, is acknowledged by **THOMAS AQUINAS** in the *Summa Theologica*, Prima Secundae, Qu. LXXXII, Art. III, p. 169.

#### §. IX.

*It is called evil concupiscence.*

All these evils are called in one word **EVIL CONCUPISCENCE**, which in this place is the soul's effort to desire evils, breaking forth into evil inclinations on any given occasion. (e) Paul used this word, saying: "I had not known concupiscence, unless the law had said: You shall not covet." (Rom. VII, 7). He implies by these words that he had not considered concupiscence to be a sin, unless it were expressly prohibited by the law. For by this declaration he gives the reason for the assertion immediately preceding, that sin is not recognized except through the law. But if by this concupiscence he had understood the inclination to evil itself, how could he have said that he was ignorant that it was a sin? Was the Apostle, diligently nurtured in the doctrine of the law from infancy, ever so dull and seeing nothing at all that he was ignorant that to will, desire, and long for evil is a sin? It is therefore necessary that this concupiscence in this

place denotes the disposition and proclivity of the whole nature to desire evil and to abhor good.

(e) Thus **PETER LOMBARD**, in Book II of the Sentences, Dist. XXX, p. 204, has already declared concupiscence from **AUGUSTINE**. "Concupiscence," he says, "is not the act of concupiscing, but the first vice, which makes a small child capable of concupiscing, and also makes an adult concupiscent."

## §. X.

*The propagation of Original Sin is demonstrated.*

And this is that evil which is transmitted from parents to children by natural generation. Of this matter, a clear testimony, greater than any exception, exists in John III, 6: "Whatever is born of the flesh, is flesh." For since "flesh" in scripture signifies the source of all evil and inevitable inclinations (Rom. VII, 18; VIII, 7, 8, 13; Gal. V, 16, 17, 19), men who are called **FLESH** are corrupt, disposed to evil, and bound by the necessity of sinning. Those who are born of such parents must themselves be depraved and labor under the habit of desiring evil and being averse to good. A sinner begets a sinner, corruption begets corruption, flesh begets flesh. But of this unhappy and most sad origin is whoever descends from the first parents by a natural mode. For Christ speaks not limitatively but declaratively and causally when he says: "Whoever is born of the flesh, is flesh." For from this axiom he gives the reason why all men must be regenerated if they wish to enter the kingdom of God and attain eternal salvation. "Unless a man," he says, "is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (v. 5). "For whoever," he continues, "is born of the flesh, is flesh." (v. 6). How from these words could he infer the universal necessity of regeneration, if only some men were born of the flesh? Certainly, if it happened to only some, either certain men would be saved without regeneration, or those also would have to be regenerated who are not flesh. But since both are refuted by Christ's own speech, behold an argument which can be broken by no arts! Whoever draws their origin from corrupt parents, their nature also is corrupt and disposed to evil; But all men have this origin: Therefore all men also by virtue of natural generation labor under the corruption of their nature. (f)

(f) The Roman Catholics dispute much concerning the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, the origin and fate of which opinion is expounded by **B. MARTIN CHEMNITZ** in the *Examination of the Council of Trent*, Part I, Loc. V, p. 151, seqq.; **ANDR. RIVETUS** in *Apology for the Virgin Mary*, Book I, chap. IV, seqq., Opp. Tom. III, p. 607, seqq.; **PAOLO SARPI** in the *History of the Council of Trent*, Book II, p. 300, seqq.; **ANDREAS DANIEL HABICHHORST** in a special disputation on Original Sin, Th. L, and several others. This controversy can be decided most easily of all from the demonstration exhibited by us. For if Mary was born of the flesh, she herself also was flesh. But no one will be able to prove

that her parents were utterly purged from all sin when she was begotten. Wherefore there is no doubt that she also was conceived with sin.

#### §. XI.

*This demonstration is continued.*

And although this one passage is already sufficient to demonstrate the universal propagation of original sin, yet others are not lacking by which the same dogma can be still more confirmed. That the nature of men is corrupt from its first origin is testified by Job in chap. XIV, 4; David in Ps. LI, 7; and God himself in Gen. VI, 3, 5; VIII, 21. Paul specifically treats of the darkness of the intellect of unregenerate men in 1 Cor. II, 14; Eph. IV, 18, 22; V, 8; Tit. III, 3. And that the predominance of sensual pleasure and tediousness, by which all good appetites are impeded, and it is effected that we see the better things but follow the worse, the same Apostle teaches in Rom. I, 32; III, 9, seqq.; VII, 15, seqq.; Gal. V, 12; Eph. II, 3; James 1, 14.

#### §. XII.

*Another demonstration is added.*

Nor is this propagation of evil so alien to reason that it should seem necessary on that account to seek other interpretations of the clearest passages of Scripture. For that men are corrupt and disposed to sinning, and indeed daily sin in many ways, when they are fit for generating and conceiving, no one will easily call into doubt. If, therefore, any pregnant woman sins at this very time, and is driven astray by evil affections, as cannot but happen, certain more vehement motions coexist in the body with these perverse inclinations, which are communicated with the fetus on account of the natural and physical connection. These, indeed, the body of the infant receives immediately, but the soul participates mediately on account of the very tight bond of union. For with those motions existing in the body, which are accustomed to correspond to affections, evil inclinations, and sensual pleasures and tediousness, the soul cannot lack them either. Through this bond, for that entire time in which the mother carries the fetus in the womb, evil motions recur rather often in the infant, and this more frequent reawakening of evil inclinations at length begets a habit, and so disposes the whole nature that man is very prone to all evil, and depends on sensual pleasures and tediousness before he is born and learns to discern good from evil by his own reason. Therefore, the propagation of this sin to posterity was necessary, which God himself could not have impeded, unless he had wished to abolish nature and its laws by the continuous interposition of miracles. (g)

(g) From this demonstration it is clear that the body of the infant is vitiated immediately, but the soul mediately, in the mother's womb. **AUGUSTINE** saw that either both, namely the soul and the flesh, are drawn vitiated from man, or

the one is corrupted in the other as in a vitiated vessel, where the hidden justice of divine law is included. But which of these should be asserted, he himself did not dare to define. "Which of these is true," he says, "I would rather learn than say, lest I dare to teach what I do not know." See his Epistle, Book V against Julian, chap. IV, Opp. Tom. X, p. 637, seq. Moreover, the blessed IO. AD. OCHERZER taught things very similar to these in his *Brev. Huls.*, chap. V, Th. XV, p. 286.

### §. XIII.

*Adam's posterity is charged with another's sin.*

But just as God himself is the author and lord of all nature, and most wisely established those laws by whose virtue the entire human race draws its origin from the blood of one man (Acts XVII, 26), so this natural succession of generations would scarcely, if at all, have obtained if Adam's posterity were utterly without all guilt before being born and participating in the corruption of the parents. For it seems utterly unworthy of His holiness and justice to permit that men, who are in every respect innocent, should be subjected to a disposition of nature toward evil and the necessity of sinning. Wherefore, it is not difficult to see from this that men are already guilty of sin before they are begotten and born. But indeed this sin cannot be a proper offense. For who can physically transgress the law of God before he exists? It follows therefore, that the sin of another fell upon the whole of Adam's posterity while not yet existing, and was imputed to it as its own.

### §. XIV.

*And indeed, Adam's sin itself.*

What and of what kind this sin is, the holy Apostle teaches us in Romans V, 12, saying: "through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and so death passed to all men, because all have sinned." That one man, of whom he makes mention here, is without doubt Adam, the head and parent of the whole human race, as is also gathered from v. 14. Through this one man sin came into the world and diffused itself to absolutely all men. But this was done either by a physical transfusion of corruption, by which posterity is disposed to sinning, or by imitation of the deed of the first man, by which, seduced by his example, they perpetrated similar offenses, or finally by the imputation of that sin. As to the first, it is indeed true that the corruption of Adam passed physically into his posterity, and in this way it can be said that sin came upon all men. But Paul is not speaking of the propagation of this evil in this place. For 1. he gives the reason for the transition of the evil, which he teaches has penetrated to all, with these words, ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον (because all sinned). But this cannot be the reason for corruption derived to posterity by natural generation. For if it were, this very corruption would presuppose another sin of posterity, which would be either its own or another's. If its own, men would have sinned physically before

they existed, which is impossible. But if it were another's, that itself is what had to descend from another to posterity before the corruption was propagated. And then it would be confessed that the sin of another was imputed to the human race. 2. The Apostle is speaking of a sin which passed to posterity in the same way that the righteousness of Christ is participated in by men. (Rom. V, 18, 19). But this is not done by a physical infusion of his holiness, but by imputation alone. (Rom. IV, 6). Therefore, he is also treating of a sin which is not transfused physically, but is imputed morally. Secondly, from the same reasons it is manifest that sin did not pass to his posterity by imitation of Adam alone. For, to say nothing of the fact that this sin is the cause of death, to which all men are already subject before they can imitate the deed of Adam, and therefore men were already guilty of it before imitation, no one is ignorant that we are made partakers of Christ's righteousness unto eternal life not by imitating his holiness with our works, but by apprehending it by faith. And yet it is said that this sin passes into us in the same way that this righteousness full of salvation comes upon us. It is added that many men are ignorant of the lapse of the first man, for whom it is therefore impossible to imitate this disobedience, although the Apostle testifies that his sin has passed to all. And so we must confess that Adam sinned, and his sin was imputed to us all unto death.

#### §. XV.

*And indeed, by means of an interpreted consent.*

This imputation is a sentence of God as judge, by which he declared men guilty of the sin committed by Adam, and worthy of its punishment, which is temporal and eternal death. But since the judgments of God are always holy and just, there has been long and much dispute concerning the cause of this imputation, lest any suspicion of injustice might seem to fall upon the most holy God. (h) If those who disputed this argument had followed the natural and most evident principles of reason, it would not have been difficult to find it and to defend the cause of the supreme Deity. For who is unaware that the deed of another can hardly be imputed to us unless our consent intervenes? But indeed the sin of Adam, if it is referred to his posterity, is another's. Therefore, it was imputed to us because we consented to it.

(h) **IO. TOB. MAIOR** has treated this matter deliberately concerning the justice of this imputation against the Arminians and Socinians in a special disputation, *de Jure divino imputandi peccatum primum adamiticum toti generi humano* (On the Divine Right of Imputing the First Adamic Sin to the Whole Human Race), held in 1647.

## §. XVI.

*Which is to be interpreted.*

But we can consent to the deed of another in a twofold manner: first physically, when we ourselves approve of it and wish it to be held as our own; second morally, when someone else approves a deed, to whose judgment we have either willingly committed our fortune, or ought to have committed it due to a necessary connection. For whatever he does, we ourselves are deservedly seen to approve, if the deed is so constituted that its consequences touch our state, even if we are ignorant of the deed itself and its morality. The former consent is called **FORMED**, and the latter **INTERPRETED**. The question therefore is, which of these consents is the cause of the imputation of the Adamic sin? The existence of the former applies only to those who can discern good from evil, and can will and approve what seems good to them. But none of us could do that when Adam transgressed the law laid down for him. Since, therefore, we have consented to the sin of the first man (§. 15), this consent had to be interpreted. (i)

(i) That a consent of this kind is the cause of the imputation of the Adamic sin was also demonstrated by the Very Learned and Distinguished **SIGISM. JAC. BAUMGARTEN** in a special disputation, *de Propag. & Grad. P. O.* (On the Propagation and Degrees of Original Sin), held in 1748, and by the Celebrated **CARPOVIUS** in a special writing, *de Imput. facti proprii & alieni* (On the Imputation of One's Own and Another's Deed), and in his *Theol. Dogm.*, Tom. I, Part II, chap. III, §. 1217. And from the Reformed, the Very Learned **WYTTENBACH** in *Tent. Theol. Dogm.*, Loc. VII, §. 805, Sch. I.

## §. XVII.

*Whose existence is demonstrated.*

But perhaps there are not lacking those who persuade themselves that this very consent is a mere fiction, and therefore rashly conclude that this whole doctrine of the imputation of the first man's sin is destitute of all foundation. Lest their false opinions harm the truth, I ask my readers to diligently consider that men are a genus of creatures that could only be propagated and multiplied by generation and conception; that it was therefore necessary for some humans of both sexes to be the very first of all, from whom the rest would descend; that it seemed to God more suitable and more worthy of his infinite wisdom to create two at the beginning, rather than more than two; that with these, all the rest were necessarily so connected that the nature, quality, and state of all the rest could not but depend on their nature, quality, and state; that they were therefore a pair of humans to whose judgment all the rest, on account of the inevitable connection, had to commit their fortune. If, therefore, those first humans ever approved some evil deed—the sad beginning of evil consequences that will never cease—it is just as if the whole of posterity had approved it, or had appropriated it to themselves by a certain interpreted consent (§. 16.). Now it

happened, although beyond all expectation, that these humans, instructed with so many illustrious riches of holiness and wisdom, departed from the divine law! Therefore, this very deed, and the necessary connection of those humans with their posterity, brought it about that posterity also simultaneously consented to this sin, by that consent, namely, which it has pleased us to call interpreted. (k)

(k) Concerning this and the preceding section, I have a rather severe religious censor, who in the *theologischen Büchersaal*, Part 12, passed sentence on my *Inst. Theol. Dogm.*. If this declaration is not sufficient to mitigate his mind, he may, for all I care, continue to attack this dogma as he pleases. Let him know, however, that he will accomplish nothing against me unless he demonstrates either that the deed of another can be imputed without consent, or that it is not an interpreted consent, but some other, I know not what, consent by which posterity consented to the deed of Adam. If he should succeed in this as he wishes, I will be the first to desert this opinion.

#### §. XVIII.

##### *Pelagius's opinion on originated Original Sin.*

We have seen, therefore, what Scripture, and what reason aided by the light of revelation, teaches concerning original sin. But we have also seen that both these evils were denied by Pelagius. (l) In order that his dissent from the Catholics may be more clearly perceived, and that it may be established by what arguments he wished to adorn his hypothesis, let us now proceed to the Pelagian dogma concerning Original Sin. As to what pertains to originated sin, therefore, i.e., the corruption of nature, or that evil concupiscence, he seems to have denied not the existence of the thing itself which is called by this name, but only its evilness. For he had to confess, taught by experience itself, that men are born without any knowledge of spiritual things; and no less that sensual pleasures and tediousness have more power in men than reason, and that they desire sensual and apparent goods more than spiritual and true ones; and that from this appears the disposition of the whole nature to evil, which it wills and desires under the appearance of good. And although in a recently born infant this disposition of nature is not so clearly perceived, yet that it is present from the beginning is proven by the effects of concupiscence, which appear as soon as the power of desiring and being averse is granted to man. Therefore, when, having denied the propagation of original sin or of any corruption, he taught that men are born in that state in which Adam was before his transgression, everyone sees that this was his opinion: that that concupiscence, or disposition of desiring evil under the appearance of good, and the predominance of sensual pleasure and tediousness, is nothing evil, but rather pertains to the nature and essence of man, and therefore that Adam himself, when he still enjoyed the benefit of integrity, did not lack this concupiscence. (m) And to this tend his arguments by which he attacked the existence of original sin.

(l) See my Disputation *de Syst. Pelag.*, §. 18, 19.

(m) Let the Roman Catholics see, therefore, how they purge themselves from the imputation of the Pelagian error. For they themselves acknowledge that there is concupiscence in infants before and after baptism, but they are unwilling to confess that it is a sin. See the Bull of LEO in HARDOUIN'S *Collection of Councils*, Tom. IX, p. 2891; COUNCIL OF TRENT, sess. V, p. 40, Cologne Edition; BELLARMINE, Book V of *On the Loss of Grace and the State of Sin*, chap. V, *Dispp. Theol.*, Tom. IV, p. 289; MART. BECANUS in *Man. Controv.*, Book I, chap. XIV, qu. 1, p. 378. In this alone they are better than the Pelagians, that they maintain this concupiscence to be a consequence of sin, which was denied by them.

### §. XIX.

*The more powerful arguments are indicated.*

But there are chiefly five of them, namely: that God is the best creator of nature, that marriage is good, that sins are remitted through baptism, that a just God cannot condemn the sins of the parents in the children, that nature is capable of perfection. (n) For the Pelagians used this artifice to persuade the unskilled that the common Catholic dogma of Original Sin is pressed by many great difficulties and inconveniences, and to turn away ill-will from their own opinion. But so that the force of these arguments may be more easily broken, we shall now briefly touch upon each one separately.

(n) We learn this from AUGUSTINE'S Book II against Julian, chap. II, Opp. Tom. X, p. 525, where he thus disputes against the Pelagians: "You say that by asserting original sin we are saying the devil is the creator of newborn men, we condemn marriage, we deny that all sins are remitted in baptism, we accuse God of the crime of iniquity, we inflict despair of perfection. For you contend that all these things are consequences if we believe that infants are born bound by the sin of the first man." He repeats these things hereafter, reduced to the form of an argument, in the same book, chap. IX, p. 545, seq.

### §. XX.

*The first argument.*

The first, therefore, is this: If infants were born with sin, God himself would be the author of evil. Since this is very impious to assert, the nature of infants cannot be corrupt either. The reason for the consequence he undoubtedly derives from the fact that God is the creator of the whole of nature, and thus also of infants. To this, however, we respond that the consequence must be denied. And although the nature of infants is already corrupt with sin as soon as they are brought forth into the light, yet God is without all blame, nor can the origin of evil be traced back to him. Of this matter we render this reason: that God indeed created nature whole and incorrupt, but it was afterwards vitiated by the parents

without God's operation. Wherefore, to this Pelagian argument we oppose another, which is of this tenor: If the nature of infants, made whole by God, was afterwards corrupted by the fault of the parents, God is by no means the cause of sin.

§. XXI.

*Souls are created by God without fault.*

The ancients, lest these weapons of our adversaries should harm the truth, denied the creation of souls, and wished them to be educed from the substance of the parents, whence they were also called **TRADUCIANS** by the Pelagians. Our own theologians embraced the same hypothesis in their disputations against the Roman Catholics. Yet neither these nor those ancient Fathers maintained that this opinion could not be deserted, while saving the truth handed down in the Scriptures. (o) But after this argument concerning the origin of souls was also more discussed by the Philosophers, few today will doubt that souls arose by creation. For they are simple entities, which can be produced neither from a simple entity, nor from a composite one, but arise immediately from nothing. But although we prefer the creation of souls in this manner to traducianism, we by no means maintain with the Pelagians or Roman Catholics that they are then immediately produced, and thus most recently created, are breathed into tender little bodies when these are conceived in the mother's womb by the force of natural generation. But we rather think that the souls of all men were created together with Adam's soul, at the same time and on the same day. For since, as Moses testifies in Gen. II, 2, God, having finished the work of six days, created nothing more, and yet souls must have been created, it follows that they were created within this space of time. Having done this, God, who defined the ways and progressions of nature, most wisely disposed for each soul, at what time, in what vicissitude of things, and by what means the body of each soul, with the intervening concourse of male and female, should be formed, and thus, endowed with life and organs, should be born together with the soul inhabiting it. According to this opinion, the substance of infants is not indeed produced from the substance of the parents as from matter, yet it is formed by them as secondary causes, is disposed for entry into the society of men, and is in a certain way propagated, so that that creation of souls which we maintain can coexist with some kind of traduction.

(o) Although **AUGUSTINE** approved the traducianism of souls, he by no means rejected their creation entirely, if only it could be reconciled with catholic truth. "The infusion of new souls without propagation," he says, "we by no means prohibit from being defended, but by those who have been able to find something, either in the canonical books, which is not ambiguous for solving this most binding question, or in their own reasonings, which is not contrary to catholic truth." See **AUG.** Book I, *On the Soul and its Origin*, chap. XIX, Opp. Tom. X, p. 354. The blessed **IO. GERHARD** used the same moderation in his *Catholic*

*Confession*, Book II, Part III, Art. XXI, chap. II, p. 1391. "The mode of propagation," he says, "which we have not yet been able to find proposed in the Scriptures, we do not define; but we defend the propagation of souls."

§. XXII.

*They are vitiated in the mother's womb.*

But if human souls were created at that time when not even Adam's soul was stained by sin, who does not see that they were made by their creator without any blemish and fault? The question therefore is, whether these whole and incorrupt minds could have been vitiated by sin without the positive cooperation of God? That this could happen physically in a natural way has been demonstrated by us above in §. 12. In the meantime, however, since God brought it about that this soul, which was created pure and whole from the beginning, should at some time be sent into a body, in which it must most certainly contract a fault and be subjected to damnation, it might seem that this ought not to have been permitted by God, much less effected or decreed. And this is the difficulty which troubled AUGUSTINE himself, who, in the disputation on the origin of souls, was utterly ignorant of which way to turn. (p) But the matter is saved if we consider that those souls, created without fault, were soon made guilty of the sin of another, namely of their parents, Adam and Eve, when they sinned, and before they themselves were born. Therefore God, by permitting this, did not compel the innocent to become guilty; but He permitted that those who were guilty through the fault of others should not remain innocent through their own. That is to say, this evil, by which souls are corrupted in the mother's womb, is not only a sin, but at the same time takes the place of a punishment, which God does not inflict according to his will, but allows one evil to follow another naturally. For just as it was necessary that those who had participated in the guilt of their parents should also become partakers of their corruption, so it was not unjust that this should be permitted, after that could not have been prevented.

(p) Let us hear him discussing this matter in *On the Soul*, Book I, chap. XIII, p. 345: "Wherefore if God does not condemn the innocent, nor make them guilty, and if He does not free souls either from original or from their own sins, except in the Church of Christ by the baptism of Christ, and if the soul had no sin at all before the flesh, and if sins, before they are committed, and much more, which have never been committed, cannot be condemned by a just law, let him say which of these four things it is: and, if he can, let him explain, by what merit the souls of infants, who, departing without baptism, are sent into damnation, were sent into sinful flesh, which had not sinned at all, so that there they might find the sin for which they were justly condemned."

§. XXIII.

*God is not the author of sin.*

Therefore, souls lacked fault when they were created by God. But they contracted a fault when they were born from their parents. Since God had sufficiently grave and just reasons for permitting this, he is not the author of sin, although infants come into the world corrupted by sin.

§. XXIV.

*The Catholic dogma is vindicated from Manichaeism.*

Wherefore, the calumny was most unjust by which the Pelagians accused the Catholics of either making God the author of evil, or of reviving Manichaeism. (q) Men are indeed evil by the condition of their birth, but neither did God create this evil, nor another principle co-eternal with God, such as the Manichaeans imagined. To be sure, this corruption of nature had crept in by the malice of the devil, but not by creating evil, but by seducing men to evil. For after he had persuaded the first humans that nothing was to be feared if they ate of the forbidden fruit, he brought it about that they sinned, corrupted their own nature with a fault, and generated none but corrupt children. Therefore, it was voluntary that they gave such easy ears to the seducer; voluntary that they assented to his persuasions; voluntary that they contracted guilt and depraved their well-created nature. For unless their free will had acceded, this malignant Spirit could not have destroyed the holy and perfect work of God. How far these dogmas are from the dreams of the Manichaeans! They, in order to explain the origin of evil, or rather its commixture with good, imagined that there are two co-eternal principles of contrary nature, one good, the other evil; that the former created a perfectly good world, but the latter, dwelling in another region, wished to destroy that splendid work; that the good principle therefore fought with the evil one, and so it happened that something of darkness was mixed with the light, which, being immediately communicated with the creatures emanating from the divine essence, had brought it about that men existed in whom evil was mixed with good, and from whom others would be born, drawing a corrupt nature from this source. (r) How great, therefore, was either the imprudence or the malice of the Pelagians, who did not blush to compare this insanity of the heretics with the dogma of the Catholics, and to impute the delirious ravings of the Manichaeans to them!

(q) **AUGUSTINE** testifies in various places that the impiety of the Manichaeans was often imputed to the Catholics by the Pelagians, e.g., Book IV against the two Epistles of the Pelagians, chap. XI, Opp. Tom. X, p. 488; Book I against Julian, chap. IV, p. 503; also chap. V, p. 508-509. And since the Catholics most constantly denied that they made the devil the creator of natures, the Pelagians thence concluded that they were therefore far worse than the Manichaeans. Let us hear **JULIAN** discussing this matter in **AUGUSTINE'S** Book I of the *Unfinished Work against Julian*, chap. CXV, seq., p. 940: "For in order to remove the odium that rushed upon you, because you were saying the devil is the creator of men, you, having been corrected, confess that God is the creator, but

of such men as Manichaeus ascribes to the prince of darkness. For indeed, believing that men are evil by the condition of their birth, he assigned to them that author through whom the crime of an evil work might be separated from a good God. And since he had erred in the definition of sin, so as to think that to be natural which cannot be unless it is voluntary, consequently he then invented an evil artisan of an evil origin; in this more religious toward God, more contumacious toward nature. But you say that men are indeed born evil, but that God is the author of evils: you are more contumacious toward God, more honorific toward nature; for the latter is defended by the majesty of its author, but the author is accused by the foulness of the work."

(r) I believe this was the error of **MANES** concerning the commixture of good and evil, about which see **EPIPHANIUS**, *Haer.* LXVI, Book II, *adv. Haereses*, Tom. II, p.m. 625; **AUGUSTINE**, *Book on Heresies*, chap. XLVI, Opp. Tom. VIII, p. 13-14; **LAMB. DANEAU** in his *Commentary on Augustine's Book on Heresies*, chap. XLVI, Opp. p. 969, seq.; **CENT. MAGDEB.** in Cent. III, chap. V, p. 77, seqq.; **IO. MICRAELIUS** in *Hist. Eccl.*, Book II, sect. I, p. 289; **PET. BAYLE** in *Dict. Hist. Crit.*, under the entry "Manichaeans," note B, Tom. I, p. 305.

#### §. XXV.

##### *The second argument.*

The second argument, to which we now proceed, the Pelagians constructed thus: If marriage is good, and instituted by God himself, nothing evil can come from it. All of which could have been conceded to them, if they had not argued further from this: If nothing evil can arise from marriage, then men cannot be born with sin either. (s) This manner of reasoning, by which they thought to completely abolish the original sin inherent in infants, clearly shows that this was their thought: that marriage is evil in itself, and therefore to be condemned, if those who are procreated from it were not without all fault. And for this reason, no less than for the preceding one, they objected to the Catholics that they thought with the Manichaeans, who detested marriage, when they asserted original sin. But in this the Pelagians were certainly false. For that men are born infected with sin depends not on marriage, but on the fault of those celebrating the marriage. This evil has its reason not in marriage or in the congress of male and female, but in the corruption of those who come together. (t) So that this may be understood more evidently, let us hold firmly that in a recently born man two things must be distinguished from each other: first, the substance and nature of the man itself, which is good in itself and does not deserve to be called evil, except on account of the adhering fault, and second, the corruption of this nature. The former alone depends on the union divinely instituted, which is good in itself and could have been entered into without fault, if men had never sinned. (u) But it also remained good after the fall, because it is the means, most wisely chosen by God, for propagating the human race, and it brings forth into the light a nature advanced to maturity, which has God himself as its creator. But

the corruption adhering to this nature comes from the fact that the persons who perform this in itself holy work are vitiated, and they cannot generate and conceive a nature good in itself unless something of their own corruption is at the same time derived into it. We confess indeed that that carnal union is for the most part made from a libidinous affection, and is therefore in most cases a shameful and sinful act, as is most apparent from fornications and adulteries. But just as the evil intentions of men using sacred things do not thereby bring it about that those sacred things cease to be sacred, so neither do the faults of persons who copulate carnally bring it about by their lust that this copulation itself is in itself a shameful and by no means honest thing.

(s) Against this argument, **AUGUSTINE** wrote a special book *On Marriage and Concupiscence* to **VALERIUS THE COUNT**, in the beginning of which he mentions that this is his intention: "that the evil of carnal concupiscence, on account of which man, who is born through it, contracts original sin, may be distinguished from the goodness of marriage."

(t) Thus **AUGUSTINE** himself always distinguished. In book I of *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, chap. I, p. 280, he says: "They do not notice that the good of marriage cannot be accused of the original evil which is drawn from it, just as the evil of adulteries and fornications cannot be excused by the natural good which is born from it. For just as sin, whether it is drawn by infants from here or there, is the work of the devil, so man, whether he is born from here or there, is the work of God." And in Book I against Julian, chap. II, p. 499, he notes that he therefore wrote this book *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, "so that he might distinguish the good of marriage from that evil from which original sin is drawn." **FULGENTIUS** used the same distinction in Book I of *On the Truth of Predestination*, p. 28-29. See **GER. IO. VOSSIUS** in *Hist. Pelag.*, Book II, Part II, Antith. VI, p. 202.

(u) For that insipid comment is not worthy of attention, that the carnal union of the first humans was the eating of the forbidden tree itself; see **BAYLE** in his Lexicon, Art. "Eunuch," note 13, from which the author of the book, *philosophische Untersuchung vom Zustande des Menschen in der Erbsünde* (Philosophical Investigation of the State of Man in Original Sin), wished to prove his opinion, that original sin derived to posterity is the desire of cohabiting with the other sex. For since the law concerning the propagation of the human race was given before the fall, and for this end Adam received a spouse, and no other natural means of multiplying men was possible than that congress of male and female, no turpitude can be in it. Cf. *meine Gedanken von dem Fall der Menschen* (my thoughts on the fall of men), chap. II, §. 52, seq., p. 68, seqq.

## §. XXVI.

*The third argument.*

Thirdly, the Pelagians thought that either the dignity and efficacy of Baptism must be abolished, or Original Sin must be denied. Hence they argued thus against the Catholics: If in baptism all sins are remitted, those born of the reborn cannot contract original sin. (x) If this argument had any force, it would only be particular, and could at least purge from the sin of origin those who are born of justified and holy parents. For the reason for the absence of this sin is placed in the remission of sins, which the one generating and the one giving birth enjoy. But what advantage would the Pelagians have from this, if the whole were conceded? For it would always be uncertain which of the infants would be born without this evil. And on account of this uncertainty, the means of regeneration would have to be applied to all, lest their souls be lost by a vain presumption of purity. And although it is established which parents have been tinged with the sacred font of baptism, and through it the remission of sins was given to them, yet it could have happened that they lost this grace again by a new unbelief or deliberate choice, and lack it when they generate, conceive, or bear offspring. It is added that by this argument the rest of the Pelagian positions are overturned. For if the remission of sins which the parents have obtained is the cause why original sin cannot be derived to the infants, it follows that those can be corrupted by this evil who are born of unbelievers and the unbaptized. But if this can happen, it is no longer permitted to the Pelagians to object that the propagation of Original Sin renders God the author of evil, or that it violates the sanctity of marriage.

(x) See AUGUSTINE, Book II against Julian, chap. IX, Opp. Tom. X, p. 545.

## §. XXVII.

### *Its refutation.*

But so that we may respond directly to the proposed argument, it must be known that the consequence is false. This those will easily perceive who are not ignorant that the remission of sins is not a physical action by which man is internally sanctified, but a forensic and judicial action, by which the imputation of sins unto punishment is taken away. The Pelagians, it seems, had another opinion on this matter. For they thought that not only the guilt of sin is taken away, but that the evil inherent in man is itself deleted and abolished when sins are remitted. (y) In which matter they have the Roman Catholics as followers, who believe in a remission of sins which is nothing other than an internal purification of the heart and the removal of all evil. (z) But the Apostle thinks far otherwise, who teaches us that the remission of sins is their non-imputation. (Rom. IV: 7, 8). And this non-imputation is a declaration of a judge, by which someone is absolved from punishment, whom he knows not to lack the offense. Since, therefore, sins are indeed remitted through baptism, but are not deleted, nor are they so taken away that they are no longer present, it can happen that original vice is also transmitted from reborn parents to their children. For to the Pelagians arguing thus: What the parents do not have, that cannot be transferred

to the children; but the parents, having obtained remission of sins, do not have Original Sin; therefore it cannot be propagated to the children either; to them, I say, arguing thus, we respond that the subsumption is false, and we oppose another argument: What the parents have in every way, that can be transferred to the children; but the parents have Original Sin, although this sin has been remitted to them. Therefore the children also can contract this fault.

(y) This can be gathered from the disputations of **AUGUSTINE**, who, about to refute this argument, diligently urges the difference between the non-existence and the non-imputation of sins, the latter of which he teaches is effected by remission, not the former. There is, among others, a notable passage in Book I of *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, chap. XXVI, Tom. X, p. 294: "In those, therefore, who are regenerated in Christ, since they receive the remission of absolutely all sins, it is certainly necessary that the guilt of this, **ALTHOUGH IT STILL REMAINS, CONCUPISCENCE** be remitted, so that, as I have said, it is not imputed as sin." And etc. To what purpose is this, unless the adversaries had believed that remitted sins are no longer present in one who has obtained remission?

(z) Thus **BELLARMINE** expounds the remission of sins in Book II of *On Justification*, chap. II, Dispp. de Controv. Fidei, Tom. IV, p. 503, and many others. See my program *de Naturalismo ecclesie romane*, published in 1750.

#### §. XXVIII.

*A doubt is addressed.*

But perhaps you will say that the reborn parents nevertheless lack the guilt and the obligation to sustain the punishment, and therefore the children, if they participate in some evil of nature, yet lack its punishment, and are not liable to death on account of original sin. For what God has remitted to the parents, how can he impute it to the infants? But neither does this have any force against us. For parents generate children, they do not regenerate them. They can therefore transfuse into them by generating whatever they themselves have received by generation; they cannot propagate by generating whatever has been given to them by regeneration. They can communicate the evil which adheres to the natural seed; they cannot transfer the good which is procreated from the spiritual Seed. Now indeed they have drawn the fault of nature from generation, and have received its remission from regeneration. Therefore, it is possible for reborn parents to confer original sin indeed upon their children, but not its remission. But just as infants receive by generation from their parents what they themselves have from generation, so also they can receive by regeneration what they have received by this grace. The salutary laver of regeneration is offered to them, and if they are tinged with it, they will be similar to their parents in grace no less than in nature.

§. XXIX.

*The fourth argument.*

By this response, the fourth argument has already been partly satisfied: if God is just, he cannot condemn the sins of the parents in the children, when he remits their own to the parents themselves. But because this objection rather denies the imputation of the first sin than the propagation of evil concupiscence, it will have to be discussed more at length hereafter.

§. XXX.

*The fifth argument.*

We come therefore to the fifth and last argument, which can be destroyed with easy effort. Namely, they last attacked original sin in such a way that, if this evil were present in man, they would show that human nature would not be capable of perfect justice. (a) But we see that this argument was inflected in another way, if account is had of those things by which the force of this objection was explained. For, in order to demonstrate that nature is not capable of perfect justice if Original Sin is granted, they urged this most of all: that the opinion of the existence of this evil inflicts despair of perfection and that all study of piety perishes, if vices are believed to be inbred in us. (b)

(a) **AUGUSTINE**, from the mind of the Pelagians, in Book II against Julian, chap. IX, p. 546, expresses this argument thus: "If human nature is capable of perfect justice, it cannot have natural vices."

(b) Elsewhere, this argument is thus explained by **AUGUSTINE**: "Nor is virtue, to which viciousness is understood to be contrary, believed to be able to be perfected, because it is incredible that inbred vices can be consumed, which now are not even to be considered vices. For he does not sin who cannot be other than he was created." Book II against Julian, chap. I, p. 526. For they thought that by the persuasion of this evil, the hope of attaining virtue is taken away, and with that taken away, there would be no stimulus for pursuing piety. Hence **PELAGIUS**, in his Letter to Demetrius, in **JEROME**, Tom. IV, p. 12, says: "We are by no means able to enter upon the paths of virtues unless we are led by the companion of hope. For the effort of desiring perishes by the despair of attaining."

**§. XXXI.**

*The first response.*

Thus they fell into another reason, on account of which they thought it permissible for them to deny this evil. And although we easily grant that the former can be proved from the latter, it is nevertheless better to consider these two arguments as distinct and to respond to each separately. Concerning the first argument, it should have been said to the Pelagians whether they are disputing about human nature considered in itself, or indeed about it as it is now, while we walk in the body. If they understood the nature of man after the fall in this world, their antecedent is false. For who, while preserving scripture, would assert that our nature, as long as we live in this world, is capable of perfect justice? Were those men ignorant that John holds those guilty of a lie who affirm that they lack all sin? (1 John I, 8). Did they not know that the most holy Paul complains that he cannot do the good that he wishes, nor has he any hope of liberation from this evil? (Rom. VII, 19, 24, 25). Did it escape them that a clean thing cannot be found in the world where no one is clean? (Job XIV, 4). But if the discussion is about the nature of man considered in itself, it by no means follows: if nature is capable of perfect justice, Original Sin is not given. For although this sin impedes human nature from being able to have perfect justice, yet that evil is not necessarily in nature. It was separated from human nature before the first humans sinned. And it will be separated again after the pious and faithful have entered from this life into eternal felicity: whether this happens by a natural disjunction of the sensual body from the rational soul, or supernaturally, by grace and sanctification through the bestowal of the light of glory. For just as original justice is restored in an inchoative way in this life through the light of grace, so it will be perfected in the future through the light of glory.

**§. XXXII.**

*The second response.*

To the other we respond that the Pelagians are vehemently mistaken in asserting that the persuasion that natural vices are in us takes away all study of piety. For first, those who know that they labor under original sin must also know that, although not the sin itself, yet its dominion can be abolished by the study of piety, which both befits the faithful of Christ and is very profitable. (Rom. VI, 12, seqq.). Secondly, although not a perfect, yet some kind of justice can be acquired by the study of virtue, which is pleasing to God on account of Christ, and for which he has so often promised a most lavish, though gratuitous and utterly unmerited, remuneration. Nor is it to be feared, thirdly, that there should be any necessity of believing that inbred vices are not vices, and that he does not sin who cannot be other than he was born. I confess that a natural man, destitute of divine revelation, who, as Paul testifies, does not grasp spiritual things, can scarcely guard himself from this opinion. He, perhaps, to excuse nature, will

think that this necessary evil is not an evil, because he is ignorant of its origin. Which is the less to be wondered at, since Paul himself was ignorant that concupiscence is a sin, unless he had learned it from the law. But he who is well imbued with the sacred letters knows most certainly that this concupiscence, congenital to him, is altogether a sin. And in this also is placed some excellence of the Christian religion, that it leads us to a fuller recognition of sin, to which it is not permitted to arrive by natural powers.

### §. XXXIII.

*Arguments against originating Original Sin are to be examined.*

We have seen thus far by what arguments the Pelagians attacked Original Sin, which we above called **ORIGINATED**. It remains, therefore, that we briefly touch upon the reasons by which they wished to prove that that other sin, which is commonly called **ORIGINATING**, is not given either. For although the ancient Fathers did not distinguish these two with sufficient accuracy, yet the mode of disputing by which the dissenting parties attacked each other proves sufficiently that the imputation of the first sin and the concupiscence inherent in nature were not for them utterly one and the same. (c) I gather this chiefly from those arguments which can indeed be opposed to that imputation, but not to the corruption of nature.

(c) The Fathers understood this imputation when the sense of the words πάντες ἥμαρτον (all have sinned) was disputed. For the Pelagians interpreted these of imitation alone, but the Catholics of imputation. **GERH. IO. VOSSIUS** diligently collected the testimonies of the Fathers on this matter in his *Hist. Pelag.*, Book II, Part 1, Th. 1, p. 134, seqq., and **ANDR. RIVETUS** on the *Imputation of the First Sin*, Chap. VIII, Opp. Tom. III, p. 818, seq.

### §. XXXIV.

*The first argument.*

To this pertains that of which I already made mention in §. 29. "If God is just," they said, "he cannot condemn the sins of the parents in the children." That is to say, it seemed alien to justice to impute the sins of others, especially since God remits one's own. And they placed the foundation of this injustice chiefly in the fact that they believed the souls of posterity did not yet exist when the first parent of all sinned. For this was the common opinion of the Pelagians, that souls are most recently created by God when bodies are formed in the mother's womb, and that these alone draw their origin from the parents. (d) For which cause **AUGUSTINE** also especially urges that we were all already present in Adam when he sinned, and that his transgression is not utterly another's. (e) If the Pelagians had had no other reasons for accusing of injustice this judgment by which the lapse of the parents was imputed to the children, the response to this argument would be easy. For we have shown that souls are indeed created

by God, but not at the time when each man is generated, but rather that they were all so created within the six days, and hence they all existed when Adam sinned (§. 21). But it would be unjust, whether the souls had existed or not, to impute the offenses of the first humans to posterity, if they were in every respect another's. In order that the appearance of this injustice might be removed from God, it has been demonstrated that this sin of another was made the posterity's own by the intervention of consent, and therefore it was rightly and deservedly imputed to the whole human race not as another's, but as its own.

(d) **PELAGIUS** proposed this argument thus: "If the soul is not from traducianism, but only the flesh, it alone has the traducianism of sin, and it alone merits the punishment. For it is unjust that a soul born today, not from the mass of Adam, should bear so ancient a sin of another." See **AUGUSTINE**, Book III of *On the Merits of Sins*, chap. X, Tom. X, p. 80.

(e) Concerning this matter, he discusses somewhere thus: "Nor are those sins said to be another's as if they do not pertain at all to infants: for indeed all then sinned in Adam, when in his nature that force was implanted by which he was able to beget them, they were all still that one man: but they are said to be another's, because they themselves were not yet living their own lives, but whatever was in the future progeny, the life of one man contained." See **AUGUSTINE**, Book III of *On the Merits of Sins*, chap. VII, p. 78.

#### §. XXXV.

##### *The second argument.*

Secondly, the Pelagians attacked this Catholic dogma indirectly, asserting that this paradox followed from it: that the righteousness of Christ could also be imputed to unbelievers. For thus they concluded: "If the sin of Adam harmed even those not sinning, then the righteousness of Christ also benefits even those not believing." (f) But they falsely suppose that it was believed by the Catholics that the sin of Adam harmed those not sinning. For although they teach that posterity did not sin in the same way as Adam, following the Apostle in this matter (Rom. V, 14), yet they do not think that they did not sin at all. They did indeed sin, but not in the same way as Adam. The latter sinned physically and with deliberate choice; the former only morally, and without deliberate choice. They sinned by consenting to the transgression of the first humans, the nature, possibility, and existence of which consent I have demonstrated in §. 16 and 17. Whence, just as the sin of Adam was not imputed to these as not sinning, so also today the righteousness of Christ cannot be imputed to those not believing. (g)

(f) See **AUGUSTINE**, Book III of *On the Merits of Sins*, chap. III, p. 73.

(g) Let the entire fourth chapter of my German treatise, *On the Fall of Men and Original Sin*, be consulted here.