
AUGUSTINIAN STUDIES

A Publication of Villanova University

AUGUSTINIAN STUDIES

Volume 23

1992

Editor:

Allan D. Fitzgerald, O.S.A.
Villanova University

Book Review Editor:

John Cavadini
University of Notre Dame

Associate Editors:

John E. Rotelle, O.S.A.
Augustinian Press

Frederick van Fleteren
LaSalle University

Advisory board:

Elizabeth A. Clark
Duke University

George P. Lawless, O.S.A.
Augustinianum – Rome

Joseph T. Lienhard, S.J.
Fordham University

Margaret R. Miles
Harvard Divinity School

Benedict A. Paparella
Villanova University

Rowan D. Williams
University of Oxford

Augustinian Studies is a journal devoted to the study of Saint Augustine. The Editors welcome contributions from a variety of disciplines and perspectives, including history, philosophy, and theology. Although the primary emphasis of the journal is the study of Augustine himself, articles illuminating aspects of Augustinian studies more broadly conceived (for example, studies of other persons, groups, or issues in Augustine's time, or studies of Augustine's influence upon later thinkers or cultural situations) are welcome to the extent that such studies bear on or contribute to an understanding of Augustine's life or thought. The annual Saint Augustine Lecture, given each Fall at Villanova University, is published in the pages of this journal. *Augustinian Studies* also prints substantive review articles on appropriate publications.

Augustinian Studies is committed to fostering gender-inclusive scholarship and expression. In the preparation of manuscripts, authors are requested to follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Full titles of Augustine's works, rather than abbreviations, are preferred. Book, chapter and paragraph numbers are to follow the style of the critical edition used. Translated citations from Latin authors should supply the original language in the note.

Articles are to be submitted in manuscript form (two clean, double-spaced copies with endnotes). When an article is available in machine-readable form (DOS, ASCII format), a disk-copy will be requested from authors whose papers have been accepted. In order to allow manuscripts to be evaluated in ignorance of the author's name and institutional affiliation, the editor requests that such information be given in an accompanying letter and not on the manuscript itself. A decision will normally be reached within six months of receiving a paper. Manuscripts will be returned upon request.

Manuscripts, editorial and business correspondence, and orders for subscriptions or back issues should be addressed to Augustinian Studies, Tolentine Hall, Villanova University, Villanova, PA 19085. Annual subscription cost is \$15.00.

© Copyright 1992 by Augustinian Studies. All rights reserved. Library of Congress Card Catalog Number: 79-141613. ISSN 0094-5323

AUGUSTINIAN STUDIES

The 1992 Saint Augustine Lecture

Saint Augustine as Philosopher: The Birth of Christian Metaphysics

Roland Teske, S. J.

7

Articles

Pelagianism and Augustine

Gerald Bonner

33

Augustine's Use of Rhetoric in His Interpretation of John 21, 19-23 ✓

George Lawless, O.S.A.

53

Per Speculum et in aenigmate: The Use of I Corinthians 13, 12 in
the Writings of Augustine

Frederick Van Fleteren

69

The Structure and Intention of Augustine's *De trinitate*

John Cavadini

103

Friendship As Adultery: Social Reality and Sexual Metaphor in
Augustine's Doctrine of Original Sin

Gerald W. Schlabach

125

Augustine, the "Mixed Life," and Classical Political Philosophy:
Reflections on *Compositio* in Book 19 of the *City of God*.

William P. Haggerty

149

Book Reviews

*Thomas Heffernan, Art and Emblem: Early Seventeenth-Century
English Poetry of Devotion, Renaissance Monographs 17.*

Peter S. Hawkins

165

The Ethics of St. Augustine, Edited by William S. Babcock

William Werpehowski

167

The 1992 Saint Augustine Lecture

**Saint Augustine as Philosopher:
The Birth of Christian Metaphysics**

A distinguished Augustine scholar, Goulven Madec, has said, "The history of patristic philosophy has only a precarious status. It lacks a principal object; for there is no 'patristic philosophy'" He immediately adds, "and the Fathers of the Church are not 'philosophers' in the commonly accepted sense."¹ Certainly, he is correct in maintaining that the Fathers of the Church are not philosophers in the sense commonly accepted today. However, it is not nearly so clear that the Fathers of the Church were in no sense philosophers or that there is no philosophy to be found in the Fathers of the Church. Regardless of the claim about the Fathers of the Church in general, I shall argue that Augustine of Hippo was a philosopher in some sense and that there is an Augustinian philosophy, even in the sense of philosophy commonly accepted today. I shall first examine what Augustine understood by philosophy; then I shall ask whether there is in Augustine a philosophy in the contemporary sense. Finally, I shall suggest what I consider the principal features of Augustine's legacy to Western philosophy.

I. *What Augustine Meant by Philosophy*

Augustine provides a nominal definition of philosophy as “the love of wisdom” or “the pursuit of wisdom.”² While a philosopher of the late twentieth century certainly recognizes and can probably accept such a definition, if one listens further to what Augustine says about philosophy, one finds the *philosophia* of which he speaks to be something both familiar and also something quite unfamiliar, something much the same and something quite different from what is today meant by philosophy. I will suggest one reason why at least some today find themselves at home with what Augustine meant by philosophy; then I want to point out two ways in which what Augustine meant by philosophy differs from what most of us take philosophy to be.

I suggest that we find the *philosophia* of which Augustine speaks something familiar, because he saw philosophy as a continuation of classical Greek philosophy, as something rooted in and carrying on the very best of Greek philosophy. Augustine began to burn with the love of wisdom from the time of his reading Cicero’s *Hortensius* which contained an exhortation to this love of wisdom.³ He tells us that he began to desire “the immortality of wisdom with an incredible ardor of heart” and “began to rise up to return to” his God.⁴ This conversion to philosophy, begun with the reading of the *Hortensius*, reached a high point in the momentous encounter with the *libri platoniorum* in 386 when the fire kindled by the *Hortensius* flamed out incredibly.⁵ But what was this *philosophia* that so aroused Augustine’s love? In the closing sections of *Contra academicos*, he presents a brief history of philosophy, beginning with Socrates and Plato, through the later Academy and Plotinus, and continuing down to his own time. Plato, he tells us, added to the moral teaching of Socrates a knowledge of natural and divine reality, derived from Pythagoras and other wise men, and crowned it with dialectic, which is either itself wisdom or its indispensable condition. Hence, Augustine adds that “Plato is said to have put together the complete discipline of philosophy.”⁶ Augustine singles out the features of the Platonic system that are for his purposes most significant:

that there are two worlds: one the intelligible world in which Truth dwells, and this sensible world, which, it is clear, we perceive by sight and touch. The former is the true world; this one is similar to it and made in its image. From the intelligible world the Truth, so to speak, shines forth and becomes, as it were, clear in the soul that knows itself. But of this world, not

knowledge, but only opinion can be generated in the minds of the foolish. . . .⁷

Later in his history of philosophy, Augustine points out that “the doctrine of Plato, which is purest and brightest, has banished the clouds of error and has shone forth, especially in Plotinus.” Plotinus was so kindred a soul to Plato that he seemed to be Plato come back to life.⁸ By his own time Augustine claims that there has

been filtered out one teaching that is the true philosophy. It is not the philosophy of this world, which our sacred mysteries rightly detest, but of the other intelligible world. . . .⁹

Furthermore, in *De ordine* Augustine makes it quite clear that Christ himself taught what was for Augustine the core of Platonic philosophy, namely, that there was another intelligible world besides this world known to the senses. He says, “Christ himself does not say, ‘My kingdom is not of the world,’ but ‘My kingdom is not of this world,’” thus indicating that “there is another world far removed from these eyes.”¹⁰

Through his brief history of philosophy Augustine clearly indicated that what he calls the true philosophy, the philosophy of the intelligible world, is in continuity with the best in Greek thought, namely, that of Plato and Plotinus. Later in *The City of God*, Augustine’s appraisal of the achievements of the Platonic philosophers is no less laudatory. They recognized, he tells us, that “the true God is the author of reality, the source of the light of truth and the bestower of beatitude.”¹¹ The Platonists “saw that God was not a body, and, therefore, transcended all bodies in their search for God.” They “saw that nothing subject to change is the highest God and, therefore, transcended every soul and all spirits subject to change in their search for the highest God.”¹² Plato taught that the wise man imitates, knows and loves this God and becomes blessed by participating in him.¹³ There is no need to look at the position of any other philosophers; none of them have come closer to us than the Platonists.¹⁴ Most of us, I suspect, can agree with Augustine that Plato and Aristotle and Plotinus were philosophers and that we too mean by philosophy the sort of thing that Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus did.¹⁵

But what we mean by philosophy also differs from what Augustine meant in at least two very important ways. First, philosophy for Augustine meant a whole way of life. When Augustine said that “a human being has no other reason for philosophizing except to be happy,”¹⁶ he meant by *philosophari*, not

the pursuit of a particular academic discipline, but a whole way of life dedicated to the pursuit of wisdom. With an exaggeration perhaps needed to prevent us from assuming that we know what the ancients meant by "*philosophia*," one scholar has said that "philosophy means something entirely different in Graeco-Roman antiquity from what it does today."¹⁷ Following what Pierre Hadot has written, A. H. Armstrong has put it this way with greater balance:

for most ancient philosophers, philosophy was a comprehensive and extremely demanding way of life, requiring, certainly, the intense study of the whole of reality, but designed to lead, not simply to what we should call an "intellectual" or "scientific" understanding of the nature of things, but to the attainment of that human goodness, including or consisting in wisdom, but a transforming wisdom, which can alone bring about human well-being.¹⁸

With such a view of philosophy in mind, Augustine reminds Romanianus of his frequent insistence that he "regarded no fortune as favorable save that which bestowed the leisure to philosophize (*otium philosophandi*), no life as happy save that which is lived in philosophy."¹⁹

A life lived in philosophy required *otium* which we correctly, but very inadequately, translate as "leisure." André Mandouze says that, besides leisure and the material resources needed to assure it, *otium* requires "above all the interior availability (*disponibilité*) without which there is neither tranquillity of soul nor peace of mind, two things indispensable for withdrawal into oneself and the recollection of God."²⁰ It was for the sake of such *otium* that Alypius kept steering Augustine away from marriage, warning that "we could by no means live together a life of secure leisure in the love of wisdom, as we had long desired," if Augustine took a wife.²¹ Years later, in looking back on the time at Cassiciacum, Augustine described it as: *Christianae vitae otium*: the Christian life of leisure.²² And soon after his return to Africa, in writing to Nebridius, Augustine used the marvelous phrase: "*deificari in otio*: to become God-like in leisure"²³ to describe his aim in withdrawing from the troubled journeys of this world in order to "think of that one last journey which is called death."²⁴ Georges Folliet claims,

Augustine speaks as a Christian convert, but the description of the asceticism he envisages and the expressions he uses make one suspect that his present ideal for life is much closer to that of the wise man presented by the Neoplatonic philosophers than to that of the Gospel.²⁵

Folliet has perhaps overemphasized the Neoplatonic influence upon Augustine's ideal for the life he and his companions were beginning to lead at Thagaste, a life which others see as the cradle of Western monasticism.²⁶

Later in his life Augustine said that "the true philosopher is a lover of God,"²⁷ for the true philosopher loves that Wisdom which or, rather, who is God. We must remember that for Augustine what one loves necessarily transforms the lover into itself.²⁸ Thus in loving God, one is transformed into or becomes God.²⁹ Hence, Augustine's goal at Thagaste of "becoming God-like" is simply the goal of the life of philosophy. The life of philosophy is, after all, a life in love with wisdom, "but of a transforming wisdom" — to use Armstrong's words — of that Wisdom that transforms one into God, into children of the Most High.

Certainly, the *otium* of Thagaste is Christian and monastic, but it is also, I believe, clearly in continuity with the dedication to the life of philosophy envisioned at Cassiciacum. In any case, to dedicate oneself to philosophy, in order to become God-like in leisure, was far more like entering monastic life than selecting a major in college or even a program of graduate studies. This is the first respect in which the *philosophia* of Augustine is quite different from the contemporary meaning of philosophy.

The second way in which what Augustine called philosophy differs from what most moderns understand by philosophy has to do with the task and the content of philosophy. In one passage Augustine tells us that philosophy has a twofold question:

one about the soul, the other about God. The first makes us know ourselves; the other that we know our origin. The former is sweeter to us; the latter more precious. The former makes us worthy of happiness; the latter makes us happy.³⁰

That is, as aiming at the happy life, philosophy has no concern with this world of bodily things, but only with God as our goal and ourselves as returning to him.³¹ Philosophy is not the path for everyone, but for the very few. Philosophy promises reason to these few, setting them free and teaching them, "not only not to hold those [i.e., the Christian] mysteries in contempt, but to understand them, and them alone, as they should be understood."³² Thus the content which philosophy brings the very few to understand is identical with the mysteries of the Christian faith. The true and genuine philosophy has, Augustine claims,

no other task than to teach what is the principle without principle of all things and how great an intellect remains in it and what has flowed forth from there for our salvation without any lessening of its being. . . .³³

Augustine explicitly identifies these three with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which "the venerable mysteries . . . proclaim, neither confusing them, as some do, nor treating them unjustly, as many do."³⁴

Thus, the whole task of philosophy is to understand the Christian Trinity as the source of being, of truth, and of salvation. It does not take too much stretching to see in this early text the "*rerum auctorem, ueritatis inlustratorem et beatitudinis largitorem*" of *The City of God*. Thus the whole content of philosophy for Augustine is the triune God of Christianity.

Philosophy is the love of wisdom, and as early as the *Contra academicos* Augustine appeals to Cicero's definition of wisdom as "the knowledge of things human and divine."³⁵ In the *De trinitate*, following St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:8, Augustine distinguishes wisdom and knowledge so that wisdom (*sapientia*) is the knowledge of things eternal and knowledge (*scientia*) is knowledge of things temporal. *Scientia* is not knowledge of just anything temporal, but only of that "by which the saving faith, which leads to true happiness, is born, nourished, defended and strengthened."³⁶ Madec has noted that this distinction between *sapientia* and *scientia* "is not without analogy with the double function that Cicero assigns to philosophy in the *Hortensius*: the practice of the virtues and contemplative wisdom."³⁷ Thus, in *Contra academicos* I,vii,20, the knowledge of things human is "that by which one knows the light of prudence, the beauty of temperance, the strength of courage, and the holiness of justice."³⁸

It is, I suggest, Augustinian wisdom in the proper sense, which is the content of philosophy, that is, knowledge of the eternal God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, while knowledge in the proper sense embraces the means of the soul's return to God, the temporal dispensation by which God has offered us salvation.³⁹ Or, as Augustine has often expressed it, the great Neoplatonists have seen from afar the Fatherland to which we must return.⁴⁰ They have come to know the eternal reality of God, but in their pride they have failed to know the way to attain the Fatherland.⁴¹ That way is the humanity of Christ, who as God is also the goal. As human, he is our knowledge, as divine he is our wisdom. What philosophy can attain, and what the great Platonists have attained is the knowledge of God's eternal reality; what philosophy cannot

attain is the knowledge of the temporal dispensation and the humanity the Word has assumed, which is also the way, indeed the only way of return.⁴² Thus from his earliest writings Augustine saw the need for the Incarnation of the Word if souls, "blinded by the abundant darkness of error and stained with the deepest filth of the body," were to be "able to return to themselves and see again their fatherland."⁴³

We have seen that *philosophia* for Augustine was a wisdom in continuity with the best in classical Greek thought, but that it differed from what it means for us in the twentieth century insofar as it involved a whole way of life aimed at true happiness and embraced as its content only the Christian mysteries. On the other hand, Augustine is quite clear that, if philosophy can know the eternal God as the source of our being, knowledge and beatitude, philosophy cannot provide the way of attaining God. For that we need faith in Christ, our knowledge, who is also our wisdom.

II. *Can There Be An Augustinian Philosophy?*

The most serious objections to the claim that there is such philosophy in Augustine stem from Augustine's clear claim that one must first believe in order to understand.⁴⁴ Etienne Gilson has made the strong claim that "we know of no single instance where Augustine allowed reason to dispense with faith as its starting point This is the reason why belief in God precedes even proof of His existence. . . ." ⁴⁵

Augustine's insistence that one must first believe in order to understand would seem to prejudice the case against anything like an autonomous philosophy within his thought. "Faith seeking understanding" is, after all, the classical description of the movement of theology rather than of philosophy.

Moreover, the case for an independent philosophy, is aggravated by an important change in Augustine's thought. Scholars frequently speak of Augustine's conversions in the plural.⁴⁶ Besides the momentous events of 386-387 that led to his baptism and becoming a servant of God, there is Augustine's conversion to Manichaeism in 373. But there is another turning point in Augustine's life which has been described as his final conversion.⁴⁷

In 396, while writing to Simplician, Augustine came to realize that faith is a gift of God. Much later, in writing to the monks of Hadrumentum, Augustine admits that he had "other thoughts on this question. . . ." and that God

“revealed to me the means of solving the problem, when . . . I was writing to bishop Simplician.”⁴⁸

Prior to the time of *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*, he thought “that the faith by which we believe in God is not a gift of God, but something that we have from ourselves. . . .”⁴⁹ At that time he thought that we needed grace in the sense that we needed to have the Gospel preached to us, but “I thought that it was entirely up to us that we should consent to the Gospel preached to us, and that we had it from ourselves.”⁵⁰ Hence, from 396 on Augustine regarded the assent of faith to the Gospel as a gift of God, while prior to that time he thought of the assent as merely a reasonable act of human practical reason. Prior to 396 Augustine had distinguished human authority and divine authority as grounds for belief, and he had distinguished divine and human objects of belief.⁵¹ But he had not distinguished the assent of belief that is a gift of God from the assent which is merely a reasonable human act.

What then is the relevance of this final conversion to my topic? Prior to 396 believing was, in Augustine’s eyes, a matter of reasonable human assent, whether one relied upon divine or human authority, whether what one believed was what God spoke or what another human spoke. Hence, believing in order to understand was a method open to every reasonable human being and, for that reason, a philosophical method. Masai describes Augustine’s pre-396 position as a philosophical fideism in the sense that one must begin with faith, albeit a philosophical faith.⁵² Masai sees in the revelation of 396 the birth of theology and refers to Augustine’s position after 396 as a theological fideism, because one begins with faith, but a faith that is a gift of God and not, therefore, something entirely up to us or that we have from ourselves as human beings. Masai concludes,

Beginning in 396, Augustine acknowledged in the act of faith as well as in its object a divine origin and nature. But *ipso facto* the philosophical character of Augustinian thought is found to be compromised. As it rests entirely upon the foundation of a light freely given by God, it cannot keep the pretense of addressing human reason as such; it becomes necessarily a knowledge reserved for the faithful alone. In brief, the philosophy of Augustine has from that time been transformed into theology.⁵³

Obviously the question of whether there can be an Augustinian philosophy becomes more difficult once the act of believing is seen to be a free gift of God and not something up to us so that we can believe if we want to do so. It is not merely that prior to 396 Augustine did not consider the question of our

beginning to believe as a grace; rather, he tells us that he had regarded beginning to believe as something within our power.

In a footnote Masai wonders whether it is conceivable to restore within the strictly Augustinian perspective a Christian philosophy along side theology.⁵⁴ He dodges an answer, while noting that an answer to this question depends upon the solution of other problems raised by divine illumination and, more generally, the relation between nature and grace.

On the other hand, the existence of philosophy in Augustine has also had its defenders. In the second Bibliothèque Augustinienne edition of *De magistro* and *De libero arbitrio*, F. J. Thonnard, while admitting that Augustine did not formally create a philosophical system, holds that it is possible to make explicit Augustine's philosophy. He points to three conditions of an Augustinian philosophy that were articulated by Fulbert Cayré:

1) if the philosophical questions that Saint Augustine has dealt with were studied by him in a rational manner and not merely from the perspective of faith; 2) if these questions include all the major problems posed by every philosophy worthy of the name; 3) if the solutions that he brings to them are tied together by common principles capable of giving to the whole a solid coherence. If these are fulfilled, there is in Saint Augustine a true philosophy that can be separated from his theology, even if he himself has not separated them.⁵⁵

I agree with F. Cayré that the three conditions for the existence of philosophy are sufficient and sufficiently met in the works of Augustine for one to speak of an Augustinian philosophy. But I think one can go further and say that there has to be within Augustine's strictly theological thought an autonomous philosophy that is an indispensable condition of the possibility of his theology. Masai is surely correct that a proper solution to the question of whether there can be an Augustinian philosophy depends upon the wider questions of nature and grace, or of reason and faith.

There was a time in the not so distant past when in Catholic circles philosophy and theology were sharply distinguished, so much so that philosophical ethics, for example, was said to be the sort of moral guidance that would have been applicable, if we were living in a state of pure nature, that hypothetical state which has never existed, but would have existed if human beings were not destined for a supernatural end. Theologians, such as Karl Rahner and Henri de Lubac, have done much to correct the view that revelation

and grace are purely extrinsic additions to nature.⁵⁶ Rahner has argued that the possibility of revelation requires that man, as the hearer of the word of God, have a natural self-understanding independent of special revelation in order to be able to hear and understand God's word. He claims that theology "necessarily implies philosophy, i.e., a previous . . . self-comprehension of the man who hears the historical revelation of God."⁵⁷ Furthermore, he maintains that "that self-clarification of man's existence which we call philosophy can certainly be 'pure' philosophy in the sense that it does not take any of its material contents and norms from . . . revelation. . . ."⁵⁸

But even apart from such a transcendental deduction of the necessity of a philosophy for understanding the revealed word of God, one can, I believe, argue that in Augustine there are philosophical truths that human reason can know independently of accepting in faith God's revelation of those truths. These truths would be analogous to what Thomas Aquinas called the *praeambula fidei*. Let me briefly sketch my reasons for this claim. First, even after 396 when God revealed to Augustine that the act of believing is a gift of God and not something within human power, it does not seem to be the case that every act of believing is a gift of God. Indeed Augustine implies that faith need precede reason only "in certain things pertaining to the doctrine of salvation which we cannot yet perceive by reason."⁵⁹ Second, Augustine groups the objects of belief (*credibilia*) into three classes. He speaks of things which must always be believed and can never be understood, of things that are understood as soon as they are believed, and of things which are first believed and later understood. The first class of objects of beliefs includes all historical events of which we were not ourselves witnesses. The second class includes "all human reasonings either in mathematics or in any of the disciplines." The third class of objects of belief includes truths about "the divine realities that can only be understood by the pure of heart."⁶⁰ Augustine thought that one understood, for example, a theorem in geometry as soon as one accepted it as true. Certainly, the second class of *credibilia* are supernatural in terms neither of the object believed nor of the authority one believes nor of the act of believing as a special gift of God.⁶¹ Third, Augustine credited the great Greek philosophers with having come to a knowledge of God and of human destiny. Though he entertained the idea that Plato had come into contact with God's revelation to the Jewish people, he clearly stated that they came to a knowledge of the eternal reality of God from the things God had made.⁶²

Hence, I believe that one can maintain that there is in Augustine—and indeed there must be in Augustine—a philosophy, and a philosophy that can be recognized as philosophy even in the sense in which we speak of philosophy today. One could, of course, so define philosophy that Augustine's thought is automatically excluded. But any such definition could, I fear, banish from the realm of philosophy the works of Hegel and Aquinas, Kierkegaard and even Descartes as well.

III. *Augustine's Legacy to Western Philosophy*

Any attempt to sum up the core of Augustine's legacy to Western philosophy is bound to be incomplete and perspectival. I intend to touch upon three topics, one an attitude, the other two matters of doctrine.

The attitude that I want to single out is a deep appreciation for human intelligence. Prior to Augustine, at least in the African Church, the spirit of Tertullian was still regnant—Tertullian who asked what Athens has to do with Jerusalem, what the Academy has to do with the Church, Tertullian who claimed that we have no need for a curiosity going beyond Christ Jesus or for inquiry going beyond the Gospel.⁶³ When Augustine warns of bishops and priests who “avoid unveiling the mysteries or, content with simple faith, have no care to know more profound truths,” he indicates the anti-intellectual atmosphere within the *Catholica* that helped push him into the Manichaean fold.⁶⁴ From his own conversion to Manichaeism Augustine learned how dangerous it could be to meet the human desire to know with ridicule instead of respect.⁶⁵ In his *Literal Commentary on Genesis* he again and again indicates his respect for the inquiring mind by refusing rashly to claim knowledge or to give up on its pursuit.⁶⁶

Let me offer two examples of Augustine's respect for the human intellect's desire to know. First, years after Augustine's ordination to the episcopacy, Consentius wrote to Augustine that he thought “that the truth about God's reality ought to be grasped by faith rather than by reason.”⁶⁷ Otherwise, Consentius suggests, only the likes of philosophers would attain beatitude, and he argues that “we should not so much require a rational account of God as follow the authority of the saints.”⁶⁸ In response Augustine warns with regard to the Trinity against following the authority of the saints alone without making any effort to understand. “Correct your position,” he says, “not so that you reject faith, but so that what you already hold by solid faith, you may also see

by the light of reason.”⁶⁹ Augustine adds, “Heaven forbid that God should hate in us that by which he made us more excellent than the animals. Heaven forbid, I say, that we believe so that we do not accept or seek a rational account, since we could not believe unless we had rational souls.”⁷⁰ He cites St. Peter’s warning that we should be ready to give an account of our faith and urges Consentius to “a love of intelligence” (*ad amorem intelligentiae*). His words, “*Intellectum uero ualde ama: Have a great love for the intellect,*” echo down the centuries as a charter for Christian dedication to intellectual pursuits, first of all, in theology, but also in what we today identify as philosophy and the sciences.⁷¹

Second, no one would claim that Augustine was a philosopher of science, but his care to interpret Scripture in such a way as to avoid a contradiction with what has been scientifically proven has been admired by a scientist as great as Galileo. In *The Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, while dealing with the shape of the heavens, Augustine manages to ask a question that cannot on the surface fail to strike us, who live in the age of space exploration, as naive. “What does it matter to me,” he asks, “whether the heaven encloses the earth like a sphere . . . or only covers it from above like a lid?”⁷² Yet he worries that someone might find in the Scripture what seems opposed to clearly seen rational arguments and, as a result, give up all belief in the Scriptures. He warns that “the Holy Spirit who spoke through the [authors of Scripture] did not intend to teach human beings matters of no use for their salvation.”⁷³ He faces the Psalm text that God “has stretched out the heaven like a skin” (Ps. 103:2), which seems contrary to the view that the heaven is spherical. Augustine even envisages the case in which some are able to prove with indubitable arguments that the heaven is spherical and says,

Then we must prove that what our books say about the skin is not contrary to those rational truths; otherwise, there will be another contradiction between this text and the other passage of Scripture in which it says that the heaven was hung as a vault (Is 40:22).⁷⁴

In writing to Christine of Lorraine, Galileo cites the text from Augustine and adds,

From this text we see that we need no less care to show how a passage of Scripture is in agreement with a proposition demonstrated by natural reason than to show how one passage of Scripture agrees with another contrary to it . . . one must admire the circumspection of this saint who manifests such

great reserve in dealing with obscure conclusions or those of which one can have a demonstration by human means.⁷⁵

Let me, then, turn to two points of philosophical doctrine. In writing to Caelestinus in 390 or 391, Augustine offers a brief, but important summary of his world view.

Accept this priceless, but tiny gem (*quiddam grande, sed breve*): There is a nature changeable in places and times, such as the body, and there is a nature not changeable in place at all, but changeable only in time, such as the soul, and there is a nature which cannot change either in place or in time. This is God.⁷⁶

Robert O'Connell has pointed to this three-tiered view of reality with the utterly immutable God at the top and souls mutable only in time in the middle and bodies mutable in both time and place at the bottom as the controlling idea in Vernon Bourke's presentation of Augustine's view of reality.⁷⁷

Contained in that "*quiddam grande et breve*" that Augustine offered to Caelestinus are two doctrines that lie, I suggest, at the heart of Augustine's philosophical legacy to the Western world: his concept of non-bodily realities, such as the soul and God, and his concept of non-temporal reality, such as, the utterly unchanging reality of God. As a nature that is immutable in place must be free from any spatial extension, so a nature that is immutable in time must be free from any temporal distension.

Prior to Augustine, at least in Western Christianity, there was no philosophical concept of incorporeal being, of being that is whole wherever it is (*totus ubique*). Once again the philosophical views of Tertullian and the corporealism of the Stoics were the common philosophical patrimony of the West.⁷⁸ In the West prior to Augustine, the term "spirit" was, of course, used in the Bible, in medicine and in philosophy. But when the meaning of spirit was spelled out, it seems to have meant a subtle kind of body, not something non-bodily. So too, we use "spirits" to refer to a beverage, and pneumatic tires are certainly bodily.⁷⁹ In holding that God and the soul were bodily, the Manichees were not being singular, but rather were in full accord with the common philosophical view of the age.⁸⁰ Even the Arians whom Augustine encountered seem to have thought of God as corporeal.⁸¹ From Consentius' letter to Augustine already mentioned, we can see that even this budding theologian could not quite see how God was bodiless.⁸² We also know that Augustine encountered in the young layman, Vincentius Victor, a convert from Donatism, a thinker

who explicitly held that the soul was corporeal.⁸³ Even after Augustine's time the doctrine of the incorporeal nature of the soul was not universally accepted. Thomas Smith points to Faustus of Riez and Cassian as examples in fifth century Gaul of thinkers who held the corporealist position on the nature of the soul.⁸⁴ Augustine's spiritualist understanding of God and the soul, however, became the dominant view in the West for centuries to come. Indeed, the Augustinian revolution was so effective that many anachronistically suppose that the concept of spiritual reality is biblical and explicitly contained in the Christian revelation.⁸⁵

The second philosophical doctrine that Augustine bequeathed to the West is the concept of eternity as timelessness, as a mode of existence that is whole all at once (*tota simul*), without past and without future.⁸⁶ Once again, as in the case of spirit, there is in the Bible the language of eternity in the sense of a duration that is everlasting, a duration without beginning or, at least, without end. So too, there was in earlier Greek philosophy the concept of a world without beginning or end.⁸⁷ Only with Plotinus do we find a philosophically articulated concept of eternity as timeless duration.⁸⁸ But prior to Augustine, at least in the West, there does not seem to have been a philosophically articulated concept of eternity as timeless presence in any Christian author.⁸⁹ Even if Gregory of Nyssa did anticipate Augustine in adopting the Plotinian concept of eternity into Christian thought, Augustine certainly remains the source of the concept for the Christian West.

Just as Augustine needed the philosophical concept of incorporeal reality if he was going to be able to deal with the Manichaean questions about the ontological status of evil, so he needed the concept of timeless eternity to handle their questions about what God was doing before he created the world.⁹⁰ Unless one has a concept of God as a reality not extended in length, breadth and depth, one cannot maintain that God is infinite and that evil is not in God, unless, of course, one takes the radical option of denying the reality of evil. So too, unless one can think of God's eternity as a duration not extended beyond the present into past and future, one is faced the prospect of an idle or sleeping God who wakes up and in a burst of energy creates the world.

Peter Brown speaks of Augustine's discovery of spiritual reality in reading the *libri Platoniorum* as "the evolution of a metaphysician."⁹¹ Brown adds, "[A]nd his final 'conversion' to the idea of a purely spiritual reality, as held by the sophisticated Christians in Milan, is a decisive and fateful step in the

evolution of our ideas on spirit and matter.”⁹² It was certainly that, but I suggest that it was also the birth of Christian metaphysics in the West, if one may use such an Aristotelian term for so Platonic an offspring. It was the philosophical doctrine of Augustine on the spirituality of God and the soul and on the eternity of God that pervaded Western Christian thought for centuries to come. Both of these doctrines were found in Neoplatonism prior to being taught by any Christian thinker, and the Christian faith was proclaimed and taught for the better part of four centuries before there emerged clear concepts of God and the soul as non-bodily and of God as timeless. Hence, these doctrines cannot have been derived from the Christian revelation; they must rather be philosophical doctrines independent of revelation, however useful they may have come to appear as means for articulating the word of God. Just as the desire to know, or the love for intelligence, is part of the nature of human beings, so the doctrine of the incorporeal nature of the human soul and of God and the doctrine of the eternity of God are matters of philosophical, not revealed knowledge.

IV. Conclusion

I have tried to show what Augustine meant by philosophy and have argued that there is in Augustine philosophy even in the contemporary sense. Finally, I have tried to show that Augustine's philosophical legacy to the West has been very rich, though there is, of course, much, much more in Augustine than philosophy and he is much more than a philosopher.

Notes

1. G. Madec, “La christianisation de l'hellenisme. Thème de l'histoire de la philosophie patristique,” *Humanisme et foi chrétienne. Mélanges scientifiques du centenaire de l'institut catholique de Paris* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1976), pp. 399-406, here p. 399 (my translation).
2. Cf. *Contra academicos* II, iii, 7: CC XXIX, 21; *De ordine* I, xi, 32: CC XXIX, 105; *Epistula* CXLIX, 30: CSEL XLIV, 376.
3. *Confessiones* III, iv, 7: CC XXVII, 29-30. The *Hortensius* survives only in fragments, many of which are contained in the writings of Augustine. The fragments have been edited by Michel Ruch, *L'Hortensius de Cicéron: Histoire et reconstitution* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1958). Cf. G. Madec, “L'*Hortensius* de Cicéron dans les livres XIII-XIV du *De Trinitate*,” *Revue des Etudes augustiniennes* 15 (1969) 167-171, where Madec

argues that Augustine may have derived his definition of wisdom as "rerum humanarum divinarumque scientia" (*De trinitate* XIV, i, 3: CC L/A, 423) from the *Hortensius*, though it is clearly found in other works by Cicero.

4. *Confessiones* III, iv, 7: CC XXVII, 30: "immortalitatem sapientiae concupiscebam aestu cordis incredibili et surgere coeperam, ut ad te redirem." Cf. also, R. J. O'Connell, "On Augustine's 'First Conversion' Factus Erectior (*De beata vita* 4)," *Augustinian Studies* 17 (1986) 15-29.

5. *Contra academicos* II, ii, 5: CC XXIX, 20-21. In "Verus Philosophus Est Amator Dei: S. Ambroise, s. Augustin et la philosophie," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 61 (1977) 549-566, G. Madec has said, "L'*Hortensius* a lancé Augustin dans la quête de la sagesse; il a ouvert son esprit un espace de liberté."

6. *Contra academicos* III, xvii, 37: CC XXIX, 57: "Igitur Plato adiciens lepori subtilitatisque Socraticae, quam in moralibus habuit, naturalium divinarumque rerum peritiam, quam ab eis quos memoravi diligenter acceperat, subiungensque quasi formatricem illarum partium iudicemque dialecticam, quae aut ipsa esset aut sine qua omnino sapientia esse non posset, perfectam dicitur composuisse philosophiae disciplinam." Cf. also *De civitate dei* VIII, 4: CC XLVII, 220, where he again sketches in outline the history of philosophy and gives the same central position to Plato. While Pythagoras excelled in the contemplative part of philosophy, Socrates excelled in the active part. "Proinde Plato utrumque iungendo philosophiam perfecisse laudatur, quam in tres partes distribuit: unam moralem, quae maxime in actione versatur; alteram naturalem, quae contemplationi deputata est; tertiam rationalem, qua uerum discernatur a falso."

7. *Contra academicos* III, xvii, 37: CC XXIX, 57: "Sat est enim ad id, quod volo, Platonem sensisse duos esse mundos, unum intelligibilem, in quo ipsa ueritas habitaret, istum autem sensibilem, quem manifestum est nos uisu tactuque sentire; itaque illum uerum, hunc ueri similem et ad illius imaginem factum, et ideo de illo in ea quae se cognosceret anima uelut expoliri et quasi serenari ueritatem, de hoc autem in stultorum animis non scientiam sed opinionem posse generari. . . ."

8. *Contra academicos* III, xviii, 41: CC XXIX, 59-60: "Adeo post illa tempora non longo interuallo, omni peruicacia pertinaciaque demortua os illud Platonis, quod in philosophia purgatissimum est et lucidissimum, dimotis nubibus erroris emicuit maxime in Plotino, qui Platonius philosophus ita eius similis iudicatus est, ut simul eos uixisse, tantum autem interest temporis, ut in hoc ille reuixisse putandus sit."

9. *Contra academicos* III, xix, 42: CC XXIX, 60: "sed tamen eliquata est, ut opinor, una uerissimae philosophiae disciplina. Non enim est ista huius mundi philosophia, quam sacra nostra meritissime detestantur, sed alterius intellegibilis. . . ."

10. *De ordine* I, xi, 32: CC XXIX, 106: "Esse autem alium mundum ab istis oculis remotissimum, quem paucorum sanorum intellectus intuetur, satis ipse Christus significat, qui non dicit: 'regnum meum non est de mundo', sed: 'regnum meum non est de hoc mundo.' Later in his *Retractationes* I, iii, 2: BA 12, 286, Augustine expresses his displeasure at this interpretation of Christ's words and sees that it would have been better to understand him as referring to the new heaven and new earth. However, he adds: "Nec Plato quidem in hoc erravit, quia esse mundum intelligibilem dixit, si non vocabulum, quod ecclesiasticae consuetudini in re illa inusitatum est, sed ipsam rem velimus attendere. Mundum quippe ille intelligibilem nuncupavit ipsam rationem sempiternam atque incommutabilem, qua fecit Deus mundum."

11. *De civitate dei* VIII, 5: CC XLVII, 221: "uerum Deum et rerum auctorem et ueritatis inlustratorem et beatitudinis largitorem esse dixerunt."

12. *De civitate dei* VIII, 6: CC XLVII, 222-223: "Viderunt ergo isti philosophi, quos ceteris non inmerito fama atque gloria praelatos uidemus, nullum corpus esse Deum, et ideo cuncta corpora transcenderunt quaerentes Deum. Viderunt, quidquid mutabile est, non esse summum Deum, et ideo animam omnem mutabilesque omnes spiritus transcenderunt quaerentes summum Deum."

13. *De civitate dei* VIII, 5: CC XLVII, 221: "Si ergo Plato Dei huius imitorem cognitorem amatorem dixit esse sapientem, cuius participatione sit beatus, quid opus est excutere ceteros?"

14. *De civitate dei* VIII, 5: CC XLVII, 221: "Nulli nobis quam isti propius accesserunt."

15. Augustine knew that some had claimed that Plato and Aristotle held that same doctrine; cf. *Contra academicos* III, xix, 42: CC XXIX, 60: "non defuerunt acutissimi et solertissimi uiri, qui docuerunt disputationibus suis Aristotelem ac Platonem ita sibi concinere, ut imperitis minusque attentis dissentire uideantur. . . ." He is perhaps alluding to the lost work of Porphyry that bore such a title. Cf. "Porphyrios," by R. Beutler, in *Real-encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* vol. 22, pt. 1 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1953), cc. 284-285.

16. *De ciuitate dei* XIX, i, 2: CC XLVIII, 659: "nulla est homini causa philosophandi, nisi ut sit beatus."

17. I. Hadot, "The Spiritual Guide," in *Classical Mediterrean Spirituality*. Volume 15 of *World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), pp. 436-59, here 444.

18. A. H. Armstrong, *Expectations of Immortality in Late Antiquity*. The Aquinas Lecture, 1987 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1987), p. 21. Armstrong refers to P. Hadot's *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique* (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1981).

19. *Contra academicos* II, ii, 4: CC XXIX, 20: “nullam mihi videri prosperam fortunam, nisi quae otium philosophandi daret, nullam beatam uitam, nisi qua in philosophia uiueretur. . . .”
20. A. Mandouze, *Saint Augustin. L'aventure de la raison et de la grâce* (Paris: *Etudes Augustiniennes*, 1968), p. 194 (my translation).
21. *Confessiones* VI, xii, 21: CC XXVII, 87: “Prohibebat me sane Alypius uxore ducenda cantans nullo modo nos posse securo otio simul in amore sapientiae uiuere, sicut iam diu desideraremus, si id fecissem.”
22. *Retractationes* I, 1: BA 12, 274.
23. *Epistula* X, 2: CSEL XXXIV, 24.
24. *Epistula* X, 2: CSEL XXXIV/1:23: “de illa una ultima, quae mors vocatur, cogitantis”
25. G. Folliet, “Deificari in otio.’ Augustin, *Epistula* 10, 2”, *Recherches Augustiniennes* 2 (1962) 225-236, here 226 (my translation).
26. Cf. A. Mandouze, *Saint Augustin. L'aventure de la raison et de la grâce* (Paris: *Etudes Augustiniennes*, 1968), pp. 207-209, where the author emphasizes the advance represented by *deificari in otio* over the ideal of Cassiciacum and insists that the *otium* of Thasgaste includes the framework of religious life and communal sharing of goods. Cf. also George Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 51, where Lawless says of the *otium* described in *De vera religione* XXXV, 65: CC XXXII, 229-230 that it “is a far cry from the leisure of the philosophers.”
27. *De civitate dei* VIII, 1: CC XLVII, 216: “uerus philosophus est amator dei.”
28. *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus* XXXV, 2: CC XLIV/A, 52: “Et quoniam id quod amatur afficiat ex se amantem necesse est, fit ut sic amatum quod aeternum est aeternitate animum afficiat. Quocirca ea demum uita beata est quae aeterna est. Quid uero aeternum est quod aeternitate animum afficiat nisi Deus?”
29. *In epistolam Ioannis ad Parthos* II, 14: PL XXXV, 1997: “quia talis est quisque qualis eius dilectio est. Terram diligis? terra eris. Deum diligis? quid dicam? deus eris? Non audeo dicere ex me, Scripturas audiamus: ‘Ego dixi, Dii estis, et filii Altissimi’” Cf. also *Sermo* CXXI, 1: PL XXXVIII, 678.
30. *De ordine* II, xviii, 47: CC XXIX, 133: “Cuius duplex quaestio est, una de anima, altera de deo. Prima efficit, ut nosmet ipsos nouerimus, altera, ut originem nostram. Illa nobis dulcior, ista carior, illa nos dignos beata uita, beatos haec facit.”
31. Cf. *Contra academicos* I, i, 3: CC XXIX, 5: “Ipsa docet et uere docet nihil omnino colendum esse totumque contemni oportere, quidquid mortalibus oculis cernitur,

quidquid ullus sensus attingit. Ipsa uerissimum et secretissimum Deum perspicue se demonstraturum promittit et iam iamque quasi per lucidas nubes ostentare dignatur.”

32. *De ordine* II, v, 16: CC XXIX, 115-116. “Philosophia rationem promittit et uix paucissimos liberat, quos tamen non modo non contemnere illa mysteria sed sola intellegere, ut intellegenda sunt, cogit . . .” G. Madec, “A propos d’une traduction de *De ordine* II, v, 16,” *Revue des Etudes augustiniennes* 16 (1970) 179-185, where Madec argues convincingly that “sola” modifies “mysteria” rather than “philosophia.”

33. *De ordine* II, v, 16: CC XXIX, 116: “nullumque aliud habet negotium, quae uera et, ut ita dicam, germana philosophia est, quam ut doceat, quod sit omnium rerum principium sine principio quantusque in eo maneat intellectus quidue inde in nostram salutem sine ulla degeneratione manauerit . . .”

34. *De ordine* II, v, 16: CSEL LXIII, 157: “quem unum deum omnipotentem, cum quo tripotentem patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum, ueneranda mysteria, quae fide sincera et inconcussa populos liberant, nec confuse, ut quidam, nec contumeliose, ut multi, praedicant.” Here I find Madec’s argument for following the edition of P. Knöll persuasive. I also agree with Madec’s claim that “confuse” and “contumelose” refer to the doctrine of the Sabellians and of the Arians respectively; cf. G. Madec, “A propos d’une traduction,” 182-184. F. Van Fleteren, however, suggests that it is Porphyry whom Augustine has in mind; cf. F. Van Fleteren, “Authority and Reason, Faith and Understanding in the Thought of St. Augustine,” *Augustinian Studies* 4 (1973) 33-71, here 48-49.

35. Cf. *Contra academicos* I, vi, 16: CC XXIX, 12: “Non enim nunc primum auditis, ‘Sapientiam esse rerum humanarum diuinarumque scientiam.’” Augustine repeats that definition four or even five times in the first book. Cf. G. Madec, “L’*Hortensius* de Cicéron dans les livres XIII-XIV du *De Trinitate*,” *Revue des Etudes augustiniennes* 15 (1969), 169.

36. *De trinitate* XIV, i, 3: CC L/A, 423-424: “Verum secundum hanc distinctionem qua dixit Apostolus: ‘Alii datur sermo sapientiae, alii sermo scientiae’ (I Co 12:8), ista definitio diuidenda est ut rerum diuinarum scientia proprie sapientia nuncupetur, humanarum autem proprie scientiae nomen obtineat . . . huic scientiae tribuens, sed illud tantummodo quo fides saluberrima quae ad ueram beatitudinem ducit, gignitur, nutritur, defenditur, roboratur.”

37. G. Madec, “L’*Hortensius* de Cicéron dans les livres XIII-XIV du *De Trinitate*,” *Revue des Etudes augustiniennes* 15 (1969) 170 (my translation). Madec adds, “Mais la *scientia* augustiniennne assume précisément la fonction pratique de la philosophie . . .” (p. 170).

38. *Contra academicos* I, vii, 20: CC XXIX, 14: "Illa est humanarum rerum scientia, qua nouit lumen prudentiae, temperantiae decus, fortitudinis robur, iustitiae sanctitatem."
39. Madec claims that the true philosophy included the Incarnation of the Word. In "Connaissance de Dieu et action de grâce. Essai sur les citations de l'*Ep. aux Romains* 1, 18-25 dans l'oeuvre de saint Augustin," *Recherches Augustiniennes* 2 (1962) 273-309, here 283, he says, "Augustin a reconnu dans la doctrine du Verbe incarné la 'seule doctrine philosophique parfaitement vraie' et 'la philosophie véritable et authentique' qui a pour tâche l'intelligence des mystères." He refers to *Contra academicos* III, xix, 42: CC XXIX, 60, where Augustine says, referring to the intelligible world: "cui animas multiformibus erroris tenebris caecatas et altissimis a corpore sordibus oblitas numquam ista ratio subtilissima reuocaret, nisi summus deus populari quadam clementia diuini intellectus auctoritatem usque ad ipsum corpus humanum declinaret atque submitteret, cuius non solum praeceptis sed etiam factis excitatae animae redire in semet ipsas et respiscere patriam etiam sine concertatione potuissent." I am in complete agreement with Madec that without humble faith in the Incarnate Word, souls could never attain the fatherland, even if they saw it from afar. The Platonists certainly did not know or were too proud to take the way, but faith in the Incarnation belongs to *scientia* as opposed to *sapientia*, to the way as opposed to the goal. *Philosophia* concerns the *aeternalia Dei*, not the temporal dispensation. Cf. my "The Link between Faith and Time in St. Augustine," *Collectanea Augustiniana* II, forthcoming.
40. *In Ioannis Evangelium tractatus* II, 4: CC XXXVI, 13 "Viderunt quo ueniendum esset. . . . Illud potuerunt uidere quod est, sed uiderunt de longe." *De trinitate* IV, xv, 20: CC L, 187: "nonnulli eorum potuerunt aciem mentis ultra omnem creaturam transmittere et lucem incommutabilis ueritatis quantulumcumque ex parte contingere. . . . de longinquo prospicere patriam transmarinam."
41. *De trinitate* IV, xv, 20: CC L, 187: "Sed quid prodest superbienti et ob hoc erubescenti lignum conscendere de longinquo prospicere patriam transmarinam? Aut quid obest humili de tanto interuallo non eam uidere in illo ligno ad eam uenienti quod dedignatur ille portari?"
42. Cf. *Confessiones* VII, ix, 13-14: CC XXVII, 101-102, where Augustine contrasts what he found in the *libri Platoniorum* and what he did not find there. What he found there were the *aeternalia Dei*; what he did not find there was the temporal dispensation by which we are saved. Cf. also *De consensu euangelistarum* I, xxxv, 53: CSEL XLIII, 60: "Ipse est nobis fides in rebus ortis qui est ueritas in aeternis." *De trinitate* XIII, xix, 24: CC L/A, 416-417: "Scientia ergo nostra Christus est, sapientia quoque nostra idem Christus est. Ipse nobis fidem de rebus temporalibus inserit; ipse de sempiternis exhibet ueritatem. Per ipsum pergimus ad ipsum, tendimus per scientiam ad sapientiam; ab uno

tamen eodemque Christo non recedimus, 'in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae absconditi'" (Col 2:3).

43. *Contra academicos* III, xix, 42: CC XXIX, 60; cf. above note 39.

44. Augustine read in Isaiah 7:9, "Nisi credideritis, non intellegitis." He cites the text for the first time in *De libero arbitrio* I, ii, 4 and then again in *De libero arbitrio* II, ii, 6 and *De magistro* XI, 37.

45. E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, p. 34. Gilson points to *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* I, ii, 3: PL XXXII, 1311-1312, where he claims Augustine uses the faulty method of beginning with reason—a method that Gilson oddly views as Manichaeian. Gilson comments, "He only resigns himself to stoop to the madness of the Manichaeans by provisorily adopting their method, even as Jesus Christ submitted to death to save us." *The Christian Philosophy*, p. 265, n. 31.

46. Cf. J. LeBlond, *Les conversions de saint Augustin* (Paris: Aubier, 1950); F. Masai, "Les conversions de saint Augustin et les débuts du spiritualisme en Occident," *Le moyen âge* 67 (1961) 1-40; Leo C. Ferrari, *The Conversions of Saint Augustine* (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1984).

47. Cf. Ferrari, pp. 70ff. A. Pegis refers to this conversion as Augustine's second. Cf. Anton C. Pegis, "The Second Conversion of St. Augustine," in *Gesellschaft, Kultur, Lituratur: Rezeption und Originalität im Wachsen einer europäisschen Lituratur und Geistigkeit* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1975), pp. 79-93.

48. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* IV, 8: BA 24, 488. Ferrari takes Augustine's use of "revelare" in this passage in a strong sense. He speaks of the revelation as "a tremendous transformation in the very foundations of Augustine's thought. Furthermore, it was no conclusion reached on the basis of mere human reasoning. Indeed, as Augustine tells us, it was a veritable revelation to him from God Himself, as he struggled to answer the question of Simplicianus . . ." (Ferrari, p. 77). However, Augustine uses "revelare" in the preceding paragraphs of *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, and he does so in dependence upon Paul's words, "And if on some point you think otherwise, God will reveal this to you as well; only, let us walk in the truth that we have already attained" (Phil 3:15-16). Augustine applies this text to the monks of Hadrumentum, saying that, if they cling to the truths they already hold which separate them from the Pelagians, "if they think otherwise with regard to predestination, God will reveal this to them as well" (1.2) Surely Augustine is not promising these monks an exceptional revelation from God, but simply the intellectual clarification that comes from prayerful pursuit of the truth, which is always for Augustine a divine gift. Cf. as well Augustine's use of this text in *Epistula* CXX, i, 4: CSEL XXXIV, 707, where Augustine can hardly be promising Consentius an exceptional revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity. On the other hand, Peter Brown's statement, "when Augustine speaks of an idea having been 'revealed' to him, he means only that he has reached the inevitable

conclusion of a series of certainties . . . — an experience not unknown to speculative thinkers today,” (*Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969], p. 280, n. 2) seems to offer a too naturalistic interpretation that overlooks the fact that for Augustine it is God “who gives understanding” (cf. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 1.2).

49. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* III, 7: BA 24, 478: “errarem, putans fidem qua in Deum credimus, non esse donum Dei, sed a nobis esse in nobis”

50. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* III, 7: BA 24, 478: “ut autem praedicato nobis Evangelio consentiremus, nostrum esse proprium, et nobis ex nobis esse arbitrabar.”

51. Cf. *De ordine* II, ix, 27: CC XXIX, 122: “Auctoritas autem partim diuina est, partim humana, sed uera firma summa est, quae diuina nominatur.”

52. The term “fideism” is, I believe, unfortunate; like the term “ontologism,” it carries misleading historical overtones and recalls the fideism of Huet (1630-1721) or the traditionalism of Bonald (1754-1840) and of Lamennais (1781-1854) in accord with which all knowledge had to begin with an act of faith.

53. F. Masai, “Les conversions de saint Augustin,” pp. 36-37.

54. F. Masai, p. 37.

55. Cf. the note complémentaire: “La philosophie augustinienne,” in the second edition of BA 6, 514-517, here 517. In the third edition by G. Madec, this note is omitted, perhaps because of Madec’s conviction that there is no patristic philosophy.

56. Cf. my “Rahner on the Relation of Nature and Grace,” *Philosophy and Theology*, disk supplement 4, 4 (1989) 109-122.

57. Karl Rahner, “Philosophy and Theology,” in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6 (Baltimore: Helicon, 1969), p. 73.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

59. *Epistula CXX*, i, 3: CSEL XXXIV, 706: “Ut ergo in quibusdam rebus ad doctrinam salutarem pertinentibus, quas ratione nondum percipere ualemus, sed aliquando ualebimus, fides praecedat rationem. . . .”

60. *De diversis quaestionibus octaginta tribus*, XLVIII: CC XLIV/A, 75: “alia quae mox ut creduntur intelleguntur, sicut sunt omnes rationes humanae uel de numeris uel de quibuslibet disciplinis; tertium quae primo creduntur et postea intelliguntur, qualia sunt ea quae de diuinis rebus non possunt intelligi nisi ab his qui mundo sunt corde. . . .”

61. Thus in *Epistula CXX*, i, 5: CSEL XXXIV, 708, Augustine seems to say that there are some truths which we know to be true and cannot believe once an account has been given. “Sunt autem quaedam, quae cum audierimus, non eis accommodamus fidem et ratione nobis reddita uera esse cognoscimus, quae credere non ualemus.”

62. *De civitate dei* VIII, xii: CC XLVII, 229: "Sed undecumque ista ille [Plato] didicerit, siue praecedentibus eum ueterum libris siue potius, quo modo dicit Apostolus, quia 'quod notum est Dei manifestum est in illis. . .'"
63. Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum* VII, 9 and 12: CC I, 193: "Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis? Quid academiae et ecclesiae? . . . Nobis curiositate opus non est post Christum Iesum nec inquisitione post euangelium."
64. *De moribus ecclesiae* I, i, 1: BA 1, 136: "Nec, si ea discere cupiens, in aliquos forte inciderit vel episcopos vel presbyteros, vel cujusmodi Ecclesiae catholicae antistites et ministros, qui aut passim caveant nudare mysteria, aut contenti simplici fide, altiora cognoscere non curarint, desperet ibi scientiam esse veritatis, ubi neque omnes a quibus quaeritur docere possunt, neque omnes qui quaerunt discere digni sunt." Cf. *De utilitate credendi* I, 2: CSEL XXV/1, 4, for Augustine's claim that it was the demand for belief prior to understanding that lured him into Manichaeism.
65. We perhaps have a reflection of such ridicule in Augustine's refusal to give the answer that someone gave to the question about what God was doing before he created the world, namely, that he was preparing hell for people who ask profound questions; cf. *Confessiones* XI, xii, 14: CC XXVII, 201: 'Alta,' inquit, 'scrutantibus gehennas parabat.' Aliud est uidere, aliud ridere. Haec non respondeo."
66. Cf. the "note complémentaire": "Le caractère aporétique du De Genesi ad litteram," in BA 48, 575-580.
67. *Epistula* CXIX, 1: CSEL XXXIV, 699: "ego igitur cum apud memet ipsum prorsus definerim ueritatem rei diuinae ex fide magis quam ex ratione percipi oportere. . ."
68. Ibid.: "si enim fides sanctae ecclesiae ex disputationis ratione, non ex credulitatis pietate adprehenderetur, nemo praeter philosophos atque oratores beatitudinem possideret."
69. *Epistula* CXX, i, 2: CSEL XXXIV, 706: "corrigere definitionem tuam, non ut fidem respuas, sed ut ea, quae fidei firmitate iam tenes, etiam rationis luce conspicias."
70. *Epistula* CXX, i, 3: CSEL XXXIV, 706: "Absit namque, ut hoc in nobis deus oderit, in quo nos reliquis animantibus excellentiores creauit. absit, inquam, ut ideo credamus, ne rationem accipiamus siue quaeramus, cum etiam credere non possemus, nisi rationales animas haberemus."
71. *Epistula* CXX, i, 6 and iii, 13: CSEL XXXIV, 708 and 716. It is important to bear in mind that Consentius' principal difficulty was purely philosophical, namely, to conceive of God as an incorporeal being, as we shall see shortly.
72. *De Genesi ad litteram* II, ix, 20: BA 48, 174: "Quid enim ad me pertinet, utrum caelum sicut sphaera undique concludat terram in media mundi mole libratam, an eam ex una parte desuper uelut discus operiat?"

73. *De Genesi ad litteram* II, ix, 20: BA 48, 176: "sed spiritum Dei, qui per eos loquebatur, noluisse ista docere homines nulli salutis profutura."
74. *De Genesi ad litteram* II, ix, 21: BA 48, 176: "demonstrandum est hoc, quod apud nos de pelle dictum est, ueris illis rationibus non esse contrarium; alioquin contrarium erit etiam ipsis in alio loco scripturis nostris, ubi caelum dicitur uelut camera esse suspensum."
75. Galileo Galilei, "Lettre Christine de Lorraine, Grand-Duchesse de Toscane (1615), traduction et présentation par François Russo," *Revue d'histoire des sciences et de leurs applications* 17 (1964) 332-366; cited from BA 48, 177, n. 20 (my translation). Galileo also cites *De Genesi ad litteram* I, xvii, 37; I, xix, 38-39, 41; II, x, 23; II, xviii, 38; VII, xxviii, 43.
76. *Epistula XVIII*, 2: CSEL XXXIV, 45: "Sane quoniam te noui, accipe hoc quiddam grande et breue. est natura per locos et tempora mutabilis, ut corpus, et est natura per locos nullo modo, sed tantum per tempora etiam ipsa mutabilis, ut anima, et est natura, quae nec per locos nec per tempora mutari potest, hoc deus est."
77. Robert J. O'Connell, S.J., *Imagination and Metaphysics in St. Augustine* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1986). O'Connell is referring to Bourke's *St. Augustine's View of Reality* (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1964).
78. Cf. G. Verbeke, *L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma, du Stoïcisme à s. Augustin* (Paris and Louvain, 1945). Verbeke attributes the concept of spirit as incorporeal to the influence of Scripture. F. Masai more correctly, I believe, recognizes the term as biblical, but attributes the concept to Neoplatonism. Cf. F. Masai, "Les conversions de saint Augustin et les débuts du spiritualisme en Occident," *Moyen Age* 67 (1961) 1-40, here 17. For the Stoic view that whatever is is a body, cf. E. Weil, "Remarques sur le 'matérialisme' des Stoïciens," in *Mélanges Alexandre Koyré. II. L'aventure de l'esprit* (Paris: Hermann, 1964), pp. 556-572. Weil argues that corporealism more accurately describes the Stoic position than materialism. With Augustine too, the term "materialism" should be used with care, since matter is present in everything changeable, such as souls, though souls are not bodily. Cf. *Confessiones XII*, vi, 6: CC 14, 219.
79. Cf. Masai, pp. 15-23, for his account of the spiritualization of spirit. Just as most of us who are believers do not require a philosophical concept of non-bodily reality when we pray to God, so the Christians of the first centuries had no need for such a concept of God or of the soul in their lives. So too, prior to the Arian controversy, there was no need for a concept such as the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, but once the question arose whether or not the Son was a creature, the technical term and concept were needed. In Augustine's case, it was the problem of evil that necessitated a concept of God as non-bodily. After all, if all that is is bodily, then God is an infinite body and evil is in God, or God is finite and evil is another body. The former view means that God is not all good; the latter approximates the Manichaean position.

80. Masai says, "La vérité est qu'avant Augustin, il est vain de chercher dans l'Afrique chrétienne un spiritualisme au sens moderne du terme: le Stoïcisme de Zenon y régna sans contest . . ." (p. 19). For the Manichaean position, cf. *Contra epistulam quam uocant Fundamenti* XX, 22: CSEL XXV/1, 216, where Augustine calls the Manichees "carnal minds" "qui naturam incorpoream et spiritualem cogitando persecui uel non audent uel nondum ualent. . . ." So too, he admits in *Confessiones* IV, xvi, 31: CC XXVII, 55, that he thought of God as a "bright and immense body" and that he was "a part of that body."

81. Cf., for example, *Contra Maximinum* II, ix, 2: PL XLII, 764, where Augustine accuses Maximinus of a carnal interpretation of "in sinu Patris" (Jn 1:18): "Sinum quippe tibi fingis, ut video, aliquam capacitatem maioris Patris, qua Filium minorem capiat atque contineat: sicut hominem corporaliter capit domus, aut sicut sinus nutricis capit infantem." Cf. my paper, "Heresy and Imagination in St. Augustine," *Studia Patristica* 11, forthcoming.

82. Cf. *Epistula* CXIX, 5: CSEL XXXIV, 702, where Consentius writes to Augustine, "ais non tamquam aliquod corpus debere cogitare deum . . . sed sicut iustitiam uel pietatem corpoream cogitare non possumus . . . ita et deum sine aliqua phantasiae simulatione, in quantum possumus, cogitandum." Cf. R. J. O'Connell, *The Origin of the Soul in St. Augustine's Later Works* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1987), p. 94.

83. Cf. *De anima et ejus origine* IV, xii, 19-xiv, 10: BA 22, 612-622. Cf. the notes to the text which show the linkage to Tertullian's position, as well as the "note complémentaire": "Une théorie stoïcienne de l'âme," pp. 837-843.

84. Cf. Thomas A. Smith, "Augustine in Two Gallic Controversies: Use or Abuse?" *Collectanea Augustiniana* II, forthcoming. Cf. also, E. Fortin, *Christianisme et culture philosophique au cinquième siècle. La querelle de l'âme humaine en Occident* (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1959).

85. Masai, for example, points to M. Testard who, in speaking of the young Augustine, mentions that he totally lacked certain beliefs fundamental to the Christian faith, such as the spiritual nature of God and the soul (M. Testard, *Saint Augustin et Cicéron* [Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1958], I, p. 101; Masai, *art. cit.*, p. 13).

86. For the texts on eternity in Augustine, cf. my 'Vocans temporales, faciens aeternos': St. Augustine on Liberation from Time," *Traditio* 41 (1985) 29-47.

87. Cf. Aristotle, *De caelo* II, c. 1, 283b26-32.

88. For the Plotinian source of the concept of timeless eternity, cf. W. Bierwaltes, *Plotin über Ewigkeit und Zeit* (Frankfurt a.M.: V. Klostermann, 1967), pp. 198-200, and also my 'Vocans temporales, faciens aeternos': St. Augustine on Liberation from Time," *Traditio* 41 (1985) 29-47.

