

'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and other Gnosticism

Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty

Edited by

Jacob Albert van den Berg

Annemaré Kotzé

Tobias Nicklas &

Madeleine Scopello

BRILL

‘In Search of Truth’:
Augustine, Manichaeism and other Gnosticism

Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies

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Johannes van Oort

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PREFACE

This book aims at being both a Festschrift and an inspiring collection of studies. Its intention is to present a manifest appreciation of the work of an eminent scholar on the one hand and to stimulate further studies in the fields of research he excelled in on the other hand.

Johannes van Oort started his scholarly career in the beginning of the 1980s. He initially qualified as a teacher, but subsequently, while working as a part-time teacher and as the editor of an educational periodical, he first studied classical languages and then theology at Utrecht University. It was there that, after finishing his theological studies, he almost immediately obtained a position, first in religious education and after that in his most beloved field of research: historical theology. In the course of the years his focus shifted from Reformation studies to Patristics in general and St Augustine in particular. From Augustine he also moved to Manichaeism, and from Manichaeism to other Gnosticism. In all his studies the inner drive was constituted by the adagium he found put into words by both Augustine and his Manichaean opponents: the classical and perennial aspiration of *ueritatem quaerere*, the search for truth.¹

A fair impression of van Oort's career is provided by the overview of his publications and many related activities listed elsewhere in this Festschrift. Here, some other personal characteristics may be highlighted. For several decades—first in Utrecht and later on also in Nijmegen and Pretoria—he enthusiastically introduced generations of students to the richness of Augustine's thought and the charming beauty of his language. Moreover, he also expressed this enthusiasm in a series of poems published in 1993 and later set to music by the Utrecht Conservatorium composer Theo Teunissen. More recently the same honour befell his translation of the *Gospel of Judas*: such was its stylistic appeal that the Frisian composer Leo Köhlerberg decided to write an oratorium based on this rendition; it will appear in print in both a Dutch and an English version in 2010 (www.intradamus.nl) and the premiere is scheduled for early 2011. A distinguishing feature of Johannes van Oort's research is not only its enduring quality that found its expression in a remarkable number of

¹ Cf. e.g. *C. Fort.* II; *Conf.* III, 6, 10; *C. Felicem* I, 13.

reprints of his books and other publications, but also his emphasis on a clear and polished diction. In his capacity as book review editor of *Vigiliae Christianae* he more than once felt himself obliged to complain of the real flood of hastily written and badly composed publications.

The original stimulus for the publication of this Festschrift was van Oort's stepping down as President of the International Association of Manichaeism in early September 2009. This event happily coincided with his reaching the age of sixty. Members of the IAMS working in his specific fields of research as well as a number of other scholars and friends were invited to contribute to the volume, a preliminary copy of which could be presented at the end of the Seventh International Conference of Manichaeism in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. Later on a number of other colleagues requested to become part of the venture. The result is a book of studies in four sections reflecting the most important areas of van Oort's research interests: Augustine, Manichaeism, and 'other' Gnosticism.

At the special request of the *honorandus* this is not so much a laudatory volume as it is a book of stimulating studies. Turning sixty is, so it is hoped, not the end of an illustrious career but a memorable point in time which will provide the incentive for new research pursued together with old and new colleagues and friends. *In multos annos!*

The editors wish to thank the many contributors, and also Einar Thomassen, with whom Johannes van Oort directs the series Nag Hammadi and Manichaeism, for accepting this volume in this series. Thanks as well to Mattie Kuiper and Wilma de Weert of Brill Academic Publishers for their kind cooperation.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY JOHANNES VAN OORT

The data listed below focuses on the scientific work directly connected to the subject of this Festschrift.¹ Popular publications in newspapers and weeklies are not listed, nor are the many (as a rule authorized) interviews over the years, or the scholarly and other activities in university *gremia* and elsewhere. The overview of editorial responsibilities reflects only the present situation; the record of memberships focuses only on participation in international associations. A list of finished related doctoral dissertations is added at the end.

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¹ A complete bibliography will be published elsewhere.

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A. Supervisor Doctoral Dissertations

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PART ONE

STUDIES IN AUGUSTINE:
CONFESSIONS, SERMONS, LETTERS & *DE HAERESIBUS*;
AUGUSTINE ON GRACE & PLURALISM;
AUGUSTINIAN 'GNOSIS'

CHAPTER ONE

PROTREPTIC, PARAENETIC AND AUGUSTINE'S *CONFESSIONS*

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INTRODUCTION¹

In a previous publication on Augustine's *Confessions* I argued that the work was, partly, but to an important extent, a protreptic addressed to a Manichaean reader (mostly in the first eight books) and that it also included paraenetic encouragement to the already-converted (mainly in the last three books).² It has, in fact, become something of a commonplace to refer to the *Confessions*, in passing, as 'a protreptic'.³ Efforts to gain further insight into the protreptic characteristics and the literary antecedents of the *Confessions* and especially into the interconnection between protreptic and autobiographical writing in earlier literature raises the question: what exactly is protreptic?

Unfortunately, no full scale study of protreptic has been published and Slings' observation (1995, 173) that 'surprisingly little has been done on this important subject' still holds true.⁴ This article is an attempt to illumi-

¹ This study represents a subsection of a bigger project to investigate the nature of ancient exhortative literature where I argue that the integration of research on protreptic, paraenetic and apologetic is a prerequisite for a thorough understanding of the field. While much has been published, especially by biblical scholars, on paraenetic, and by patristic scholars on apologetic, in-depth research on protreptic is long overdue. The field that needs to be scrutinized is vast and the problems complex and vexing. I foresee no easy answers or simple solutions.

² Kotzé 2004.

³ See e.g. Feldmann (1994), Mayer (1998), Serge Lancel (2002, 210) and recently Hübner in the *Augustin Handbuch* (2007, 51), which takes the protreptic character of the *Confessions* for granted where it speaks of the *Hortensius*, 'der dann mit seiner *exhortatio* ... zur Wahrheitssuche in beträchtlichem Maße zum protreptischen Charakter der *conf.* beigetragen hat.'

⁴ Two doctoral theses have more recently tackled the problem in earnest. Unfortunately neither has been published and I have succeeded only in obtaining Swancutt's

nate the problems surrounding the term 'protreptic' and the cognate term 'paraenetic,' because I believe that an investigation of the current distinction between these two terms can contribute significantly to our understanding of exhortative literature. The technical meanings the terms have acquired in secondary scholarship and the problematic nature of such conventions are examined in the light of a new look at the use of the terms protreptic and paraenetic by three ancient authors who represent three distinct periods in the chronological spectrum a survey of ancient exhortative texts has to take into account:⁵ Ps-Isocrates, Seneca and Clement of Alexandria. While I realize that it is probably 'wissenschaftsgeschichtlich zu spät'⁶ to change the way these terms are currently used I hope that it will become clear that important perspectives may emerge from a questioning of the standard understanding of the terms.

The initial stimulus for this *modus operandi* was Diana Swancutt's article 'Paraenesis in Light of Protrepsis: Troubling the Typical Dichotomy' (2004). But scholars like Popkes (1996), Wachob (2000) and, in fact, Burgess in his *Epideictic Literature* as early as 1902 had already questioned the dichotomous view of protreptic and paraenetic that has dominated scholarship since Hartlich's (in)famous article,⁷ *De exhortationum a Graecis Romanisque scriptarum historia et indole* (1889). But Burgess' work went practically unheeded for over a century while Hartlich's findings came to dominate scholarship on protreptic and paraenetic alike.⁸ The dichotomous view of protreptic and paraenetic has, in fact, become

thesis (2001) but not that of Van der Meeren (1999), in spite of a number of efforts to contact the University of Lille where the catalogue indicates that a copy of the thesis is available. Fortunately, part of Van der Meeren's thesis appears in *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 115 (2002).

⁵ I do not consider diachronic development here (although this certainly has to be taken into account) but the interesting fact is that *both* the earliest *and* the later (Christian) usage of the terms protreptic and paraenetic belie the neat dichotomy constructed in scholarship.

⁶ I borrow the phrase from Popkes (1996, 9) who in turn borrowed it from Johannes Thomas (1992, 270).

⁷ The article is respectfully quoted with monotonous frequency over more than a century. It is also (deservedly in my opinion) criticized, e.g. as a 'farrago of analyses,' (Slings 1995, 173) or for 'altering [Philo of Larissa's] *locus classicus* on the subject' (Swancutt 2004, 115).

⁸ The reason for this is probably, on the one hand, that Burgess' remarks on protreptic and paraenetic do not form the core of his study but occur in a (very long) footnote (1902, 229–233) and on the other hand, that he himself remains undecided in spite of the compelling evidence he adduces against a clear distinction between protreptic and paraenetic in ancient sources.

so firmly entrenched that two separate areas of research have developed, with mainly biblical scholars focusing on paraenetic⁹ while those working on ancient philosophy and patristic and late ancient literature investigate protreptic.¹⁰

The first section of this article (after the introduction) presents some general remarks on the use of the terms protreptic and paraenetic in current scholarship, while the second section makes a number of arguments against the traditional definitions of these terms, based on a re-reading of a number of ancient remarks usually adduced to argue for a dichotomous view of protreptic and paraenetic. This will eventually be supplemented by analyses of a selection of exhortative texts themselves, but in this article the focus is only on three instances of ancient theorizing and to a lesser degree on the *Confessions*.

My main aim is to illustrate that the ancient sources used for over a century to support the assignment of dichotomous technical meanings to the terms protreptic and paraenetic do not, in fact, support such an inference. This has been argued, as I have indicated, by scholars like Burgess, Wachob and Swancutt before, but the issue is far from resolved: Burgess' work has been mostly ignored; Wachob's very acute observations are hidden away in a book with the title *The voice of Jesus in the social rhetoric of James* (2000);¹¹ and Swancutt's article (2004) appears in a volume (*Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*) where many of the other articles presuppose in some way or other, a dichotomous view of protreptic and paraenetic. In 2002 there also appeared an article by Sophie Van der Meeren, which still argues that protreptic is an autonomous genre in terms of form and content, and that it should be clearly distinguished from paraenetic.

THE TRADITIONAL VIEW OF PROTREPTIC AND PARAENETIC: SOME PROBLEMS

I start with a few general remarks on the protreptic-paraenetic dichotomy. Many of the traditional definitions revolve around communicative purpose and audience location: protreptic is characterized by the

⁹ Prominent large scale studies on paraenesis in the Old and New Testaments are Perdue and Gammie 1990, Popkes 1996, and Engberg-Pedersen 2004.

¹⁰ Jordan 1986, Slings 1981 and 1995 and Van der Meeren 2002 focus mainly on ancient philosophic protreptic.

¹¹ Wachob's observations are based only on a shrewd reading of a number of secondary sources, not on a new investigation of the ancient sources.

purpose to convert, paraenetic by the purpose to confirm belief or strengthen the resolve of those already within a certain group. The intended audience of protreptic literature is the not-yet-converted (outsiders) who have to be persuaded of the validity of a certain way of life; paraenetic is aimed at an audience of the already converted (insiders) sharing the author's world view.¹² That this is still widely regarded as the standard definition is illustrated, for example by Rankin's confident assumptions (2006, 8) about the nature of protreptic and paraenetic:

If we identify apologetic as that form of discourse which seeks to explicate or to articulate a given position—to either believers or non-believers—without any intention, explicit or implicit, to seek the conversion of its addressees, and *protreptic as that which seeks explicitly to convert by exhortation non-believers (paraenetics is exhortation to believers)*, then we will not be far from the truth (my italics).

But even a glance at the titles and contents of existing exhortative texts bearing the title *protreptikos* or *paraeneticos logos* illustrates that the distinction 'conversion-of-outsiders' versus 'confirmation-of-insiders' is not flexible enough to describe the complex nature of exhortative works. Ps-Justin Martyr's *Exhortation to the Greeks* is, for example, a work very similar to Clement of Alexandria's *Exhortation to the Greeks*, in terms of explicit addressees and professed aim to convert to Christianity as well as in terms of the use of literary devices and elements of content. But the first work is called a *parainetikos logos* by its author¹³ while Clement refers to his own work as a protreptic.¹⁴ There are also a number of *protreptikoi*

¹² I quote a few definitions by some of the influential exponents of these views: Stowers (1986, 92): 'I will use protreptic in reference to hortatory literature that calls the audience to a new and different way of life, and paraenesis for advice and exhortation to continue in a certain way of life'; Aune (1991, 91): 'The λόγος προτρεπτικός, or 'speech of exhortation', is a lecture intended to win converts and attract young people to a particular way of life ... by exposing the errors of alternative ways of living by demonstrating the truth claims of a particular philosophical tradition over its competitors'; Ferguson (1993, 302): 'Paraenesis is a broader term [than protrepsis] for moral exhortation to follow a given course of action or to abstain from a contrary behavior. It thus consisted of encouragement and dissuasion. Rules of conduct are prominent. Paraenesis presupposed some positive relationship between the parties; the definition arrived at by a group of scholars at a conference in Oslo (Starr and Engberg-Pedersen 2004, 4): 'Paraenesis is (a) concise, benevolent injunction that reminds of moral practices to be pursued or avoided, expresses or implies a shared worldview, and does not anticipate disagreement.'

¹³ Ἀρχόμενος τῆς πρὸς ὑμᾶς παραινήσεως, ὃ ἄνδρες Ἕλληνες, εὐχομαι τῷ θεῷ ἔμοι μὲν ὑπάρξαι τὰ δέοντα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰπεῖν ... ('Beginning the paraenetic discourse to you, o Greek men, I pray to God that it may be possible for me to say to you what has to be said.') The Greek text is from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG).

¹⁴ Van den Hoek (2005, 81–82) points to this: 'It is worth noting that Clement himself

logoi that are obviously addressed to insiders,¹⁵ e.g. Origen's *Protreptic to Martyrdom*, Tertullian's *Exhortation to Chastity*, or Gregory of Nyssa's *Protreptic to Baptism*.¹⁶

Still, communicative purpose and audience location remain useful concepts through which exhortative texts may be examined. I suspect that, like in the *Confessions*, the intention to convert is perhaps more frequently than not, combined with the intention to confirm the resolve of the already converted. Perdue's investigation of the social functions of *paraenesis* and the typical situations where *paraenesis* would operate, leads to observations that clearly suggest the probability of exhortative discourse having a dual communicative purpose and a dual intended audience:

Paraenesis was often issued to addressees in a liminal setting, either at the actual point or at least the anticipation of entrance into [new] stages, roles, and groups (thus possessing a protreptic function in the broadest sense of the term). The moral exhortation was then often repeated, both to remind recipients of expected behavior associated with the stage, role, or group and to reconfirm the validity of the guidance (thus a paraenetic function). In reminding recipients of their moral responsibilities and duties, they were compelled to reflect upon that 'threshold' experience (1990, 19).¹⁷

A cursory examination of a number of texts also points to mixed audiences, with a far more complex composition than described by the terms 'outsiders' and 'insiders.' In the case of the *Confessions*, for example, I have argued that the exhortation of the first 8 books would be well suited to reach the kind of Manichaean reader who is no longer a committed Manichee but searching for alternatives (a type of 'outsider') or a Catholic member of Augustine's congregation in Hippo (an 'insider')

provided the title *Protreptikos* to his work; in one of his later writings, in *Str.* 7,4,22,3, he explicitly referred to this title.

¹⁵ The terms outsiders and insiders are in themselves problematic and although they are used to characterize the intended audiences of protreptic and paraenetic literature respectively, they create a false impression: those targeted for conversion are usually no longer 'true outsiders' but individuals or groups already interested in the ideas of the group canvassing for adherents, willing to listen to its speeches or read its literature. See for example Swancutt's use of the terms in her arguments against such a distinction (2004, 118, 120 *et passim*).

¹⁶ The problematic nature of the terms 'insider' and 'outsider' is also illustrated by these works. While it is clear that they are not aimed at converting a non-Christian audience, it could be argued that in each instance it is a matter of crossing a threshold to become part of a more intimate inside group: the martyrs, the celibate, the baptized.

¹⁷ Perdue (in this extract) and Gammie (1990, 53) view paraenetic as the overarching term, including protreptic within itself.

who is constantly exposed to conversion attempts by members of the rival Manichaean community. In a recent doctoral thesis from the University of Bologna,¹⁸ the author reports a very similar reading of Clement of Alexandria's *Protreptic*: he contends that the contents and devices of the text are best suited to reach a pagan audience *already* interested in Christianity and seeking for enlightenment *or* to provide arguments that may be used by Christians to convert people within their own family circles.

Another aspect concerning the audience of exhortative works that I think may provide useful insights, is the relationship between professed audience and 'real' audience: the *Confessions* is addressed to God but an acute awareness of its human audience is generally accepted and I have argued that an individual caught up in or leaning towards Manichaeism is presupposed by much of its content and literary devices; Clement calls his work *Protreptic to the Greeks*, but Swancutt has argued, and I am inclined to agree, that—at least to some extent—it 'was intended for an inner-Christian audience' (Van den Hoek 2005, 74; Swancutt 2004, 149); also in the case of the well-known Christian Apologies 'it is not generally believed ... that the emperor was their true audience' (Van den Hoek 2005, 71).¹⁹

This brings me to another issue that I think will have to be incorporated into any study of exhortative literature: its relationship to apologetic. Many modern authors, like van den Hoek (2005), use the words apology or apologetic as synonyms for protreptic and its derivatives. Scholars regularly refer to Plato's *Apology* as a protreptic (or at least partly protreptic) text,²⁰ which makes this popular model for later authors the paradigm for both apologetic and protreptic texts. But this is a matter for a different paper.

SOME ANCIENT REMARKS CONCERNING PROTREPTIC AND PARAENETIC

I am convinced that no cohesive and consistent view of protreptic and paraenetic can be gleaned from the ancient sources habitually quoted for

¹⁸ Herrero Jáuregui 2008.

¹⁹ See also the remarks by Gammie about the ostensible and real audiences of the *Letter of Aristeas* (1990, 54).

²⁰ Slings (1981, 79–81) includes sections of the *Apology* in his list of works that constitute, according to him, an autonomous protreptic genre in 4th century BCE.

this purpose: in fact, many have come to this conclusion before.²¹ Yet, like Burgess, they seem to make an about turn at the last moment to yield before the overwhelming tradition that has grown around a technical distinction between protreptic and paraenetic.²²

Some of the most frequently quoted passages in arguments about ancient remarks on the nature of protreptic and paraenetic are: Ps-Isocrates *Ad Demonium* 3–5, Philo of Larissa's analogy between the doctor and the philosopher (Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.7.2), Eudorus' classification of the sections of philosophy (Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.7.2), Seneca's *Epistulae* 94 and 95 and Clement of Alexandria's remarks at the opening of his *Pedagogue*. This is by no means an exhaustive list: one of the problems with evaluating ancient observations on protreptic and paraenetic is, in fact, that there are a relatively high number of instances scattered over works of various kinds written over a long period of time.²³ And because of the inconsistent nature of the way in which the terms protreptic and paraenetic, together with a number of others like *paraklesis*, *hupothetikos*, *therapeutikos*, or *paramuthetikos*, were used—selective reading can create a totally distorted impression.

Still, in this article I too focus on only three instances of theorizing. I hope that this selectiveness may be counterbalanced by the fact that this is an effort to argue *against* deducing a consistent view of protreptic and paraenetic from texts often quoted *for* exactly this purpose. To my mind, the binary opposition between protreptic and paraenetic (against which I make an argument) is in fact *stronger* in these examples than in most other passages.

²¹ Both Jordan (1986) and Slings (1995) sift through the sources meticulously and judge that no reconciliation is possible.

²² What is surprising is the fact that Burgess remains undecided and leaves the door open for the traditional definitions to persist in spite of the much stronger and much more frequent evidence for a general interchangeable use of the terms protreptic and paraenetic (1902, 230): '*in the vast majority of instances they are used in a loose, indefinite way, either with almost the same meaning, or more frequently with a more or less noticeable predominance of the precept character in the word παραινῶ and its derivatives. We may add, at this point, that the lexicons (exc. Hesychius, cf. also Stephanus) fail to give any distinctive use of the words, and the meanings given there require no special notice*' (my italics).

²³ The work of Hartlich and Burgess remain valuable indices of ancient references to these terms.

PS-ISOCRATES *AD DEMONICUM*

Near the opening of the *Ad Demonicum* (in paragraphs 3–5) the author uses the terms protreptic and paraenetic in a way that probably provided the initial stimulus and still provides the best support for arguments for the existence of two separate kinds of discourse or literary genres. I quote a relatively long section in order to substantiate the remarks following below:

‘Ὁρῶ δὲ καὶ τὴν τύχην ἡμῖν συλλαμβάνουσαν καὶ τὸν παρόντα καιρὸν συναγωνιζόμενον· σὺ μὲν γὰρ παιδείας ἐπιθυμεῖς, ἐγὼ δὲ παιδεύειν ἄλλους ἐπιχειρῶ, καὶ σοὶ μὲν ἀκμὴ φιλοσοφεῖν, ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς φιλοσοφοῦντας ἐπανορθῶ. Ὅσοι μὲν οὖν πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτῶν φίλους τοὺς προτρεπτικούς λόγους συγγράφουσιν, καλὸν μὲν ἔργον ἐπιχειροῦσιν, οὐ μὴν περὶ γε τὸ κράτιστον τῆς φιλοσοφίας διατρίβουσιν· ὅσοι δὲ τοῖς νεωτέροις εἰσηγοῦνται, μὴ δι’ ὧν τὴν δεινότητα τὴν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἀσκήσουσιν, ἀλλ’ ὅπως τὰ τῶν τρόπων ἦθη σπουδαῖοι πεφυκέναι δόξουσιν, τοσοῦτ’ ἂν μάλλον ἐκείνων τοὺς ἀκούοντας ὠφελοῦσιν, ὅσον οἱ μὲν ἐπὶ λόγον μόνον παρακαλοῦσιν, οἱ δὲ [καὶ] τὸν τρόπον αὐτῶν ἐπανορθοῦσιν. Διόπερ ἡμεῖς οὐ παρὰ κλησιν εὐρόντες ἀλλὰ παρὰ νείεσιν γράψαντες μέλλομέν σοι συμβουλεύειν, ὧν χρὴ τοὺς νεωτέρους ὀρέγεσθαι καὶ τίνων ἔργων ἀπέχεσθαι καὶ ποίοις τισὶν ἀνθρώποις ὁμιλεῖν καὶ πῶς τὸν ἑαυτῶν βίον οἰκονομεῖν. Ὅσοι γὰρ τοῦ βίου ταύτην τὴν ὁδὸν ἐπορεύθησαν, οὗτοι μόνοι τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐφικέσθαι γνησίως ἠδυνήθησαν, ἧς οὐδὲν κτῆμα σεμνότερον οὐδὲ βεβαιότερόν ἐστιν.²⁴

²⁴ ‘I see that fate assists us and that the present moment is also on our side. For, while you desire to be educated, I endeavour to educate others. Further, while you have time to philosophize, I teach those who philosophize. Those *who compose exhortations addressed to their friends* try to do a good thing, but they are not busy with the strongest aspect of philosophy. Those, on the other hand who advise the youth, not on how they will practice cleverness of speech, but how they will come to be known as men with good character traits, are of so much more use to their audience than the others, inasmuch as the first group exhort them to speechmaking only, while the latter also improves their character. For this reason we plan to advise you not through composing *an address*, but by writing *advice* on what the youth should strive for and which actions they should avoid and with what kind of people they should associate and how they should manage their lives. For only those who have travelled this road in life have been able to attain to knowledge of virtue; and no possession is more noble or durable than virtue.’ This translation was to a certain extent a thought experiment, to see whether it was possible to make sense of the passage without assigning technical meanings to the terms protreptikos, paraklesis and paraenesis. While the term protreptic in this context seems apt to describe the type of epideictic showpieces generally associated with the sophists and was probably a generally known more or less technical term, it can be translated here with the general term ‘exhortation.’ In this passage paraklesis is, in fact, the only term that cannot be translated simply with ‘exhortation’ (because this would render: ‘Therefore we plan to advise the youth, not by writing an exhortation but by writing an exhortation on ...’).

While there are intricate aspects of the interpretation of this passage that I cannot go into here, I think one *can* safely say that the *main point* of this section is the contrasting of more and less useful kinds of contents or aims in written teaching, rather than to define protreptic and paraenetic as two distinct literary genres. It seems equally apparent that there may be some polemical intent and that the author wants to emphasize the usefulness of his own methods in a situation of rivalry where other approaches may threaten to cast doubt on the validity of his. This is what Swancutt (2004) points to when she argues that protreptic and paraenetic were in fact discourses with similar aims and audiences but that rivalry for the prime position as educators for young Athenians leads to a polarization where paraenetic is owned by one group as their typical teaching speech and protreptic by the other, while both groups try to denigrate the discourse and teaching methods of the other group.

Though I agree that situations of rivalry seem to be a constant factor in the kind of social milieus where exhortative discourse functioned, Swancutt's article does not illustrate to me that the polarization between protreptic and paraenetic was as pervasive as she assumes it to be. Swancutt (2004, 135) also postulates that Isocrates may have been the initiator of the endeavour to distinguish paraenetic 'as practical philosophers' elite, traditional advice' and to demarcate it from protreptic, but I find that one must infer from the passage quoted above that protreptic and paraenetic are not well enough established as technical terms—even at this presumably later stage, if the work was written by a pupil of Isocrates as is generally assumed—to allow the author simply to say: I will write paraenetic and not protreptic. He (still) finds it necessary to circumscribe what is understood by each of the terms and to construct an opposition that is probably not well established at this stage. The fact that the term *protreptikos* is substituted with *paraklesis* in paragraph 5 also argues against the attribution of precise technical meanings and the elevation of protreptic and paraenetic to the two dominant types of exhortation.²⁵

A look at Isocrates' use of forms of *protrepein* and *parainein* also does not support arguments for the existence of a well established dichotomy

LSJ's suggestion ('not [by writing] a mere address to their feelings, but counsel to act rightly') is surely tempting but, to my mind not really justified by the context. The Greek text is from the *TLG*.

²⁵ See also Popkes (1996, 25): 'Die pseudo-isokratische Schrift *Demonicea* wird zu meist in ihrem Aussagewert überschätzt. Eine allgemein gültige Definition von P[arä-nese] ist aus ihr nicht abzuleiten; ihre Gegenüberstellung von P. mit Protrepitk und Paraklese hat spezifische Gründe.'

in this period. In the *Antidosis*, for example, Isocrates uses forms of *protrepein* to describe the aims of his own writings without any indication that the word bears a negative meaning: e.g. in paragraph 60: Ἐνθυμήθητε δὲ πρὸς ὑμᾶς αὐτοὺς, εἰ δοκῶ τοῖς λόγοις διαφθεῖρειν τοὺς νεωτέρους, ἀλλὰ μὴ προτρέπειν ἐπ' ἀρετὴν,²⁶ or in paragraph 86: Καίτοι τὸν πάντας τοὺς πολίτας προτρέπειν προθυμούμενον πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον καὶ δικαιότερον προστῆναι τῶν Ἑλλήνων, πῶς εἰκὸς τοῦτον τοὺς συνόντας διαφθεῖρειν;²⁷

The *Ad Demonicum* as a whole does have the character that has come to be associated with paraenetic since the late 19th and the 20th century, probably to an important extent taking this work as a prototype: the liberal use of (sometimes loosely connected) maxims rather than sustained argument (Perdue and Gammie identify the latter as a characteristic that distinguishes protreptic from paraenetic).²⁸ But, though there is an undeniable contrasting of *protreptikos* and *paraenesis* in *Ad Demonicum* 3–5, few of the characteristics associated with these two terms in modern scholarship are articulated here:²⁹ protreptics are not defined in current scholarship as exhortations to the study of (mere) rhetoric, and even less as addressed to friends (it exhorts ‘outsiders’ to a ‘way of life’). While the contents of the *Ad Demonicum* exemplify what modern definitions call traditional maxim-like contents, I do not see sufficient motivation to call the addressee an ‘insider;’ the general nature of the type of content often ascribed to paraenetic makes it, in fact, more suited (also) for the non-initiated or ‘outsiders.’ In addition, the mention of the young addressee as ready and eager for this (paraenetic) instruction is, in fact, a motif

²⁶ ‘Consider for yourselves if I appear to corrupt the youth through my words or rather to exhort them to virtue.’ All texts from the *Antidosis* are from the TLG.

²⁷ ‘And yet, how is it reasonable (to assume) that a man who exerts himself to exhort all the citizens to be nobler and more just rulers of the Hellenes corrupts his associates?’ See also par. 304 where προτρέψετε is once again used to express a positive evaluation of his own activities. The question does arise whether it is possible that the noun and adjective forms of protreptikos / protrepsis and paraenetikos / paraenesis acquired technical meanings while the verbal forms did not, but this remains to be examined. (In Isocrates’ *Antidosis*, *Ad Nicoclem* and *Nicocles* only verbal forms occur: 24 forms of the verb protrepein and 17 of the verb parainein.) Popkes (1996, 15) also concludes: ‘Eine wesentliche Unterscheidung zwischen dem Nomen im Singular und Plural, Verb und Adjektiv parainetikos hinsichtlich ihres Sinngehalts ist nicht zu konstatieren.’

²⁸ See for example Perdue 1990, 23 or Gammie 1990, 53.

²⁹ There is a general tendency to see the derivatives of protrepein and of parakalein as synonyms on the one hand and those of parainein and sombouleuein on the other, but also this is not consistently supported by ancient remarks.

identified by Gaiser (1959, 107) as typical of protreptic in the early Platonic dialogues.

The protreptic-paraenetic antithesis in the *Ad Demonicum* (which I have argued does not justify current dichotomous definitions of protreptic and paraenetic) is the strongest and clearest opposition of specifically the two terms protreptic and paraenetic that I have been able to find in the literature. This is also the place where there seems to be clearest reference to types of writing, as opposed to other instances where references seem to denote different divisions or tasks of philosophy or teaching methods rather than types of orations or literary works.

In the passages frequently quoted by scholars of protreptic and paraenetic there is often equal emphasis on *other* terms, and not exclusively on the two elevated to genre designations in scholarship. Further, one ancient author would come near to describing protreptic in terms that seem to justify the current definition but would not use the term paraenetic at all, while the next would focus on paraenetic and ignore the existence of the term protreptic. Philo of Larissa, for example, does not use paraenetic as one of his subdivisions in the long analogy between the doctor and the philosopher, except for a passing reference to it as a synonym for *hupothetikos logos*, near the end of the passage quoted in Stobaeus (*Ecl* 2.7.2). In Seneca the scenario is the opposite.

SENECA *LETTERS* 94 AND 95

In Seneca's *Letters* 94 and 95 the Latin term *praecepta* and its Greek counterpart *paraeneticen* feature prominently, but not the term protreptic. Seneca contrasts and discusses the relative merits of the use of specific and practical precepts in the teaching of philosophy and teaching the basic principles underlying the precepts, devoting the majority of *Ep* 94 to a discussion of the value of precepts and *Ep* 95 to the value of general principles. It seems tempting to equate works containing mainly practical precepts to paraenetic and those displaying a more holistic approach and treating the basic principles of the philosophy or religion with protreptic. But this is not justified by what Seneca says in these two letters.³⁰

At the opening of *Ep* 95 Seneca explicitly equates the Latin *praecepta* (actually the subject of the previous letter) with the part of philosophy

³⁰ Eudorus also does not equate theoretical with protreptic but categorizes protreptic both as a subdivision of the theoretical and of the practical. See Slings 1995, 186.

quam Graeci paraeneticen vocant (Ep 95.1),³¹ but the Greek term he cites for the general principles on which the other kind of teaching is based is *dogmata* (Ep 95.10). Although there is no mention of the word *protreptikos* in letter 95 some scholars do interpret *exhortatio* in Ep 95.65 as a direct parallel for *protreptikos*.³² To my mind the context does not justify this: in Ep 95.64 Seneca discusses yet again the difference between *praecepta* and *decreta*, but the five other strategies he identifies in paragraph 65 as also recommended by Posidonius (to be used in addition to *praecepta*) do not allow an unequivocal identification between *exhortatio*, *decreta* and *protreptikos*, nor the polarization of protreptic and paraenetic as the two dominant types of exhortative literature.³³

Posidonius non tantum praeceptionem (nihil enim nos hoc verbo uti prohibet) sed etiam [1] sausionem et [2] consolationem et [3] exhortationem necessariam iudicat; his adicit [4] causarum inquisitionem, aetiologicalian quam quare nos dicere non audeamus, cum grammatici, custodes Latini sermonis, suo iure ita apellent, non video. Ait utilem futuram et [5] descriptionem cuiusque virtutis; hanc Posidonius ‘ethologian’ vocat, quidam ‘characterismon’ appellant, signa cuiusque virtutis ac vitii et notas reddentem, quibus inter se similia discriminantur.³⁴ (Ep 95.65)

The fact that Seneca does not use the Greek word *protreptikos*, although he does explicitly mention other Greek forms (*paraeneticen* in Ep 95.1, or *aetiologicalian* and *ethologian* or *characterismon* here) is probably significant. It may mean that *protreptikos* and *paraenetikos* were also at this stage (like in the time of Isocrates) and in Latin not the two dominant and clearly distinct categories used to describe two evidently divergent types of philosophical exhortation. It is also important to note that, while Seneca discusses two approaches to teaching philosophy (using particular prescriptions versus focusing on general principles) separately, he does not give any indication that he is talking about literary types and

³¹ For Seneca's letters I use the Oxford text (Reynolds 1965).

³² See for example Slings 1995, 187 and Swancutt 2004, 130.

³³ This brings to the fore another issue which needs further investigation: the Latin term *exhortatio* is, on the one hand, often assumed to be a synonym for protrepsis, while on the other hand it is used to translate both *protreptikos* and *paraenetikos*.

³⁴ ‘Posidonius is of the opinion that not only precepts (for nothing forbids us to use this word) are necessary, but also persuasion, consolation and exhortation. To these he adds the enquiry into causes (and I do not see why we should not dare to call this aetiology, since the grammarians, the guards of the Latin language—appropriately in their opinion—call it this). He says that also the description of certain virtues will be useful; this Posidonius calls ‘ethology’, while others call it ‘characterization’, because it describes the symptoms and distinctive qualities of certain virtues and vices, through which things that appear similar may be distinguished from one another.’

no reason to believe that he would not think it possible to use both the practical and the more theoretical approaches *which he argues are both indispensable*,³⁵ in the *same* work.

As far as audience is concerned I also do not find any indication in these two letters that Seneca distinguishes between types of audiences (in terms of insiders and outsiders) that practical instruction or theoretical instruction respectively should target. The only mention of types of audiences is the remark that the intellectually less endowed may benefit from concrete instructions and thus need precepts (more):

Aut si praecepta nihil adiuvant, omnis institutio tollenda est; ipsa natura contenti esse debemus. Hoc qui dicunt non vident alium esse ingenii mobilis et erecti, alium tardi et hebetis, utique alium alio ingeniosiore. Ingenii vis praeceptis alitur et crescit novasque persuasiones adicit innatis et depravata corrigit.³⁶ (Ep 94.30)

Letters 94 and 95 are an exposition of Seneca's views on an ancient philosophical debate concerning best methods in teaching philosophy. As in the case of the *Ad Dementium*, it is important to remember that in these letters Seneca's aim is not to provide a clear description of two literary types and that we should be cautious of reading into them the notions about protreptic and paraenetic (not always legitimately) bequeathed to us by scholarship of the 19th and 20th centuries.

³⁵ See for example Ep 94.32: "Si quis" inquit "recta habet et honesta decreta, hic ex supervacuo monetur." Minime; nam hic quoque doctus quidem est facere quae debet, sed haec non satis perspicit. Non enim tantum adfectibus inpedimur quominus probanda faciamus sed inperitia inveniendi quid quaeque res exigat. Habemus interdum compositum animum, sed residem et inexercitatum ad inveniendam officiorum viam, quam admonitio demonstrat (Ep 94.32). ('Someone says that if a person has right and honourable principles, it is superfluous to advise him. Not so. For, this man is certainly aware of the things he should do, but these things are not entirely self-evident. For, we are not only deterred from doing the right things by our passions, but also by our inexperience in determining what each situation requires. We do perhaps have a well ordered soul, but the way of duty is unknown and we are not experienced in finding it; concrete admonishments reveal this way.')

³⁶ 'In fact, if precepts are of no use, all education should be abolished; we must be content with nature itself. Those who say this do not understand that the nature of an intellect that is lively and alert differs from that of one that is slow and dull. The power of the intellect is nourished by precepts and it grows and adds new convictions to ingrained ones and corrects wrong perceptions.' See also Ep 94.50: 'Inbecillioribus quidem ingeniis necessarium est aliquem praeire: "hoc vitabis, hoc facies."' ('Those of less astute intellect need someone to guide them: "Avoid this, do that."')

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA'S *PEDAGOGUE* 1.1.1.1–1.1.2.2

The opening paragraphs of Clement of Alexandria's *Pedagogue* constitute rather perplexing reading for those who want to unravel the meanings of the terms protreptic and paraenetic. I am convinced that, because of the contradictory and inconsistent way in which Clement uses forms of *pro-trepein* and *parainein*, together with the other terms frequently occurring in philosophical theorization about exhortation (*paraklesis*, *hupothetikos*, *paramuthetikos*, *therapeutikos*), the sections from the *Pedagogue*, like the other extracts discussed here, could probably be used to defend both sides of the argument: that protreptic and paraenetic are clearly delineated and distinct literary genres (as Van der Meeren has done)³⁷ or that Clement's remarks do not support the view of the existence of two clear cut types of writing (my argument).

Once again, at the risk of stating the obvious, I have to observe that it is not the aim of the author to describe the literary characteristics of a paraenetic discourse (as a counterpart to protreptic). It is one of his objects to present a specific view of how Christian education should proceed. However, the most important objective Clement strives for in the much quoted opening sections of the *Pedagogue* is to lay the foundation on which to build the elaborately worked out metaphor of Christ as the Pedagogue and the Christian men and women as children in the rest of the work. In this endeavour he is creative and original; he is not describing the status quo as far as Christian exhortation and its written forms are concerned and it would be dangerous to deduce

³⁷ Van der Meeren argues partly on the basis of this passage—quite convincingly—for the existence of an autonomous protreptic genre. Her arguments centre on the introductory or preliminary nature of protreptic, which she sees embodied in the *Exhortation to the Greeks* and which would always be followed by paraenetic, where further instruction of the converted is undertaken, in this instance constituted by the *Pedagogue*. Gaiser's arguments concur in broad strokes with this view of the preliminary nature of protreptic. He sees the Sophistic Logos Protreptikos, the Erotikos Logos and Aristotle's *Protreptic* as instances of preliminary 'advertising' while the *paideia* to which it invites, is offered at a later stage. He regards the early Platonic dialogues as an exception in the sense that they serve both to arouse the initial desire for knowledge and to bring about the acquisition of this knowledge (1959, 28, 107 *et passim*). The fact that Swancutt assumes, contra Van der Meeren, that the *Pedagogue* is protreptic is in itself an indication of the precarious nature of arguments that try to make a rigorous distinction between protreptic and paraenetic: 'The troublesome question is whether anyone actually incorporated paraenesis into protreptic ... The answer is yes. Though hardly a hardcore Stoic, Clement of Alexandria provides a textbook example in the *Pedagogue*' (2004, 131).

technical meanings from a prologue that is in many ways impressionistic rather than precise.³⁸

To illustrate, I focus here only on the opening paragraphs of the *Pedagogue* (1.1.1.1–1.1.2.2). *Protrepein* and its derivatives occur six times, but a form of *parainein* is used only twice in this section: first, as a verb in the present tense, to describe the function of the present work (νυνὶ), which he here characterizes as following after the activity called protreptic and as *therapeutikos* and *hupothetikos* ((νυνὶ δὲ θεραπευτικός τε ὢν καὶ ὑποθετικός ἅμα ἄμφοι, ἐπόμενος αὐτὸς αὐτῷ, παραινεῖ τὸν προτετραμμένον 1.1.1.4).³⁹ Since the verb παραινεῖν is used to describe the whole of the action of the pedagogue ((παραινεῖ τὸν προτετραμμένον, κεφάλαιον τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν παθῶν ὑπισχνούμενος τὴν ἴασιν. Κεκλήσθω δ' ἡμῖν ἐνὶ προσφυῷ οὗτος ὀνόματι παιδαγωγός 1.1.1.4)⁴⁰ it seems possible to deduce that Clement is indicating that the *Pedagogue* is a *parainetikos logos*, as van der Meeren (2002, 618) argues.⁴¹ But in the second instance of the use of a derivative of *parainein*, in what appears to be a clear mention of something like a type of discourse, the adjective *parainetikos* is used to describe only a small subsection of the work of the pedagogue, the giving of advice:

ἥδη δὲ καὶ εἰς τὴν τῶν δεόντων ἐνέργειαν παρακαλεῖ, τὰς ὑποθήκας τὰς ἀκηράτους παρεγγυῶν καὶ τῶν πεπλανημένων πρότερον τοῖς ὑστερον ἐπιδεικνὺς τὰς εἰκόνας. Ἄμφοι δὲ ὠφελιμώτατα, τὸ μὲν εἰς ὑπακοήν, τὸ παραινετικὸν εἶδος, τὸ δὲ ἐν εἰκόνας μέρει παραλαμβάνόμενον, 1.1.2.1–2.⁴²

Not only is there some inconsistency in this allocation of meaning to *parainein*/ *parainetikos* which argues against the attribution of a technical meaning to the term, but also the use of *hupothetikos*/ *hupothekas*

³⁸ My views concur in broad outline with those of Popkes (1996, 20) who states succinctly: 'Nicht überwertet sollte ClemAlex Paidagogos I 1–2 werden.'

³⁹ 'Now because it is caring and hortatory both at the same time, following in its own footsteps, it advises the one who has been exhorted.' All texts from the *Pedagogue* are from the TLG.

⁴⁰ 'It advises the one it has exhorted, mainly by undertaking the healing of the passions in us. Let us name this word appropriately by one name, Paedagogus.'

⁴¹ 'Le *Protreptique aux Grecs* de Clément d'Alexandrie ne contient pas la parénèse, réservée à un ouvrage suivant le protreptique: c'est le *Pédagogue*, qui ne sera efficace qu'après la conversion. Le *Protreptique* demande un engagement de toute la personne, le *Pédagogue* guide les actions particulières' (Van der Meeren 2002, 618).

⁴² 'And then it exhorts us to perform our duties, giving clear instructions and pointing out examples of those who erred earlier to those who follow later. And both are extremely useful, the former to be obeyed (the paraenetic type) and the latter taken as an example.'

seems erratic: first (in 1.1.1.2) the *hupothetikos logos* is said to have as its domain all the actions of man and it is contrasted to the *paramuthetikos logos*, which has the passions as its domain (πράξεών τε ἀπασῶν λόγος ἐπιστατεῖ ὁ ὑποθετικός, τὰ δὲ πάθη ὁ παραμυθητικός ἰᾶται); then, (in 1.1.1.4) *hupothetikos* is paired with *therapeutikos* to describe the functions included in *παραινεῖν*, the functions of the pedagogue (νυνὶ δὲ θεραπευτικός τε ὢν καὶ ὑποθετικός ἅμα ἅμφω, ἐπόμενος αὐτὸς αὐτῷ, παραινεῖ τὸν προτετραμμένον), but it is also said explicitly that these two mainly aim at healing the passions, thus as though *hupothetikos* and *therapeutikos* are synonymous with *paramuthetikos* in 1.1.1.2, instead of with *hupothetikos* as one would have expected. In the course of the *Pedagogue* Clement also uses many examples—not only advice (*hupothekas*); the scope of his writing is thus, by implication, wider than that he assigns to τὸ παραινετικὸν εἶδος in 1.1.2.2, because this excludes the use of examples.

The question remains whether we should look away from the inconsistency in the use of these terms to which many have in vain tried to allocate consistent technical meanings and see that Clement wrote a *protreptikos logos* (the *Protreptic to the Greeks*), conforming at least outwardly to the current standard definition of protreptic, followed by a *paraenetikos logos*, exhibiting characteristics correspondent with the current definition of *paraenesis*. But the aim of this article is, as already stated, to illuminate the other side of the coin, to illustrate that the distinction protreptic/paraenetic is not as cut and dried as is often assumed. For this purpose I list some of the important aspects that, in my view, argue against reading Clement's prologue to the *Pedagogue* as an indication of the existence of two separate genres of exhortation.

Apart from what seems to be an attempt at ascribing different forms of discourse to different domains of Christian life and teaching Clement also expresses an awareness of the overlapping and intertwined nature of these discourses: *all is one logos* (εἷς ὢν πᾶς ὁ αὐτὸς οὗτος λόγος 1.1.1.2) and the whole process of turning man away from the world in directing him towards salvation (functions normally associated mainly with protreptic) is ascribed to the pedagogue (τῆς συντρέφου καὶ κοσμητικῆς συνηθείας ἑξαρχάζων τὸν ἄνθρωπον, εἰς δὲ τὴν μονότροπον τῆς εἰς τὸν θεὸν πίστεως σωτηρίαν παιδαγωγῶν 1.1.1.2–3);⁴³ a part is (not totally accurately by implication) called protreptic, but in fact *the whole*

⁴³ 'Rescuing man from common worldly habits by guiding him towards the only salvation of belief in God.'

of piety is protreptic (‘Ο γοῦν οὐράνιος ἡγεμών, ὁ λόγος, ὁπηνίκα μὲν ἐπὶ σωτηρίαν παρεκάλει, προτρεπτικός ὄνομα αὐτῷ ἦν—ἰδίως οὗτος ὁ παρορμητικός ἐκ μέρους τὸ πᾶν προσαγορευόμενος λόγος· προτρεπτική γὰρ ἡ πᾶσα θεοσεβεία 1.1.1.3);⁴⁴ and lastly, although Clement argues for postponing this teaching activity until much later, he emphasizes that the *same* logos is also *didaskalikos* (Καίτοι καὶ διδασκαλικὸς ὁ αὐτός ἐστι λόγος, ἀλλ’ οὐ νῦν 1.1.2.1).⁴⁵

Further, ascribing the teaching of *dogmata* to the *didaskalikos* logos, i.e. referring it to a *third* stage in the education of the Christian (after the protreptic and pedagogical stages) makes good practical sense, but compels the opposite inference than is often made in interpretations of Seneca's *Ep* 95. Some scholars, as I have indicated, equate Seneca's reference to the part of philosophical teaching dealing with principles (*dogmata*) with protreptic, while most scholars (as well as Clement) see protreptic as the *initial* phase of the activities. The *Pedagogue* is obviously practical and concrete rather than devoted to *dogmata* or philosophical principles, but it is also no loose stringing together of maxims (an attribute often ascribed to paraenetic) and especially book 1 contains much sustained argument (which, as I have said, Perdue and Gammie identify as distinguishing protreptic from paraenetic) as well as some polemical interest (which I would like to argue is often present in works commonly categorized as protreptics, reflecting the context of rivalry mentioned before).

One last thought on the opening of the *Pedagogue*: Clement's version is only one perspective on the issue, expressed in the late 2nd century CE where it may or may not represent a decisive change in the way the terms had been used before, and may or may not represent the general understanding of the terms at the time. It must be remembered that after his time we have a *parainetikos* logos exhorting Greeks to become Christians and *protreptikoi logoi* to exhort insiders to baptism or to martyrdom.

To conclude the remarks on ancient theorizing: The many tortuous efforts in ancient literature to analyze the different sections of philosophical activity and especially to argue about the appropriate way to teach philosophy or religion and to circumscribe the terms may point exactly

⁴⁴ ‘The heavenly guide, the logos, when it exhorted to salvation, had the name protreptikos—this inciting word is properly called thus, the whole from a part. For the whole of piety is protreptic.’

⁴⁵ ‘And yet the same word is also didactic, but not now.’

to a lack of consensus on these matters even then, rather than to the existence of the neat categories they seem to want to convey. What we *can* deduce is that the practice of exhorting addressees was pervasive, important and varied. It probably was a practice much too multifaceted to be neatly categorized.

CONCLUSION

As far as the *Confessions* is concerned, the crucial question to ask is, of course: what, if anything, will be gained by reading a work like Augustine's autobiographical masterpiece within the tradition of ancient exhortative writing? I think it is clear that a significantly different perspective on the man, Augustine, emerges from reading the *Confessions*, not as autobiography for the sake of self-reflection, self-therapy or self defence,⁴⁶ nor as addressed only to an inner circle of *servi dei*, but as a work reaching out to turn an audience towards God (as Augustine has become convinced he has to be understood). For me this illuminates a man more concerned with the salvation of others than with his own ambition and image with posterity.⁴⁷

The fact that many exhortative works have both a protreptic and a paraenetic aim, in terms of the current definitions of these terms, and that the intended audiences of one and the same work often include both 'insiders' and 'outsiders' confirms my earlier reading (2004) of the *Confessions*. Further, it means that there is no real conflict between readings of the *Confessions* pointing to its inner circle audience and those focussing on its message to a type of outsider with Manichaean (or Neo-Platonic) sympathies.

It is my hope that once a greater measure of clarity concerning the theoretical and terminological issues surrounding protreptic, paraenetic

⁴⁶ O'Donnell (2005, 36) uses a strong *tricolon* to describe his view of the purpose of the *Confessions*: 'In prostrating himself before the divine in the *Confessions*, Augustine performs an astonishing act of self-presentation and self-justification and paradoxically, self-aggrandizement.' He has not been able to convince me that the deadly serious engagement with Manichaean error and the heartfelt appeals to a Manichaean audience (see next footnote) are there merely to achieve self-aggrandizement.

⁴⁷ The urgent emotional appeal to a Manichaean audience in *Conf* 9.4.8–11 remains for me the crucial section of the work illustrating Augustine's deep concern with freeing this section of his audience from what he has come to believe to be fatal error. See my 'Reading Psalm 4 to the Manicheans' (2001).

and apologetic has been achieved new insights may be gained also into the *Confessions*. I am convinced that an enhanced understanding may result from studying the occurrence of not only the *topoi* and strategies normally associated with protreptic (and parallels with texts like the *Apology of Socrates*) but also those that characterize texts habitually called paraenetic (and parallels with especially Pauline texts from the New Testament). I believe that the identification of such *topoi* used in the *Confessions* and a study of parallels with antecedent exhortative texts (e.g. Plato's *Apology of Socrates* or other (auto)biographical exhortations like Dio Chrysostom's *Oratio* 13) may lead to significant additional insights into the literary strategies of the *Confessions*.

I hope that I have illustrated that the debate on protreptic and paraenetic is one that should continue, and that the terms should be used only with careful circumspection. The fact remains that the corpus of exhortative writings constitutes a large number of influential ancient texts. Analyses that take into account their characteristics as exhortative texts but break free from the preconceptions traditionally associated with protreptic and paraenetic respectively may open up the debate in a fruitful and productive way. It may also contribute to an enhanced understanding of the communicative purposes and intended audiences of texts bearing the title or habitually called either protreptic or paraenetic.

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CHAPTER TWO

ALLEGORICAL READING AND WRITING IN AUGUSTINE'S *CONFESSIONS*

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1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

When we speak of allegory we need to differentiate between *allegoresis* as a reading strategy (and, as such, a hermeneutic approach) and, on the other hand, the allegory proper as a rhetorical trope, that is, as an intentional form of speech.¹ A text which can be read allegorically need not have been designed to be allegorical, though it may have been. Allegorical writing is evident whenever a narrator or speaker uses personified abstracta in order to illustrate facts or circumstances (e.g. Hercules at the Crossroads, Prudentius' *Psychomachia*). It encodes the text with a meaning that has to be decoded by allegorical reading; in other words, allegorical writing assigns the text a meaning that has to be explained with words which have no semantic relation to the words that express the literal message of the text (for instance: Hercules stands for the human soul, the female figures for virtue and vice).

In ancient literature, the act of allegorical *writing* is preserved in texts with allegorical figures, and the act of allegorical *reading*—*allegoresis*—in texts that interpret a pre-text allegorically, as in Augustine's *Confessions* 13. Allegorical readings are usually labelled as such.² It is more difficult

¹ From the wide range of literature on allegorical writing and reading I refer to J. Pépin, *La tradition de l'allégorie de Philon d'Alexandrie à Dante* (Paris 1987); W. Freytag, "Allegorie, Allegorese", *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* 1 (1991) 330–392; G. Kurz, *Metapher, Allegorie, Symbol* (Göttingen 1997). Cf. also the collection of essays in: *L'allégorie de l'antiquité à la renaissance*, ed. by B. Pérez-Jean/P. Eichek-Lojkine (Paris 2004). On the nature of Prudentius' allegory cf. C. van Dyke, *The Fiction of Truth. Structures and Meaning in Narrative and Dramatic Allegory* (Ithaca/London 1985) 25 ff. On the allegorical reading of the text of the Bible cf. J.J. O'Keefe/R.R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision. An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore/London 2005).

² E.g. Aug. *Gn. Man.* 2,1–3 (cf. *Gn. litt.* 8,2,5); *ep.* 102,33; *en. Ps.* 33,1,2; 51,2; 59,1.

to identify allegorical writing. This is unproblematic in cases where the allegory is made explicit: Prudentius lets virtues and vices appear as fighting figures, with the effect that an allegorical reading is unavoidable. But whenever texts from Homer, Moses, Vergil, Ovid etc. are *read* allegorically, it is only done on the assumption that they were *written* allegorically.

The following interpretation also has, to a certain extent, the character of such an assumption. I will try to show that Augustine's *Confessions* do not just document allegorical reading—that is, of the biblical creation story in Genesis 1 and 2 in book 13,13–46—but rather that the first ten books (the autobiographical part of the *Confessions*) may be *read* allegorically, which implies that they are *written* as a pretext to an allegorical interpretation.³ Augustine himself does not set us the task of doing so but, nonetheless, the text of the *Confessions* contains a series of signs that may be interpreted as allegorical signals.

It is important to consider first the differences between the allegoresis of myths and of the Bible. When one tries to assign a deeper meaning to a mythical story or a mythical figure, it is irrelevant whether the myths are historical or not. Questions such as who Hera, Zeus, Ares, Hercules or Odysseus were and what they did or suffered are only relevant for an allegorical reading insofar as they refer to a specific, philosophically significant phenomenon. The myth here serves only as a carrier of meaning that conveys the real message without actually containing it. In contrast, the object of biblical allegoresis is a text (the Bible) which claims to report historical events or to reflect upon phenomena, as in non-narrative books like the Psalms or the Song of Songs. The model for the method is the *Epistle to the Galatians* 4,22–24, where Paul interprets the two sons of Abraham, one of whom he begot with the slave Hagar, the other with the freewoman Sarah, as allegories of the Old and New Testaments; the historicity of the circumstances described is not put in doubt by the allegorical interpretation.⁴ So, the history of Creation, the history of the people

³ The idea is not new, cf. R. McMahon, *Augustine's Prayerful Ascent. An Essay on the Literary Form of the Confessions* (Athens, Ga. 1989), and id., "Book Thirteen: The Creation of the Church as the Paradigm for the Confessions," in: *A Reader's Companion to Augustine's Confessions*, ed. by K. Paffenroth/R.P. Kennedy (Louisville, Ky./London 2003) 207–223. But cf. n. 34 below. Cf. also C.G. Vaught, *The Journey Toward God in Augustine's Confessions: Books I–VI* (Albany NY 2003) who proposes a symbolic reading of the *Confessions* as a whole.

⁴ Cf. *trin.* 15,15 where Augustine calls this interpretation *allegoria in factis*. He does the same with 1 Cor 10,1–11 in *util. cred.* 11–18; cf. B. Stock, *Augustine the Reader*.

of Israel, and salvific history all have a specific meaning and this meaning is worked out as an independent interpretation, the literal exegesis. This meaning is usually termed “historical” (*secundum/iuxta historiam*).⁵ In a further step—usually the second step—allegorical reading demonstrates how these results direct the reader to another reality. Allegorical reading is pursued in addition to the literal exegesis, which is seldom wholly eliminated. It is almost never applied to whole biblical books; rather, it is used only for problematic, that is incomprehensible, morally objectionable or seemingly nonsensical passages.⁶ The actors in the exegetical stories are not substituted by abstract ideas or natural phenomena, as is the case, for example, in the Stoic allegoresis of myth.⁷ Instead, one or more additional meanings are ascribed to them to supplement the literal meaning. The literal meaning is needed as the point of departure to ascend to further levels of meaning. In contrast, this principle plays no role in mythical exegesis, in which the main focus is the allegorical enhancement.

The ancient Latin terminology to describe the practice of allegoresis and allegory as it appears in rhetorical-theoretical or hermeneutical texts is neither concise nor consistent. The Latin term *allegoria* was not used with the same definitional sharpness which we find today in modern lexica. Based on Cicero’s and Quintilian’s definitions, we can also subsume the modern terms ‘typology’ or ‘personification’ under the term *allegoria*.⁸ In biblical exegesis it is hard to differentiate between the allegorical and the typological or figural interpretation.⁹ Augustine, too, describes *allegoria* as a trope which includes the allegorical personification of man and animal, and typological pre-figuration (*figuratio*)¹⁰ as well as allegory

Meditation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation (Cambridge, Mass./London 1996) 167–169.

⁵ Cf. Jerome *in Nah.* 3,8; *in Am.* 6,7. On Augustine cf. C. Müller, “historia,” *Augustinus-Lexikon* 3, fasc. 3/4 (2006) 373 f.; J.-F. Thomas, “Le mot latin *allegoria*,” in: Pérez-Jean/Eichke-Lojkine (n. 1) 75–92, esp. 82 f.

⁶ Cf. C. Mayer, “Allegoria,” *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1986–1994) 237; R.J. Teske, “Criteria for Figurative Interpretation in St. Augustine,” in: *De doctrina christiana, A Classic of Western Culture*, ed. by D.W.H. Arnold/P. Bright (Notre Dame/London 1995) 109–122, esp. 109–111; cf. n. 21 below.

⁷ Cf. P. Steinmetz, “Allegorische Deutung und allegorische Dichtung in der alten Stoa,” in: *Kleine Schriften*, ed. by S. Koster (Stuttgart 2000) 159–171.

⁸ Cf. Mayer (n. 6) 233–239; Thomas (n. 5) 87 ff.

⁹ Cf. C.P. Mayer, *Die Zeichen in der geistigen Entwicklung und in der Theologie Augustins*, vol. 2 (Würzburg 1974) 346.

¹⁰ Also *allegoria prophetica, prophetia, aenigmata rerum futurarum*. Cf. e.g. Gn. litt. 1,17,34; trin. 15,15; doct. chr. 3,40.

in the modern sense: that is, as a narrative that can be read throughout on a different level of meaning.

2. AUGUSTINE AND THE (PAGAN) PRACTICE OF ALLEGORICAL READING AND WRITING

As professor of rhetoric, Augustine will have been familiar with the rhetorical technique of allegory as well as with allegorical exegesis. In his role as orator at the imperial court in Milan he will certainly not have passed over this rhetorical device. In his role as a teacher of rhetoric he will have explicated the ancient authors according to the methods then customary and will have taught that not only a literal meaning but also symbolic and allegorical meanings can be ascribed to a text.¹¹ Augustine's early dialogues attest these assumptions, as they show how he instructed his students in the reading and interpretation of Vergil.¹² Augustine also seems to have been familiar at this time with the Platonic allegoresis of Vergil and he himself provides an allegorical exegesis of a Vergilian myth.¹³ As a rhetorically interested listener to the sermons of Ambrose in Milan, he will also have become familiar with the practice of biblical allegoresis.¹⁴

A quick look at two text passages from the early dialogue *De ordine* may illustrate his knowledge in this area.

The early dialogues present conversations that Augustine conducted in Cassiciacum with a group of friends, students and relatives after retiring

¹¹ Cf. C. Schaublin, "Augustin, 'De utilitate credendi'. Über das Verhältnis des Interpreten zum Text," *Vigiliae Christianae* 43 (1989) 53–68.

¹² Cf. G.A. Müller, *Formen und Funktionen der Vergilzitate und -anspielungen bei Augustinus von Hippo* (Paderborn etc. 2003) 41 ff.

¹³ Namely the Proteus myth. Cf. T. Fuhrer, "Der alte Mann aus dem Meer: Zur Karriere des Verwandlungskünstlers Proteus in der Philosophie," in: *Geschichten und ihre Geschichte*, ed. by T. Fuhrer/P. Michel/P. Stotz (Basel 2004) 11–36, esp. 21–26. On Augustine's familiarity with the Neoplatonic allegoresis of the *Aeneid* cf. P. Courcelle, "Interprétations néo-platonisantes du livre VI de l'Énéide," in: *Recherches sur la tradition platonicienne*, Entretiens Fond. Hardt 3 (Genève 1957) 95 ff.; P. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus. Recherches sur sa vie et ses oeuvres* (Paris 1971) 215–231; J. Flamant, *Macrobe et le néo-platonisme latin à la fin du IVE siècle* (Leiden 1977) 580 and 625 f.; F. Buffière, *Les mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque* (Paris 1956) 417 f.; Schaublin (n. 11) 58 f. and 63; D. Shanzer, "Licentius' Verse Epistle to Augustine," *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 37 (1991) 110–143.

¹⁴ *Conf.* 5,24; 6,6. Cf. J.J. O'Donnell, *Augustine, Confessions*, vol. II: *Commentary on Books 1–7* (Oxford 1992) 349–351.

from his position as court rhetorician in Milan. Although the main focus was placed on philosophy, he also allowed his students to read Vergil, and the young Licentius even practiced his own skills as a poet. In *De ordine* Augustine portrays him actively pursuing his enthusiasm for the Ovidian myth of Pyramus and Thisbe, and when he tries to maintain this activity at the expense of the philosophical discussion, he reprimands him and then obliges him to rework the myth allegorically:

ord. 1,8: hic ego nonnihil metuens, ne studio poeticae penitus provolutus a philosophia longe raperetur: inritor, inquam, abs te versus istos tuos omni metrorum genere cantando et ululando insectari, qui inter te atque veritatem inmaniolem murum quam inter amantes tuos conantur erigere; nam in se illi vel inolita rimula respirabant.

ord. 1,24: verumtamen scis, quid te facere velim? iube, ait, quod placet. ubi se, inquam, Pyramus et illa eius super invicem, ut cantaturus es, interemerint, in dolore ipso, quo tuum carmen vehementius inflammari decet, habes commodissimam opportunitatem. arripe illius foedae libidinis et incendiorum venenatorum execrationem, quibus miseranda illa contingunt, deinde totus ad tollere in laudem puri et sinceri amoris, quo animae doctae disciplinis et virtute formosae copulantur intellectui per philosophiam et non solum mortem fugiunt verum etiam vita beatissima perfruuntur.

Here I somewhat feared that he [Licentius] might wholly stray from philosophy by his poetry: "I feel sorry for your singing and howling these verses of yours in all kinds of rhythms. They are erecting a wall, between you and the truth of things, thicker and more impenetrable than the one that divides the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe you are crooning about. At least they could whisper to each other through a crack"

(Aug.): "But truly, do you know what I would have you to do?" (L.): "Speak your mind". (Aug.): "You were about to relate the point when Thisbe kills herself over Pyramus' half-dead body, who had fatally wounded himself in error. At that point, the emotional climax of the story, you have your opportunity. Consider the curse of that unclean lust and poisoned passion as the basis for the miserable end. Then turn to praising that clean and sincere love by which disciplined characters made beautiful by virtue are raised up by a philosophical mind [lit.: "have intercourse with the intellect"]. In so doing they not only escape death, but enjoy the happiest of lives"¹⁵

¹⁵ Translations by S. Borruso, *St. Augustine, On order* (South Bend, Ind. 2006).

The text that Licentius is supposed to produce would be a mythical exegesis in poetic form. With this new interpretation, Licentius' occupation with a non-philosophical, even erotic subject is justified.¹⁶

Another scene in *De ordine* documents Augustine's ability to interpret even mundane activity allegorically and thus to sublimate its meaning. As Licentius sings the psalmic verse "O God of hosts, convert us, show us your face and we shall be saved" (Psalm 80 [79], 8) while sitting on the toilet, Augustine's mother Monnica is revolted by his voicing a devout text in an offensive place. Augustine defends him by interpreting the dark toilet and Licentius' singing of the psalmic verse as an expression of the situation in which the group at Cassiciacum finds itself: they all are situated in the darkness and tainted with ignorance and pray to God that He may lead them into Light and enlighten them with wisdom:

ord. 1, 22 f.: interea post paululum dies sese aperuit. surrexerunt illi et ego inlacrimans multa oravi, cum audio Licentium succinentem illud propheticum laete atque garrule: *deus virtutum, converte nos et ostende faciem tuam, et salvi erimus.* quod pridie post cenam cum ad requisita naturae foras exisset, paulo clarius cecinit, quam ut mater nostra ferre posset, quod illo loco talia continuo repetita canerentur. nihil enim aliud dicebat, quoniam ipsum cantilenae modum nuper hauserat et amabat, ut fit, melos inusitatum. obiurgavit eum religiosissima, ut scis, femina ob hoc ipsum, quod inconveniens locus cantico esset. tunc ille dixerat iocans: quasi vero, si quis hic me inimicus includeret, non erat deus exauditurus vocem meam.

Shortly afterward daylight broke. They got up, and I shed tears while praying. Whereupon I heard happy Licentius singing rather noisily a verse from Psalm 79: "*O god of hosts, convert us. Show us your face and we shall be saved*". The previous day, after dinner, he had gone out for a call of nature singing this same hymn. It was a little louder than my mother could stand, for she suddenly heard it again and again issuing from that place. He was getting repetitious, for he had recently learned it, and rather liked the new tune. That most pious woman scolded him precisely for singing it in such an unbecoming place. But he joked: "So what? If an enemy were to lock me in here, wouldn't god hear my voice?"

¹⁶ Cf. C. Bennett, "The Conversion of Vergil: The Aeneid in Augustine's Confessions," *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 34 (1988) 47–69, esp. 51 f.: "Likening the lovers and Licentius is not as arbitrary as it might seem ... since Licentius' 'wall', his obsessive preoccupation, is love-poetry."

(23) ... mihi, inquam, nec hoc displicet, et ad illum ordinem puto pertinere ut etiam hinc aliquid diceremus. nam illi cantico et locum ipsum, quo illa offensa est, et noctem congruere video. a quibus enim rebus putas nos orare ut convertamur ad deum eiusque faciem videamus, nisi a quodam ceno corporis atque sordibus et item tenebris, quibus nos error involvit? aut quid est aliud converti nisi ab inmoderatione vitiorum virtute ac temperantia in sese adtolli? quidve aliud est dei facies quam ipsa, cui suspiramus et cui nos amatae mundos pulchrosque reddimus, veritas?

(23) (Aug.:) ... "I am pleased to relate all this to that same order, and to continue speaking about it. I see a connection between the singing, the place, the night, and my mother's taking offense at it. When we pray to convert to god and to see his face, don't we ask to be liberated from bodily and other filth, and from the darkness of error? What else is to be converted, than going from immoderate vice to accepting virtue and temperance? Is not god's face that very truth we yearn for, and to which we show our love by being clean and beautiful?"¹⁷

In this passage we are dealing with an allegoresis that attributes a deeper meaning to a historical situation explicitly characterized as offensive by Monnica's reaction. It is not only the biblical text that is allegorized, but also the context in which it is cited.¹⁸ A further aspect is that the imagery of darkness and light plays a vital role in the entire dialogue: the hours of the day determine the talks, which begin at night and last for three days, at times extending into the evening hours when artificial light is needed; at the same time, the phases of darkness and light correlate with the level of knowledge achieved by the group.¹⁹

3. AUGUSTINE'S THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

In the course of his work on the biblical text Augustine constantly grappled with the questions of method that an allegorizing exegete asks

¹⁷ Translation by Borruso (n. 15).

¹⁸ Cf. J. Trelenberg, *Augustins Schrift De ordine* (Tübingen 2009) 136–139 who takes this passage as "eine der Schlüsselstellen für die Legitimität eines allegorischen Verständnisses von *De ordine*" (p. 137); cf. also Bennett (n. 16) 54.

¹⁹ Cf. C. Schäfer, "Aqua haeret. A View on Augustine's Technique of Biographical Self-Observation in *De ordine*," *Augustiniana* 51 (2001) 65–75, esp. 75: "By this way of reading the Church Father, I should like to argue by way of conclusion, then, we would do nothing else but follow Augustine's own exegetical method allowing a metaphorical or allegorical sense to a text's contents without at the same time denying its historicity, its *ad litteram* or 'factual' correctness."

himself.²⁰ He often asks which passages should be read allegorically and in his exegetical works on Genesis and in *De doctrina christiana* he formulates criteria for the use of allegorical interpretation: it should serve the elimination of unintelligible and morally objectionable passages.²¹ Augustine also sets limits to the amount of arbitrariness in the allegoresis by making it subject to the “rule of faith” (*regula fidei*) and the commandment to love God and neighbour.²²

Also of importance for Augustine’s legitimization of allegoresis are his reflections on why the biblical text allows more than one reading. In *conf.* 12,17–43 he pleads for a plurality of true interpretations of the Creation story in Genesis, since we are not capable of discerning God’s will in all the true messages of Moses’ words. So, speech is a priori polysemic.²³ In his justification of allegoresis, however, he does not raise linguistic arguments; on the contrary, he proceeds on the basis of a non-linguistic transfer of meaning. According to Augustine, not only words but also things can be carriers of several meanings. In Letter 102 he clarifies this point using the example of the story of Jonah: he was thrown into the sea by the inhabitants of Nineveh, who refused to believe his prophecy; then he was swallowed by a whale and three days later vomited out again alive; after the second prophecy in Nineveh—this time successful—God lets a shady castor oil plant gourd grow over Jonah’s head and then lets it wither so that Jonah suffers from the heat.²⁴ Countering pagan criticism and objections against the plausibility of the story, in particular that of Porphyry, Augustine not only defends the factuality of the events portrayed, but also ascribes a deeper meaning to the story, which, however, can only be deduced by allegoresis:

²⁰ E.g. *doctr. chr.* 2,7 f.; *ep.* 55,21 etc. (cf. n. 21); cf. Mayer (n. 6) 237 f.

²¹ Cf. e.g. *Gn. Man.* 2,3; 2,17; *Gn. litt.* 1,17,34; 8,2,5; *doctr. chr.* 3,9; 3,14; *Gn. imp.* 2,5; 3,6; cf. *Gn. litt.* 8,1,1–4 and 9,16,30 (against *figurate tantum*). Cf. Teske (n. 6) 115 f.; F. Van Fleteren, “Augustine’s Principles of Biblical Exegesis, *De doctrina christiana* Aside: Miscellaneous Observations,” *Augustinian Studies* 27 (1996) 109–130, esp. 120 ff.

²² *Doctr. chr.* 3,2; 3,15; 3,24 etc. This rule is comparable to Quine’s and Davidson’s “principle of charity” in modern hermeneutics; cf. D. Glidden, “Augustine’s Hermeneutics and the Principle of Charity,” *Ancient Philosophy* 17 (1997) 135–157; T. Fuhrer, “Augustine on the Power and Weakness of Words,” *Papers of the Langford Latin Seminar* 13 (2008) 365–383, esp. 376 f.

²³ Cf. Fuhrer (n. 22) 376–381.

²⁴ *Ep.* 102,30–37.

ep. 102,33: non sane absurde neque importune requiritur, quid ista significant, ut, cum hoc expositum fuerit, non tantum gesta sed etiam propter aliquam significationem conscripta esse credantur. prius ergo non dubitet Ionam prophetam in alvo ingenti marinae beluae triduo fuisse, qui vult scrutari, cur hoc factum sit; non enim frustra factum est, sed tamen factum est. si enim movent ad fidem, quae figurate tantum dicta, non facta sunt, quanto magis movere debent, quae figurate non tantum dicta sed facta sunt! nam sicut humana consuetudo verbis ita divina potentia etiam factis loquitur et, sicut sermoni humano verba nova vel minus usitata moderate ac decenter aspersa splendorem addunt, ita in factis mirabilibus congruenter aliquid significantibus quodam modo luculentior est divina eloquentia.

It is neither unreasonable nor unprofitable to inquire what these miracles signify, so that, after their significance has been explained, men may believe not only that they really occurred, but also that they have been recorded, because of their possessing symbolic meaning. Let him, therefore, who proposes to inquire why the prophet Jonah was three days in the capacious belly of a sea monster, begin by dismissing doubts as to the fact itself; for this did actually occur, and did not occur in vain. For if figures which are expressed in words only, and not in actions, aid our faith, how much more should our faith be helped by figures expressed not only in words, but also in actions! Now men are wont to speak by words; but divine power speaks by actions as well as by words. And as words which are new or somewhat unfamiliar lend brilliancy to a human discourse when they are scattered through it in a moderate and judicious manner, so the eloquence of divine revelation receives, so to speak, additional lustre from actions which are at once marvellous in themselves and skilfully designed to impart spiritual instruction.²⁵

God can speak to us in the form of deeds and events (*facta*), and so his rhetoric (*eloquentia*) manifests itself in incidents, and most illustriously in miracles (*facta mirabilia*). Behind its literal meaning, this divine speech conceals a further figurative meaning that Augustine then attempts to identify in the paragraphs which follow: the monster, the three days in his belly, the act of vomiting, Jonah's prophecies in the city of Nineveh and his initial rejection by the inhabitants, the gourd as shelter

²⁵ Translation by J.G. Cunningham, in: *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin, with a Sketch of his Life and Work*, ed. by P. Schaff (repr. of the American ed. 1886, Peabody, Mass. 1995).

from the sun and the dehydrating sunbeams over Jonah are set in relation to the resurrection of Christ after three days—here, Jonah stands for Christ—and to the reactions of the people of Israel to the reports of his disciples—in this case, Jonah stands for the disciples.²⁶

Divine communication in the form of facts is compared with human speech; the result is that the chain of events in the story of the prophet Jonah can be understood as—a certain kind of—divine speech. If we interpret the narrative allegorically, we are interpreting the divine speech that is manifest in the things portrayed. Hence, we are not conducting textual allegoresis, but rather the allegoresis of things, to which Augustine assigns a much stronger impact than to the allegoresis of spoken words.²⁷ What Augustine means is that acts of a non-linguistic nature and those—both human and animal—who enact them, and the material environment all have a stronger force of expression in the allegoresis than do speech acts and speeches.

4. THE ALLEGORICAL EXEGESIS OF GENESIS IN *CONF.* 13

Book 13 of the *Confessions* combines the allegoresis of words and things and attempts to explain the figurative meaning of the deeds and words ascribed to God by the first Creation story (*Gn* 1,1–31 to 2,3). In the two previous books Augustine interpreted the text of Genesis literally, that is, as an account of the creation of the visible world. After he has thus confirmed that the Genesis text presents facts, Augustine can go on to enquire into the meaning of the events themselves.²⁸

²⁶ Cf. R.W. Bernard, “The Rhetoric of God in the Figurative Exegesis of Augustine,” in: *Biblical Hermeneutics in Historical Perspective. Studies in Honor of Karlfried Froehlich on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. by M.S. Burrows/P. Rorem (Grand Rapids 1991) 88–99, esp. 96 f.

²⁷ On the difference between textual allegoresis and allegoresis of things cf. Kurz (n. 1) 44; Mayer (n. 6) 236; Teske (n. 6) 114. It corresponds to the differentiation between *allegoria in verbis* and *in factis in trin.* 15,15 (cf. n. 3); cf. *Gn. Man.* 1,34; 2,3. Cf. also R. Klockow, “*Confessiones* 13: Versuch einer Orientierung in einer ‘unwegsamen Lektüre,’” in: *Schöpfung, Zeit und Ewigkeit. Augustinus: Confessiones 11–13*, ed. by N. Fischer/D. Hatstrup (Paderborn etc. 2006) 107–139, esp. 110: “Der bezeichnete Gegenstand oder Sachverhalt (*res*) wird seinerseits zum Zeichen (*figura*), indem er auf andere Gegenstände oder Sachverhalte verweist.”

²⁸ *Conf.* 13,13–46. Cf. the excellent discussion of Augustine’s allegorical exegesis in *conf.* 13 by C. Müller, “Der ewige Sabbat. Die eschatologische Ruhe als Zielpunkt der Heimkehr zu Gott,” in: *Die Confessiones des Augustinus von Hippo. Einführung und Interpretation zu den dreizehn Büchern*, ed. by N. Fischer/C. Mayer (Freiburg 1998/²2004) 603–652, esp. 621–626. Cf. also Klockow (n. 27); McMahon 1989 (n. 3).

Heaven and earth, the primary creations, correspond to the “spiritual and carnal” humans (13,13: *homines spiritales et carnales*); accordingly, the earth stands for Christians *before* they were “shaped by the Christian doctrine” (before the *forma doctrinae*). It is these humans whom God freed from darkness with his call “*fiat lux*” on the first day of Creation so that they might be freed from darkness, undergo conversion and devote themselves to the truth.²⁹ The firmament that is created on the second day is equated with the Holy Scripture, which God rolled out “like an animal skin” to protect humans after they were exiled from Paradise. They can now read the Scripture which is the firmament (13,16), whereas the angels can “read, interpret and love” (13,18: *legunt, eligunt et diligunt*) the divine plan of the world in the face of God himself. The salty, bitter water that God parted from the dry land on the third day corresponds to humans who cleave to worldly things (13,20), while the land symbolizes the community of those joined with God. This latter group is refreshed with freshwater and brings forth vegetation and fruits—that is, good deeds (13,21). The stars of the fourth day correspond to people who reach toward Heaven; with the help of God’s splendour they themselves are able to shine (13,22–25). The creatures in the sea and the birds that God created on the fifth day are interpreted as “works of the holy men”, as miracles that were generated from the floodwaters of temptation and as Christian messengers who announced the word of God all over the world (13,26). God’s commandment on the sixth day, that humans shall have dominion over the beasts and fruits of the earth is a commandment to the “spiritual, renewed humans”,³⁰ who forthwith shall have power over the ecclesiastical sacraments, over the linguistic signs and speech signals that are expressed in the Bible and in the service of biblical exegesis (13,33 f.). God’s commandment to be fruitful and multiply is a commandment to reproduce the types of true knowledge (*verarum intellegentiarum genera*) using innumerable forms of expression (*innumerabilibus locutionum modis*, 13,35 f.). The reproduction processes in water mean that something can be expressed through bodily signs in various ways, for instance in various languages. The process of reproduction among humans means that a statement both can be understood in various ways due to the fecundity of the human *ratio* and can generate various interpretations. In this

²⁹ The exegesis of this passage is striking due to the fact that Augustine most often cites the New Testament and the Psalms, by which he lets ‘God’ himself speak and interpret the text as an allegory.

³⁰ According to *Rm* 12,2 and *Col* 3,10 or *1 Cor* 2,15.

discussion Augustine links the process of multiple interpretations to the Bible (13,37). In the context of this allegoresis, the allegoresis itself may be subsumed under the abovementioned “innumerable forms of expression”.³¹ The seventh day of Creation is interpreted in the form of a prayer as “everlasting Sabbath”, as eternal serenity and heavenly peace with God and thus as the goal of each and every human being on earth (13,50–53).

Augustine reads the first Creation story on an allegorical level as a history of mankind. Heaven and earth correspond to “spiritual and worldly” humans, the firmament is equated with the Holy Scripture, the salty, bitter water stands for those who cleave to this world and the stars for those who strive for higher things, the “living soul” represents the baptized and devout Christians, and the last day is timeless serenity, in which all efforts come to an end. The entire exegesis of *Confessions* 13 is aimed at understanding the act of Creation as an invitation to humans to devote themselves to the Light, the good life, the Holy Scripture and the knowledge of God in order to achieve eternal peace.³²

5. ALLEGORICAL READINGS OF *CONFESSIONS* 1–10?

The *Confessions* end with book 13, a strange conclusion for a work which in its first nine books tells us the story of the historical author up to the death of his mother and in the tenth book describes his psychological and moral make-up at that time. At first sight, book 13 seems to be appropriate only as a sequel to the literal exegesis of the first Creation story in books 11 and 12. The connection between the autobiographical narrative and the exegesis of Genesis, and especially the allegoresis, has always been found problematic by scholars. Consequently, many proposals have been put forward to try to make sense of the text as composed of three parts or two, depending on whether or not book 10 is considered a later insertion; some of these proposals are quite sophisticated.³³

³¹ With that, Augustine makes God's commandment to be fruitful and multiply, as it is found in *Gn* 1,28, serve the purpose of legitimizing the allegorical exegesis.

³² Müller (n. 28) 639 ff. calls this the “Sehnsuchtsmotiv” which occurs throughout book 13. Cf. id., “*Confessiones* 13: ‘Der ewige Sabbat’—die eschatologische Ruhe als Ziel der Schöpfung,” in: *Schöpfung, Zeit und Ewigkeit. Augustinus: Confessiones 11–13*, ed. by N. Fischer/D. Hattrup (Paderborn etc. 2006) 155–167.

³³ Cf. E. Feldmann, “Das literarische Genus und das Gesamtkonzept der *Confessiones*,” in: *Die Confessiones des Augustinus von Hippo. Einführung und Interpretation zu den dreizehn Bücher*, ed. by N. Fischer/C. Mayer (Freiburg 1998/2004) 11–59, esp. 19 ff.; id., “*Confessiones*,” *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1986–1994) 1134–1193, esp. 1143–1153.

Without denying the force of these arguments, I would like to add a further argument in favour of unity. In the following comments I aim to show that the exegesis of Genesis in books 11–13, and especially the allegoresis in book 13, can be understood as a guide to reading books 1–10 and that the autobiographical narrative in books 1–9 can be read as an allegory of God's actions—or speech—in the created world.³⁴

It has often been noted in research on the *Confessions* that certain elements of the autobiographical narrative are more meaningful than the mere facts they transmit. The whole presentation of the author's development from small child to baptized Christian has been read as a parable of the wandering soul or, alternatively, single scenes or figures have been understood as referring back to 'other' scenes or figures. It has been argued that some episodes and objects have a figurative or symbolic or paradigmatic meaning or serve as an exemplum for or signify or imply 'something else'.³⁵ However, none of these interpretations has been called an allegoresis, and the term allegory is seldom used in connection with *Confessions* 1–10.³⁶ The reason may be that the term is generally defined narrowly, so that it is reserved for texts with clear allegorical signals.³⁷

³⁴ In this general point I follow Robert McMahon 1989 and 2003 (n. 3) who takes the view that Augustine's allegory in *conf.* 13 "provides the paradigm for the whole work" (2003, 207), but I do not agree with him in his specific interpretation of the *Confessions*. According to McMahon, books 1–9 describe nine "acts" of both Creation and of Augustine's "return to the origin". This interpretation is too schematic; I cannot see a pattern of neatly divided acts in the autobiographical narrative.

³⁵ Cf. V. Buchheit, "Augustinus unter dem Feigenbaum (zu Conf. VIII)," *Vigiliae Christianae* 22 (1968) 257–271; H. Derycke, "Le vol des poires, parabole du péché originel," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 88 (1987) 337–348; R. Lumann, "Journeys and Gardens: Narrative Patterns in the Confessions of St. Augustine," in: *Collectanea Augustiniana*, ed. by J.C. Schnaubelt/F. Van Fleteren (New York 1990) 141–157; F. Young, "The *Confessions* of St. Augustine: What is the Genre of this Work?," *Augustinian Studies* 30 (1999) 1–16. This is also the vocabulary of e.g. L.C. Ferrari in his numerous articles on symbolic meanings in *Confessions*; cf. e.g. "The Pear-Theft in Augustine's 'Confessions,'" *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 16 (1970) 233–242; "Symbols of Sinfulness in Book II of Augustine's 'Confessions,'" *Augustinian Studies* 2 (1971) 93–104; "Monica on the Wooden Ruler (Conf. 3.11.19)," *Augustinian Studies* 6 (1975) 193–205; "The Barren Field in Augustine's Confessions," *Augustinian Studies* 8 (1977) 55–70; "The 'Food of Truth' in Augustine's Confessions," *Augustinian Studies* 9 (1978) 1–14; "The Arboreal Polarisation in Augustine's Confessions," *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 25 (1979) 35–46; "The Tree in the Works of St. Augustine," *Augustiniana* 38 (1988) 37–53.

³⁶ With the exception of D. Shanzer, "Latent Narrative Patterns, Allegorical Choices, and Literary Unity in Augustine's Confessions," *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992) 40–56. Cf. also S. Spence, "Veiled Allusions: Aeneas, Augustine, and Dante at Ostia," *Classica et Mediaevalia* 49 (1998) 143–161, esp. 160. Young (n. 35) 1–16 speaks of "a typological imagination" which lies "at the heart of his autobiography" (p. 6).

³⁷ On a definition of signals of allegory cf. Kurz (n. 1) 60–65.

Nonetheless, I would like to suggest that we can indeed read the narrative in books 1 to 9 of the *Confessions* and the self-portrayal in book 10 allegorically; the condition for my thesis is that we understand 'allegoresis' as a means of interpretation exactly as it is used by Augustine in book 13 and in his other exegetical writings.³⁸ Allegoresis will thus be understood as a practice by which terms are replaced by semantically non-related new terms and where facts reported by the text are given new meanings and the narrative is related to events that seem entirely foreign.

Before explicating my thesis on the text itself, I must try to eliminate a possible objection. In *Confessions* 13 Augustine employs allegoresis on the Bible, whose authors were considered by early Christians to have been divinely inspired; hence, the allegorical contents of the text are laid out by God. Augustine, in contrast, cannot be considered a divinely inspired author nor can his text be interpreted according to the same criteria as the Bible. What can be brought forward against this objection is that Augustine does not ascribe allegorical meaning to the Bible text itself, but to the facts and speeches transmitted by the text.³⁹ They are the medium through which God speaks to us. They are part of Creation and, as in the history of Creation, so also in the author's own time. Augustine regards contemporary events, too, as divine speech that only need to be interpreted; they can be interpreted allegorically as is the case in *De ordine*, where Licentius' singing while on the toilet was interpreted as the human situation in the darkness of the bodily world. That is also what Augustine does when he encourages his student to rework the myth of Pyramus and Thisbe.⁴⁰

Augustine's allegorical readings may not convince modern readers, to whom they may seem to do violence to the text.⁴¹ If I now claim that this

³⁸ This is also the sense in which it is used by the patristic exegetes from Philo of Alexandria onwards. Cf. the literature cited in n. 1.

³⁹ Cf. pp. 33 f. above. Cf. P. Burton, *Language in the Confessions of Augustine* (Oxford 2007) 13: "Although this argument [scil. the multiplicity of interpretations] is developed specifically with reference to the interpretation of the Scriptures, it is at least possible that he would have accepted it as a sound principle of interpretation of his own writings."

⁴⁰ Cf. pp. 28–31 above (section 3).

⁴¹ Cf. Klockow (n. 27) 109: "Das hat für den aufgeklärten, an historisch-kritische Interpretation gewöhnten Leser einen hohen Grad an Beliebigkeit; der Gedanke, dass diese Dinge in irgendeinem Sinn vom Text 'gemeint' sein könnten, wie Augustin ja offenkundig glaubt, erscheint ihm abwegig"; cf. *ibid.* 136: "Als wissenschaftliche Methode der Textexegese ist sie [i.e. die Allegorese] tot und nicht wiederzubeleben". Cf. also O'Keefe/Reno (n. 1) 107 f.

exegetical method can also be used for the text of *Confessions* 1 to 10, my argument may seem just as unconvincing as the results of Augustine's own allegoresis of book 13. But, in the light of the history of interpretation of the *Confessions*, we can observe that an allegorical reading of books 1 to 10 will not bring with it any surprising results. On the contrary, such a reading coincides with the standard practice of contemporary research on the *Confessions*, the difference being that I have chosen to refer to the terminology and method of allegoresis.

Georg Nicolaus Knauer has made an important contribution to the research on the *Confessions* by interpreting the author's self-portrayal as a *peregrinatio animae*.⁴² Knauer views the literary figure of Augustine as the very "picture" of the human soul which in sin turns away from God and flees, travelling along strange paths to isolated areas and falling into deep chasms. Calling on God for help, the soul realizes that He is also there to pull it out and put it on the right path so that after a long journey it will reach the House of God. The sequence of biographical events is viewed as a spiritual journey along a path that begins as an aberration and ends with the return to God. According to Knauer's argument, Augustine's repeated reference to the parable of the lost son in *Lc* 15,11–32 serves as a central hermeneutic key.⁴³ Yet, by declaring the *peregrinatio animae* to be the leitmotif of the *Confessions*, Knauer assigns an allegorical meaning to the narrative from the very beginning and thereby also indirectly allegorizes the biblical parable: Augustine and the lost son stand for something other than themselves, namely the human soul.

Henry Chadwick, too, emphasizes the meaning of the parable of the lost son, but he sees the biographical narrative with its biblical references as mapping the Neoplatonic theme of the journey and battle of the human soul in the bodily world and the soul's pursuit of its divine origin. Augustine's life history thus becomes the history of mankind in the Creation.⁴⁴

⁴² G.N. Knauer, "Peregrinatio animae (zur Frage der Einheit der augustinischen Konfessionen)," *Hermes* 85 (1957–1958) 216–248, esp. 216.

⁴³ Knauer (n. 42) 217: "Sinnbild des Ganzen ... ist in den Konfessionen das Gleichnis vom verlorenen Sohn." Cf. also A. Raffelt, "'profectus sum abs te in regionem longinquam' (conf. 4,30). Das Gleichnis vom 'verlorenen Sohn' in den *Confessiones* des Aurelius Augustinus," in: *Freiheit und Gnade in Augustins Confessiones*, ed. by N. Fischer/D. Hat-trup/C. Mayer (Paderborn etc. 2003) 82–96 who speaks of a "Motivspur" (p. 84).

⁴⁴ H. Chadwick, *Augustine* (Oxford 1986) 68: "The last four books actually carry the clue to the whole. Augustine understood his own story as a microcosm of the entire story of the creation, the fall into the abyss of chaos and formlessness, the 'conversion' of

Neither Knauer nor Chadwick speaks of an allegory. But they do the same thing the Platonists did with the Odysseus and Aeneas myth when they called the two figures or the whole story a portrayal of the fate of the soul in the bodily world. Augustine was familiar with the Neoplatonic allegoresis of myth, especially the allegoresis of the *Aeneid*.⁴⁵

Gerhard Kurz cites as traditional characteristics of the allegorical genre the story-pattern of the journey, the pilgrimage, and the search as well as the loose, paratactic structure of the narrative.⁴⁶ From the beginning, the *Confessions* focus on moments and episodes where the literary figure of Augustine finds himself literally or figuratively on a journey. He is stylized not only as the lost son, but also as another Aeneas who departs from the straight path, secretly leaves Carthage for Italy and thereby abandons a woman—in Augustine's case it is his mother he leaves behind—all the while concealing his true plans.

With regard to the figure of Augustine, it has often been asked why the portrayal of the wanderings and the journey home should evoke the pretext of the *Aeneid*.⁴⁷ But this question becomes irrelevant once we adopt not just a reading but the *allegorical* reading of the *Aeneid* as a way of reading the *Confessions*. By stylizing certain passages according to this allegoresis, Augustine lets his literary self stand for Aeneas so that it can then be read as an allegory of the wandering, searching, homeward bound soul.⁴⁸ Hence, the *Confessions* offer a new version of the history of Aeneas. In combination with the concept of the spiritual transformation of man as described by Paul, Augustine's life is, in the

the creaturely order to the love of God as it experiences griping pains of homesickness"; cf. id., "Introduction," in: *Saint Augustine, Confessions*, a new translation by H.C. (Oxford 1992/²1998) ix–xxviii, esp. xxiv: "So the autobiographical books I–IX are more than a memoir: they illustrate a universal truth about human nature". Cf. Young (n. 35) 8–13; R.J. O'Connell, *Augustine's Confessions. The Odyssey of Soul* (Cambridge, Mass. 1969/New York 1989).

⁴⁵ Cf. p. 28 with n. 13 above.

⁴⁶ Kurz (n. 1) 62 etc. (e.g. pp. 48 f., 51, 55).

⁴⁷ In addition to the literature mentioned in n. 13 cf. E.L. Ziolkowski, "St. Augustine: Aeneas' Antitype, Monica's Boy," *Literature & Theology* 9 (1995) 1–23; S. McCormack, *The Shadows of Poetry. Vergil in the Mind of Augustine* (Berkeley etc. 1998), esp. 96–99; cf. Burton (n. 39) 36 ff.; S. Spence (n. 36) 160. But cf. also the sceptical view (esp. against psychoanalytical interpretations) of Müller (n. 12) 183–186.

⁴⁸ Cf. the imaginative interpretation of Ziolkowski (n. 47) 4: "[Augustine] composed the *Confessions* soon after he began formulating his theory of figurative expression in *De doctrina Christiana* ... he does not hesitate to draw figuratively upon the *Aeneid* for his own theological purposes in the *Confessions*, a text suffused with 'metaphoricity'". Cf. also Luman (n. 35) 144 f.; Bennett (n. 16).

narrative of the *Confessions*, paradigmatic for the transformation from a worldly, carnal state to inner spirituality, during which man is directed by divine grace.⁴⁹

The text of books 1 to 10 can thus be viewed as an allegory as a whole. Let us now come to a second type of allegoresis: the allegorical exegesis of individual figures, sequences of events, scenes or objects in the narrative. I will limit myself to three examples, all of which have long puzzled interpreters of the *Confessions*. The following observations are therefore necessarily based on existing research material, the difference being that I will apply the term allegory in my analysis. The difficulties in understanding these passages can be seen as a call to interpret the text allegorically when we consider that in his own hermeneutics Augustine himself calls for the use of allegoresis to give a deeper meaning to difficult, incoherent or morally objectionable passages.⁵⁰ Allegorical readings always have the character of an assumption, but there are good arguments in favour of each of these readings.

There has been much discussion in the past of Augustine's ascription of the role of Mother Church to his own mother.⁵¹ Augustine himself provides indications that we should apply the term *mater* not only to his bodily mother but also to other functions of a 'mother'. In two passages of the *Confessions* he juxtaposes the literary figure with the *mater ecclesia*: in book 1 when he asks why neither his mother nor Mother Church fulfilled his wish to be baptized, and in book 9 when he concludes the narrative of Monnica's death and funeral, and in many passages of the *Confessions* where Monnica is mentioned, Augustine emphasizes her

⁴⁹ Cf. Young (n. 35) 9: "Augustine allowed his reading of Paul's life to shape the telling of his own, which by hindsight becomes a paradigm of Adam's bondage and the saving grace of divine providence. And the last four books may be seen as confirming that reading of his intention."

⁵⁰ Cf. p. 32 above with nn. 21 and 22.

⁵¹ E.g. notably J. Ratzinger, *Volk und Haus Gottes in Augustins Lehre von der Kirche*, Diss. 1951 (St. Ottilien 1992) 2–12, esp. 11. More recently, this point has been discussed by J. Holzhausen, "Augustin als Biograph und Exeget. Zur literarischen Einheit der *Confessiones*," *Gymnasium* 107 (2000) 519–536, esp. 525–527; N. Lanzi, "La chiesa nel ritorno di Agostino alla fede cattolica," *Doctor Communis* 42 (1989) 42–62, esp. 57; C.P.E. Springer, "The Prosopopoeia of Church as Mother in Augustine's *Psalmus contra partem Donati*," *Augustinian Studies* 18 (1987) 52–65, esp. 57f.; Schäfer (n. 19) 74; Ziolkowski (n. 47) 14. E.A. Clark, "Rewriting Early Christian History: Augustine's Representation of Monica," in: *Portraits of Spiritual Authority. Religious Power in Early Christianity, Byzantium and the Christian Orient*, ed. by J.W. Drijvers/J. Watt (Leiden 1999) 3–23 speaks of "Monica-functions".

connection with the church.⁵² In the life of the protagonist she, to an extent, symbolizes the role of the church in persuading people to live with God. Towards the end of her life, Monnica's dream (*conf.* 3,19) in which she sees her son standing next to her on a measuring stick (*regula*) comes true: Augustine now stands next to her on the "rule", which is interpreted as the *regula fidei* (8,30).⁵³ The bodily mother has fulfilled her role as the figuration of the church, and the institution of the church now stands in her place.

The famous garden scene is also often cited in the literature as holding allegoric potential: the garden and house in Milan that Augustine and his friend Alypius are only renting⁵⁴ are set in close relation to the portrayal of Augustine's inner stirrings and ultimate decision to live in abstinence.

Both men leave the house (8,19: *abscessi ergo in hortum et Alypius pedem post pedem*) and Augustine also departs from Alypius (8,28: *surrexi ab Alypio ... et secessi remotius*, "I stole away from Alypius"). Battling with himself, Augustine lies down under a fig tree (*ibid.*), where he hears a voice coming from the neighbour's house (8,29). Thinking it to have come from the children, he interprets the voice as a divine command to read the open book lying on a table, a text with Paul's letters. In order to do this, however, he must return to Alypius, who has remained by the book (*ibid.*: *itaque concitus redii in eum locum, ubi sedebat Alypius: ibi enim posueram codicem apostoli*). Augustine reads a pericope recommending abstinence that has an immediate effect on him (*Rm* 13,13 f.). Thereupon (8,30) Alypius reads further in the text about the commandment to take care of the weak and decides immediately to join Augustine. Both men go to Augustine's mother and report their experiences leading to their decision to live in chastity according to the *regula fidei* (*ibid.*).

The stranger's house rented by Augustine and Alypius and the neighbour's house,⁵⁵ from which Augustine heard the voice coming, might

⁵² For *mater ecclesia* in connection with Monnica cf. *conf.* 1,17; 9,37 (cf. 9,22; 12,23); for other juxtapositions of *ecclesia* and Monnica cf. 3,21; 5,17; 5,25; 6,1 f.; 8,15.

⁵³ Ferrari 1975 (n. 35) sees behind the *regula*, which is made of wood, a reference to the arboreal symbolism prominent in *Confessions* (cf. p. 43 with n. 59 below).

⁵⁴ *Conf.* 8,19: 'hortulus quidam erat hospitii nostri, quo nos utebamur sicut tota domo: nam hospes ibi non habitabat, dominus domus. illuc me abstulerat tumultus pectoris.'

⁵⁵ On the variant *divina* in the Sessorianus favoured by Pierre Courcelle cf. J.J. O'Donnell, *Augustine, Confessions*, vol. III: *Commentary on Books 8–13* (Oxford 1992) 62 f. L.C. Ferrari, "Ecce audio vocem de vicina domo" (*Conf.* 8,12,29)," *Augustiniana* 33 (1983) 232–245 identifies the *vicina domus* with Augustine's house and the voice with his mother's. But it is very unlikely that *vicina* in the context of the narrative means "adjacent", and not "neighbouring".

be identified as secular and ecclesiastical institutions: as professor of rhetoric Augustine is in the service of the emperor, which means he is a tenant in the secular institution. The adjoining house can be understood as standing for the church out of which the call to read the Bible comes. The voices like those of children have long been interpreted by scholars as divine or even angels' voices.⁵⁶ Like the one in Ostia, the garden can be seen as foreshadowing the hereafter.⁵⁷ To the fig tree, in the shadow of which Augustine is now lying, is ascribed a deeper meaning by means of the reference to a scene in the gospel of John where Jesus "sees" Nathaniel sitting under a fig tree.⁵⁸ In his exegesis of John, Augustine interprets the fig tree as the tree of sin; like Nathaniel, Augustine is recognized ('seen') by Christ and freed from a life of sin.⁵⁹ The Scripture, that is, the Book of God, serves as a guide for Augustine, but first he must return to it. With his return to the Book he also returns to Alypius, who might be identified with the Christian community which encourages him to care for others in communal service. The path to his mother might stand for Augustine's acknowledgement of the church. Shortly after this event, they all leave that house and, some months later, Augustine resigns his secular job in Milan.

Augustine himself describes the process which leads to his decision as an allegorical scene. He portrays his inner battle as a psychomachia of virtues and vices (*conf.* 8,26–28): his "old mistresses", "the very toys of toys, and vanities of vanities",⁶⁰ tug at his fleshly clothing and hold him back; on the other hand, the "chaste dignity of continence" (8,27: *casta dignitas continentiae*) appears and holds out her benevolent hands to him. However it is not this conventional allegorical battle scene leading to his decision but, rather, its continuation, the concrete events, things and places, that can be viewed as "God's speech" and thus can be interpreted allegorically.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Cf. O'Donnell (n. 55) 63 f.

⁵⁷ Luman (n. 35); cf. Vaught (n. 3) 7.

⁵⁸ *Vulg. Io* 1,47 f.: 'cum esses sub arbore fici vidi te.'

⁵⁹ *Io. Ev. tr.* 7,21 f.; s. 69,3 f. Cf.—following Pierre Courcelle – O'Donnell (n. 55) 57 f. and Buchheit (n. 35) on the traditional sexual symbolism of the figtree. Cf. also Ferrari 1979 and 1988 (n. 35) who sees a Manichaean background behind the arboreal symbolism.

⁶⁰ 8,26 f.: 'nugae nugarum et vanitates vanitantium, antiquae amicae meae.' Chadwick (n. 44) translates "vain trifles and the triviality of the empty-headed." Cf. Shanzer (n. 36) 43 ff.

⁶¹ Cf. Buchheit (n. 35) 269 f.: "Auch diese Szene [scil. the scene in the garden] kann nach dem Vorhergehenden [scil. the allegory] nur symbolisch verstanden werden."

As a third example of a text which allows allegorical readings, we may mention the theft of the pears in *conf.* 2,9. It is obviously reminiscent of the sin of Adam and Eve at the tree of knowledge, as a manifestation of the evil will caused by the original sin.⁶² It has been argued plausibly that the three major components of this example may be interpreted on a different level: the pears, by reason of their being the cheapest fruits, stand for the worthlessness and futility of our aims; the pigs, to whom the thieves give the fruit, symbolize both filth and foul intentions; and the night in which the deed is committed represents evil.⁶³

6. CONCLUSION

These interpretations are not entirely new; we find them often mentioned in the abundant research literature on the *Confessions*. My proposal is to put these interpretive methods on the same level as the method used by Augustine himself to analyze the text of Genesis in book 13: they, too, allegorize the text as a whole and in its parts and so give it an extended meaning. Some of these allegorizing interpretations have provoked endless debates, especially Pierre Courcelle's position that Augustine's narrative has, above all, a symbolic meaning. Consequently, Courcelle called into question the literal meaning of the text.⁶⁴

Yet in more recent research on the *Confessions* it is no longer supposed that giving an extended meaning to the narrative must bring with it the problem of a loss of realism. Scholars do not doubt the real background behind the portrayal of the individual events. Just as Augustine does not

⁶² Cf. e.g. F. Van Fleteren, "Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie und Metaphysik des Bösen," in: *Die Confessiones des Augustinus von Hippo. Einführung und Interpretation zu den dreizehn Büchern*, ed. by N. Fischer/C. Mayer (Freiburg 1998/2004) 107–131; J. Brachtendorf, *Augustins „Confessiones“* (Darmstadt 2005) 63–68.

⁶³ Cf. O'Donnell (n. 14) 126–131; Ferrari 1970 (n. 35); D. Shanzer, "Pears before Swine: Augustine, *Confessions* 2.4.9," *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 42 (1996) 45–55. The symbolic interpretations are discussed by L.C. Seelbach, "Confessiones 2—Augustin—Ein Birnendieb!," in: *Irrwege des Lebens. Augustinus: Confessiones 1–6* (Paderborn etc. 2004) 55–73. The pigs in *conf.* 2,9 are often connected with the pigs in the parable of the lost son (p. 39 above); cf. e.g. Raffelt (n. 43) 213.

⁶⁴ Courcelle has been followed by L.C. Ferrari, cf. e.g. "Saint Augustine's Conversion Scene: The End of a Modern Debate?," *Studia Patristica* 22 (Leuven 1989) 235–250; "Truth and Augustine's Conversion Scene," in: *Augustine: "Second Founder of the Faith"*, ed. by J.C. Schnaubelt/F. Van Fleteren (New York 1990) 9–19; "Book Eight: Science and the Fictional Conversion Scene," in: *A Reader's Companion to Augustine's Confessiones*, ed. by K. Paffenroth/R.P. Kennedy (Louisville, Ky./London 2003) 127–136.

question the factuality of the Creation, so the allegorical interpretation of the autobiographical narrative should not be taken as authorization for disputing the historicity of the events portrayed.⁶⁵ And, above all: God speaks through the 'things' in Creation, which are thoroughly authentic. In such an allegoresis the text does not stand between the interpreter and the portrayed reality as it does in a literal interpretation. Rather, the interpreter takes the narrated facts as a basis to extend the meaning to a higher level.

Another central theme in research on the *Confessions* is the question of the work's unity. Gerhard Knauer, Robert McMahon and others have used the symbolic or allegorical interpretation of the autobiographical narrative to argue for unity.⁶⁶ The narrative's supra-individual level of meaning in books 1 to 10, the journey of the human soul, merges, in book 11 to 13, into the interpretation of the Creation story, i.e. of the world order where man takes centre stage. This interpretation becomes more probable if we view the allegorical reading at the end of the work as a hermeneutic key for interpreting the autobiographical part. Augustine's allegoresis in book 13 portrays the seven days of Creation as a history of mankind and as an invitation to all men to devote themselves to the Light, the good life, the Holy Scripture and the knowledge of God in order to achieve eternal peace. Therefore, both Augustine's autobiographical narrative and the allegoresis in book 13 can be understood as a call to accept the Christian teachings and the Church.⁶⁷

Augustine's life—an allegory? We may read *Confessions* 1 to 10 as such. At the least, we may take Augustine's own allegorical interpretation in book 13 as a hermeneutical invitation.

⁶⁵ Cf. Luman (n. 35) 150f.: "I do not believe that the historical truth ... was a trivial question for him, subordinate to these larger meanings. Even the most modest mind will use the stock of images and ideas common to its time and experience to make its experience more accessible ... It does not follow that the narrative is untrue, merely the occasion for myth, or that the historical truth of the narrative is irrelevant to the narrator"; cf. Shanzer (n. 36) 41–43; O'Keefe/Reno (n. 1) 99; E. Dassmann, *Augustinus. Heiliger und Kirchenlehrer* (Stuttgart etc. 1993) 32–34.

⁶⁶ Cf. Knauers (n. 42) subtitle "Zur Frage der Einheit der augustinischen Confessiones" in parentheses; McMahon 1989 (n. 3) xi–xii. Holzhausen (n. 51), too, adds as subtitle "Zur literarischen Einheit der *Confessiones*".

⁶⁷ Both as a Christian "protreptic", according to Feldmann 1998/²2004 (n. 33) 38–48; id. 1986–1994 (n. 33) 1157–1166, and as an apology against reproaches of non-catholicity and residual Manichaeism, according to T. Fuhrer, "De-Konstruktion der Ich-Identität in Augustins *Confessiones*," in: *Vom Selbst-Verständnis in Antike und Neuzeit: Notions of the Self in Antiquity and Beyond*, ed. by A. Arweiler/M. Möller (Berlin etc. 2008) 175–188.

CHAPTER THREE

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS AS A CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY

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Professor Johannes van Oort, to whom this volume is dedicated and to whose work this essay, and its author, are greatly indebted, has done more than many scholars in recent decades to enhance our understanding of the communicative purpose and probable audience of Augustine's *Confessions*.¹ He has done so particularly through his study of the work's Manichaean background. As Annemaré Kotzé has recently put it, 'van Oort's research is probably at the moment the most important impetus towards a new appreciation of the importance of the Manichaean element in the *Confessions*.' It has, Kotzé continues, greatly increased our 'awareness that the *Confessions* target a Manichaean audience to a much greater extent than many scholars have believed up to now.'²

This insight goes hand in hand with the growing consensus in scholarship that the *Confessions* are a 'protreptic', a 'λόγος προτρεπτικός, or "speech of exhortation", ... intended to win converts and attract young people to a particular way of life ... by exposing the errors of alternative ways of living by demonstrating the truth claims of a particular

¹ See, for example, J. van Oort, 'Augustinus und der Manichäismus,' in: A. Van Tongerloo and J. van Oort (eds.), *The Manichaean NOYΣ. Proceedings of the International Symposium organized in Louvain from 31 July to 3 August 1991* (Lovanii: 1995) 289–308; Id., *Mani, Manichaeism and Augustine: The Rediscovery of Manichaeism and its Influence on Western Christianity* (Tbilisi: Georgian Academy of Sciences, (1996) 4th ed. 2001); Id., 'Manichaeism and anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's Confessiones', in Luigi Cirillo and Alois Van Tongerloo (eds.), *Manichaean Studies III. Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi 'Manichaeismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico'* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997) 235–247; Id., *Augustinus' Confessiones: Gnostische en christelijke spiritualiteit in een diepzinnig dokument* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002). Further publications are referred to at appropriate places below.

² A. Kotzé, *Augustine's Confessions. Communicative Purpose and Audience* (Leiden: Brill, 2004) 43.

philosophical tradition over its competitors,³ to quote but one current definition of the protreptic genre.⁴

On the one hand it is surprising that the *Confessions* should have only very recently been identified as a protreptic. The way in which Augustine styled his own 'first conversion' (to Manichaeism) has always been before the readers' eyes: It was through reading Cicero's philosophical protreptic *Hortensius* that he became aware of his deeper intellectual and spiritual desires, his 'philosophy', or 'love of wisdom'.⁵ This made him become a Manichaean after he ruled out any form of Graeco-Roman ('pagan') philosophy (because of the absence of Christ's name, which he had ingested with his mother's milk and held essential for his salvation) and any form of orthodox Christian, biblical, studies (because the Old Latin Bible fell short of his expectations regarding literary quality; he could therefore not accept it as a philosophical text).⁶

On the other hand it may be precisely because Augustine explained his becoming a Manichaean through the influence of Cicero's protreptic that Christian readers of his *Confessions* may have found it difficult to imagine that they could have been intended as a text similar to the *Hortensius*. They perceived it as an essentially Christian text, written after their author's conversion (to orthodox Christianity) and addressed to 'fellow believers'.⁷ A protreptic would also have been addressed to 'non-believers' and it would have contained elements that appealed to

³ D. Aune, 'Romans as a Logos Protreptikos in the Context of Ancient Religious and Philosophical Propaganda,' in Martin Hengel and Ulrich Heckel (eds.), *Paulus und das antike Judentum* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991) 91–124, 91, cited in Kotzé 2004, 57.

⁴ As seminal on the *Confessions* as a protreptic see E. Feldmann, 'Confessiones,' in: *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1–7/8 (1994) 1134–1193, 1166–1167; compare also C.P. Mayer, 'Die *Confessiones* des Aurelius Augustinus: Eine philosophisch-theologische Werbeschrift (Protreptikos) für christliche Spiritualität,' in: *Theologie und Glaube* 88 (1998) 285–303.

⁵ Traces of the *Hortensius* can also be found elsewhere in the *Confessions*, for example 9.7.17 (not so much the finding of, but already the quest for wisdom, *philosophia*, is preferable to wealth, power and pleasure; echoed in 12.1.1), or 10.21.31 (desire for happiness is universal; echoed in Cic. *Tusc.* 5.28); generally on the role of the *Hortensius* in Augustine's work see now K. Schlapbach, 'Hortensius,' in: *Augustinus-Lexikon* 3–3/4 (2006) 425–436.

⁶ Aug. *Conf.* 3.4.7–6.10. Seminal for this period in Augustine's life are E. Feldmann, *Der Einfluss des Hortensius und des Manichäismus auf das Denken des jungen Augustinus*, 2 vol. (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Münster, 1975); J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden: Brill, 1991) 33–47.

⁷ Kotzé (2004, 58) observes that 'numerous' studies 'simply take for granted that the intended audience is primarily the already-converted, Augustine's fellow-Christians', with examples on pp. 27–43.

such an audience. Any attempt to define the *Confessions* as a protreptic would have had consequences regarding the definition of the audience. The stereotype that they were primarily addressed to fellow orthodox Christians would have had to be revised and the possibility that they were at least potentially, or partially, also addressing 'heterodox' contemporaries including Donatists⁸ and pagan Platonists,⁹ but above all Manichaeans,¹⁰ would have had to be seriously considered. What is therefore least surprising in all this is the fact that the new way of looking at the *Confessions* as a protreptic emerged in its most convincing form from scholarship dealing with its potentially Manichaean audience.¹¹

Now the protreptic character of the *Confessions* does not preclude another aspect, which also dominated scholarship on the work for a long time, namely the fact that Augustine speaks a lot about himself in this text. This observation gave rise to the idea that the *Confessions* are essentially an autobiography, which in turn raised the question how to integrate the many non-autobiographical parts into the whole of the work.¹² That question has now become much less urgent, since the autobiographical elements are more and more understood from their functionality within the protreptic. Similarly the fact that Augustine's speaking of himself, narrating his life, happens in the context of addressing God in prayer, using a language strongly influenced by the Psalms:¹³ Augustine himself is quick to point out that this is of course for the benefit of his human

⁸ For examples see Kotzé 2004, 17 n. 26, 36 and 39 citing C.E. Quillen, 'Consentius as a Reader of Augustine's *Confessions*', in: *Revue des études augustiniennes* 37 (1991) 87–109, 108, and M. Wundt, 'Ein Wendepunkt in Augustin's Entwicklung,' in: *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 22 (1923) 53–64.

⁹ Kotzé (2004, 40) cites Peter Brown's summary as typical that the *Confessions* may have been mainly addressed to fellow believers (or more specifically, to fellow *servi dei*, the new 'class' of educated lay ascetics, which Augustine had joined after his return to Thagaste from Italy in 388), although it also 'contained moving appeals to the men who might join this new elite: to the austere Manichee and the pagan Platonist'. P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo. A Biography* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967) 160.

¹⁰ Kotzé's (2004) own new study is focused on (convincingly) arguing precisely this case.

¹¹ Landmarks in this development are Feldmann 1997, van Oort 2002 and Kotzé 2004.

¹² As the length and prominent position of the relevant section in Feldmann's article suggests, until very recently this was seen as one of the central problems in scholarship (Feldmann 1994, 1143–1153).

¹³ Compare H.-J. Sieben, 'Der Psalter und die Bekehrung der *Voces* und *Affectus*. Zu Augustinus, *Conf.* IX, 4.6 und X, 33,' in: *Theologie und Philosophie* 52 (1977) 481–497; and the discussion in Kotzé 2004, 33–34 and 101.

(including Manichaeans!) audience.¹⁴ His protreptic, in other words, is (also) a (literary) performance.

One important aspect of this performance character of Augustine's protreptic is the rhetorical use of emotions. The author of the *Confessions* does not so much aim at convincing, or 'converting', his audience by rational philosophical argument as by affecting their innermost motivations. His aim is not primarily to 'convert' reason but the *affectus*.¹⁵ While this is widely recognised in the sense that it is acknowledged that Augustine deals with his subject more as a rhetor than as a scholastic philosopher, one particular aspect of this has remained somewhat neglected, the aspect of *consolatio*.

It may seem at first glance as if introducing this aspect might merely unnecessarily complicate matters. Ancient *consolatio* has broadly been treated as a literary genre,¹⁶ dominated by literary *topoi*, although the link to philosophy has never been entirely denied.¹⁷ It was certainly present from the earliest explicit specimens of consolatory writing.¹⁸ But a certain

¹⁴ Aug. *Conf.* 2.3.5: 'Cui narro haec? Neque enim tibi, Deus meus, sed apud te narro haec generi meo, generi humano, quantulumcumque ex particula incidere potest in istas meas litteras.' ('Whom am I telling this? Surely not to you, my God. Rather, before you I am telling this to my kind, humankind, however small the part of it may be that happens to read these my lines.') On the significance of this passage see already Feldmann 1994, 1176–1177; compare also Kotzé 2004, 42. 151 and 197 ff. and especially Kotzé's observation p. 42 (following L. Asher, 'The Dangerous Fruit of Augustine's *Confessions*', in: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 66 (1998) 227–255, 238–239) that for protreptic purposes Augustine here deliberately combined a motif which Manichaeans would have been able to appreciate, namely the gratuitous ('evil') nature of the pear theft, with a line of argument designed to refute the Manichaean position, namely that this 'nihilistic' act was performed under the eyes of an omnipotent God. Woven into this metaphysical framework is Augustine's first person narrative, presented in highly emotional terms, as a confession.

¹⁵ Note in this context the title of Sieben's article (1977): The *affectus* are 'woken up'; and A. Kotzé, 'Reading Psalm 4 to the Manichaeans', in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 55 (2001) 119–136; see also Kotzé's discussion of the role of the term *excitare* in protreptic literature (2004, 65). For the wider rhetorical principle at work here see B. Studer, 'Delectare et prodesse. Ein exegetisch-homiletisches Prinzip bei Augustinus', in: *Signum Pietatis. Festschrift C.P. Mayer* (Würzburg: Augustinus-Verlag, 1989) 497–513.

¹⁶ For a useful distinction of this literary genre from more 'philosophical' *consolatio* compare J.H.D. Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus. A Commentary on Jerome, Letter 60* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993) 16.

¹⁷ See for this W. Kierdorf, 'Consolation as a Literary Genre', in: *Brill's New Pauly* 2 (2003) 704–706, who refers to consolatory literature among others as 'writings of a philosophic bent, whose authors either try to dissuade individuals from grieving ... or proffer general counsel on overcoming adversity.'

¹⁸ Famously, the ancient *consolatio* (παράμυθια λόγος) that was traditionally seen as a model for later consolations and exerted at least considerable influence upon

emphasis in the ancient consolatory tradition and its modern scholarship on literary *topoi* is certainly one reason why more 'literary' authors than Augustine, i.e. authors who are especially well known for their use of classical *topoi*, have dominated the discussion also of early Christian *consolatio*: Jerome, Paulinus of Nola, Ambrose, the Cappadocian Fathers.¹⁹ The classic study of early Latin Christian *consolatio* by Charles Favez did not even include Augustine.²⁰ Favez later closed that gap by writing a separate article on Augustine's consolatory writings, but his strictly literary criteriology only allowed him to include three letters under this category.²¹ Attempts at 'restoring' more of Augustine's works for the early Christian consolatory tradition, notably by Sr. Mary Melchior Beyenka,²² met with criticism,²³ though in a more recent article Yves-Marie Duval has to some extent vindicated Beyenka's attempts by suggesting a surprisingly broad portfolio of consolatory writings by Augustine, which do not only include notes to grieving persons, but also wider and, in philosophical and theological terms, deeper reflections on a range of issues including exile, poverty, fall from grace, or the contrast between consolation as a preliminary measure within this miserable earthly life and the hoped for ultimate salvation in the next, across a range of genres, though mainly in letters, and in some sermons.²⁴

the later consolatory tradition, even though it cannot be considered exactly a 'proto'- or 'arche-type' of all later consolations, was the work 'On grief' (περὶ πέντους) by the Platonist (Academic) philosopher Crantor of Soli (ca. 325 – ca. 275 BC). It directly influenced Cicero's 'Tusculan Disputations', which in turn influenced Augustine; see Scourfield 1993, 18–19; for the philosophical influences on ancient consolatory writing the classic study by R. Kassel, *Untersuchungen zur griechischen und römischen Konsollationsliteratur* (Munich: Beck, 1958); for the influence of Cicero's 'Tusculans' on Augustine's Confessions K.M. Tortorelli, 'Cicero as a Point of Reference for Appreciating Confessions IV.4–9: Consolatio,' in: *Vetera Christianorum* 28 (1991) 375–385.

¹⁹ For the latter compare R.C. Gregg, *Consolation Philosophy. Greek and Christian Paideia in Basil and the two Gregories* (Cambridge, MA: Philadelphia Patristic Society, 1975).

²⁰ Ch. Favez, *La consolation latine chrétienne* (Paris: Vrin, 1937).

²¹ Ch. Favez, 'Les Epistulae 92, 259 et 263 de S. Augustin,' in: *Museum Helveticum* 1 (1944) 65–68.

²² M.M. Beyenka, *Consolation in Saint Augustine* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1950); Id., 'Saint Augustine and the Consolatio Mortis,' *The Classical Bulletin* 29 (1953) 25–28.

²³ Compare the reviews by G. Bardy, in: *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 28 (1950) 221–222; P. Courcelle, in: *Revue des études latines* 28 (1950) 239–240; Ch. Favez, in: *Latomus* 9 (1950) 473–474; H.-I. Marrou, in: *L'antiquité classique* 20 (1951) 200–201.

²⁴ Y.-M. Duval, 'Consolatio,' in: *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1, 7/8 (1994) 1244–1247. In addition to *epp.* 92, 259 and 263, already treated by Favez (1944), Duval also counts as consolatory *epp.* 203 and 204 (addressed to people who experienced a reversal of fortune),

The question I should like to address in this paper is to what extent we can include the *Confessions* in this portfolio, or more poignantly, in what sense we might be able to treat them as a more fundamental form of consolatory writing, not one that merely addresses a specific situation and offers an *ad hoc* kind of consolation, but one that takes the specific case of its author as a starting point to reflect more fundamentally on the human condition thus offering consolation on a more profound level, in other words, a ‘consolation of philosophy’ comparable to Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations*,²⁵ some of the younger Seneca’s letters,²⁶ or Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*.²⁷

To clarify a little further the aim of this investigation let us consider some of the main concepts at play. First, *consolatio*: This is not to be confused with the modern, comparatively ‘weak’ notion of ‘consolation’, as already Rudolf Kassel had to point out.²⁸ Ancient *consolatio* was not characterised by helpless pity for its addressees. It had serious, methodical, advice on offer: how to cope with it, and how, possibly, to overcome it. It combined moral exhortation and ‘psychological’, therapeutic,

epp. 99 and 111 (referring to Barbarian invasions and echoing *exc. urb.* and Book 1 of the *City of God*), *epp.* 78, 208, 248, 249, 264 (addressed to people who are afflicted by troubles in the church), and *ss.* 143, 172, 173 and 396. Duval admits that some of these attest more to Augustine’s reluctance to comply with consolatory conventions than his contribution to the tradition: In *ep.* 92 he quickly moves on from dispatching *solacia* to discussing a theological point, in *ep.* 259 he declines a conventional eulogy because of the moral conduct of the departed, in *s.* 173.3 he cuts his consolation short referring to God as the true consoler (‘consoletur vos abundatius qui non migrat de corde vestro’), in *s.* 396.1 he puts it even more radically: ‘consolatio nostra nullus hominum est, sed qui facit hominem.’ But as in the *Confessions*, where he frequently uses consolatory *topoi* for protreptic purposes and even constructs a whole section (9.8–13) as an *epitaphium* (cf. Beyenka 1950, 37–40), his reluctance to comply with conventions does not necessarily mean that he wants to abolish the tradition. It may be more an indication that he is about to change, or transform, it.

²⁵ Compare S.A. White, ‘Cicero and the Therapists,’ in J.G.F. Powell (ed.), *Cicero the Philosopher* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) 219–246.

²⁶ For examples, from his letters to Marcia and Helvia, and *ep.* 1, see below in this paper.

²⁷ For a brief discussion of this work with references to more recent literature see below.

²⁸ Kassel 1958, 3–4. As Kassel points out, a non-literary, private, informal, approach to bereavement also existed in Antiquity. He quotes an Oxyrynchus-Papyrus letter of condolence (Ox. Pap. I 115) from the second century AD, whose author shares in the despair of the addressee saying, ‘but after all, one can do nothing about this kind of thing (ἀλλ’ ὁμοῦς οὐδὲν δύναται τις πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτα).’ But, Kassel continues, this is not the approach of the literary-philosophical ancient *consolatio*: ‘Von so rührender Hilflosigkeit sind die Verfasser literarischer consolaciones weit entfernt. Sie glauben sehr wohl etwas ausrichten zu können πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτα.’

help, through the conscious use of 'cognitive' methods (including logic and rhetoric),²⁹ a kind of intellectual-spiritual exercise. Traditional *consolatio*, of course, took concrete instances of loss and grief at its starting point. But it did not stop there. It used these concrete instances to pose wider and deeper questions. The best, and most influential, consolatory works in Antiquity were at least in part also read for their more general philosophical insights,³⁰ while, on the other hand, consolatory *topoi* were also applied to philosophical literature of a more general, or more generally moralizing, character, to improve the practical applicability of philosophical principles;³¹ which brings us to our second concept, philosophy.

To some extent this was precisely the purpose of philosophy in Antiquity. It was not a largely academic, let alone purely rationalistic, pursuit, but a 'way of life'.³² It included the 'management' of emotions with the aim to achieve and sustain perfect physical and mental health, social and ethical conduct, and even religious salvation.³³ This is also how Augustine understood the concept when in *Confessions* 3.4.8, citing Job 12:13, 16, he addressed God as the seat of wisdom and philosophy as love of that wisdom, which, or so he claimed, his reading of the *Hortensius* had kindled

²⁹ This is also emphasized by the forthcoming volume, edited by Han Baltussen, *Acts of Consolation. Approaches to Loss and Sorrow from Sophocles and Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), which was inspired by P. Lain Entralgo, *The Therapy of the Word in Classical Antiquity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970); compare also Scourfield 1993, 17–18 n. 75.

³⁰ For example Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, but also his *Consolation to himself on the death of his daughter Tullia*; compare Cic. *Att.* 12.20–21. Cicero draws on older models such as Crantor's *On Grief*. In turn, Cicero's work is used as a model for later consolations, or at least consulted. Thus Augustine cites Crantor through Cicero (*Tusc.* 3.6) in support of his argument that total *apatheia* is not something which could be achieved (or would be worth achieving) in this life; Aug. *civ.* 14.9.

³¹ Compare Scourfield 1993, 17 n. 73, who writes: 'The popular philosophy of the "diatribe" has much in common with the literature of consolation.' By 'diatribe' Scourfield means not a genre but a range of popular philosophical literature of a 'generally moralizing character'.

³² It was above all Pierre Hadot who brought this dimension of ancient philosophy to our attention: P. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life. Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995); Id., *What is Ancient Philosophy?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002). But the concept is used in the same way, for example, by Richard Sorabji in his book *Emotions and Peace of Mind. From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), e. g. 76–8, 175–178, 391–398 and *passim*.

³³ Compare S. Knuutila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), especially 111–176 (on early Christianity) and 152–171 (specifically on Augustine, who is treated as an early medieval philosopher).

(“Apud te est” enim “sapientia” [Job 12:13.16]. Amor autem sapientiae nomen graecum habet philosophiam, quo me accendebant illae litterae’).

But can a philosophical protreptic be a *consolatio*? This question has been asked before, in relation to Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*, and, in Boethius’ case at least, it has been affirmatively answered.³⁴ The clear presence of consolatory *topoi* in that work and their purposeful use for consolation or self-consolation has been cited as an obvious criterium in that regard, while the fact that Boethius sometimes used such *topoi* as a springboard to introduce more elaborate philosophical doctrines has not been considered a serious counter-argument, since for him such doctrines could themselves function as consolatory *topoi*. At the same time, Boethius’ *Consolation* has also been classified as ‘a protreptic work, an exhortation to philosophy, despite the important modification that it purports, not to win a newcomer to philosophy, but rather to portray the recapture of the prisoner, who once philosophized, but has [more recently] strayed. Like other examples of protreptic, [Boethius’] *Consolation* is an introduction to philosophy, demonstrating its value in the practical conduct of life, as well as in the treatment of fundamental intellectual problems.’³⁵

³⁴ For what follows compare G. O’Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991) 23–24, who follows J. Gruber, *Kommentar zu Boethius’ De Consolatione Philosophiae* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1978) 24–27. There have been other voices, too. For example, T.F. Curley, ‘The *Consolation of Philosophy* as a Work of Literature,’ in: *American Journal of Philology* 108 (1987) 343–367, 352, has argued that the *Consolation* is not a typical representative of its genre because it uses really only one mainstream *topos*, a view that is followed by Scourfield 1993, 16 n. 68, who otherwise situates Boethius’ *Consolation* in the early medieval tradition.

³⁵ O’Daly 1991, 24. More recently, Joel Relihan and John Marenbon seem to have developed the view that the *Consolation* lacks philosophical coherence, because the use of many consolatory motifs leads to too many different, ultimately incompatible, lines of argument. Compare J. Relihan, *The Prisoner’s Philosophy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); J. Marenbon, *Boethius* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Michael Fournier has opposed this view. See M. Fournier, ‘Boethius’ *Consolation* and Philosophy’s Homer,’ in Baltussen 2010 (forthcoming). In Fournier’s view the idea that the philosophical *consolatio* merely ‘throws together’ various consolatory motifs without concern for philosophical coherence is probably based on a mis-translation of a phrase in Cicero’s *Tusculans*. The verb *conicio* in *Tusc.* 1.96 and 5.13 can indeed mean ‘to throw together’ various ideas in the sense of ‘composing hastily’, but it can also mean ‘to collect’ or ‘to unite’. It does not necessarily imply lack of coherence. Cicero’s *Tusculans*, to which the phrase refers, were themselves considered a carefully crafted genuine *consolatio*, written under the impression of great personal grief and loss, which was nevertheless also a highly methodical, sustained philosophical argument. Compare White 1995, 226.

For Augustine's *Confessions*, of course, we have to consider an additional factor. Augustine departs from the classical tradition in certain points. For example, we have already mentioned his sustained use of biblical and in particular 'Psalmic' language. This has to be considered an innovative element, employed in view of the intended audience. This audience would at least in part have consisted of Manichaeans, who would have been familiar both with intellectually exploring their religious views in philosophical language and with sharing them also 'emotionally' in speech, writing and the singing of hymns and psalms.³⁶ As Augustine's own account in *Confessions* 3.4.7–6.10 indicates, Manichaean intellectuals would have been taken seriously by philosophers from pagan schools on all these counts, even if the latter would have disagreed with certain Manichaean positions.³⁷

It was Christian polemicists, including the later Augustine, who tended to ridicule and even parody the Manichaean practice of displaying and sharing emotions.³⁸ In *Confessions* 3.6.10 Augustine uses a number of *topoi* which can also be found in other anti-Manichaean authors: The Manichaeans are only interested in their body, their diet, their personal emotions, and in spiritual talk. They are 'raving mad, carnal, blithering' ('delirantes, carnales nimis et loquaces'). In their prayers and hymns they link the figures of Mani and Christ by playing with the wording of Mani's name.³⁹ It was easy to ridicule this practice, not least since the expression

³⁶ See van Oort 2001, 37–53; E. Feldmann, 'Christus-Frömmigkeit der Mani-Jünger: Der suchende Student Augustinus in ihrem "Netz"', in: E. Dassmann (ed.), *Pietas. Festschrift Bernd Kötting* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1980) 198–216.

³⁷ The 3rd/4th century Alexandrian Platonist philosopher Alexander of Lycopolis, for example, wrote a treatise against Manichaean dualism, in which he seems to address the Manichaeans as members of just another philosophical school. This was a somewhat different attitude from the one which, for example, Porphyry displayed in his work against the Christians. Compare P.W. van der Horst and J. Mansfeld, *An Alexandrian Platonist Against Dualism. Alexander of Lycopolis' Treatise 'Critique of the Doctrine of Manichaeus'* (Leiden: Brill, 1974).

³⁸ Compare S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992) 117–118 for motifs of early Christian anti-Manichaean polemic more generally. On ridicule in a particular case compare E. Spät, 'The "Teachers" of Mani in the *Acta Archelai* and Simon Magus', in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 58 (2004) 1–23, 2.

³⁹ *Conf.* 3.6.10: '... in quorum ore laquei diaboli et viscum confectum conmixtione syllabarum nominis tui et domini Iesu Christi et paracleti consolatoris nostri Spiritus Sancti.' Note the epithet *consolator*. Its deliberate use here is not ironic (as might be argued with reference to Augustine's relatively low opinion about *consolatio* as expressed in ss. 173 and 396; compare above n. 24) but geared towards captivating and persuading a potentially Manichaean audience, as argued further below in this paper. Manichaean

'Mani' is very similar to 'maniac', a play on words that works similarly well in Greek as in English.⁴⁰

Yet at the same time Augustine also acknowledged the power and relevance of the Manichaean way of life. He himself was drawn to it in his quest for the philosophical life. Similar to philosophers like Alexander of Lycopolis he presented the Manichaean position as one among several.⁴¹ He disagreed with it, but he did not in fact treat it as 'raving mad'. He engaged with it. In the *Confessions* he may have done so precisely for protreptic reasons, to appeal to Manichaeans and try to persuade them to convert like him to orthodox Christianity. But he could only do that by taking Manichaeism seriously.

The reference to the paraclete as 'consoler' in *Confessions* 3.6.10 is significant in this context. Mani, modelling himself on the suffering Christ, had always presented himself as a model of suffering with the aim to encourage his followers in times of uncertainty and persecution. In a recently published Coptic papyrus, for example, a letter purporting to be by Mani, the addressee is encouraged to 'bear up' in a situation of affliction and persecution and to follow the sender's, i.e. Mani's, example.⁴² Thus the strong presence of consolatory elements in the *Confessions*

Psalms could address Jesus as paraclete (compare Feldmann 1980, 209 and 211), though this seems to have been rare. Usually, the Spirit was addressed as paraclete, and Mani as identical with the Spirit. Mani was certainly addressed as God, especially in the concluding sections of Manichaean Psalms. Since he was the apex of revelation, he could be presented as superior to the 'historical' Jesus, who was merely one in a long line of Apostles. At the same time Mani could also be conceived of as having been sent by Jesus Splendour (Feldmann 1980, 204; compare also M. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings* (London: T&T Clark, 2003) 103–104). There may be more to Augustine's 'mixing of syllables' than mere hostile polemic, as Feldmann thought (1980, 216). Augustine may be referring here to a rhythmic form of prayer, perhaps similar to the 'Allahu ... haqq' in Sufi music, which could have included the names of Mani and Jesus, perhaps in a form not entirely unlike the one in which the combination came also to be known in Central Asia (*Manni he Mishehe*, 'Mani is Messiah'). Compare T.H. Barrett, 'Tang Taoism and the Mention of Jesus and Mani in Tibetan Zen: A comment on recent work by Rong Xinjiang,' in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 66 (2003) 56–58. It is possible, although Augustine does not make this explicit, that on the occasion to which he is referring the North African Manichaeans could perhaps also have used a Semitic expression (analogous to the expression 'Messiah' in modern English) rather than the Greek 'Christ', or 'Jesus'.

⁴⁰ Compare J. Tubach and M. Zakeri, 'Mani's Name,' in: J. van Oort, O. Wermelinger, and G. Wurst (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West* (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 272–286.

⁴¹ See for example *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 31.2, where he compares the views of Epicureans, Stoics, Manichaeans and Platonists on a particular topic.

⁴² Compare I. Gardner, *Kellis Literary Texts* 2 (Dakhleh Oasis Project: Monograph

can be seen as an aspect of the only recently more explicitly appreciated possibility that the work is primarily addressing Manichaeans and that it reflects Augustine's own Manichaean formation, which was considerable. Augustine himself acknowledged that he spent the best part of his young adult life, nine years,⁴³ perhaps even more, as a Manichaean *auditor* or 'hearer'. Although as a hearer he would have been subjected to a less strict life-style than the more radical *electi*, he would still have engaged in intense spiritual activity including personal prayer and reflection.

At the same time, of course, Augustine was also, in the first instance, a classically trained rhetorician.⁴⁴ He would have mastered the use of classical consolatory *topoi* without problem, and the consolatory characteristics of the *Confessions* would not merely have appealed to Manichaeans. *Consolatio*, as already mentioned, had a long tradition in Classical culture⁴⁵ and was widely appreciated, even though it also had its ambiguities and its detractors. Already in classical antiquity it could attract polemics, and parody.⁴⁶ Its limits were sorely recognised. Still, in spite of the potential dangers to philosophical consistency, philosophers did offer *consolatio* to others, and showed genuine pity in the process, i.e. they were less severe with their addressees than one might expect, especially from Stoic authors.⁴⁷

15, Oxford 2007) 23, referring to P. Kell. Copt. 53; more generally E. Smagina, 'Das manichäische Kreuz des Lichts und der *Jesus patibilis*', in: Van Oort, Wermelinger and Wurst 2001, 243–249.

⁴³ Aug. *Conf.* 4.1.1 and 5.6.10. James O'Donnell has recently pointed out that it may in fact have been twelve years. J.J. O'Donnell, *Augustine. Sinner and Saint* (London: Profile, 2005) 44–45. It was in 373 that Augustine joined the Manichaeans, and only in 385/6 that he finally distanced himself from them. But Augustine's own account may stand up, if his being an adherent of Manichaeism is not coextensive with his being an *auditor*. There may have been a period of initiation and, more particularly, a 'cooling off' period during 384/5.

⁴⁴ See *Conf.* 1.16.26, 3.4.7, 4.2.2, 5.12.22–13.23 and 6.7.12, among others, for his immersion both in learning and teaching rhetoric. Although he resented rhetoric as a profession at a certain point in his life (*Conf.* 6.6.9), he was still good at it.

⁴⁵ Achilles' comforting of Priam in *Iliad* 24.507–551 was frequently cited as one of the earliest literary witnesses; Scourfield 1993, 15–16.

⁴⁶ See Kassel (1958, 33) on Stoic dogmatism and a possible instance of parody.

⁴⁷ Compare Sorabji 2000, 392–395, who cites Seneca as an example. Although as a Stoic Seneca did not approve of expressing pity or grief as a form of distress on the part of the consoler (*De clementia* 2.5–6), he acknowledges the severity of Marcia's loss (*Ad Marciam* 2.2). He does not belittle it. Nor does he strictly advocate *apatheia*, but he allows *metriopatheia* as a concession (*Ad Marciam* 3.4 and 4.1). He even evokes the image of the deceased as being happy in an afterlife, although he has to admit that it will only last until the next conflagration (*Ad Marciam* 23–26). Sorabji contrasts this with the relative severity of Christian 'consolers'.

In fact, it was the early Christian *consolatio* which introduced a new severity. Its *locus classicus* is 1 Thessalonians 4:13, where grief is dismissed as showing lack of faith in the afterlife.⁴⁸ Of course, there are also passages where the Bible encourages consolation: According to Matthew 5:5 ('Sermon on the Mount') those who grieve are blessed, for they will be consoled. Romans 12:15 'exhorts' its addressees to cry with those who cry. The Gospel of John 11:35 depicts Jesus as genuinely crying at Lazarus' tomb; and in 1 Thessalonians 5:14, the same letter which declared grieving to be un-Christian, the addressees are asked to 'exhort' ('console'), i.e. encourage, those who are anxious and feeble.⁴⁹

Yet despite this evidence there was also a cold breath of austerity running through the early Christian tradition of *consolatio*. The third century *Epistula ad Turasium*, an anonymous work,⁵⁰ infamously berates a grieving father, who has suffered the loss of a daughter, for allowing 'the wall of his faith' to be breached.⁵¹ This seems far more one-dimensional and inflexible than the classical, 'therapeutic', *consolatio*, which is adapted to the needs of the individual addressee. The purpose of this austere type of Christian *consolatio* seems to be more apologetic and homiletic, addressing the needs of a community under external pressure, perhaps persecution, and collective distress. This was also the situation behind Cyprian's sermon *De mortalitate*, which is similar in tone and content to the *Epistula ad Turasium*.⁵² The harshness and inflexibility of these early Christian consolations is not directly influenced by Stoic doctrine. It is a reflection of the particular, early Christian, context from which they originated.

Augustine's approach is comparatively more flexible again, and more influenced (partly through Manichaeism) by the classical, 'therapeutic', approach. Although he too is ultimately apologetic and ideological (for example, he considers 'Original Sin' the ultimate source of grief), he is aware of Cicero's consolatory oeuvre⁵³ and works with the clas-

⁴⁸ For the influence of the passage see J.H.D. Scourfield, 'The *De Mortalitate* of Cyprian. Consolation and Context,' in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 50 (1996) 12–41, 17–18; P.A. Holloway, '*Nihil inopinati accidisse*—"Nothing Unexpected Has Happened": A Cyrenaic Consolatory Topos in 1 Peter 4:12 ff.,' in: *New Testament Studies* 48 (2002) 433–448, 445–446.

⁴⁹ Compare Duval 1994, 1245. Holloway (2002) considers *consolatio* in 1 Peter.

⁵⁰ Mistakenly discussed by Beyenka (1950, 102–104) as Augustine's *Epistula consolatoria ad Probum*.

⁵¹ *Epistula ad Turasium* (CSEL 3:3); compare Scourfield 1996, 21.

⁵² Compare Scourfield 1996.

⁵³ Compare for example the reference to Cicero's 'Consolation to Himself on the Death

sical framework of the four basic emotions.⁵⁴ He accepts that *consolatio* works at different levels, material,⁵⁵ emotional,⁵⁶ spiritual,⁵⁷ prayer, hymns, psalms. Though compared with the bliss of the afterlife of the saved it can only be considered second best ('in hac aerumnosa et procellosa vita, solatia sunt miserorum, non gaudia beatorum'),⁵⁸ its limited use for the present life must also be acknowledged. If applied correctly, it can make people more perceptive of the truth.

It is from this perspective that the consolatory outlook of the *Confessions* needs to be considered, its usefulness for protreptic at many different levels across the whole work. Thus already the little baby is physically consoled by the milk of his mother.⁵⁹ The child in school learns to feel and express grief through literature.⁶⁰ In hindsight Augustine accuses himself of weeping over Dido's death at reading the *Aeneid*. But he does not so much decry the fact that his grief (and the way he learned to handle it) was triggered by reading literature, as the fact that it was the wrong kind of literature. If it had been the Bible and the Psalms that moved him to tears and thereby pointed him in God's direction, it would surely have been alright.⁶¹ Thus Augustine is not a primitivist who would deny that human emotions are shaped by language, as if God would have directly infused the right kind of emotions into him had he not read the *Aeneid*. He rather asserts this link between words and emotions as constitutive for any form of *consolatio* to work. What he does is question the *kind* of literature that taught him to 'feel' particular emotions and to express them and deal with them.⁶² What he seems to advocate is an alternative literary canon within a Christian literary culture. He may well have thought of the *Confessions* themselves as the kind of literature with which to replace the classical canon which in his view had him led so astray.

of his Daughter Tullia' in *Civ. dei* 19.4: 'Quam lamentatus est Cicero in consolatione de morte filiae.'

⁵⁴ For example in *Conf.* 10.14.22; see below in this paper.

⁵⁵ Compare *Conf.* 1.4.7 (a mother's milk as consolation for the baby).

⁵⁶ *Conf.* 4.8.13 and frequently (consolation through friendship).

⁵⁷ *Conf.* 3.6.10 (the paraclete as consoler). This too is a frequent motif; compare *S. dom. mont.* 1.5, c. *Adim.* 17.5; Duval 1994, 1245 n. 2.

⁵⁸ *En. in Ps.* 118.19.3 cited by Duval 1994, 1245.

⁵⁹ *Conf.* 1.4.7.

⁶⁰ *Conf.* 1.13.20–21.

⁶¹ Compare *Conf.* 1.13.22: 'peccabam ergo puer, cum illa inania istis utilioribus amore praeponerem vel potius ista oderam, illa amabam.'

⁶² Significantly, the whole passage (*Conf.* 1.13.20–22) is packed with highly evocative allusions to and citations of Psalm verses.

Something slightly different is going on in Augustine's criticism of the theatre in *Confessions* 3.2. Here he does distance himself from the artificial—and ambivalent—nature of the grief aroused in the onlooker by the suffering shown on stage. His main point of criticism is that this arousal lacks any real objective. Its main objective is to arouse grief for pleasure. But this, thus Augustine's implication, is precisely not the purpose of ancient *consolatio*. The negative emotion of misery (*miseria*) felt over a particular instance of suffering must be distinguished from the positive emotion of pity, or mercy (*misericordia*).⁶³ The latter helps one to manage one's emotion, put them to good use, and achieve happiness in the process, the former merely feeds on itself at a superficial level and leaves one wounded and sore.⁶⁴

It is possible that *Confessions* 3.2 marks a transitional phase in the way Augustine viewed 'feeling pity' as opposed to 'taking pity'. The early Augustine, as Sorabji has pointed out, rejected the former as a negative emotion. In this he followed the Stoics and earlier Christian writers, for example Clement of Alexandria: 'The wise man does not 'feel' pity, though he 'takes' it.'⁶⁵ In the *Retractationes* Augustine rejects this view conceding that wise men of this kind do not exist in real life and that a moderate level of emotionality (*metriopatheia*) is after all a good thing.⁶⁶ Here in *Confessions* 3.2 he still seems to equate 'feeling pity' with *miseria* and 'taking it' with *misericordia*. But the perspective has already begun to change. The context in which he situates the first is entirely within the theatre. In other words, 'feeling pity' is only then really bad if it takes place in the artificial and ambivalent atmosphere of the stage, where there is no opportunity to manage it, and act on it, e. g. through conversion, the appropriation of an ascetic ('philosophical') life style. That this is indeed how Augustine understands this complex, becomes clearer in *Confessions* 4.4.7–7.12 in connection with the death of his unnamed childhood friend.

⁶³ *Conf.* 3.2.2: '... cum ipse patitur, miseria, cum aliis compatitur, misericordia dici solet.' The sentence echoes Cic. *Lig.* 14 and 37–38. For Cicero and early Christian Latin writers on *misericordia* see J. Lössl, 'Sallust in Julian of Aclanum,' in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 56 (2004) 179–202, 185–190.

⁶⁴ Compare *Conf.* 3.2.4: 'quos tamen quasi unguis scalpentium fervidus tumor et tabes et sanies horrida conseqebatur.'

⁶⁵ Sorabji 2000, 397, referring to Aug. *mor.* 1.27; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 7.11.61; Sen. *Clem.* 2.5–6.

⁶⁶ *Retract.* 1.7.4. Similarly *Civ. Dei* 9.4 and 14.9.

This death is already the second instance of bereavement which Augustine relates in the *Confessions*. Intriguingly, a book earlier, in *Confessions* 3.4.7, he passed over the first, the death of his father, in almost complete silence. Only a brief, and belated, side-note refers to it: 'My father had died two years earlier.'⁶⁷ This is in contrast to a remark in *De Academicis* 2.2.3, which singles out Romanianus as a 'friend' (*amicus*) who after Patricius' untimely death 'consoled, encouraged and financially supported' the sixteen-year-old.⁶⁸ The link between *consolatio*, *amicitia* and spiritual support in this context is highly significant. It recurs in the episode which Augustine does tell in the *Confessions*. It is almost as if he develops the episode about his childhood friend's death with motifs taken from the reference in *De Academicis* to his father's death.⁶⁹

Augustine contrasts the emotional intensity of this early friendship (*dulcis nimis*) with the fact that it did not rest on the foundations of the orthodox faith.⁷⁰ He points out that he and his friend were initially 'welded together' by a common passion for the Manichaean religion.⁷¹ When 'true faith' (*vera fides*), i.e. the orthodox Christian position, entered into the equation, the bond broke. Falling ill, the friend had himself baptised and distanced himself from Augustine. Not recognising the seriousness of this development Augustine still waited for an opportunity to persuade him to return to their old ways. But then, suddenly and

⁶⁷ *Conf.* 3.4.7: '... cum agerem annum aetatis undevicesimum iam defuncto patre ante biennium.'

⁶⁸ *Acad.* 2.2.3: 'patre orbatum amicitia consolatus es, hortatione animasti, ope adiuvisti.' On the role of Romanianus and his *amicitia* in this context see Th. Fuhrer, *Augustin. Contra Academicos* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1997) 73–81, 78.

⁶⁹ Romanianus plays an important role in the earlier works. Augustine used to emphasize his friendship in superlative terms. Compare *Ord.* 1.6.16: *carissimus amicus*; *Ep.* 27.4: *mihi familiariter amicissimus*; *Vera rel.* 12: *carissime mihi Romaniane*. The reason why Romanianus plays no role in the *Confessions* could be biographical. Augustine could have lost contact (compare Brown 1967, 145), or Romanianus was still a prominent Manichaean from whom Augustine wanted to distance himself. But it could also be a feature of rhetorical strategy: In his protreptic Augustine wanted to emphasize the role of divine, not human help. Fuhrer 1997, 77 n. 27.

⁷⁰ Compare *Conf.* 4.4.7: Even though it was emotionally intense (*dulcis nimis*) and 'welded together' by common intellectual interests (*cocta fervore parilium studiorum*) it was not *vera amicitia* because its bond did not consist in God's love (*tibi caritati*) which is 'poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us' (Romans 5:5). Despite the obvious differences note also the similarities of this statement with Cic. *Lael.* 20: 'est enim amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio.' Cicero too wrote his *Laelius* (*De Amicitia*) under the impression of the death of a friend. On further similarities and differences with Augustine's account see below.

⁷¹ *Conf.* 4.4.7: Augustine takes all the blame upon himself: 'deflexeram eum in superstitiosas fabellas et perniciosas, propter quas me plangebat mater.'

unexpectedly, the friend died. And it is at this point that Augustine introduces the theme of *consolatio*: 'He was snatched away from my madness that he might be kept with you [God] for my consolation.'⁷²

What was the nature of this consolation, or better, first of all, what was it not? The first thing Augustine emphasizes is the lack of hope, which aggravated his grief and led to a spiralling, deepening identity crisis: 'I had become a huge question to myself and I asked my soul: "Why are you sad? Why are you so upset?" But she had nothing to answer. Yet even if I had told her, "Trust in God" (Ps 41:6), she would have been right not to obey,'⁷³ because, Augustine concludes, the God in whom he believed at the time was a mere phantom (*phantasma*). Conventional *consolatio*, relying on the power of the word, on literary-rhetorical *topoi* and philosophical arguments, that is the implication of this account, did not work in this situation. The ultimate basis to which Augustine was reduced in the end was his emotional state itself, his grief. In the absence of any virtue, however, his emotion became excessive and he began to wallow and take pleasure in it.

There is an analogy between the *miseria* of the theatre-going youth in *Confessions* 3.2 and the *dolor* of the bereaved Manichaean in *Confessions* 4.4.7. Both are plunged into self-centred emotionality. The difference is that in *Confessions* 4.4.7 Augustine is not in a play. It is his very life that is affected. This grief is not merely scratching the surface of his identity, it affects its core. Yet because of his emotionality Augustine finds some sort of consolation even in this situation, namely in his grief itself, in the tears it produces.⁷⁴

By the time Augustine is recalling this event in the *Confessions* many years have passed. He can now cite a conventional consolatory *topos*: 'Over time my wound has become less painful.'⁷⁵ But he is still perturbed by his behaviour then and by what his emotions did to him: What about those tears he was shedding in his grief then? Why did they have a

⁷² *Conf.* 4.4.8: 'Sed ille abreptus dementiae meae ut apud te servaretur consolationi meae.'

⁷³ *Conf.* 4.4.9: 'Factus eram ipse mihi magna quaestio et interrogabam animam meam, quare tristis esset et quare conturbaret me valde, et nihil noverat respondere mihi. Et si dicebam: "Spera in deum" (Ps 42:5), iuste non obtemperabat, quia verior erat et melior homo, quem carissimum amiserat, quam phantasma, in quod sperare iuebatur.'

⁷⁴ *Conf.* 4.4.9: 'Solut fletus erat dulcis mihi et successerat amico meo in deliciis animi mei.'

⁷⁵ *Conf.* 4.5.10: 'Et nunc, domine, iam illa transierunt, et tempore lenitum est vulnus meum.' The phrase might allude to Ovid, *Remedium Amoris* 131: 'Temporis ars medicina fere est.'

consolatory effect, even though at the time he had neither hope nor faith? Was God using them as *solacia* even in the absence of his faith?⁷⁶ He is not able to answer the question. All he can do is to define his state at the time as *miser*. He had clung with his love to a mortal man. That made his own state of *dolor* and *luctus* morbid, like the artificial grief of those theatre audiences of *Confessions* 3.2.

The problem of finding pleasure in grief, especially through weeping, was also known to classical authors on *consolatio*. In *Iliad* 24.507–524 Priam and Achilles are said to have found pleasure and consolation in weeping over their dead loved ones, though Achilles eventually also exhorts Priam not to waste his grief on the dead for no good. Seneca, in his *Consolatio ad Marciam* 1.7 and 2.4, warns Marcia not to go on grieving for too long lest grief might take over her life. A grieving person has a responsibility for the living including herself.

Kevin Tortorelli also compared Augustine's account of his grief after his friend's death with Cicero's *Laelius* (*De amicitia*).⁷⁷ Cicero wrote this work after his friend's, Scipio's, death. But he emphasized that his grief (*dolor*) was measured (*moderate*).⁷⁸ He even condemns excessive grief over a friend's death as a sign of self-love rather than genuine love for the friend, and he argues that even though his friend died, his virtue lives on.⁷⁹ In *Confessions* 4.4.7–9 Augustine extends the boundaries of these ancient conventions. He suggests that he might have found genuine consolation even in that purely emotional state of despair, albeit only for a transitional period. On the other hand he implies that no measured grief, however virtuous, could have helped him cope in that situation anyway. As Tortorelli observes, he ultimately saw only two possibilities: God or despair. Recalling his emotional state after his childhood friend's death Augustine finds that it was dominated by despair. Later, in *Confessions* 9.12.29–33, he was to recall his emotional state immediately after the death of his mother and found *it* guided by faith in God. On that occasion he was able to control his emotions, at least externally, yet he still suffered grief and was in need of consolation.⁸⁰ Among the *solacia* which he tried

⁷⁶ *Conf.* 4.5.10: 'An hoc ibi dulce est, quod speramus exaudire te? ... Num in dolore amissae rei et luctu, quo tunc operiebar?'

⁷⁷ Tortorelli 1991, 375–385.

⁷⁸ *Cic. Lael.* 2.8.32–33.

⁷⁹ *Cic. Lael.* 3.10.9–10; 27.102.30–33; compare Tortorelli 1991, 378.

⁸⁰ *Conf.* 9.12.30: 'Quid erat ergo quod intus mihi graviter dolebat?' Beyenka (1950, 31–42) emphasizes the contrast between Augustine's depiction of his grief before and after his conversion. But although it is of course correct that his grief after the death of his mother

out then was a bath and a sleep. Neither worked. As in the aftermath of his childhood friend's death only a prolonged bout of weeping made him finally feel better.⁸¹

Among the *solacia* which temporarily eased his despair after his childhood friend's death Augustine mentions again time ('non vacant tempora') and—yet more friends: 'aliorum amicorum solacia'.⁸² Although he still does not rate these early friendships very highly,⁸³ he nevertheless depicts them as genuine, using motifs from Cicero's *Laelius*.⁸⁴ Augustine does believe in human friendship, but he doubts that it can be sustained without faith. With faith, it might bring about sustained consolation. For Augustine, it would eventually do this with the development of his friendships with Nebridius and Alypius, which are mentioned from *Confessions* 6.7.11 onwards. In Book 5 this is still in the future. Augustine, or so he presents it, is still stuck with his Manichaean friends, and the consolatory effect of these friendships began to wane quickly. By the time he meets Faustus in *Confessions* 5.6.11–7.13 it is only Faustus' interest in rhetoric which Augustine finds worth sharing.⁸⁵

His days in Africa were now numbered. He moved to Rome. A famous aspect of his departure from Carthage is his separation from his mother. He depicts this as a heartless deception on his part analogous to Aeneas' desertion of Dido in Vergil's *Aeneid* (4.287–692),⁸⁶ with talk of his moth-

was essentially different from the despair he suffered after his friend's death because of his belief in an afterlife (Beyenka 1950, 35), the point is that he still suffered grief and still needed the same kind of *solacia* as before to relieve it.

⁸¹ *Conf.* 9.12.32–33: '... et dimisi lacrimas quas continebam ut effluerent quantum vellent substernens eas cordi meo, et requievit in eis.' Note the parallel with *Conf.* 1.1.1: '... et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.' Augustine seems to be suggesting that his tears were an expression of God's presence. This is similar to *Conf.* 4.5.10, where he asks how it was possible to experience consolation in his tears even though he had no faith in God implying that God was present in his tears even then.

⁸² *Conf.* 4.8.13.

⁸³ He calls them 'ingens fabula et longum mendacium (ib.).'

⁸⁴ Compare *Conf.* 4.8.13: '... conflare animos et ex pluribus unum facere,' with Cic. *Lael.* 92: '... ut unus quasi animus fiat ex pluribus.'

⁸⁵ *Conf.* 5.7.13: 'Ipse flagrabat in eas litteras quas tunc iam rhetor Carthaginis adulescentes docebam.'

⁸⁶ Compare *Conf.* 5.8.15 with *Aen.* 4.287–692, but also with *Aen.* 9.287–289 (Euryalus departing from his mother and leaving her in tears), which may also be alluded to in Augustine's general characterisation of his mother in *Conf.* 6.1.1; and remember that in *Conf.* 1.13.20–21 Augustine had already mentioned his tendency since childhood to get emotionally involved in the drama of the *Aeneid* and to interpret his own life story in dramatic terms; compare C. Bennett, 'The Conversion of Vergil: The *Aeneid* in Augustine's *Confessions*,' in: *Revue des études augustiniennes* 34 (1988) 47–69, 61.

er's grief and tears centre stage. Yet only a few paragraphs further on, in *Confessions* 6.1.1, he reports how his mother, despite her own grief, 'consoled', i.e. encouraged, her fellow passengers and even the crew of the ship that took her to Italy in pursuit of him on what seems to have been a particularly hazardous voyage.⁸⁷

Further on in *Confessions* 6 he then takes once more stock of his own continuing grief in a famous passage in which he compares his own emotional state with that of a beggar whom he meets on the street while feeling under pressure from his duties as imperial rhetor. The comparison of one's own misery with that of someone who is still considerably worse off, no matter whether that person is comparatively cheerful or not, is a consolatory *topos*. Augustine makes it quite clear that he would not have wanted to swap places with that poor man, and, he adds, probably quite rightly so.⁸⁸ Clearly, he presents the encounter as having, within certain limits, a consolatory effect on him, even though his overall narrative is dressed up as a lament over his despair and lack of faith.

Further consolation beckons with the developing friendships with Nebridius and Alypius, already mentioned,⁸⁹ though further—and deeper—grief is also breaking out with the dismissal of his partner: 'nec sanabatur vulnus illud meum ... sed desperatius dolebat.'⁹⁰ This is in contrast with the Platonic and Biblical motifs that are developed in Books 7 and 8 and allow Augustine more and more to depict his despair in positive terms, with his philosophical efforts, for example his question regarding the origin of evil, having a consolatory meaning: 'While I bravely researched in silence, the mute contrition of my spirit was a mighty voice calling for your mercy (*misericordia*).'⁹¹

⁸⁷ *Conf.* 6.1.1: 'Nam et per marina discrimina ipsos nautas consolabatur a quibus rudes abyssi viatores, cum perturbantur, consolari solent.'

⁸⁸ *Conf.* 6.6.9: '... si interrogaret utrum me talem mallet qualis ille an qualis ego tunc essem, me ipsum curis timoribusque confectum eligerem, sed perversitate, numquid veritate?'

⁸⁹ *Conf.* 6.7.11: 'Congemescebamus in his qui simul amice vivebamus, et maxime ac familiarissime cum Alypio et Nebridio ista conloquebar.'

⁹⁰ *Conf.* 6.15.25; for the literary connections compare D. Shanzer, 'Avulsa a Latere Meo: Augustine's Spare Rib—*Confessions* 6.15.25,' in: *Journal of Roman Studies* 92 (2002) 157–170.

⁹¹ *Conf.* 7.7.11: '... quaerebam aestuans unde sit malum. Quae illa tormenta parturientis cordis mei, qui gemitus, deus meus. Et ibi erant aures tuae nesciente me. Et cum in silentio fortiter quaererem, magnae voces erant ad misericordiam tuam tacitae contritiones animi mei ... "et lumen oculorum meorum non erat mecum" (Ps 37:10); "intus autem erat ...," compare Plot. *Enn.* 6.5.12.

When he encounters Simplicianus, he receives an 'exhortation' to embrace Christ's humility, which 'is hidden to the wise but revealed to the little ones' (Ps 25:9; Luke 15:32).⁹² The exhortation, or consolation, consists in Simplicianus telling Augustine the story of Marius Victorinus' conversion, which duly moves Augustine to tears.⁹³ All this leads up to the 'garden scene' when Augustine's grief is finally transformed into joy (Ps 29:12).⁹⁴ This scene, as we have already seen, important as it may be in the drama of Augustine's conversion narrative, is not equally central in terms of the use of consolatory *topoi*. These have been used before now and continue to be used from here onwards (in Books 9 to 13), only the parameters of their use change. Until now they have been used against the negative background of Augustine's hopeless despair, from now on they are used in support of his underlying philosophical stance, his conversion and confession, the basis of his protreptic.

More deaths follow in Book 9. First Verecundus, who had allowed Augustine and his friends to stay at his villa in Cassiciacum. He had himself baptised shortly before his death and thus died a Christian, for Augustine a great consolation. It would have been unbearable had he died unbaptised ('dolore intolerabili cruciaremur'). But God, Augustine concludes, looks after his own, as is demonstrated by his encouragements and consolations.⁹⁵ Second, Adeodatus. He did not actually die in 387, but two years later, yet Augustine mentions his death in connection with their common baptism in Milan at Easter 387. He emphasizes that the memory of his son keeps him completely calm. His early death has spared him many worries.⁹⁶ In connection with his baptism Augustine mentions the tears he shed, again a sign of consolation, even pleasure,⁹⁷ but this time he has no qualms; for now he knows the source of his consolation.

The third death mentioned in Book 9 is that of his mother. As Mary Beyenka has shown, Augustine constructs his narrative of her death as a panegyric *epitaphium*,⁹⁸ an obituary, which concludes the autobiographic narrative of the *Confessions*. This contains a lot of biographical material

⁹² *Conf.* 8.2.5: 'Deinde, ut me exhortaretur ad humilitatem Christi sapientibus absconditam et revelatam parvulis, Victorinum ipsum recordatus est ...'

⁹³ *Conf.* 8.3.6: '... et lacrimas excutit gaudium solemnitatis "domus tuae" (Ps 83:5).'

⁹⁴ *Conf.* 8.12.30: '... convertisti luctum eius in gaudium.'

⁹⁵ *Conf.* 9.3.5: 'Gratias tibi, deus noster. Tui sumus. Indicant hortationes et consolationes tuae.'

⁹⁶ *Conf.* 9.6.14: 'Cito de terra abstulisti vitam eius et securior eum recordor non timens quicquam pueritiae nec adulescentiae nec omnino homini illi.'

⁹⁷ *Conf.* 9.6.14: '... et currebant lacrimae et bene mihi erat cum eis.'

⁹⁸ Beyenka 1950, 37–40; compare *Conf.* 9.8–13. Intriguingly, this literary 'epitaph' is

culminating in the famous 'vision at Ostia',⁹⁹ Augustine's account of an exceptional spiritual, perhaps mystical, experience which he claims to have shared with his mother shortly before she died, and in some of her last thoughts, wishes and 'instructions', notably regarding the place of her burial.¹⁰⁰ The book ends, as already mentioned, by Augustine's account of his own grief after his mother's departure, which compares and contrasts with his emotional state after his childhood friend's death described in Book 4.

Although the autobiographical part of the *Confessions* is thereby concluded, the theme of *consolatio* and the use of consolatory *topoi* continues. In fact, the aspect of philosophy as consolation is now becoming even more central. At the beginning of Book 10 the self, identity, is defined as memory. To exist is to be known.¹⁰¹ To assert oneself one has to be able to confess this, which is what is happening in *Confessions* 10.1.1. In order to be able to confess, one has to know oneself. Augustine identifies God as the source of this self-knowledge: God, the 'physician' (*medicus*) through the consolatory power of his love and grace, enables him to make his confession.¹⁰² The epithet *medicus* for God emphasizes the 'therapeutic' nature of the process.¹⁰³ The kind of therapy which Augustine is referring

matched by a stone epitaph at Monnica's re-discovered tomb; see W. Wischmeyer, 'Zum Epitaph der Monica,' in: *Römische Quartalschrift* 70 (1975) 32–41.

⁹⁹ *Conf.* 9.10.23–25. This is also where the 'philosophical consolation' culminates, after earlier, similar, attempts, fell either short of their potential, for example *Conf.* 4.13.20–23 the attempt at *De pulchro et apto*, or *Conf.* 7.10.16 and 23 the encounter with the Platonic books at Milan, or they were not in the strict sense philosophical, but more spiritual-emotional, albeit consolatory, like the 'tolle-lege' scene (8.12.29), or the experience of tears during baptism (9.6.14). In Ostia everything came together. The classic study of the passage is P. Henry, *La vision d'Ostie. Sa place dans la vie et dans l'oeuvre de Saint Augustin* (Paris: Vrin, 1938); for a more recent account see E.P. Kenney, *The Mysticism of Augustine. Re-reading the Confessions* (London: Routledge, 2005) 47–86.

¹⁰⁰ *Conf.* 9.11.27–28.

¹⁰¹ *Conf.* 10.1.1: 'Cognoscam te, cognitor meus, cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum.' For the identification of self-knowledge and knowledge of God compare Plot. *Enn.* 5.3.7.2–3.

¹⁰² *Conf.* 10.3.4: 'Verum tamen tu, medice meus intime, quo fructu ista faciam, eliqua mihi ... in amore misericordiae tuae et dulcedine gratiae tuae.'

¹⁰³ Augustine's use of the medical analogy, in particular his motif of *Christus medicus*, has been widely studied. The classic account is R.E. Arbesmann, 'The Concept of *Christus medicus* in St. Augustine,' in: *Traditio* 10 (1954) 1–28. A more recent study focusing on the cultural-historical context is J.-M. André, 'Saint Augustin et la culture medicale greco-romaine,' in: *La cultura scientifico-naturalistica nei Padri della Chiesa (I–V sec.). XXXV incontro di studiosi dell' antichità cristiana. 4–6 maggio 2006* (= *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 101; Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2007) 597–604. Especially valuable in the present context for its consideration of the Manichaean connection is J. van Oort, 'Augustine and Manichaeism in Roman North

to is *consolatio*. The aim of the therapy is healing, to become whole. For grief is not to be 'one' (i.e. united) with oneself or with someone else whom one loves.¹⁰⁴ In the case of a departed loved-one physical and mental separation is the cause of grief.¹⁰⁵ For the convert from a life unto death to a life in hope and joy¹⁰⁶ grief is regret over the past. This is how Augustine describes his situation: For him, ongoing (silent) grief over his past, mixed with hope, is part of his confession.¹⁰⁷

The medium and proper 'location' for this confessional therapy is the memory, the power (*vis*) of the mind, the 'inner self'.¹⁰⁸ Augustine imagines this also to be a virtual place, a wide (inner) space.¹⁰⁹ Among the 'treasures' contained there are the emotions (*affectiones*), but these are not in the memory as emotions, but as memories.¹¹⁰ This means that the power of the memory can hold the power of the emotions at bay. For even though memories can stir emotions, memories of emotions can be objectivized. The memory can order emotions and thus manage them.¹¹¹ It can categorise them into the 'four main disturbances of

Africa. Remarks on an African Debate and Its Universal Consequences,' in: P.-Y. Fux, J.M. Roessli and O. Wermelinger (eds.), *Augustinus Afer. Actes du colloque internationale de Alger-Annaba 1-7 Avril 2001. Saint Augustin. Africanité et universalité* (Fribourg: Editions universitaires, 2003) 199–210, 206–207.

¹⁰⁴ Compare *Conf.* 10.4.5: '... fraternus ... qui cum approbat me, gaudet de me, cum autem improbat me, contristatur pro me, quia sive approbet sive improbet me, diligit me.'

¹⁰⁵ In *Conf.* 4.6.11 Augustine had cited Horace and Ovid to illustrate the point: His departed childhood friend had been to him like his 'other self' (*ille alter eram*). He asked himself, how his friend could be dead, while he was still alive? It was to him as if his soul had been cut in half (see Horat. *Carm.* 1.3.8: a friend as 'half one's soul', *dimidium animae*), since he and his friend had been like 'one soul in two bodies' (Ovid. *Trist.* 4.4.72; Arist. *apud* Diog. Laert. 6.1.20: 'duo corpora, mens unus'; Augustine: 'una anima in duobus corporibus').

¹⁰⁶ Compare *Conf.* 10.3.4: God is 'converting' the soul ('mutans animam meam'). The confessions wake up the heart ('confessiones ... excitant cor') (compare Kotzé 2004, 168). The heart wakes up consoled by God's grace ('in dulcedine gratiae tuae').

¹⁰⁷ *Conf.* 10.4.6: '... ut hoc confitear ... secreto maerore cum spe ...'

¹⁰⁸ *Conf.* 10.8.15: 'Magna ista vis est memoriae ... penetrare amplum et infinitum ... et vis est haec animi mei atque ad meam naturam pertinet,' for 'inner self' see Ph. Cary, *Augustine and the Invention of the Inner Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹⁰⁹ *Conf.* 10.8.12: '... lata praetoria memoriae ...'

¹¹⁰ *Conf.* 10.14.21: 'Affectiones quoque animi mei eadem memoria continet ... illo modo ... sicut sese habet vis memoriae.'

¹¹¹ In Augustine's view the memory 'contains' the 'notions' of things: *Conf.* 10.14.22: 'rerum ipsarum notiones.'

the soul, desire, joy, fear and sadness.¹¹² It can learn as well as unlearn them.¹¹³ As mentioned earlier, the Augustine of the *Confessions* does no longer adhere to the Stoic principle of *apatheia* as an ideal, as advocated by Cicero in *Tusculans* 3–4, but to an Aristotelian *metriopatheia*, a moderation of emotionality, which is also consistent with the idea of a bipartite soul.¹¹⁴

Obviously, moderating the emotion of grief (sadness) is a major objective of the consolatory work of the memory. Interestingly, Augustine observes, in order for the memory to do its work it has to remember.¹¹⁵ Overcoming grief through consolation can therefore not be equivalent to forgetting it. Something that is totally forgotten is like something that never existed.¹¹⁶ But consolation is not self-annihilation through oblivion. Rather, Augustine advocates a transformation of the converted self through the cultivation of a spiritual sensorium with the help of the memory, the translation of external sensations into an inner life orientated towards God.¹¹⁷ This is now different from Cicero's 'surely, all men want to be happy'.¹¹⁸ In order to be able to want to be happy one first has to have a seminal knowledge of what 'true happiness' actually is. This knowledge comes from God, and it is not only 'intellectual' but also 'ethical'. It is grace, comprising both the intellect and the will.¹¹⁹ 'Grant what you

¹¹² *Conf.* 10.14.22: '... de memoria profero, cum dico quattuor esse perturbationes animi, cupiditatem, laetitiam, metum, tristitiam.' Compare *Cic. fin.* 3.10.35; *Tusc.* 4.6.11. Augustine adopts the Stoic model of four emotions but changes the terminology in two instances. Cicero's *libido* is replaced by *cupiditas*, *aegritudo* by *tristitia*. This is because for Augustine *libido* has a strictly sexual meaning and *aegritudo*, like *dolor*, has too physical a ring; compare *Civ. Dei* 14.7; G.J.P. O'Daly, 'Affectus', in: *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1–1/2 (1986) 166–180; J. Lössl, 'Dolor', in: *Augustinus-Lexikon* 2–3/4 (1999) 581–591.

¹¹³ This is consistent with Augustine's depiction of emotions as being culturally formed throughout the *Confessions*, from his being stirred by reading the *Aeneid* in class (*Conf.* 1.13.20–21) via his experiences in the theatre (3.2) and with the Manichaeans (3.6.10) to his conversion in Books 8 and 9.

¹¹⁴ Compare above n. 105 and below *Conf.* 10.40.65 the motif of the soul being split between outside (*foris*) and inside (*intus*), 'here' (*hic*, the physical world) and 'there' (*illic*, the intellectual world); Plot. *Enn.* 4.8.4.33; G.J.P. O'Daly, 'Anima, animus', in: *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1–1/2–3 (1986/88) 315–350, at 322–324.

¹¹⁵ *Conf.* 10.18.27: '... nec agnoscere possumus, si non meminimus.'

¹¹⁶ Compare *Conf.* 10.19.28: 'Hoc ergo nec amissum quaerere poterimus, quod omnino obliti fuerimus.'

¹¹⁷ *Conf.* 10.27.38: 'Sero te amavi ... et ecce intus eras et ego foris et ibi te quaerebam ...' Note again the rhetoric of regret (grief over a wasted past, opposed to joy over a saved present).

¹¹⁸ Compare *Conf.* 10.21.31; *Cic. Hort.*; *Tusc.* 5.28; and also *Conf.* 6.6.9.

¹¹⁹ Compare J. Lössl, 'Intellect with a (Divine) Purpose: Augustine on the Will', in:

command, and command what you will,' Augustine addresses God in his context.¹²⁰

For Augustine, the memory is the transitional place between the physical and the spiritual-intellectual world. This is why he believes that the cultivation of a spiritual sensuality will result in a more spiritual life, a life which ultimately 'returns' wholly into the intellectual realm. This is why he approves of some degree of emotionality. Weeping during hymn- and Psalm-singing purifies the soul and prepares for higher things.¹²¹ Scientific curiosity in contrast, which takes the awe out of life, is deemed bad.¹²² It won't make you happy. What kind of pleasure is that which comes from exploring a mangled corpse which is giving you the creep?¹²³ This is not done with salvation in mind, but for the thrill. The soul's misery in its present state between the outer (*foris*) and inner (*intus*) world, thus Augustine, is not helped by such antics.¹²⁴ Nor, interestingly, does Augustine advocate a retreat into the desert. It is not outer solitude which God requires from him.¹²⁵ The exploration of the inner world has to start right here and now, by reflecting on the very nature of time and eternity itself.

Book 11 begins once more with Augustine citing Psalms, confessing his misery and God's mercy towards him.¹²⁶ This is not a mere commonplace. What follows are reflections on time in the best consolatory tradition. Augustine invokes all of God's exhortations, shock treatments, consolations and directives which he had received.¹²⁷ But he does not think that narrating these is the best way of spending the rest of his life.

T. Pink and M.W.F. Stone (eds.) *Theories of the Will From Antiquity to the Present Day* (London: Routledge, 2004) 53–77.

¹²⁰ *Conf.* 10.29.40: 'Da quod iubēs et iube quod vis.' Interestingly, the immediate context is the ability to remain sexually abstinent (continent). Pelagius famously was to take offence at the sentence.

¹²¹ *Conf.* 10.33.50: 'Flete mecum and pro me flete ...' The similarity of this with Manichaean thought and practice as described earlier in this paper is striking.

¹²² *Conf.* 10.35.54: '... vana et curiosa cupiditas nomine cognitionis et scientiae palliata.'

¹²³ *Conf.* 10.35.55: 'Quid enim voluptatis habet videre in laniato cadavere, quod exhorreas?'

¹²⁴ *Conf.* 10.40.65: 'Hic esse valeo nec volo, illic volo nec valeo, miser utrobique.'

¹²⁵ *Conf.* 10.43.70: 'Conterritus peccatis meis et mole miseriae meae agitaveram corde meditatusque fueram fugam in solitudinem, sed prohibuisti me et confirmasti me ...'

¹²⁶ *Conf.* 11.1.1 citing Ps 32:22: 'confitendo tibi miseras nostras et misericordias tuas super nos.'

¹²⁷ *Conf.* 11.2.2: '... omnia hortamenta tua et omnes terrores tuos et consolationes et gubernationes.'

What he thinks is the right thing to do in the face of death ('quousque devoretur a fortitudine infirmitas') is to 'meditate in God's law',¹²⁸ Scripture, something which he had long been burning to do. He elaborates on his plan with consolatory *topoi* which are partly borrowed from Seneca: The drops of time are running out. They must not be wasted.¹²⁹ Let not the few spare hours, which we have in our busy life, seep away without investing them efficiently in this enterprise, an important aspect of which is the exploration of time itself.¹³⁰

This exploration is not a natural-scientific but a psychological one. For Augustine, time 'happens' in the memory. He 'defines' time as 'distention of the soul'.¹³¹ This is reminiscent of earlier passages where he had bewailed the soul's lot of being 'spread out' between mortal temporality and immortal eternity.¹³² The immediate, practical, purpose of his analysis of time is therefore consolatory. It helps him put temporality in perspective and develop a more focused notion of eternity, including the here and now.¹³³ Valeria Viparelli has identified many striking similarities between Augustine in this passage and certain passages in Seneca, whose thought Augustine admired but whose lifestyle he deplored.¹³⁴

¹²⁸ *Conf.* 11.2.2: 'Et olim inardesco meditari in lege tua (Ps 1:2) et in ea tibi confiteri scientiam et inperitiam meam, primordia illuminationis tuae et reliquias tenebrarum mearum, quousque devoretur a fortitudine infirmitas.'

¹²⁹ *Conf.* 11.2.2: 'caro mihi valent stillae temporum ... et nolo horae ... diffuant quas invenio liberas.' Compare Sen. *ep.* 1.1–2: 'Ita fac, mi Lucili: vindica te tibi et tempus quod adhuc aut auferebatur aut subripiiebatur aut excidebat collige et serva ... persuade tibi hoc sic esse ut scribo: quaedam tempora eripiuntur nobis, quaedam subducuntur, quaedam effluunt; fac ergo, mi Lucili, quod facere te scribis, omnes horas complectere ... quem mihi dabis qui aliquod pretium tempori ponat, qui diem aestimet, qui intellegat se cotidie mori?' For a discussion of this passage see V. Viparelli, 'Seneca e Agostino alla ricerca della sapienza: la scrittura di sé e il problema del tempo (Sen. *ep.* 1 e Aug. *conf.* XI 2, 2–3)', in: F.E. Consolino (ed.) *L'adorabile Vescovo d'Ippona* (Università della Calabria: Rubbettino, 2001) 255–273, 266–267.

¹³⁰ *Conf.* 11.14.17: '... quid est enim tempus?' As Gerard O'Daly points out, Augustine does not answer this simple question, but dwells on the aspect of the quantitative extension of time, the possibilities of measuring it with the help of the memory; G. O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987) 153. O'Daly does not discuss Augustine's motivation for doing this.

¹³¹ *Conf.* 11.26.33: 'Inde mihi visum est nihil esse aliud tempus quam distentionem; sed cuius rei ... si non ipsius animi.' O'Daly (1987, 153) argues that this is not really a definition, but a metaphor. For the purpose of this metaphor see below n. 133.

¹³² See above nn. 105 and 114 and *Conf.* 10.40.65.

¹³³ Compare *Conf.* 11.29.39: '... tu solacium meum, domine, pater meus aeternus es. at ego in tempora dissilui.'

¹³⁴ *Civ. Dei* 6.10: '... colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat.'

Both reveal themselves as philosophers of consolation. Seneca, in his exhortations to Lucilius, works through his inner discourse of the self in a similar way as Augustine works through his in his *Confessions*, addressing God and his audience. Seneca could not do that. His God was hidden in his discourse of the self. Therefore the *cotidie mori* at the end.¹³⁵ But Augustine too ends with a hint at dying. And as we have seen, his hope never annihilates but transforms his grief over his past sins—for a higher purpose. It is true that Seneca does not ascribe such a task to emotions. But we have seen earlier that he does allow for grief as a concession. It is also true that Seneca ultimately retreats into self-sufficiency (*indigentia*). But he does so within the limits of his public role, as does Augustine, who after resting his body, engaging in study and helping others¹³⁶ intends to fulfil his ultimate desire, which is to dwell, through the study of Scripture, on the nature of inner time itself.

Both Seneca and Augustine agree that time is precious. For Seneca every moment is precious; for all time and all meaning of life is summed up in the present moment. He does use the *topos* that we live on borrowed time. It is not ours. We have to use it properly and efficiently. Augustine can say openly to whom he thinks it belongs. For him it is a means of salvation, the transitional sphere in which we prepare ourselves for eternity, when infirmity is devoured by strength. Both Augustine and Seneca also have an acute sense of their poverty in the light of this situation. If time is all we have, and even time is not ours, and we are quickly running out of it, what is there left for us? As indicated earlier, for Seneca it is existing in the instant present of the self, for Augustine it is existing in the here and now as the horizon of the eternal God.¹³⁷

To conclude: This paper began by acknowledging the degree to which Augustine's *Confessions*, not least through the work of Johannes van Oort, have become accepted in scholarship as a protreptic, with Manichaeans as at least one of the primary target audiences. It then suggested that *consolatio* could be one of the main techniques and *foci* of *topoi* used in the *Confessions* to bring to bear the work's protreptic purpose, in particular in view of a potential Manichaean audience. It discussed briefly the role of *consolatio* in classical, Manichaean and early Christian traditions and possible ways in which these influenced the *Confessions*. Finally we traced

¹³⁵ See the full quotation above n. 129.

¹³⁶ *Conf.* 11.2.2: '[necessitates] reficiendi corporis et intentionis animi et servitutis, quam debemus hominibus ...'

¹³⁷ Compare Viparelli 2001, 272–273.

the theme of *consolatio* throughout the *Confessions*. Due to the relatively limited scope of this paper it was not possible to do this exhaustively. However, we believe that a case could be made for arguing that the *Confessions* do not just contain consolatory elements here and there, as has been argued before, but could actually be considered, as a whole, as a 'Consolation of Philosophy'.

CHAPTER FOUR

AUGUSTINE'S *SERMONES* 29 AND 29A ON PS. 117, 1 (118, 1) TWO EARLY CARTHAGINIAN *SERMONES AD POPULUM* ON THE MEANING OF *CONFESSIO* DURING THE VIGIL OF PENTECOST?

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The present contribution offers a reading of two of Augustine's *sermones ad populum* traditionally associated with the liturgical period around Pentecost during his stay in Carthage in 397, namely *sermones* 29 and 29A. In the first part of the article we will focus on this specific visit to Carthage. We will then offer a succinct *status quaestionis* on Augustine's Pentecost homilies. The third part discusses two specific homilies, *sermones* 29 and 29A, which are in the secondary literature connected with the feast of Pentecost. Each sermon first is introduced by placing it in its historical and chronological framework, making the link with the first part of the article on Augustine's Carthaginian visit of 397. In a second movement we let the preacher speak for himself, as it were, in *sermones* 29 and 29A. We concisely summarize the content of each sermon. Thirdly, this content will be evaluated regarding its connection with the Pentecost theme (making the link with the *status quaestionis* on the Pentecost sermons), Augustine's homiletic style and methodology, and the audience that likely attended this sermon.

1. AUGUSTINE IN CARTHAGE IN 397

This first chapter offers an overview of the available historical data concerning Augustine's travel to Carthage in 397 and his homiletic activities during this period in which *sermones* 29 and 29A are situated.

O. Perler's inventory places Augustine in Carthage no less than sixteen times in the period from 397 to 419. His visits tended for the most part to be fairly lengthy and generally took place either shortly before the summer, during the summer itself, or in the early autumn. Late autumn

and winter were usually spent in his cathedral city, where he would have celebrated the feasts of Christmas and Easter. Wherever he was, however, he never missed the opportunity to preach, and his time in Carthage is no exception in this regard. It would appear that Augustine travelled less after 419.¹ According to Perler, he probably visited Carthage for the last time in 424.²

As a priest, Augustine attended a meeting of the African bishops in Carthage in 394, chaired by Aurelius of Carthage.³ In 397, he spent roughly five months in the city, this time as a bishop,⁴ and participated in two local ecclesial meetings.⁵ Easter 397 fell on April 5th and Augustine probably left for Carthage after the Easter octave, arriving in the third or fourth week of April. A synod of the ecclesial province of Carthage took place in the city on Friday June 26th 397 under the leadership of bishop Aurelius. Although Hippo was part of the ecclesial province of Numidia and did not belong to the province of Carthage, Augustine probably attended the provincial synod as advisor to his good friend Aurelius.⁶ It is possible that the synod in question was intended as preparation for the general African council that was to take place in Carthage later the same year. The council in question was chaired by Aurelius of Carthage on August 28th and was held in the *secretarium* of the *Basilica Restituta*.⁷

¹ See the summarising lists of Augustine's journeys in O. Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, Études Augustiniennes, Paris 1969, pp. 430–477. Because of the inaccessible roads and foul weather conditions (combined with his occasionally weak health) Augustine avoided making (long) journeys in autumn and winter. Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, pp. 45–56.

² Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, pp. 373–380.

³ J.E. Merdinger, 'Councils of North African Bishops,' in: A.D. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopaedia*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 1999, 248–250, p. 249. Ch. Munier, 'Concilium (concilia),' in: C. Mayer & K.H. Chelius (eds.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Schwabe & Co. AG, Basel 1986–1994, 1085–1099, cols. 1092–1093.

⁴ S. Lancel, *Saint Augustin*, Fayard, Paris 1999, p. 265.

⁵ G. Wijdeveld (transl., introd., notes), *Aurelius Augustinus. Carthaagse preken* (Ambo Klassiek), Ambo, Baarn 1988, pp. 10–11.

⁶ The only canon to have been preserved from the synod forbade the bishops of Carthage from making overseas journeys without the permission of their primate. The purpose of the prohibition was to prevent the Carthaginian bishops from appealing constantly to the bishop of Rome or the court of the emperor. Lancel, *Saint Augustin*, pp. 278–279. Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, pp. 218–220.

⁷ The council started by approving the *Breviarium* of decisions made during the general council of Hippo in 393. "Le Brev. Hippon. constitue le noyau substantiel de la législation canonique africaine à l'époque d'A. La plupart de ses dispositions concernent la discipline du clergé et la vie liturgique des communautés; elles attestent la volonté de l'épiscopat catholique, soumis aux critiques des donatistes, de posséder un clergé digne et consciencieux." Some examples of the measures taken and decisions made in

Augustine's signature can be found among those of the council fathers approving the acts of the council: "Augustinus episcopus plebis Hipponae Regiensis, subscripsi".⁸

We are certain that Augustine's visit lasted until September 14th, the feast of St Cyprian. Augustine held a number of sermons for this feast, probably including *sermones* 308A (Denis 11), 313C (Guelfer. 26) and 313F (Denis 22). After a stay of roughly five months, Augustine left Carthage—perhaps around the end of September—and returned to his Episcopal residence in Hippo.⁹

Hippo are provided here. They were summarised in the *Breviarium Hipponense* and read out at the council of Carthage in 397. The African provinces were to turn to Carthage for establishing the date of Easter. Bishop Cresconius of Villa-Regis was to be satisfied with his own church and give up his claims to the see of Tubuna. Conditions for priestly ordination were established as follows: at least 25 years of age, schooled in the Scriptures and decisions of the councils, uncompromised by Donatism. Priestly obligations were repeated: celibacy and residence. Complaints concerning a bishop were to be addressed to the primate of the province. A number of arrangements were made with regard to the ecclesial courts. Clerics, bishops and, where fitting, their sons were expected to lead a virtuous life. Overseas travels for bishops was strictly regulated. A number of measures were taken with regard to the liturgy. Public prayer was always to be addressed to the Father. Under certain circumstances, Donatist clerics joining the Catholic church could be allowed to maintain their clerical status. The council fathers agreed to meet on an annual basis. Ch.J. Hefele (ed., trad., notes), *Histoire des conciles d'après les documents originaux*, Tome II. 1^{ère} Partie, Letouzey et Ané, Paris 1908, pp. 84–91. Munier, 'Concilium (concilia)', pp. 1092–1093. C. Munier (ed.), *Concilia Africae*. A.345–A.525 (Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 149), Brepols, Turnhout 1974, pp. 28–53; pp. (22–)30–53.

In addition, the council took disciplinary measures against the aforementioned Bishop Cresconius of Villa-Regis, who had designs on the see of Tubuna. Agreements were made with respect to the feast of Easter and the choice and consecration of bishops. In line with the decisions of 393, the bishops in Carthage agreed to admit certain converts from Donatism to the clerical state. Bishops resident overseas in Rome and Milan, however, were first to be consulted before the implementation of the latter decision. Hefele, *Histoire des conciles*, pp. 101–102. Merdinger, *Councils of North African Bishops*, p. 249. Munier, *Concilia Africae*. A.345–A.525, pp. 28–53. Munier, 'Concilium (concilia)', p. 1093. Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, pp. 220–221.

⁸ Only O. Perler mentions the full signature "Augustinus episcopus plebis Hipponae Regiensis, subscripsi". Ch. Hefele and C. Munier only mention "Augustinus episcopus". Perler bases himself here on J.D. Mansi, J.-B. Martin & L. Petit (eds.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Vol. 3, Welter, Paris 1901, p. 892 (p. 930). Hefele, *Histoire des conciles*, p. 102. Munier, *Concilia Africae*. A.345–A.525, p. 49. Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, p. 221.

⁹ Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, p. 222.

2. AUGUSTINE'S SERMONS ON THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

This second chapter summarizes the studies of Augustine's preaching on the feast of Pentecost. This *status quaestionis* provides an insight into the characteristics of Augustine's Pentecost sermons, and will thus serve to evaluate the liturgical context and content of *sermones* 29 and 29A which are situated around this feast.

Generally speaking, Augustine's Pentecost homilies have not been studied in significant detail.¹⁰ V. Saxer, for example, has made an analysis of seven preserved Pentecost homilies and drawn some conclusions with respect to their date, localisation and the scriptural texts cited therein.¹¹ G.C. Willis has also made a study of Augustine's *lectionarium* for Pentecost.¹² Both scholars agree that Acts 2, 13 and Mt. 9, 17 were among the readings used for the feast of Pentecost.

J.A.A. Stoop demonstrates the significance of Pentecost on the basis of the *sermones* delivered by Augustine on the feast.¹³ Augustine explains that Pentecost is the feast of the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the first instance, the event of Pentecost—the fact that the apostles spoke many languages—foretells the unity of the Church. Furthermore, the Church as the body of Christ came into existence as a pneumatic reality through the arrival of the Holy Spirit. Augustine's continued insistence on the unity of the Church is the result of an anti-Donatist reflex. Secondly, the arrival of the Holy Spirit signified the fulfilment of the law and introduced the beginning of the period of grace. It represented the beginning of the ongoing presence and activity of Christ in the Church as His body.

¹⁰ Augustine's understanding of the significance of Pentecost as such and unrelated to his Pentecost sermons has likewise not been the subject of thorough research. In addition to the studies mentioned in the present paper, I was able to find one single study, the title of which suggested that it had to do with Augustine's theology of Pentecost. In spite of the title, however, the said article does not focus on the significance of Pentecost as such. M.M. Campelo's contribution focuses rather on the first Christian community as described in Acts 4, 32, taking Augustine's understanding of prayer and community life as his point of departure. M.M. Campelo, 'Teología de Pentecostés en san Agustín,' *Estudio Agustiniano* 22 (1987) 3–51.

¹¹ V. Saxer (ed., trad., notes), *Saint Augustin. L'année liturgique* (Les Pères dans la Foi), Desclée De Brouwer, Paris 1980, pp. 21–23.

¹² G.C. Willis, *St. Augustine's Lectionary* (Alcuin Club Collection 44), S.P.C.K., London 1962, p. 29; pp. 68–69.

¹³ J.A.A. Stoop, 'Die Pinksterprediking van Augustinus,' *Kerk en Eredienst* 7 (1952) 67–72.

J.A.A. Stoop summarises the following Pentecost sermons: *sermones* 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, *sermo* Mai 158.

Thirdly, Augustine's Pentecost homilies offer an explanation of the significance of the sacraments in general and those of baptism and eucharist in particular, because the catechumens who could not be baptised at Easter were baptised on Pentecost. Indeed, there were often too many catechumens to be baptised by the bishop during the Easter vigil. The primary theme of Augustine's Pentecost homilies is thus the pneumatic unity of the Church.

M. Hoondert's recent study of Augustine's Pentecost *sermones* limits itself to those homilies that explicitly allude to the theme of Pentecost and were preached on the Pentecost Sunday itself: *sermones* 267 to 271 and *sermo* 272B.¹⁴ The homilies studied in the present contribution—*sermones* 29 and 29A—were delivered on the vigil of Pentecost and thus fall outside the boundaries of Hoondert's research.¹⁵ Hoondert examines the Pentecost sermons from three different perspectives. Firstly, he systematises the themes referred to in the homilies in question, subdividing the six Pentecost sermons according to their primary topics. The theme of the first group (*sermones* 267, 268, 269, 271) is the unity of the Church.¹⁶ It is possible that these homilies come from the period between 400 and 412 when Augustine was reacting against the perceived Donatists threat to the said unity. Augustine uses a number of images to give expression to the unity of the Church: one person speaks many languages, the Church and its various functions leads a common life thanks to the Holy Spirit, humanity is born from one human being. Moreover, the fiftieth day ($7 \times 7 + 1$) represents the Holy Spirit (7×7) who unites the Church (1). The second group (*sermones* 270, 272B) deals with the relationship between the Jewish law and the grace of the Holy Spirit. This group dates from the time at which Augustine was preoccupied with the Pelagians. Both homilies insist that the law can only be fulfilled through grace. Augustine reacts, furthermore, to the Pelagian claim that men and women are capable of choosing between good and evil on their own account. He gives expression to the relationship between the Jewish law and grace by way of numerical symbolism and the kinship between the

¹⁴ M. Hoondert also addresses the question of the authenticity of Pentecost sermon 378. Although the latter is generally not disputed, Hoondert calls it into question because its theme differs too much from the other Pentecost sermons.

¹⁵ M. Hoondert, 'Les sermons de saint Augustin pour le jour de la Pentecôte,' *Augustiniana* 46/3–4 (1996) 291–310.

¹⁶ Cf. T. Mariucci, 'La lingua dello Spirito. Il vincolo cristiano dell'unità-carità,' in: Id., *Meditazioni agostiniane. Antologia di studi e testi* (Collana Itinerari Spirituali. Nuova Serie), Edizioni Dehoniane, Rome 1991, pp. 31–44.

Jewish and Christian Pentecost. Secondly, Hoondert compares Augustine's Pentecost themes with the Pentecost homilies of his contemporaries. The comparison reveals that Augustine primarily sought inspiration for his themes in the Donatist and Pelagian controversies that were a feature of his day. Besides Augustine, Leo the Great is the only other preacher to allude to the relationship between the law and grace in his Pentecost homilies. The theme of Church unity is also found in the homilies of John Chrysostom and Leo the Great, but neither author speaks with the same frequency and emphasis on the subject as Augustine does. Thirdly, Hoondert studies the use of Scriptures in Augustine's Pentecost homilies. According to Hoondert, the conclusions of Saxer and Willis are ill-considered and insufficiently substantiated. Augustine makes no explicit reference to the Scriptures in his Pentecost sermons, thus rendering his liturgical use of the Scriptures impossible to reconstruct. The link between Acts 2, 13 and Mt. 9, 17, moreover, upon which Saxer and Willis based their hypothesis, is also made in other writings and homilies.

3. *SERMONES* 29 AND 29A

The third chapter separately analyses *sermones* 29 and 29A. As a first step the place and date of the studied sermon is sketched. The second movement consists of a presentation of the sermon as such. Step by step we follow Augustine's homiletic argumentation, with special attention for the content of the sermon. Our evaluation of the sermon is reserved for the third segment of this study in which the content, Augustine's preaching method, the possible connection with Pentecost and its relation to the audience are discussed.

3.1. *Sermo* 29

3.1.1. *Context*

The title of *sermo* 29¹⁷ informs us that the homily in question was delivered during the celebration of the vigil of Pentecost in the *Basilica*

¹⁷ PL 38, cols. 185–187. CCL 41, pp. 373–376. Ch. Mohrmann, *Sint Augustinus. Preken voor het volk handelende over de Heilige Schrift en het eigen van de tijd* (Monumenta Christiana. Eerste Reeks Geschriften van de Kerkvaders. Deel 1), Het Spectrum, Utrecht/Brussels 1948, pp. 64–67. J.E. Rotelle (ed.) & E. Hill (trans., notes), *Sermons II* (20–50), *On the Old Testament* (The Works of Saint Augustine, A translation for the 21st Century, III/2), New City Press, Brooklyn/New York 1990, pp. 116–119. Wijdeveld, *Carthaagse preken*, pp. 42–45; p. 169.

Restituta.¹⁸ B. Fischer's list locates the sermon in Carthage in 397.¹⁹ C. Lambot agrees with this dating: "Le sermon fut prononcé à Carthage, dans la Basilica Restituta, c.-à-d. la basilique principale sise à proximité de la résidence de l'évêque. Il eut lieu au cours de la vigile de Pentecôte 397, 24 mai, quelques jours donc avant les sermons 7 et 28 (cf. Rev. Bénédict. 47, 1935, p. 116). On avait récité ou chanté au moins deux psaumes, les 140^e et 117^e."²⁰ Lambot bases his dating on the identification of *sermo* 29 with sermon X⁶. 108 from Possidius' *Indiculum*,²¹ although he provides no further (content based) arguments to substantiate his position.²² In addition to Lambot's dating, M. Pellegrino also alludes to the dating of O. Perler²³ who likewise locates *sermo* 29 in Carthage on the vigil of Pentecost, but in his opinion that of May 25th/26th 418, because he believes *sermo* 29 to belong to the *sermones* collection *De Alleluia*, which

¹⁸ CCL 41, p. 373.

¹⁹ B. Fischer, *Verzeichnis der Sigel für Kirchenschriftsteller* (Vetus Latina 1/1), Herder, Freiburg-im-Breisgau 1963, pp. 116–129, p. 117.

²⁰ CCL 41, p. 372.

²¹ D. de Bruyne and C. Lambot situate the series of 32 homilies X⁶. 101–131 from Possidius' *Indiculum* (*Miscellanea Agostiniana 2: Studi Agostiniani*, Typografia Poliglotta Vaticana, Rome 1931, pp. 200–202) in Carthage in 397. Lambot argues the context of Carthage 397 for these sermons on the basis that this is the only year in which the three conditions required for this specific collection of sermons were met simultaneously. The first condition is that May 22nd falls in between Ascension and Pentecost, and even closer to the second feast. In 397 Ascension is celebrated on May 14th and Pentecost on May 24th. The second condition is that Augustine was in Carthage between May and August of the same year. This is the case for 397. A third condition is that Augustine only very recently became a member of the clergy, a fact he states in *sermo* 101. In 397 he was priest only for six years and bishop for two years. Perler agrees with the arguments of D. de Bruyne and C. Lambot, but does however not situate all 32 *sermones* in Carthage 397. According to him, in chronological order, the following sermons were preached in Carthage 397: *sermo* 284, *sermo* 343, ? *sermo* 261, *sermo* 101, *sermo* 60, *sermo* 145, *sermo* 285, *sermo* 266, ? *sermo* Denis 9, *sermo* 7, *sermo* 28, *sermo* 133, *sermo* 89, *sermo* 177, *sermo* 160, ? *sermo* 37 – ? *sermo* Guelferb. 30, *sermo* 72, ? *sermo* 330, ? *sermo* Morin 15, *sermo* Denis 11, *sermo* Denis 22. S. Lancel, in his Augustine biography, accepts Perler's chronology regarding the Carthaginian *sermones* of 397. D. de Bruyne, 'La chronologie de quelques sermons de saint Augustin,' *Revue Bénédictine* 43 (1931) 186–188. C. Lambot, 'Un "ieiunium quinquagesimae" en Afrique au IV^e siècle et date de quelques sermons de saint Augustin,' *Revue Bénédictine* 47 (1935) 114–121. C. Lambot, 'Le catalogue de Possidius et la collection carthusienne de sermons de saint Augustin,' *Revue Bénédictine* 60 (1950) 3–7. Lancel, *Saint Augustin*, pp. 265–289; pp. 697–700. Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, pp. 215–222; pp. 438–443.

²² É. Rebillard, *Sermones*, in: Fitzgerald, *Augustine through the Ages*, p. 775.

²³ M. Pellegrino, 'General Introduction,' in: J.E. Rotelle, *Sermons I (1–19), On the Old Testament* (The Works of Saint Augustine, A translation for the 21st Century, III/1), New City Press, New York 1990, pp. 13–163, p. 141.

Augustine delivered that year in Carthage.²⁴ Perler bases his arguments here on Lambot, who later adapted his initial dating.²⁵ Lambot places the collection in 418 because of the fact that Pentecost fell on May 27th in that year and that Augustine was known to be in Carthage at the time. A. Zwinggi agrees with Perler's dating.²⁶ Based on content related agreements with *sermones* 19 and 20, E. Hill dates *sermo* 29 to between 417 and 421.²⁷ G. Wijdeveld dates this sermon between 397 and 418. According to Hill, the date in question depends on when we situate the beginning of Augustine's *Confessiones*. The twofold meaning of *confiteri* alluded to in the *Confessiones* is central to *sermo* 29.²⁸

The title also indicates that Augustine preached *sermo* 29 in the *Basilica Restituta*.²⁹ Augustine preached a number of sermons in the Carthaginian *Basilica Restituta*,³⁰ which was located inside the city walls, served as the bishop's residence and episcopal seat, and as the metropolitan Cathedral of the church community in Carthage. The basilica also functioned as Aurelius' *secretarium* for a number of councils, including that of 397.³¹ The basilica was probably named after the fact that it was returned to the Catholics after confiscation during the persecution of 303–313 or after a (relatively recent) occupation by the Donatists.³²

²⁴ Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, p. 341; p. 342: n. 2; p. 467.

²⁵ C. Lambot, 'Le catalogue de Possidius et la collection carthusienne de sermons de saint Augustin,' *Revue Bénédictine* 60 (1950) 3–7, p. 6: n. 1. C. Lambot, 'Collection antique de sermons de saint Augustin,' *Revue Bénédictine* 57 (1947) 95–96.

²⁶ A. Zwinggi, 'Der Wortgottesdienst im Stundengebet,' *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 20 (1970) 129–140, p. 137.

P.-P. Verbraken collected the datings of C. Lambot, B. Fischer, O. Perler and A. Zwinggi in P.-P. Verbraken, *Études critiques sur les sermons authentiques de Saint Augustin* (Instrumenta Patristica XII), In Abbatia S. Petri/Martinus Nijhoff, Steenbrugis/Hagae Comitatus 1976, pp. 53–196, p. 60. Cf. H.R. Drobner, 'The Chronology of St. Augustine's *Sermones ad populum*,' *Augustinian Studies* 31 (2000) 211–218, pp. 214–215.

²⁷ Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 119: n. 1.

²⁸ Wijdeveld, *Carthaagse preken*, p. 169.

From the temporal perspective, Augustine's stay in Carthage in 397 can also be related to two early doctrinal documents: *De diuersis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* and (the beginning of) *De doctrina christiana*, the pastoral document *De agone christiano* and the two polemical documents *Contra epistulam Manichaei quam uocant Fundamenti* and *Contra partem Donati*.

²⁹ CCL 41 p. 373.

³⁰ S. Lancel, 'Carthago,' in: Mayer & Chelius (eds.), *Augustinus-Lexikon* I, 5/6, Schwabe & Co. AG, Basel 1992, 760–770, col. 768.

³¹ Lancel, *Carthago*, col. 765; col. 768.

³² Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, p. 418. Hill, *Sermons I* (1–19), p. 384: n. 1.

3.1.2. *Content*

The goal of *sermo* 29 is to demonstrate on the basis of scriptural argumentation that *confessio* and *confiteri* mean both praise of God and the admission of one's sins. The concrete occasion of *sermo* 29 lies in the fact that Ps. 118, 1 was read during the liturgical celebration,³³ apparently preceded by a reading from Ps. 141, 3–4 (140, 3–4). Occasioned by Ps. 118, 1 and Ps. 141, 3–4, the double meaning of *confessio* and *confiteri* thus became *sermo* 29's opening gambit.³⁴ Augustine develops a structured argumentation in the sermon. In the first part, he analyses the meaning of “*confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus est*”; “*confess to the Lord since He is good*.”³⁵ He begins by explaining the goodness of God (*sermo* 29, 1) and then goes on to analyse the double meaning of *confessio* and *confiteri*: praise (*sermo* 29, 2) and admission of sin (*sermo* 29, 3). In the second part of his homily, Augustine focuses on the moral dimension of the analysis made in the first part. God's goodness, praise of God and the admission of one's sins imply the confirmation of one's own ability to be good (*sermo* 29, 4–6).

³³ *Sermo* 29, 1. CCL 41 p. 373.

³⁴ It is interesting to note that Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1) is mentioned only 19 times in Augustine's entire oeuvre, and 9 times in *sermones* 29 and 29A. It is even more striking that the verse is only referred to on three other occasions in the context of the double meaning of *confessio/confiteri*: *Enarratio in Psalmum* 117, 2 and *sermones* 29B, 1; 7 (Dolbeau 8) and 68, 2. The date of the *enarratio* remains uncertain. *Sermo* 68 is dated late (between 425 and 430). *Sermo* 29B (Dolbeau 8) is one of the *sermones* dated by Hombert (403–408). The latter admits, however, that the arguments he uses to support this late dating are not convincing. It is interesting to note that *sermo* 29B shares further similarities with *sermones* 29 and 29A in addition to the quotation of Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1) and the double meaning of *confessio/confiteri*: the distinction between human and divine administration of justice, God's hatred of sin, and the need to admit one's own guilt. Cf. P.-M. Hombert, 'Augustin, prédicateur de la grâce au début de son épiscopat', in: G. Madec (ed.), *Augustin Prédicateur (395–411). Actes du Colloque International de Chantilly (5–7 septembre 1996)*, Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, Paris 1996, pp. 217–245, pp. 301–304.

Mayer's lemma together with personal research via CAG demonstrates that Augustine's use of *confessio* and *confiteri* cannot be employed in support of a possible dating. Although the sense 'to praise God' (and the combination with an explicit reference to the multiple significance of *confessio/confiteri*) represents the minority meaning in Augustine's usage, the said meaning occurs from the chronological perspective throughout his work. It is striking, nevertheless, that more than half the occurrences of *confessio/confiteri* (meaning praise and referring to the double significance) are to be found in Augustine's preaching (*Sermones, Enarrationes in Psalmos, In Iohannis evangelium tractatus, In epistulam Iohannis ad Parthos tractatus*). C. Mayer, *Confessio, confiteri*, Augustinus-Lexikon 1 (1986–1994) 1122–1134.

³⁵ CCL 41, p. 373. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 116.

"Confess to the Lord since he is good" (Ps. 118, 1).³⁶ Augustine begins by turning his attention to the goodness of God.³⁷ The power of goodness is so great that it is also sought after by the wicked. All goodness comes from God. "And God made all things, and behold they were very good" (Gn. 1, 31).³⁸ Good things are not good of themselves, they are good because God made them; God is good in himself since no other good created Him. God is not good to himself alone, but also to us.³⁹

Augustine then explains that *confiteri* means both to praise and to confess. "Confession can mean either praising or repenting."⁴⁰ *Confessio* does not only have to do with sin. Christ is also found as the subject of the verb: "I confess to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the prudent and have revealed them to little ones" (Mt. 11, 25).⁴¹ "But this confessor is a praiser, not a sinner."⁴² As these biblical quotations reveal, Christ was without sin⁴³ and as a result his *confessio* cannot have been a confession of sin.

Having explained the double meaning of *confessio*, Augustine focuses further on the significance and necessity of the confession of sin: the *confessio peccatorum* (confession of sins) is *salubris* (salutary).⁴⁴ "That's why we heard in the psalm that was read first, *Set a guard, Lord, on my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips, and do not tip my heart into words of malice, to excusing my sins with excuses* (Ps. 141, 3-4)."⁴⁵

³⁶ Hill, *Sermons II* (20-50), p. 116.

³⁷ *Sermo* 29, 1.

³⁸ Hill, *Sermons II* (20-50), p. 116.

³⁹ *Sermo* 29, 1: Sed alia quae dicuntur bona, ab aliquo bono habent ut sint bona. Si autem quaerimus omnia bona a quo habent ut sint bona, recolamus: *et fecit Deus omnia, et ecce bona ualde* [Gn. 1, 31]. Nullum igitur esset bonum, nisi factum esset a bono. Et a quali bono? Quod nullus fecit. [...] Qui fecit haec supra omnia est bonus, quia nullus eum fecit bonus, sed a se ipso bonus est. Nec tamen sibi soli, sed et nobis bonus est. CCL 41 p. 373.

⁴⁰ *Sermo* 29, 2: Confessio aut laudantis est, aut paenitentis. CCL 41 p. 373. Hill, *Sermons II* (20-50), p. 116.

⁴¹ Hill, *Sermons II* (20-50), p. 117.

Sermo 29, 2: Sed ut nouerit caritas uestra non ad sola peccata pertinere confessionem, audiamus illum de quo dubitare non possumus quod nullum omnino habebat peccatum exclamantem et dicentem: *Confiteor tibi, Pater, Domine caeli et terrae* [Mt. 11, 25]. CCL 41 pp. 373-374.

⁴² *Sermo* 29, 2: Sed confessor iste, laudator est, non peccator. CCL 41 p. 374. Hill, *Sermons II* (20-50), p. 117.

⁴³ 1 Peter 2, 22; Jn. 14, 30.

⁴⁴ *Sermo* 29, 3. CCL 41 p. 374.

⁴⁵ *Sermo* 29, 3: Vnde audiuius in Psalmo qui primo lectus est: *pone Domine custodiam ori meo et ostium continentiae circum labia mea, ut non declines cor meum in uerba*

According to Augustine, Ps. 141, 3–4 (140, 3–4) illustrates the ‘confession of sin’ aspect in the terms *confessio* and *confiteri*. In his opinion, Ps. 141, 3–4 demonstrates the need to confess one’s sins. More specifically, the psalm verse points out that one must confess one’s sins and not try to make excuses for them. When one looks for excuses, pretexts and reasons to deny one’s sins, the devil triumphs. Augustine thus appeals to his audience on the basis of Ps. 41, 4 (Ps. 40, 5), not to make excuses for sin but to accuse oneself thereof.⁴⁶

Augustine’s conclusions on the distinction between human and divine administration of justice in the following section of the sermon also rest on his analysis of the double meaning of *confiteri* and *confessio*: “If you want to praise, what can you more safely praise than the Good one? If you want to praise, if you want to make the confession of praise, what can you more safely praise than the Good One? If you want to confess your sins, to whom can you more safely do it than the Good one?”⁴⁷ Those who confess their sins to other human beings are subject to condemnation because human beings are evil. Those who confess to God are absolved because God is good. Augustine further substantiates this conclusion on the basis of the anthropological proposition that human beings are good on account of God and evil on account of themselves.⁴⁸ He thus appeals

maligna, ad excusandum excusationes in peccatis [Ps. 141, 1–3/140, 1–3]. CCL 41 p. 374. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 117.

⁴⁶ *Sermo* 29, 3: Et dic Deo tuo: ego dixi, Domine, miserere mei, sana animam meam, quoniam peccaui tibi. Ego, inquit, ego dixi, non diabolus, non fortuna, non fatum. Ego dixi: non me excuso, sed accuso. *Ego dixi, miserere mei, sana animam meam*. Vnde enim aegrotat? *Quoniam peccaui tibi* [Ps. 41, 4 (40, 5)]. CCL 41 p. 374.

The verbs *sanare* and *aegrotare* are a characteristic feature of the *medicus* motif that enjoys a prominent place in Augustine’s *sermones*. See: R. Arbesmann, ‘Christ the “Medicus humilis” in St. Augustine,’ in: *Augustinus Magister. Congrès International Augustinien, Paris 21–24 Septembre 1954*, Vol. II, Études Augustiniennes, Paris 1954, pp. 623–629. R. Arbesmann, ‘The Concept of ‘Christus Medicus’ in St. Augustine,’ *Traditio* 10 (1954) 1–28. A. Dupont, ‘*Christus Medicus*. De genezing van de mens door de arts Christus in de preken van Augustinus,’ in B. Bruning (red.), *Oorlog en Vrede. Augustinus in confrontatie met het heden*, Augustijns Historisch Instituut, Leuven 2006, pp. 71–99. P.C.J. Eijkenboom, *Het Christus-Medicus-Motief in de preken van Sint Augustinus*, Van Gorcum & Comp. N.V., Assen 1960. Th. Martin, ‘Paul the Patient. “Christus Medicus” and the “Stimulus Carnis” (2 Cor 12, 7): A consideration of Augustine’s Medicinal Christology,’ *Augustinian Studies* 32/2 (2001) 219–256.

⁴⁷ *Sermo* 29, 4: Si laudare uis, quid securius laudas quam bonum? Si laudare uis, si confessionem laudis habere uis, quid securius laudas quam bonum? Si peccata tua confiteri uis, cui tutius quam bono? CCL 41 p. 375. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), pp. 117–118.

⁴⁸ *Sermo* 29, 4: Breuiter tibi dicta est laus Domini tui: *Bonus est*. Si et tu bonus es, lauda

to his audience to retreat from themselves and come to the Creator. By retreating from oneself, one ultimately follows oneself and achieves union with the Creator.⁴⁹

Reflecting on the goodness of God, Augustine appeals to his listeners to strive after goodness themselves.⁵⁰ He observes that when people desire something, they always want it to be good: a good horse, a good farm, a good home, a good wife, a good pair of boots. Everything people desire has to be good, he notes, with the apparent exception on their own soul.⁵¹ If somebody desires good things, he argues, then he or she first has to be what he or she desires. The possession of good things is of little value if people themselves are not good, if they themselves are lost.⁵²

Augustine concludes that being good means confessing one's own sins.⁵³ In order to be good one must hate whatever is evil in oneself, in other words one must confess one's sins with a contrite heart. God hates sin. If people hate in themselves what God hates, then they bind themselves to God through their *uoluntas* (will). Sin, after all, must be punished by God or by oneself.⁵⁴ Having devoted the lion's share of *sermo* 29 to the meaning of *confessio* and *confiteri* in the semantic context of *peccata* (sins), *punire* (to punish), *paenitere* (to repent), *punitio* (punishment) and *damnatio* (condemnation), he reconnects *confessio* and *confiteri* with *laudare* (to praise) (and even *amare*, to love) towards the end of his homily via a quotation from Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1).⁵⁵

unde es bonus; si malus es, lauda unde sis bonus. Si enim bonus es, ab illo bonus es; si malus es, a te malus es. CCL 41 p. 375.

The idea that God is in fact the one who acts when people do good is already present in Augustine's early *gratia* preaching. See in this regard: Hombert, *Augustin, prédicateur de la grâce*, pp. 236–238.

⁴⁹ *Sermo* 29, 4: Fuge te et ueni ad illum qui fecit te, quia fugiendo te sequeris te, et sequendo te haeres in eo qui fecit te. CCL 41 p. 375.

⁵⁰ *Sermo* 29, 5.

⁵¹ *Sermo* 29, 5: Quanta bona quaeris, homo male! Certe malus es. Dic mihi quid uelis nisi bonum? [...] Animam solam malam! CCL 41 p. 375.

⁵² *Sermo* 29, 5: Si bona quaeris, prius esto ipse quod quaeris. Si autem malus multa bona inuenisti, quid tibi prodest, quia tu peristi? CCL 41 p. 375.

⁵³ *Sermo* 29, 6.

⁵⁴ *Sermo* 29, 6: Peccatum enim sine dubitatione puniendum est. Hoc debetur peccato: punitio, damnatio. Puniendum est peccatum, aut a te aut ab ipso. Si punitur a te, tunc punitur sine te; si uero a te non punitur, tecum punitur. CCL 41 p. 376.

⁵⁵ *Sermo* 29, 6: *Confitemini ergo Domino quoniam bonus est* [Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1)]. Laudate quantum potestis, amate quantum potestis: *Effundite coram illo corda uestra, Deus adiutor noster* [Ps. 62, 8 (61, 9)], *quoniam bonus est* [Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1)]. CCL 41 p. 376.

3.1.3. *Evaluation*

The title of *sermo* 29 alludes to the fact that it deals with Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1): “*confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus est*”; “*confess to the Lord since He is good*”.⁵⁶ This psalm verse is repeated with some frequency throughout the short sermon, serving as a sort of rhythmical refrain. Augustine opens and closes his sermon with the verse. The pre-Christian and secular significance of *confessio*, *confiteri* is the admission of guilt. Their later Christian significance—the confession of one’s own sins—remains closely related to the profane understanding. From a general church perspective, the terms *confessio* and *confiteri* allude to bearing witness to the Christian faith (expressed in the *symbolum*). A third meaning of *confessio* and *confiteri* in Christian usage alludes to praise given to God. All three of these Christian meanings—confession of faith, admission of sins, praise of God—are present in Augustine’s oeuvre.⁵⁷ It would appear that the faithful to whom Augustine was preaching, however, were not particularly well informed with respect to the multiple meanings of *confessio*, *confiteri*. At the beginning of *sermo* 29, Augustine points out that some believers immediately beat their breasts when they hear the word *confessio* in the Scriptures, as if both *confessio* and *confiteri* had only to do with sin.⁵⁸

The combination of Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1) and Ps. 141, 3–4 (140, 3–4) illustrates Augustine’s use of associative biblical interpretation in his *sermones*. Indeed, a number of other scriptural references have a role to play in this short *sermo*.⁵⁹ While the latter serve as illustrations in support of his argument, they do not demonstrate any rhetorical importance in the sermon in question. *Sermo* 29 is short and to the point, avoiding complex

⁵⁶ CCL 41, p. 373. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 116.

⁵⁷ On the multiple meanings of *confiteri*, *confessio*, see e.g. M. Skutella (ed.), A. Solignac (intro., notes), E. Trehorel & G. Bouissou (trans.), *Les Confessions (livres I–VII)* (Bibliothèque Augustinienne, Oeuvres de Saint Augustin 13), Desclée De Brouwer, Paris 1962, pp. 9–12.

For the semantic history of the terms *confessio* and *confiteri*, word statistics and range of meanings in Augustine, profane usage, ecclesial usage (confession of faith, admission of sins, praise of God) and a recent bibliography on the theme in question see also the excellent lemma by C. Mayer, *Confessio, confiteri*, *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1986–1994) 1122–1134.

⁵⁸ *Sermo* 29, 2. CCL 41 p. 373.

⁵⁹ *Sermo* 29, 1: Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1); Gn. 1, 31.

Sermo 29, 2: Mt. 11, 25; 1 Peter 2, 22; Jn. 14, 30; Mt. 11, 25.

Sermo 29, 3: Ps. 141, 3–4 (140, 3–4); Ps. 41, 4 (40, 5).

Sermo 29, 4–5:—.

Sermo 29, 6: Ps. 62, 8 (61, 9); Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1).

arguments and extensive scriptural associations. Augustine addresses his public directly and supplements his words with concrete examples, pointing out, for example, that people are often inclined to avoid accepting personal guilt⁶⁰ and the fact that people desire only good things.⁶¹ His pedagogical and rhetorical concerns are evident from the careful structure he applies to his sermon. For the sake of both clarity and ornament, for example, he employs a number of parallelisms.⁶² The sermon's need to explain the various meanings of the verb *confiteri*, its solid structure and the simplicity of its vibrant illustrations suggests a mixed audience, the majority of which had received only a basic education or lacked the necessary strengths in Latin. Only the title itself provides us with any information on the date and rationale behind *sermo* 29.

The various distinct themes alluded to in the studies of J.A.A. Stoop and M. Hoondert in relation to Augustine's Pentecost preaching are not present in *sermo* 29. The sermon in question should be associated in the first instance with the *Confessiones*. The elaboration of the theme of the twofold meaning of *confessio* and *confiteri* (throughout the entire sermon) and the idea that turning away from oneself leads one to find oneself and God (in *sermo* 29, 4) represent two striking parallels with the *Confessiones*. A degree of consensus exists among Augustine scholars on the date of the sermon in question—between 397 and 401—, an early dating (as close as possible to the end of 397) being the most likely. Given the fact that Augustine probably drafted several versions of the *Confessiones*, it is reasonable to assume that he was already working on it around 397.⁶³ The content related association between *sermo* 29 and the *Confessiones* offers some support to the hypothetical dating of the sermon in 397, without leading to a definitive conclusion in this regard.

⁶⁰ *Sermo* 29, 3.

⁶¹ *Sermo* 29, 5.

⁶² *Sermo* 29, 2: Sed confessor iste, laudator est, non peccator. CCL 41 p. 374.

Sermo 29, 3: [...] non me excuso, sed accuso. CCL 41 p. 374.

Sermo 29, 5: Equum quaeris, nonnisi bonum; fundum quaeris, nonnisi bonum; domum quaeris, nonnisi bonam; uxorem quaeris, nonnisi bonam; tunicam nonnisi bonam, caligam nonnisi bonam. Animam solam malam! CCL 41 p. 375.

⁶³ Feldmann, *Confessiones*, *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1986–1994) 1134–1193, cols. 1184–1186. F. Van Fleteren, 'Confessiones,' in: Fitzgerald (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, 227–232, p. 227.

3.2. *Sermo 29 A (Denis 9)*3.2.1. *Context*

With a degree of reservation, O. Perler dates *sermo* 29A⁶⁴ to the vigil of the feast of Pentecost on May 23rd 397, based on its identification with sermon X⁶. 108 from Possidius' *Indiculum*.⁶⁵ M. Pellegrino, É. Rebillard and A. Zwinggi accept this date, albeit with the same degree of reservation.⁶⁶ E. Hill is more inclined to opt for an earlier date: "This sermon, like the previous one, was possibly preached at a vigil of Pentecost. The rather elaborate style, less spontaneous than usual, suggests an early date, even earlier than 397."⁶⁷ C. Lambot, however, is not so certain: "Le sermon ne fournit aucune donnée qui permette de le dater. Peut-être a-t-il été prononcé, comme le sermon 29, en une vigile de Pentecôte."⁶⁸

3.2.2. *Content*

The title of *sermo* 29A suggests that the sermon deals with Ps. 117, 1 (118, 1): "*Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus est*."⁶⁹ It seems possible that a Pentecost vigil consisted of Bible readings and the singing of psalms in similar fashion to the Easter vigil.⁷⁰ Augustine appears to have drafted

⁶⁴ G. Morin (ed.), *Miscellanea Agostiniana 1: Sancti Augustini Sermones post Maurinos reperti*, Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, Roma 1930, pp. 39–42. CCL 41 pp. 378–380.

J.E. Rotelle (ed.) & E. Hill (trans., notes), *Sermons II (20–50)*, pp. 120–122.

⁶⁵ Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, p. 216; p. 439.

Lambot initially identified the sermon in question with *sermo* 29. For further discussion of this change of identification and for Lambot's arguments in support of dating sermons X⁶. 101–131 from Possidius' *Indiculum* to 397 in Carthage see above (on the proposed datings of *sermo* 29). P.-P. Verbraken has compiled the datings proposed by C. Lambot, O. Perler and A. Zwinggi. Verbraken, *Études critiques*, p. 162. Cf. Drobner, 'The Chronology', pp. 214–215.

⁶⁶ Rebillard, *Sermones*, p. 775. Pellegrino, 'General Introduction,' p. 141. Perler, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin*, p. 216; p. 439. Zwinggi, 'Der Wortgottesdienst,' p. 136.

⁶⁷ Hill, *Sermons II (20–50)*, p. 384: n. 1.

⁶⁸ CCL 41 p. 377.

⁶⁹ The beginning of the sermon also makes clear that Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1) was sung in the liturgy of that day. *Sermo* 29A, 1: *Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus est, quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius* [Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1)]. *Quod nos uoce Psalmi Spiritus Sanctus hortatus est, cui ore uno et corde uno respondebamus alleluia*, [...]. CCL 41 p. 378.

This opening sentence contains the only reference to the Holy Spirit in the entire homily, delivered nonetheless on the eve of Pentecost.

⁷⁰ V. Saxer, *Morts, martyrs, reliques en Afrique chrétienne aux premiers siècles. Les témoignages de Tertullien, Cyprien et Augustin à la lumière de l'archéologie africaine*, Editions Beauchesne, Paris 1980, pp. 197–200. Cf. F.-W. Thiele, *Die Theologie der 'Vigilia' nach den Sermones des hl. Augustinus zur Ostervigil*, Bernward Verlag, Hildesheim 1979.

sermo 29A on the basis of a simple structure that was easy to follow: *Confiteri* is necessary and it is safe to do so because God is good:

- a) Creation is good. Human suffering is punishment and purification (*sermo* 29A, 1; CCL 41 p. 378/ll. 1–34).
- b) God is good and merciful (*sermo* 29A, 2; CCL 41 p. 379/ll. 34–53).
- c) Human goodness comes from God, human wickedness from man (*sermo* 29A, 2; CCL 41 p. 379/ll. 53–57).
- d) Confessing to God entails absolution (*sermo* 29A, 3; CCL 41 pp. 379–380/ll. 58–75).
- e) God can only absolve if one confesses (*sermo* 29A, 4; CCL 41 p. 380/ll. 76–94).

a) “*Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus est, quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius*,” (‘Confess to the Lord since He is good, since his mercy is for ever’) [Ps. 117, 1 (118, 1)].⁷¹ Praise of God’s goodness always goes hand in hand with praise of his mercifulness. *Misericordia* (mercy) stands in the first instance for God’s forgiving nature. In this sense, Augustine establishes a link between the two meanings of *confiteri* and *confessio*: the confession of one’s own sins and the veneration of a merciful God who forgives one’s sins. If people do one thing then they also do the other. People accuse themselves of wickedness in the hope that God will deal with them according to his *misericordia*. One praises his *misericordia* by recalling one’s own wickedness.⁷²

God is good. Augustine denies any suggestion that God is unjust or that he is responsible for the creation of evil creatures.⁷³ Creation is also good. Human suffering is a punishment and/or purification. Augustine substantiates these two propositions on the basis of the Scriptures.⁷⁴ Ps. 104, 24 (103, 24) teaches that God created all things. If God created all things good, then there can be no such thing as evil creatures. God is not unjust. Prov. 3, 12 demonstrates that suffering in this present—passing—life is a purification. Ps. 39, 11 (38, 12) and Ps. 119, 67 (118, 67) add that human suffering is a punishment for sin. Augustine reinforces these two positions with a theodicy.⁷⁵ If bad things happen to people in

⁷¹ *Sermo* 29A, 1. CCL 41 p. 378. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 120.

⁷² *Sermo* 29A, 1: Neque enim sola commemoratio peccatorum nostrorum, sed etiam Domini nostri laudatio confessio dicitur, quia, et si unum horum faciamus, non sine altero facimus. Nam et iniquitatem nostram cum spe misericordiae ipsius accusamus, et ipsius misericordiam cum iniquitatis nostrae recordatione laudamus. CCL 41 p. 378.

⁷³ *Sermo* 29A, 1.

⁷⁴ *Sermo* 29A, 2.

⁷⁵ *Sermo* 29A, 2.

spite of their prayers to the contrary, God makes something good of it nonetheless. People may be corrected by pain or suffering, but God's rage does not last forever,⁷⁶ although his *misericordia* is everlasting.

b) God's goodness and mercy are central to *sermo* 29A. "What could be as good as our God?"⁷⁷ God is good. His sun shines on both good and bad and his rain falls on the just and the unjust alike.⁷⁸ People persist in their wickedness, but God never ceases to invite them to return to Him. People even receive much *solacia* (consolations) from God *in pressura* (in affliction).⁷⁹ God is *misericors* (merciful), because they are able to transform the punishment due for their sins by transforming themselves.⁸⁰

In a brief statement, Augustine limits the *confessio* to the praise addressed to God alone, although he does not offer further elaboration.⁸¹ The statement as such is out of place within the structure of the argumentation he develops in *sermo* 29A. The subsequent remark on God's *gratia* also belongs to this *intermezzo*: God's grace corrects those who are *peruersi corde* (pervert of heart).⁸²

c) *Sermo* 29A, 2 contains a highly succinct presentation of Augustine's anthropology. He indicates on the one hand that human beings are capable of changing the punishment due in the future for their sins by changing themselves. At the same time, however, he points out that people's wicked desires bend them to the ground while God's grace lifts them up. This combination of human freedom and divine grace is also evident in Augustine's conviction that human goodness stems from God,

⁷⁶ Ps. 103, 9 (102, 9).

⁷⁷ *Sermo* 29A, 2: Quid tam bonum quam Deus noster? CCL 41 p. 379. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 121.

⁷⁸ Mt. 5, 45.

⁷⁹ *Sermo* 29A, 2. CCL 41 p. 379.

⁸⁰ *Sermo* 29A, 2: Quid tam misericors quam Deus noster, cuius et futuram sententiam mutati mutamus? CCL 41 p. 379.

⁸¹ *Sermo* 29A, 2: Non omnium rerum laudes confessiones sunt, sed laudes Domini Dei nostri. CCL 41 p. 379.

⁸² *Sermo* 29A, 2: Et quoniam sua malitia peruersus erat, ipsius autem gratia correctus est, simul oportet confiteatur *quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius* [Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1)]. CCL 41 p. 379.

Earlier in *sermo* 29A, 2, Augustine had already declared that, in contrast to God's *misericordia*, correction through pain and suffering did not last forever. Here Augustine points out that God's *gratia* corrects sinners. P.-M. Hombert does not refer to corrective *gratia* in Augustine's early *gratia* preaching.

while human wickedness stems from the person him or herself.⁸³ God is good for people when they are good but also when they are bad. God calls people to conversion and waits for them to change their ways. He forgives them when they do so and crowns them if they do not turn their back on Him.⁸⁴

d) Human beings should not be afraid of confessing their sins to God. Indeed, such confession differs fundamentally from the human administration of justice, which goes hand in hand with torture. In Augustine's opinion, torture makes little sense. While a person's body may be broken, it is never certain if the said person's conscience has opened itself. Augustine sets his sights here in particular on the difference between human and divine jurisprudence. Those who confess to human beings are subject to punishment.⁸⁵ A human prosecutor endeavours to find out the things he does not yet know. God, on the other hand, already knows the things people are unwilling to confess.

e) But if God knows everything, why then do people have to confess?⁸⁶ It is only when they are prepared to recognise (*agnoscere*) their sins that God can punish these sins by knowing them (*cognoscere*) and rectifying them by forgiving them (*ignoscere*).⁸⁷ Augustine demonstrates on the basis of a number of psalm verses that it is essential to confess one's

⁸³ For the same anthropology see *sermo* 29, 4.

⁸⁴ *Sermo* 29A, 2: Nos mali, bonus ille; nos ab ipso boni, a nobis mali; bonus ille nobis bonis, bonus ille nobis malis. Nos saeuientes in nos, ille misericors erga nos. Vocat ut conuertamur; expectat donec conuertamur; ignoscit si conuertamur; coronat si non auertamur. CCL 41 p. 379.

The 'crown' theme plays an important role in Augustine's martyr homilies (martyrs were crowned by Christ), which had a moral/exhortative goal, calling the faithful to live a Christian life, the challenge of such a life being as weighty as the challenge of martyrdom. Christians who live the moral life are thus crowned with the same crown. The verb *coronare* is used here in *sermo* 29A, 2 with the same moral significance.

⁸⁵ *Sermo* 29A, 3: Qui confessus fuerit homini, punitur; Deo qui confessus fuerit, liberatur. CCL 41 p. 380.

This same distinction between human and divine administration of justice is present in *sermo* 29, 4.

⁸⁶ *Sermo* 29A, 4.

⁸⁷ *Sermo* 29A, 4: Quid putas, nisi quia Deus uult, a te ut peccatum tuum cognoscendo puniatur, et ab illo ignoscendo soluatur? Nam quomodo illum cupis ignoscere, quod tu non uis agnoscere? [...] Nec ideo dicitur Deus auertere faciem, quia non cognoscit, sed quia ignoscit. CCL 41 p. 380.

sins, to admit them and not to hide them.⁸⁸ Only then can one hope for forgiveness. Augustine returns to the difference between confessing to a human judge and confessing to God at the end of *sermo* 29A. The reason people are afraid to confess to a human judge is that he himself is wicked, or at least obliged to apply the law in all its severity. People have no reason to fear when they confess to God, however, “*quoniam bonus est, quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius*”, “*since He is good, since his mercy is for ever*” [Ps. 117, 1 (118, 1)].⁸⁹

3.2.3. Content

From the perspective of style, *sermo* 29A exhibits a solid structure. Word explanation is a typical characteristic of Augustine’s homiletics. *Alleluia* means ‘laudate Dominum’ (‘praise the Lord’) in Latin.⁹⁰ At the end of the homily, Augustine clearly develops a wordplay by establishing a link between the verbs *cognoscere* (know), *ignoscere* (forgive), *agnoscere* (recognise).⁹¹

While scholars are not certain as to the dating of *sermo* 29A, the striking parallel with *sermo* 29 cannot be ignored in this regard. As with *sermo* 29, Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1) likewise serves as the foundation upon which *sermo* 29A is constructed. Both homilies deal with the same themes on the basis of their discussion of Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1): the twofold meaning of *confessio*; God is good and he makes all things good; human goodness comes from God; human badness comes from humans themselves; the need to confess one’s sins; confession of one’s sins to a human judge leads to punishment, while confession to God leads to forgiveness. In similar fashion to *sermo* 29, the homiletic themes related to Pentecost and distinguished by J.A.A. Stoop and M. Hoondert are not evident in *sermo* 29A. As a matter of fact, the latter contains neither a Pentecost theology nor a pneumatology. As with *sermo* 29, moreover, the link with the *Confessiones* is unmistakable.

At the same time, however, a number of content related as well as structural differences are also apparent between the two sermons. While

⁸⁸ Ps. 32, 5 (31, 5); 51, 3 (50, 5); 51, 9 (50, 11).

The need to confess one’s sins is also prominent in *sermo* 29, 3; 6.

⁸⁹ *Sermo* 29A, 4: Si ergo propterea times, homo, confiteri homini iudici, quia malus est, aut quia seueritatem legis implere compellitur, securus confiteri Domino, *quoniam bonus est, quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius* [Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1)]. CCL 41 p. 380. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 122.

⁹⁰ *Sermo* 29A, 1. CCL 41 p. 378. Hill, *Sermons II* (20–50), p. 120.

⁹¹ *Sermo* 29A, 4. CCL 41 p. 380.

sermo 29 would appear to place greater emphasis on the confession of sins, Augustine explores the goodness of God in greater depth in *sermo* 29A. God's goodness serves to guarantee one's safety when one confesses one's sins. While *sermo* 29 limits itself to the *bonitas* (goodness) of God as the reason for confessing one's sins, *sermo* 29A adds God's *misericordia* (mercy) as an additional motivation. Although *sermo* 29A is shorter than *sermo* 29, it contains more biblical references, especially from the Psalms.⁹² Apart from the allusions in both sermons to Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1), there is no further agreement between them when it comes to additional scriptural references. In *sermo* 29A, the said scriptural references tend to be used 'by way of illustration'. The evident differences between the sermons, nevertheless, are best described as supplementary rather than contradictory. In other words, *sermo* 29A presents a different approach to the same psalm verse and includes the same basic elements as *sermo* 29. This can be explained in two possible ways. Firstly, that *sermo* 29A was delivered by Augustine on the same day as *sermo* 29, albeit for a different public and at a different time (on the same day or even within the same vigil), or in a different location (in Carthage). It is thus reasonable to argue that one sermon followed shortly after the other. Secondly, it is possible to argue that the sermons were separated by a number of years, and that Augustine developed a similar set of arguments on different occasions although based on the same biblical verse, namely Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1). The parallel didactic bias of both sermons might suggest a similar sort of broad if poorly educated audience. The content of *sermones* 29 and 29A, however, does not provide us with information on the exact location, time and reason for the sermons or their intended public.

4. CONCLUSION

The subject of *gratia* is only discretely present in the sermons we have been discussing, namely in its description of God. The forgiving God is good and merciful, everything that can be said to be good about human persons comes from Him. God crowns the struggling human person and transforms human suffering for the good. *Sermones* 29 and 29A

⁹² *Sermo* 29A, 1: Ps. 118, 1 (117, 1); Prov. 3, 12.

Sermo 29A, 2: Ps. 39, 11 (38, 12); 73, 1 (72, 1); 103, 9 (102, 9); 104, 24 (103, 24); 119, 67 (118, 67); Mt. 5, 45.

Sermo 29A, 3:—.

Sermo 29A, 4: Ps. 32, 5 (31, 5); 51, 3 (50, 5); 51, 9 (50, 11); 118, 1 (117, 1).

likewise contain very little in terms of Christology. Augustine evidently limits himself in these short homilies to the subject at hand, to a single delimited subject, the clear explanation of the meaning of *confiteri* and *confessio*. In this context, *sermo* 29 states that Christ was without sin. Both homilies exhibit in the first instance a moral-exhortative content, a call to be contrite with regard to one's own sins, to praise God, to struggle against sin, and to turn away from the worldly.

Hoondert's study of Augustine's Pentecost homilies demonstrates a degree of polemic content: either anti-Donatist (on the unity of the church) or anti-Pelagian (on grace). The fact that *sermones* 29 and 29A, should they indeed be Pentecost sermons, would appear to lack any polemical impact, might be explained by the absence of supporters of such ideas among his audience. It might also suggest an earlier dating for the sermons in question, which would seem to be reinforced by the link we observed between them and the *Confessiones*.

The theme of Pentecost is not evident in sermons 29 and 29A. Its absence does not suggest that Augustine was not yet fully aware of the significance of the feast. Indeed, his other Pentecost sermons clearly testify to the contrary. If both sermons are to be associated in terms of time and liturgy to the feast of Pentecost, the absence of the said theme points in the first instance to the fact that Augustine still reserved the right to determine the content of his homilies, whatever the liturgical occasion or given circumstances. Studies of patristic homiletics tend to confirm that preachers at that time had considerable freedom in their choice of topic. While it goes without saying that the absence of the Pentecost theme might suggest that the homilies in question were not preached on Pentecost, this remains difficult to prove or reject on the basis of content. On the other hand, the absent theme might suggest a specific intended audience: an uneducated public, unfamiliar with pneumatological questions, for whom the basic meaning of *confiteri* and *confessio* (still) had to be explained.

CHAPTER FIVE

‘PRACTICING WHAT HE HAD TAUGHT’: AUGUSTINE’S SERMONS ON CYPRIAN

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Among Augustine’s predecessors, Cyprian occupies a prominent place. Alongside Ambrose, he is the Church Father whom Augustine most often mentions by name, and it is clear that Augustine was thoroughly acquainted with Cyprian’s works and held them in great esteem, considering Cyprian himself a man of indisputable authority.¹ He brings forward Cyprian’s testimony not only in his debates with the Donatists and Pelagians,² but also in various practical matters. For instance, the 3rd century bishop is adduced as an example for the legitimacy of using true pagan knowledge in Christian teaching.³ On a more theoretical level, Cyprian has been a major influence upon Augustine’s thought about *auctoritas*.⁴ Finally, as an exemplary martyr, Cyprian must have been a source of public pride in Augustine’s Africa and of personal inspiration to Augustine himself.

Augustine’s admiration for Cyprian can perhaps best be seen in the numerous sermons that he delivered on the yearly occasion of Cyprian’s feast on September, 14th.⁵ It may be interesting to have a closer look at the image of Cyprian as it is conveyed by these various sermons. What

¹ Cf. Ernst Dassmann, ‘Cyprianus’, in: Cornelius Mayer (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon* vol. 2. (Basel 1996–2002), 196–211, esp. 199–200. Dassmann refers to over 650 instances in Augustine’s work where Cyprian is mentioned. See also James P. Burns, ‘Appropriating Augustine appropriating Cyprian’, *Augustinian Studies* 36 (2005) 113–130.

² Cf. Ernst Dassmann, ‘“Tam Ambrosianus quam Cyprianus” (c.Iul.imp.4,112), Augustinus Helfer im pelagianischen Streit’, in: D. Papandreou a.o. (eds.), *Oecumenica et patristica. Festschrift W. Schneemelcher* (Stuttgart etc. 1989) 259–268.

³ *Doctr.Chr.* 2,146.

⁴ Cf. Dassmann 1996–2002, 200. For another shared interest, cf. Joyce E. Salisbury, ‘“The bond of a common mind”: a study of collective salvation from Cyprian to Augustine’, *The Journal of Religious Studies* 13 (1985) 235–247.

⁵ As Augustine himself explains in S.310,1, a saint’s feast concerns his or her ‘day of birth’ (*natalis*), that is, the day of earthly death.

aspects of Cyprian's life and work are highlighted? Can we detect any form of doubt or discussion with regard to Cyprian? To what extent does Augustine repeat himself in his yearly praise of the martyr and where does he try to find new, creative ways of expressing himself?

Such questions seem particularly relevant in the light of the exciting new find of six sermons by Augustine at Erfurt library, which were recently edited in *Wiener Studien*.⁶ One of these newly found texts is a sermon by Augustine about Cyprian, which was hitherto unknown.⁷ Until its publication, the corpus of Augustinian sermons about Cyprian counted eleven texts.⁸

Apart from the twelve sermons presently available, Augustine must have preached about Cyprian many more times, given the fact that he preached in North Africa for nearly forty years. Cyprian's feast was a highlight in the ecclesiastical year, and an important mark on the calendar. It seems to have been generally celebrated by the people, not only in church but also out on the street with noisy forms of spectacle. Augustine himself, in one of the Cyprian sermons, complains about ecstatic dancing and singing during mass, as it was common in earlier days, before it was officially ruled out.⁹ The feast therefore reminds somewhat of Christmas as it is now generally celebrated in many modern western countries. As Augustine not infrequently preached more than once on such an important day, this leaves us with the possibility that the total number of his sermons about Cyprian may have counted anything between thirty or forty and well over a hundred.¹⁰

Even if one assumes such high numbers of unrecorded or lost Augustinian sermons, the twelve extant texts still form a considerable corpus, and some general lines may well be discerned. I will start by analyzing the new S.313G and compare it with the eleven other sermons. As a ref-

⁶ Isabella Schiller, Dorothea Weber & Clemens Weidmann, 'Sechs neue Augustinus-predigten. Teil 1 mit Edition dreier Sermones,' *Wiener Studien* 121 (2008) 227–284; and 122 (2009), 171–213.

⁷ See Schiller a.o. 2008, 251–264.

⁸ *Sermones* 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 313A, 313B, 313C, 313D, 313E and 313F. The new Erfurt sermon is hence numbered as 313G; cf. Schiller a.o. 2008, 229. The sermons on Cyprian have only rarely been studied as a whole; cf. only Robert T. Brown, *A study of the five sermons of St. Augustine on St. Cyprian the martyr*, Dissertation (Los Angeles 1948).

⁹ S. 311,5.

¹⁰ This number is, of course, a rough estimate, for which no proof can be adduced. In addition, one may point out that other ancient Christian authors too preached about Cyprian. Some extant examples are listed in Schiller a.o. 2008, n. 99.

erence text for Augustine's practice I will use *De catechizandis rudibus*. In the first part of this text, Augustine shows how teachers can stay fresh and motivated, even if they have to treat elementary subject matter again and again to ever new audiences. The expected yearly sermon(s) about Cyprian must have put Augustine personally to the test here.

‘DOCENS QUOD FACTURUS ERAT’

The new S.313G consists of two paragraphs, separated by what is most likely a lacuna (see below), the whole amounting to roughly one page of text (34 lines).

It opens with a prayer of thanksgiving: God is thanked for granting the speaker and his public to celebrate the feast together (S.313G,1, l. 1–2). This may look like little more than a cliché, but as a matter of fact, openings like this are not frequent in Augustine's sermons.¹¹ Possibly, the remark points out that the occasion was somehow special. It has been suggested that this could mean that Augustine was speaking not in Hippo Regius but in Carthage, as was the case with most of his Cyprian sermons.¹² In the provincial capital, the speaker could readily assume that everyone was familiar with the biographical facts concerning the martyr.

The speaker moves on by marking the occasion: it is the feast *praeclarissimi martyris*, who is accordingly described in praising terms.

Ornamentum confessionis, Afrorum rector et doctor ecclesiae, martyr uerissimus et sincerissimus et praeceptor et rector, docens quod facturus erat, faciens quod docuerat, multos ante se mittens praecepto, multos post se traxit exemplo. (1, l. 3–7)

Glorious in his confession, leader of the Africans and teacher of the church, martyr in the truest and purest sense, and guide and leader, teaching what he was to practice himself, practicing what he had taught, sending many ahead by his guidance, he took on many behind him by his example.

The sentence is striking in its length and syntax, with the main clause coming just at the end after what seems merely a list of addresses. On

¹¹ For a parallel expression of thanks at the beginning of a sermon, see S. 293A,1: ‘Quoniam uoluit Dominus hodierno die reddere Caritati uestrae uocem et praesentiam nostram, et hoc fecit ipse non secundum dispositionem nostram, sed secundum uoluntatem suam, agimus ei gratias uobiscum, et reddimus uobis sermonis obsequium, quod est ministerium nostrum, in quo nos seruire uobis et oportet et decet.’

¹² Schiller a.o. 2008, 280. As to the date, Schiller a.o. plausibly argue for the time between 397 and shortly after 401.

the other hand, praising terms of a martyr do not come in unexpectedly here, and similar expressions can easily be found.¹³ The words *faciens quod docuerat* ... were to become almost like a refrain or *topos* in the Cyprian sermons (see at the end of this paper).

The specific point of praise here is that Cyprian as a bishop encouraged others to stand firm and, if necessary, suffer torture and martyrdom for the sake of faith, while he himself died a martyr's death in 258, which subsequently became a model for others to follow.¹⁴ Of course, this is not Cyprian's own merit, Augustine hastens to add. It is God who made Cyprian man, believer and martyr:

hominem quando creauit, fidelem quando uocauit, martyrem quando coronauit. (1, l. 8–9)

... man when He created him, believer when He called him, martyr when He crowned him.

With a resounding tricolon full of sound effects (notably homoeoteleuton),¹⁵ Augustine drives home his familiar point that a man's good deeds are entirely due to God, who is acting in him.¹⁶ Here this leads to the easy sequel that we may venerate such martyrs¹⁷ without reserve, as by implication we venerate God himself in them (1, l. 9–11).

¹³ E.g. 'uniuersam illam fidelissimi et fortissimi et gloriosissimi Martyris passionem' (S.309,1); 'beatus Cyprianus et episcopus misericordissimus, et martyr fidelissimus' (S. 309,5); 'Cypriani gloriosissimi martyris' (S.310,1); 'Insignem martyrem Christi, per quem maxime istam rexit, auxit, ornauit atque illustrauit Ecclesiam ...' (S.313C,1); 'Ille ipse ueridicus et uerax martyr seruus Dei, uerax munere Dei ...' (S.313E,1). For the final clause, cf. 'Alios itaque docendo praemisit imitandos, alios patiundo praecessit imitatuos' (S. 313C,2) and for the whole opening: 'Sollemnitatem sanctam eius martyris hodie celebramus, qui multos ante se martyres misit eloquio, multos post se eduxit exemplo' (S.313D,1).

¹⁴ Many works of Cyprian attest his encouragement of others, notably his *Ad martyras* and many of his letters. His own trial and death are described in the so-called *Acta Proconsularia* and the *Vita Cypriani* by his pupil Pontius. On the biographical material about Cyprian, see Vincent Hunink, 'St. Cyprian, a Christian and Roman gentleman', in: H. Bakker et al. (eds.), *Cyprian of Carthage, Studies in His Life, Language and Thought*, (Late Antique History and Religion, 3) (Leuven 2010) (forthcoming).

¹⁵ With even more effects, the thought also occurs in S.312,6: 'Illi laus, illi gloria, qui digest illum uirum praedestinare inter sanctos suos ante tempora, creare inter homines opportuno tempore, uocare errantem, mundare sordentem, formare credentem, docere obedientem, regere docentem, adiuuare pugnantem, coronare uincentem.'

¹⁶ By contrast, evil deeds and sins can only be attributed to man himself. The notion is present throughout Augustine's works.

¹⁷ There is, perhaps, an allusion here to *false* martyrs, as Schiller a.o. 2008, 280–281 suggest, referring to the Donatist martyr Marculus, and to the anti-donatist S.313E in general.

Augustine next draws a picture of Cyprian in biblical terms, comparing him first to a sheep among wolves, then to a good shepherd, and finally to a dove and a snake.

Missus est et iste beatus Cyprianus tamquam ouis in medio luporum. Verbo castigabat lupos et tamquam pastor pro ouibus respondebat et pro ouibus sanguinem profundebat. Tenuit simplicitatem columbae et astutiam serpentis. Simplicitate columbae nemini nocuit, astutia serpentis caput proprium seruauit. (1, l. 11–16)

This blessed Cyprian too was sent like a sheep amid wolves. With his words he reproved the wolves, and as a shepherd he gave account for his sheep, and he shed his blood on behalf of his sheep. He maintained the simplicity of the dove, and the adroitness of the snake. With the simplicity of the dove he damaged no one, with the adroitness of the snake he protected his own head.

In typical Augustinian fashion, two Bible texts are intertwined here. The reference to Christ's sending his disciples as sheep among wolves in Matthew¹⁸ leads the speaker to a passage in John on the good shepherd who gives his life for his sheep,¹⁹ and back again to the Matthew text with Christ's command to be as wise as snakes and as simple as doves.

It is perhaps telling that Augustine has reversed the order at the end, putting the dove first and the snake second, while he has also substituted the Evangelical *prudentes* (Vulgate) with a more precise word, *astutia*.²⁰ Quite possibly, with 'protecting his own head' Augustine is thinking of a rather debated element in Cyprian's biography. During the great persecution of Decius in 249–251 Cyprian had not looked for martyrdom but had gone into exile to a coastal resort, where he led a comfortable life. On return, Cyprian had met with criticism and opposition on account of his behavior.²¹

However, Augustine surely does not wish to include any note of criticism of the venerable martyr, and using real *astutia* himself he manages to steer clear of this dangerous point. First he expands somewhat on the manner in which snakes curl up and defend themselves when attacked. Then he quickly explains that it is not Cyprian's own 'head' that he

¹⁸ Mt 10,16.

¹⁹ John 10,11.

²⁰ Augustine refers to the Matthew passage on several occasions in his works, (although not in connection with Cyprian) with similar use of *astutia* or *astutus*, e.g. *Epist.* 55,12. However, he also quotes it with *prudentes*: *Serm. ad fratres in eremo commemorantes*, 4: 'Estote igitur, fratres, prudentes sicut serpentes, et simplices sicut columbae.'

²¹ Cf. Hunink 2010, n. 14.

protected: this head is none but Christ himself.²² Cyprian 'preserved' it by refusing to deny Christ and hence suffering martyrdom in the end (1, l. 16–20). Thus, the potentially perilous issue has effectively been turned into yet another point of praise.

The image of the good shepherd who is responsible for his flock is less problematic, as it brings in only positive associations. Augustine naturally felt this to be a practicable symbol of Cyprian, and he uses it in several other Cyprian sermons too.²³

At this point in the sermon, the text almost certainly shows a *lacuna* (1, l. 21). As the editors rightly argue,²⁴ it is not the shortness of the sermon which supports this hypothesis, but rather the abrupt change of theme and syntax. The length of the lacuna is unclear, but it must be at least a few lines. This would allow for a smoother transition to the second part of the sermon.

'LET US REMAIN SOBER!'

Unfortunately, the second part does not bring much more on Cyprian. Instead it concentrates on the manner of celebration of the feast. As has been argued above, it had long been connected with revelry and excess. Apparently, not all objectionable behavior had been eradicated, for Augustine pleads at length for soberness and modesty.

The text starts in mid-sentence, with the words *alacres, laeti*, which somehow recall the festive atmosphere in the opening sentences of the sermon, but then it is suggested that this happiness should really be enough. At this point Augustine does not shrink back from a rather easy pun.

Non persequamur martyres calicibus, quos pagani sunt persecuti lapidibus. (12, l. 2–3)

Let us not follow the martyrs with cups, whom the pagans have persecuted with stones.

²² The reference is to 1 Cor 11,3.

²³ Cf. 'magis curans quam rationem pastorum principi de commissis sibi ouibus redderet, quam quid infideli proconsuli de fide propria responderet' (S.309,4); 'Cyprianus pastor' (S.313,2); 'pastoraliter consulens clementerque compatiens' (S.313C,2); 'Numquid tacuit? numquid pastor bonus uidens lupum fugit? Quid enim prode est, si adsit pastor corpore, fugiat corde?' (S.313E,7). Cf. also the notion that Cyprian followed the Lamb (*agnus*) (S.311,1) and that he was mild (*mitis*) (S.112,1; 113A,5).

²⁴ Schiller e.a. 2008, 275.

Using the double sense of the Latin *persequi*,²⁵ Augustine tries to deter the people from drinking by comparing their cups to the stones with which martyrs (such as St. Stephen) used to be beaten. This is, of course, an unfair comparison, but in the heat of the battle, Augustine is often happy to use every means he can.

What follows is a fairly commonplace exhortation to virtue and soberness after the example of the martyrs themselves.²⁶ The only remarkable thought is the suggestion that 'eating and drinking' is what the people are actually doing, but in a spiritual sense:

Nolite interrogare uentres sed mentes! (2, l. 5)

Do not ask your stomachs but your minds!

The contrast of *uenter* and *mens*, so common in Augustine,²⁷ is used effectively to direct the attention of the audience to a more general message.

The exhortation to sobriety rounds off the sermon as a whole. In the Erfurt manuscript it is followed by a sermon by Jerome,²⁸ so we can be nearly sure there are no words missing at the end.

CYPRIANIAN THEMES

As the above analysis shows, the new sermon 313G has much in common with the eleven other public addresses Augustine delivered on Cyprian's feast day on other occasions. Various motifs return in it, such as the image of Cyprian as the good shepherd and the celebration of his martyrdom, and a number of verbal parallels has also been shown to exist.

²⁵ For another pun on *sequi*, see also S.310,2: 'Sed ut mensa illa, quae Dei est, etiam Cypriani uocetur, haec causa est; quia ut illa modo cingatur ab obsequentibus, ibi Cyprianus cingebatur a persequentibus.'

²⁶ For *uestigia martyrum sequamur* ('let us follow the footsteps of the martyrs!'), Schiller a.o. 2008, 284 compare S. 273,9 and 285,1; for the theme as a whole, idem, 279–280 refer to S. 311. For *fructus dilectionis* ('fruit of love') one may mention S.10,6. However, the concluding words *uestigium dilectionis* are unparalleled in Augustine's works and earlier texts.

²⁷ Cf. e.g. 'propter cibum ac potum non mentis sed uentris' (*Epist.* 36,11); '... ut si fieri potest, qui pasti sunt, pascuntur, et quorum satiauit panibus uentres, satiet et sermonibus mentes' (*In Joh.ev.* 25,10); 'ad escas solidiores accedere, mente, non uentre' (*In Joh.ev.* 35,3), 'panis noster quotidianus est: inde uiuunt non uentres, sed mentes' (S.56,10).

²⁸ The new text starts with a title: *Sermo Sancti Ieronimi presbiteri in natali unius martyris*, according to the extensive description in Schiller a.o. 2008, 241.

The yearly occasion of Cyprian's feast must have posed a serious challenge for Augustine as a pastor and teacher. The facts of Cyprian's life and martyrdom were both scarce and well known, and so it made little sense to linger over them. How could the speaker address his audience and retain its interest on the same subject matter again and again?

Interestingly, Augustine explicitly thought about this didactic problem in one of his other works, *De catechizandis rudibus* (a relatively early text, written in 399).²⁹ Here he discusses some of the problems a teacher may have, when faced with the need to give elementary instruction over and over again. A teacher may lose confidence by doubting his own qualities or by general despair of the limits of human language. Perhaps worse, he may lose his motivation and joy in teaching because he would prefer to be left alone and devote his time to spiritual meditation or other, seemingly more important work, or to hear or read texts by others rather than speaking himself. Repeating teaching material that is well known to him may make him bored, while a lukewarm response from the audience may also discourage him.³⁰

Against these possible threats, a teacher may protect himself, as Augustine next discusses at some length.³¹ The key element here is that the teacher should try and keep focused on what he has got to do, on the basis of brotherly affection and love for his audience, inspired by God's love. He should also respond to the needs of the audience, anticipate its reactions, and empathize with it, rejoicing at its possibility of spiritual growth.

On a more practical level too, Augustine offers solutions that will sound familiar to anyone with some experience in teaching. For example, there is his suggestion to avoid dealing with everything at length, but to select a few important points or give a summary (c.18). If people seem less interested or concentrated, it may be helpful to make some remarks that will revive their interest, or simply to keep it short (c.19).

Against the background of such considerations by Augustine, it seems interesting to have a quick look at his other eleven sermons on Cyprian. How did he keep up his motivation to speak about the bishop and martyr,

²⁹ For the text, see Chiara Fabrizi / Paolo Siniscalco, *Sant'Agostino—Prima catechesi cristiana* (= *Opere di Sant'Agostino* 7/2), Roma 2001, 175–291. There is a useful, if somewhat older edition with translation and commentary in English: Joseph Patrick Christopher, *S. Aureli Augustini Hipponensis episcopi de catechizandis rudibus liber unus, translated with an introduction and commentary* (= *Patristic Studies* 8), Washington D.C. 1926.

³⁰ This paragraph is a brief summary of *Cath.Rud.* 14.

³¹ *Cath.Rud.* 16–22.

and to what extent did he possibly repeat himself by 'recycling' material from the earlier sermons? Can any of the other sermons be considered as either the model of 313G or as a later copy of it?

On a number of points, the sermons offer reflections by the speaker on his own performance. More than once, it is made clear by the speaker that he is actually *expected* to deliver the sermon; it is evidently not a matter of free choice.

Sermonem a nobis debitum auribus et cordibus uestris exigit tam grata et religiosa sollemnitas qua passionem beati martyris celebramus.

(S.309,1)

A sermon due to your ears and hearts is demanded (from me) by the welcome and religious solemnity during which we celebrate the passion of the blessed martyr.³²

This obligation is, of course, a heavy burden,³³ for which help is needed. Thus the Holy Ghost is invoked (S.310,1) and, in an original turn, even the prayers of St. Cyprian are said to be of help (S.312,1). Generally, Augustine argues that his own language cannot match the greatness of the subject, and the martyr himself is invoked again:

uirtutibus enim eius et gloriae posset forte humana lingua sufficere, si se uoluisset ipse laudare

(S.313A,1)

human language could perhaps suffice for his virtues and glory if [Cyprian] wanted to praise himself.

Here the motif is cleverly adapted and changed: not even Cyprian himself would be equal to the task.³⁴ And, in another variant, the martyr should not expect to be praised by us at all but rather pray for us.³⁵

In some other sermons that belong to the corpus, none such preliminary reflections occur and the speaker enters *in medias res*. Thus in S.313E, Augustine immediately starts a theological, polemical debate against the Donatists. In S.313B, it is a psalm verse³⁶ that is taken up

³² Cf. 'Diei tam grati laetique sollemnitas, et coronae tanti Martyris tam felix et iucunda festiuitas, sermonem a me debitum flagitat' (S. 312,1); 'In hoc itaque sermone nostro, quem de illo debitum uestris auribus reddimus ...' (S. 313,1); 'Oportet itaque nos sermone sollemni in Domino laudare animam serui eius' (S.313C,1).

³³ Cf. 'Tantum sarcinam' (S.312,1).

³⁴ 'Cuius reuerendi episcopi et uenerandi martyris laudibus nulla lingua sufficeret, nec si se ipse laudaret' (S.313,1).

³⁵ 'Quid ergo tantae rei dignum tanto illi proferamus, nisi ut non exspectet laudari a nobis, sed non cesset orare pro nobis?' (S.313D,1).

³⁶ 'Benedictus Dominus qui non dedit nos in uenationem dentibus eorum.' The Vulgate text reads *praedam* instead of *uenationem* (Ps 123,6).

straight away and leads to a lengthy, repetitive meditation, in which there is little room for Cyprian indeed.

The role of Cyprian in these sermons can be modest indeed. The speaker can apparently choose to vary his subject by simply *ignoring* it and replacing it with another theme. A surprising example is S.313F, which deals with the theme of hope, without as much as mentioning Cyprian's name even once.³⁷ Similarly, S.313A, while including one or two remarks on Cyprian, is largely devoted to fighting worldly pleasures, notably those of the theatre, while S.311 deals with a number of moral issues that seem only loosely connected.

Of course, Cyprian does also figure prominently in some of the sermons: in these Augustine seems keen to avoid conspicuous repetitions. S.309 tells the tale of his interrogation and martyrdom, on the basis of the *Acta* and *Vita*, which are actually quoted (S.309,2–5–6); S.313D also highlights Cyprian's martyrdom, but uses not exactly the same quotations.³⁸ S.312 highlights an earlier phase in his life, notably his conversion to Christianity, including a double quotation from Cyprian's autobiographical text *Ad Donatum*.³⁹ Finally, in S.313C Augustine presents another new element: a brief survey of Cyprian's texts (S. 313C,2).⁴⁰ He does not quote them or provide any titles, but his summary is clear enough to readers familiar with Cyprian's oeuvre. It is easy to recognize references to *De habitu virginum*, *De zelo et livore*, *De oratione dominica*, *De lapsis*, *De bono patientiae*, *De unitate ecclesiae*, *De mortalitate*, *De idolorum vanitate*, and *De opere et elemosynis*. The list is not complete,⁴¹ but presents quite a broad range of Cyprian's writings.

³⁷ The sermon in question appears to have been delivered later on the day, since it refers to an earlier sermon of Augustine in the morning (*mane*); S.313F,1.

³⁸ Two well known instances from the *Acta* do, however, occur in both sermons: Cyprian's famous phrase 'In re tam iusta nulla est consultatio' and the formal sentence of the proconsul: 'Tascium Cyprianum gladio animaduerti placet' (both in S.309,6 and S.313D,4). On the whole, however, the sermons are different.

³⁹ It may be telling what Augustine actually quotes here: Cyprian's impressive image that before conversion he was lying in the dark night and floating on the high sea of worldly worries (*Ad Donatum* 3) and his similar remark on being entangled in errors and sins, from which he could not free himself, clinging to them out of despair of improvement (*Ad Donatum* 4) (S.312,2). In both cases, Augustine may have recognized something of his own spiritual path as described in his *Confessions*.

⁴⁰ The starting point is one of Augustine's *topoi* concerning Cyprian 'docendo praemissit imitandos, alios patiendo praecessit imitatuos' (S.313C,2, quoted above, note 13).

⁴¹ Conspicuously absent are Cyprian's *de spectaculis*, *de baptisate haereticorum*, *de laude martyrii*, *ad Demetrianum*, and his numerous letters.

VARIATION

When the corpus of Augustinian sermons about St. Cyprian is taken as a whole, Augustine appears to have treated what is basically the same, limited subject matter in various ways. The sermons are connected by some common elements, notably references to Cyprian's life and trial and his role as a good shepherd, but Augustine generally seems eager to present a new and different account on every single occasion. His own practice clearly shows that he could apply the methods which he had recommended in *Cath.Rud.*, and it seems that his enthusiasm and fervor as a teacher did not diminish in the course of the years.

In addition, two important rhetorical strategies are clearly adopted that had not been mentioned as such in *Cath.Rud.* Most importantly, it is the strategy of constant *variatio*. Even where elements are repeated, this almost invariably happens in a context of variation. 'Recycling' of earlier material cannot be shown to have been among Augustine's rhetorical tools.⁴²

As a special form of variation, one might perhaps identify the strategy to *change the theme*. As I suggested, a number of Cyprian speeches actually dealt with subject matter that was only vaguely associated with the bishop and martyr himself. By applying this special form of *variatio*, a speaker opens up what is potentially an infinite number of angles to the theme, which allows him to address his audience with ever new sermons.

Striving after variety effectively appears to be dominant even where a motif seems to be repeated, as a final example will show. It has been remarked above that the Cyprian sermons include a phrase that looks like a refrain. In S.313G it sounds:

docens quod facturus erat, faciens quod docuerat.

The editors of the Latin text suggest that this formulation can count as standard element in Augustine's Cyprian sermons.⁴³ This is certainly true, but it may also be observed that Augustine manages to vary even this personal *topos*. In S.313 he adds the elements of fidelity and courage;⁴⁴

⁴² At the beginning of this paper it has been remarked that the corpus may have consisted of many more sermons about Cyprian. It seems conceivable that the lost sermons actually did include 'reworked' versions of other sermons. In that case, the process of selection of speeches that were to be preserved may have been an important factor. Possibly only sermons that did not merely repeat earlier models were transmitted, while the rest was left aside. We can only speculate here.

⁴³ Schiller a.o. 2008, 278, with a list of parallels in n. 108.

⁴⁴ 'Docuit *fideliter* quod facturus erat, fecit *fortiter* quod docuerat' (S.310,3).

in S.312 he changes the order of the words and connects them with a Word of the Lord in the Gospel;⁴⁵ in S.313D the phrasing is different⁴⁶ and further subtly varied again by means of an emotional touch and the inserting of a causal element (*quia*).⁴⁷

So even Augustine's catch phrase to refer to St. Cyprian⁴⁸ appears to be in constant change. It is varied according to the pastor's purpose to suit ever new contexts. The new sermon 313G provides yet another good example of Augustine's talents as a preacher.

⁴⁵ 'Ita quod facturus erat *docuit*, et quod docuerat *fecit*; ut et in uerbis docentis praeosceretur animus martyris, et in animo patientis recognoscerentur uerba doctoris. Non enim erat similis eorum de quibus Dominus ait: "Quae dicunt, facite; quae autem faciunt, nolite facere: dicunt enim et non faciunt"' (Mat 23,3) (S.312,6).

⁴⁶ 'Hanc beatus Cyprianus nouerat et docebat: nec docebat tantum, sed et faciebat; eo demonstrans non se fallere quos docebat, quia docendo uiuebat, et uiuendo faciebat' (S.313D,1).

⁴⁷ 'Hoc credidit *martyr noster*, hoc docuit antequam faceret, hoc fecit *quia* iam docuerat' (S. 313D,4).

⁴⁸ The phrase is not exclusively used in relation to St. Cyprian. Cf. e.g. *De Mendacio* 9: 'Non enim quisquam est ita desipiens, ut dicat aliud quam saluti sempiternae hominum consuluisset Dominum uel faciendo quod praecepit, uel praecipiendo quod fecit;' further *Conf.* 10,6. The phrase has a strongly evangelical background, not only in Mat 23,3, quoted above (note 45), but also John 13,15 "Exemplum enim dedi uobis ut quemadmodum ego feci uobis ita et uos faciatis"; further e.g. 1 Pt 2,21.

CHAPTER SIX

DIE UNGESCHRIEBENEN BRIEFE DES AUGUSTINUS VON HIPPO

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„Diesen Brief betrachte ich als etwas mehr als nur einen persönlichen Gruß von mir an dich“, schrieb Augustinus’ Konkubine in Jostein Gaarders *Vita brevis*.¹ „Es ist auch ein Brief an den Bischof von Hippo ... Und vielleicht schreibe ich ja auch einen Brief an die ganze Christenheit, denn schließlich bist du heute ein sehr einflussreicher Mann.“ Die moderne Augustinusforschung bestätigt, was die fiktive Romanfigur aus den *Confessiones* (6,15) andeutet. Christian Tornau hat überzeugend gezeigt, dass praktisch jeder Brief Augustins ein „offener Brief“ war, der den Verfasser zwang, einen Ausgleich zwischen den Bedürfnissen des eigentlichen Adressaten und des allgemeinen Publikums zu finden.² Ein Brief ist, schreibt Ambrosius, ein *sermo cum absentibus*, ein Dialog mit jenen, die abwesend sind.³ Pauline Allen und Mary Cunningham⁴ haben mit Nachdruck darauf hingewiesen, dass uns meist nur die *eine* Hälfte dieses Dialogs bekannt ist und Briefe von Laien und gewöhnlicher Gemeindemitglieder fehlen. Aber weder das methodische Problem der einseitigen Empfänger-Überlieferung, noch die Exklusion sozialer Gruppen oder

¹ J. Gaarder, *Das Leben ist kurz. Vita brevis*, dt. Übersetzung G. Haefs, München 1997, 6. Aufl. 2007, 26.

² Ch. Tornau, *Zwischen Rhetorik und Philosophie: Augustinus Argumentationstechnik in De civitate Dei und ihr bildungsgeschichtlicher Hintergrund*, Berlin 2006, 35.

³ Ambr. ep. 7,48,1 (CSEL 82/2, 48): „Epistularum genus propterea repertum, ut quidam nobis cum absentibus sermo sit, in dubium non venit.“ Siehe M. Zelzer, „Die Briefliteratur. Kommunikation durch Briefe: Ein Gespräch mit Abwesenden“, in: L.J. Engels & H. Hofmann (eds.), *Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft* 4, *Spätantike*, Wiesbaden 1997, 321 f.

⁴ Siehe die Beiträge in: M. Cunningham – P. Allen (eds.), *Preacher and Audience. Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*, Leiden 1998, und P. Allen, „It’s in the Post: Techniques and Difficulties of Letter-Writing in Antiquity with regard to the Letters of Augustine of Hippo“, Trendall Lecture 2005, in: *Proceedings of the Australian Academy of the Humanities*, Canberra 2006, 111–129.

die Schwierigkeiten bei der Zustellung der Briefe sollen hier behandelt werden. Worin bestanden also die ‚ungeschriebenen Briefe‘ des Augustinus?

Es sind die geheimen oder privaten Briefe, die nicht—wie sonst—für ein größeres Publikum bestimmt sind. Im Fokus steht hier, was zwischen den Zeilen oder gar nicht zu lesen ist. Augustinus schrieb an Aurelius, den Primas von Afrika: ‚Es gibt viele beklagenswerte Dinge in meinem Leben und meiner Umgebung, die ich Dir nicht brieflich anvertrauen möchte. Im Gegenteil, zwischen deinem und meinem Herzen sei kein Vermittler außer meinem Mund und deinen Ohren.‘⁵ Der Grund hierfür war einfach: Die Antike kannte weder Urheberrecht noch Briefgeheimnis. Augustinus musste also damit rechnen, dass jeder Brief, den er aus der Hand gab, veröffentlicht wurde. Persönliche und politisch brenzlige Nachrichten wurden daher mündlich oder auf einem beigelegten Blatt überbracht.⁶ Mündlichkeit war immer dann erforderlich, wenn ein Bote durch einen Unfall den Brief seines Auftraggebers verlor oder dieser ihm—aus Bequemlichkeit, Zeitersparnis oder aus Sicherheitsgründen—kein schriftliches Dokument anvertrauen wollte. Was der Brief nicht enthüllte, erläuterten die Kommentare der Boten. Das lag nicht zuletzt auch in der Absicht und im Interesse dessen, der Briefe und Boten ausgesandt hatte. Die persönliche und über die reine Postbeförderung hinausgehende Rolle des Boten wird am besten durch Augustinus’ Antwort an eine Frau mit Namen Ecdicia veranschaulicht, die zum Zeichen ihrer Askese Witwenkleidung angezogen hatte, obwohl ihr Ehemann noch am Leben war. Nachdem Augustinus Ecdicias Brief gelesen hatte, erklärte er, er habe den Briefträger ‚über die Punkte des Briefes befragt, die noch offen geblieben waren‘ (*quae interroganda restabant*).⁷ Waren die äußere Erscheinung ihrer Kleiderordnung oder ihr Lebenswandel und ihre innere Haltung gegenüber der Ehe damit gemeint?

In der antiken Welt war der Mann, der einen Brief überbrachte, ebenso wichtig wie der Brief. Der Überbringer von Nachrichten, besonders der wenig beachteten knappen Grußadressen, war nicht nur ein Postbote. Er konnte ein enger Freund oder vertrauenswürdiger Träger wichtiger

⁵ Aug. *ep.* 22,2,9 (CSEL 34/1, 61), ca. 392: ‚Multa sunt, quae de nostra vita et conversatione deflerem, quae nollem per litteras ad te venire, sed inter cor meum et cor tuum nulla essent ministeria praeter os meum et aures tuas.‘ Die Übersetzung der Augustinustexte stammt von der Autorin.

⁶ M. Zelzer, ‚Die Briefeliteratur‘, 331.

⁷ Aug. *ep.* 262,1 (CSEL 57, 621): ‚Lectis litteris reverentiae tuae et earum perlatore interrogato, quae interroganda restabant, vehementer dolui ...‘

persönlicher oder politischer Neuigkeiten sein.⁸ Zu den Schlüsselqualifikationen eines Boten zählte Augustinus daher Zuverlässigkeit in der Ausführung (*fides agendi*), Eifer zu gehorchen (*alacritas oboediendi*) und praktische Erfahrung im Reisen (*exercitatio peregrinandi*).⁹ Der Presbyter Orosius war ein Musterexemplar dieser Gattung. Wenn der Briefträger ankam, händigte er, je nach Inhalt des Briefes, ihn entweder dem Adressaten aus oder las ihn laut vor, oder er wurde laut von einer anderen Person gelesen.

Oft enthielt ein Brief des Augustinus jedoch nicht mehr als eine *salutatio*,¹⁰ umso wichtiger wurde in diesem Fall die Aufgabe des Überbringers. Dann sprach Augustinus nach der Grußformel nur eine kurze Empfehlung für den Boten aus, damit dieser sein Anliegen selbst vortragen und zusätzlich noch auf die Fragen des Adressaten eingehen konnte.¹¹ Der Bote wurde so zum Sprachrohr (*os tuum*), zu einem Brief, besser als eine geschriebene Botschaft (*veriores litteris epistolam*).¹² Einen anderen bezeichnete Augustinus als den ‚zuverlässigsten all seiner Briefträger‘ (*litterarum fidissimum perlatorem omnium nostrum*), obwohl er gar keinen Brief mit sich führte.¹³ In Ausnahmefällen war eine mündliche Nachrichtenübermittlung durch Sprachbarrieren bedingt, dann etwa, wenn Augustinus’ Briefe dem Griechisch sprechenden Bischof Johannes von Jerusalem zugestellt wurden und der Empfänger sie durch die Vermittlung eines Dolmetschers anhören musste.¹⁴

Auch Emotionen, die über bloße Informationen hinausgingen, können auf diese Weise transportiert werden, selbst wenn zwei Briefpartner wie Augustinus und Paulinus von Nola sich nie persönlich begegnet waren. Der imaginierte Dialog zwischen Briefschreiber und Leser suggeriert durch die Selbstzeugnisse den ‚intimate space of letters‘,¹⁵ eine

⁸ P. Brown, *Augustinus von Hippo, Eine Biographie*, erweiterte Neuausgabe, dt. Übersetzung J. Bernard und W. Kumpmann, München 2000, 173.

⁹ Aug. *ep.* 166,1,2 (über Paulus Orosius): ‚Nec mihi facile occurrebat idoneus et fide agenda et alacritate oboediendi et exercitatione peregrinandi.‘

¹⁰ Typische Grußadressen sind Aug. *ep.* 42 (CSEL 34/2, 84) und *ep.* 45 (p. 122 f.), die den Umfang einer halben Seite im CSEL nicht überschreiten, vgl. die Formel ‚*ecce igitur salutamus vos*‘ (*ep.* 45,1: p. 122).

¹¹ Aug. *ep.* 45,2 (Anm. 34).

¹² Paul. Nol. *carm.* 24,9 (CSEL 30, 206).

¹³ Aug. *ep.* 186,1,1 (CSEL 57, 45), vgl. Anm. 39: ‚... litterarum fidissimum perlatorem omnium nostrum ... etiamsi non scriberemus ...‘

¹⁴ Aug. *ep.* 179,5 (CSEL 44, 693): ‚Quid pluribus agam apud sanctitatem vestram, quando quidem me onerosum sentio, maxime quia per interpretem audis litteras meas?‘

¹⁵ R. Morello und A.D. Morrison (eds.), *Ancient Letters. Classical and Late Antique Epistolography*, Oxford 2007, IV: ‚Editor’s Preface‘.

scheinbare Nähe zu dem Gegenüber in der Ferne. Die Erfahrung der Unmittelbarkeit wird durch den Akt der persönlichen Aushändigung noch gesteigert. Dabei spielte die Identität und die Rolle des Überbringers eine entscheidende Rolle: Zwei Boten nannte Augustinus deshalb ‚einen zweiten, mit Gehör und Stimme begabten Brief‘ des Paulinus, da sie ihm einen Teil von dessen Persönlichkeit gegenwärtig machten.¹⁶ In der Antike hatte der Empfänger den Boten stellvertretend für den Briefpartner vor Augen,¹⁷ wie aus demselben Brief des Augustinus an Paulinus hervorgeht: ‚Von welcher Seite oder wann oder wie wäre es Euch je möglich oder könnten wir es je verlangen, dass Ihr uns schriftlich so vieles mitteiltet, wie wir aus ihrem Munde (i. e. der Boten) vernommen haben? Hinzu kam, was kein Papier wiedergeben kann, dass die Freude der Erzähler sich auch in ihrem Gesicht und ihren Augen spiegelte ... Dieser Brief von Euch aber, d. h. die Seele der Brüder, zeigte sich, als wir ihn im Gespräch mit ihnen zusammen lasen, offensichtlich umso glücklicher, je mehr über Euch in ihm geschrieben stand.‘¹⁸ Augustinus, der externe Leser, hatte den Eindruck, dass er—wie bei einer Momentaufnahme—einen kurzen Blick in die private Welt des Verfassers und seiner Gefühle werfen durfte. Seine Reaktion bringt zum Ausdruck, welche Bedeutung die Vertrautheit der Boten mit dem Autor des Briefes hatte: Sie wurden zu Repräsentanten des abwesenden Briefpartners, weil ihr Verhalten und ihr Auftreten zu dem Bild beitrugen, das sich der Empfänger von dem ihm unbekannten Paulinus machte.

Nicht nur Informationen konnten durch Briefboten weitergegeben, Sympathien oder Antipathien auf den Empfänger übertragen werden. Christen wie Augustinus waren die Erben einer großen Kultur des Briefeschreibens, deren pagane Vorbilder, Cicero und Plinius, den Brief als machtvolles Instrument nutzten, um soziale und politische Netzwerke in der Mittelmeerwelt zu etablieren. Wie sie verzichtete auch Augustinus nicht darauf, Einfluss auszuüben, und bediente sich dabei der traditionellen Mittel seiner Gesellschaftsschicht. Eines davon waren Referenzen oder Empfehlungsbriefe—ein Novum für einen Asketen, aber eine

¹⁶ Aug. ep. 31,2 (CSEL 34/2, 2): ‚Sanctos fratres Romanum et Agilem, aliam epistulam vestram audientem voces atque reddentem et suavissimum partem vestrae praesentiae ...‘

¹⁷ Siehe C. Conybeare, *Paulinus Noster. Self and Symbols in the Letters of Paulinus of Nola*, Oxford 2000, 39 f.

¹⁸ Aug. ep. 31,2 (CSEL 34/2, 2), bes. l. 17–20: ‚... Hanc autem epistulam vestram, fraternam scilicet animam, sic in eorum conloquio legebamus, ut tanto beatior appareret nobis, quanto uberius conscripta esset ex vobis.‘

Selbstverständlichkeit für ein Mitglied der herrschenden Eliten. Knappe Grußadressen oder Billets, die nur kurz oder gar nicht auf den Anlass anspielten, wurden von Augustinus bewusst in Grenzsituationen eingesetzt, wo persönliche und religiöse Krisen Diskretion verlangten, oder bei politischen Verhandlungen, deren Ziel nicht für die Öffentlichkeit bestimmt war, weil sie nicht in falsche Hände geraten oder verkehrt ausgelegt werden konnten. Seine Position als Bischof verbindet sich bei diesen Interventionen mit der des Asketen, dessen Hilfestellung nach Peter Brown¹⁹ eine Art übernatürlicher Autorität genießt.

Doch weder das Ansehen des Augustinus als Patron noch das Verhalten und die Identität des Empfohlenen konnten für sich alleine die gewünschte Wirkung erzielen. *Litterae commendaticiae* bauten ein komplexes soziales Gefüge zwischen drei Beteiligten, dem Objekt, dem Verfasser und dem Empfänger der Empfehlung, auf, deren Zusammenspiel über den Erfolg entschied.²⁰ Gelegentlich erscheint der Sachverhalt quälend unklar, da Augustinus den Anlass der Empfehlung und das *curriculum vitae* des Empfohlenen unerwähnt ließ wie im Falle eines traumatisierten Jungen namens Vetustinus. Augustinus hatte ihn im Herbst 396 mit Romanianus auf eine Seereise nach Nola geschickt, weil er am Grab des heiligen Felix auf ein Wunder hoffen konnte. Neben den Frühdialogen²¹ hatte Romanianus auch einen Brief des Augustinus und mehrere *commendationes*, darunter eine Referenz für seinen Schützling, im Gepäck. Daraus ging hervor, dass Vetustinus, der durch sein Unglück selbst den ‚Gottlosen‘ Mitleid einflößte, den Vorsatz gefasst hatte, in den Klerus einzutreten. Aber den Grund seines Kommens sollte der Betroffene seinem Gastgeber selbst erzählen²²—Augustinus war so diskret, darüber zu schweigen. Der neu ernannte Bischof von Hippo hatte ihn zu

¹⁹ ‚The Rise and Function of the Holy Man‘, *JRS* 61 (1971) 80–101.

²⁰ Siehe den Diskussionsbeitrag G.W. Bowersocks zu S. Roda, ‚Polifunzionalità della Lettera Commendaticia‘, in: F. Paschoud (ed.), *Colloque Genevois sur Symmaque*, Paris 1986, 205 f.

²¹ Darunter die Bücher ‚Gegen die Akademiker‘, vgl. jeweils Einleitung und Kommentar von Th. Fuhrer, *Augustin. Contra Academicos*, Bücher 2 und 3, Berlin – New York 1997 bzw. K. Schlapbach, *Augustin. Contra Academicos vel De Academicis*, Buch 1, Berlin – New York 2003. Zur kompletten Büchersendung siehe S. Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola. Kommunikation und soziale Kontakte zwischen christlichen Intellektuellen*, Göttingen 2002, 478–489.

²² Aug. *ep.* 31,7 (CSEL 34/2, 6): ‚Vetustinum, impiis quoque miserabilem puerum, vestrae benignitati caritative commendo. Causas calamitatis et peregrinationis eius audietis ex ipso.‘

Paulinus gesandt, damit er dort seine Entscheidung noch einmal überdenken konnte, wenn er den Schock überwunden hatte und erwachsen geworden war.²³ In einem anderen Fall blieb der Begünstigte völlig im Hintergrund wie der namens- und gesichtslose Protégé des Paulinus; umso höhere Autorität wurde dagegen den *sanctae orationes* seines Patrons zugesprochen. Augustinus schrieb nur, dass er Paulinus' ‚barmherzigen Plan‘ zustimme, den Gott ihm eingegeben habe. Seine positive Entscheidung begründete er damit, dass ‚jener viel geliebte Mann nicht nur durch seine guten Taten, sondern auch durch Paulinus' heilige Bitten sein Ziel erreicht habe und empfohlen worden sei‘.²⁴

In der Atmosphäre politischer Krisen, die Afrika überschatteten und in endlose religionspolitische Konflikte mit Donatisten, Heiden und Häretikern zu Beginn des 5. Jh. mündeten, wurde Augustinus zum ‚Architekten‘ des Sieges gegen die Donatisten.²⁵ Die Auseinandersetzung wurde nicht immer durch Bücher, Briefe oder heftige Debatten ausgetragen, wie wir sie von der Konferenz von Karthago im Juni 411 kennen.²⁶ Gelegentlich herrschte eisiges Schweigen zwischen zwei Kontrahenten, so dass eine Kommunikation nur über die Boten erfolgen konnte. Als Augustinus zwei Laien, Theodorus und Maximus, einen Brief für Macrobius anvertraute, der als donatistischer Bischof von Hippo im Sommer 410 sein unmittelbarer Rivale in derselben Stadt war, hatte dieser es zunächst abgelehnt, sich den Brief überhaupt vorlesen zu lassen.²⁷ Anschließend würdigte er seinen Gegenspieler keiner schriftlichen Antwort, sondern erlaubte den Boten nach intensivem Drängen lediglich, den abschlägigen Bescheid mündlich zu übermitteln.²⁸ Wie

²³ Aug. ep. 31,7 (CSEL 34/2, 6f.): ‚Nam et propositum eius, quo servitutum se esse pollicetur deo, tempus prolixius et aetas robustior et transactus timor certius indicabunt.‘

²⁴ Aug. ep. 149,1 (CSEL 44, 348): ‚Et adprobo misericordiae consilium, quod tibi dominus inspiravit mihi que insinuare dignatus es. Ipse et hoc adiuvet, ipse prosperet, ut iam curam nostrum ex magna parte lenivit, quia pervectus et commendatus est carissimus homo non solum bonis operibus, sed etiam sanctis orationibus tuis.‘ Zur Datierung siehe S. Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola*, 361, Anm. 11.

²⁵ W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church. A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa*, Oxford² 1971, 226.

²⁶ Glänzend geschildert von P. Brown, *Augustinus von Hippo*, 289 ff. in dem Kap. ‚Errungene Einheit‘.

²⁷ Aug. ep. 107 (CSEL 34/2, 611): ‚Ad quem (i. e. episcopum Macrobius) cum litteras beatitudinis tuae perferremus, primo negavit se, ne eidem legerentur.‘ Zu seiner Person vgl. *PCBE de l'Afrique chrétienne*, ed. A. Mandouze, Paris 1982, Macrobius 2, p. 662 f.

²⁸ Aug. ep. 107 (CSEL 34/2, 611 f.): ‚Deinde aliquando ex nostra suggestione commotus easdem sibi voluit recitari, quibus relectis ait: ‚...‘ Quod necesse habuimus his litteris sanctitati tuae significare.‘

reagierte Augustinus auf diese massive Verletzung der Spielregeln des antiken Briefverkehrs, der seit jeher auf einer reziproken Verpflichtung beruhte?²⁹ Er diskreditierte die Haltung seines Gegners, jedoch nicht, indem er sich selbst schriftlich dazu äußerte, sondern indem er den Bericht seiner Boten (ep. 107) mit allen Details in sein Briefcorpus aufnahm und publik machte. Die Möglichkeit, dass Macrobius nicht aus Überheblichkeit, sondern aus der Überlegung heraus gehandelt haben könnte, weil er seinem Kontrahenten keine schriftlichen Dokumente in die Hände spielen wollte, wird durch die rein ereignisgeschichtliche Wiedergabe der Episode unterdrückt.

Dagegen bewährte sich die religionspolitische Kooperation zwischen Augustinus und Paulinus auch weiterhin. 398 war das Grab des heiligen Felix in Nola so berühmt, dass Augustinus nicht nur seine psychologischen, sondern auch seine juristischen Problemfälle zu ihm schickte, um die Wahrheitsfindung nach Art eines ‚Gottesurteils‘ dem heiligen Felix zu überlassen.³⁰ Er berief sich dabei auf die *notissima sanctitas loci*, auf die ‚weithin bekannte Heiligkeit des Kultortes, dem kein Märtyrergrab seiner afrikanischen Heimat gleichkäme‘ und gab Nola sogar vor Mailand den Vorzug.³¹ Worüber er nichts verlauten ließ, war die Tatsache, dass Nola für ein Jahrzehnt (398–408) Mailand auch als politisches Zentrum und Zwischenstation für die Gesandtschaften der afrikanischen Bischöfe auf ihrem Weg zum Kaiserhof oder zum Bischof von Rom überflügelte. Ausschlaggebend dafür waren, insbesondere seit den Einfällen Alarichs nach Oberitalien,³² die im Vergleich zum Kaiserhof in Mailand, besseren Kommunikationsmöglichkeiten mit Paulinus in Campanien. Aus dieser Zeit stammte auch der Löwenanteil der ungeschriebenen Briefe des Augustinus. Die Anliegen der Besucher wurden bei Paulinus nie, bei Augustinus nur andeutungsweise erwähnt. Aber ihr Aufenthalt im Monasterium von Nola erhält eine völlig andere Dimension, wenn man die religionspolitischen Hintergründe der Reisen kennt.

²⁹ Zu den Konventionen spätantiker Korrespondenz siehe Symm. ep. 7,129 (ed. Seck 213 f.), vgl. J.F. Matthews, ‚The Letters of Symmachus‘, in: ders., *Political Life and Culture in the Late Roman Society*, London 1985, 81.

³⁰ Darunter den jungen Vetustinus, Licentius und zwei miteinander verfeindete Mönche, siehe S. Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola*, 582–585.

³¹ Aug. ep. 78,3 (CSEL 34/2, 335 f.): ‚Multis enim notissima est sanctitas loci, ubi beati Felicis Nolensis corpus conditum est, quo (i. e. Nola) volui ut pergerent, quia inde nobis facilius fideliusque scribi potest, quicquid in eorum aliquo divinitus fuerit propalatum. Nam et novimus Mediolani apud memoriam sanctorum ...‘

³² 18. Nov. 401 (Pollentia), Sommer 402 (Verona) und 403 (neue Aushebungen Stilichos).

Die Beauftragten der katholischen Bischöfe von Afrika waren oft in geheimen Missionen unterwegs. Für manche, die Paulinus aufsuchten, bedeutete es schon ein Sicherheitsrisiko, ihre Anonymität zu lüften. Einer von ihnen, der Paulinus in Nola aufsuchte, musste die Blockade des Mittelmeeres, das Gildo im Herbst 397 gesperrt hatte, durchbrechen, um Verbindung zu Gildos Todfeind Mascezel und den Bischöfen von Rom und Mailand aufzunehmen. Die politische Lage hatte sich zugespitzt, als der *comes* Gildo die für Rom lebenswichtigen Kornlieferungen einstellte, sich nach der Synode von Karthago mit den Donatisten verbündete und zum Staatsfeind erklärt wurde, während sein von ihm bedrohter Bruder Mascezel in Italien Zuflucht suchen musste.³³ Weder der Name noch der Grund seiner Reise gehen aus dem Schreiben auch nur andeutungsweise hervor, das der Kurier Paulinus in Nola vorlegte: ‚Es wird zweckmäßiger sein, lautet die Begründung des Augustinus, ‚wenn er dir selbst erzählt, was in der Sache unternommen wird, und du kannst ihn sogar zu Details befragen, die gerade dein Interesse geweckt haben.‘³⁴ So groß waren die Gefahr der Spionage und die Furcht vor politischen Verwicklungen. Von Paulinus wurde eine Empfehlung (*commendatio*) erwartet. Sie stellte für den Überbringer der Botschaft eine ‚Sicherheitgarantie‘ dar, weil er befürchtete, seine gleichfalls ungenannten Gesprächspartner ‚könnten seiner guten Sache, der *bona causa*, feindlich gegenüberstehen.‘³⁵ Die Krise, unter der Nordafrika damals litt, legt nahe, dass der Bote im Auftrag des Augustinus und des Alypius Verbindungen zu den führenden Kreisen der Regierung und der katholischen Kirche Italiens aufnehmen sollte, unter deren Einfluss Mascezel zunehmend geriet. Nicht zufällig betonten die afrikanischen Bischöfe ihre persönliche Verbundenheit mit dem Boten, dem sie ein gutes Zeugnis in ihrer Heimat ausstellten.³⁶ Den Schluss der wortkargen Note bildet ein unausgesprochener Appell an den Empfänger: Wenn Augustinus und Alypius sich dafür bedankten, dass sie sich ‚mit Paulinus‘ Hilfe der Sicherheit ihres

³³ Zu Gildo als *hostis publicus* siehe CIL IX 4051 = ILS 795, AE 1926, 124, vgl. A. Demandt, *Die Spätantike*, München² 2007, 173 f. Der donatistische Bischof Optatus von Timgad zählte zu Gildos Anhängern, siehe P. Brown, *Augustinus von Hippo*, 201.

³⁴ Aug. ep. 45,2 (CSEL 34/2, 122): ‚Quid in re agatur, commodius ipse (sc. perlator) narrabit, qui etiam ad singula, quae forte animum moverint, interrogari potest.‘

³⁵ Aug. ep. 45,2 (p. 122): ‚Rogat (sc. perlator) per nos sanctimonium vestrum, ut eum commendare dignemini, cum quibus ei negotium est et apud quos ne bona causa eius opprimatur, timet.‘

³⁶ Aug. ep. 45,2 (p. 122): ‚Carus nobis est (sc. perlator huius epistulae), cuius aestimationi in regionibus nostris possumus non temere bonum testimonium perhibere.‘

Christenbruders erfreuen konnten,³⁷ war dies ein deutlicher Hinweis auf die Dringlichkeit der Empfehlung—und auf die Gefahr für ihren Boten.

Wie hoch Augustinus und Alypius die Wirkung der Briefe ihres Freundes auf einflussreiche Kreise in Italien einschätzten, gaben sie im Sommer 417 noch einmal zu erkennen, als sie Paulinus indirekt zum Einschreiten gegen Pelagius und seine Anhänger aufforderten, um dessen offizielle Rehabilitierung noch in letzter Minute zu verhindern. In einem Nachsatz deuten die beiden afrikanischen Bischöfe an, welch ‚gute Dienste‘ die Briefe ihres Bruders Paulinus ihrer Sache auch diesmal leisten könnten.³⁸ Die Verfahrensweise war in allen religionspolitischen Auseinandersetzungen die gleiche: Wieder schickten die Bischöfe einen Vertrauensmann (*fidissimum perlatores*) nach Nola. ‚Durch ihn‘ konnte Paulinus alles, was Augustinus’ Diözese betreffe, ‚wie durch einen lebendigen und denkenden Brief (*tamquam per viventem atque intelligentem epistolam*) erfahren.³⁹ Einen Boten wie den Presbyter Ianuarius zu finden, war nach Augustinus ein seltener Glücksfall: Kein Wunder, dass er ihn, den Konventionen der Briefliteratur entsprechend, mit dem Brief selbst identifizierte! Wie bei allen wichtigen Nachrichten erfolgte außer der Empfehlung des Boten und der Absenderangabe des Augustinus eine Gegenzeichnung durch Alypius, um der Angelegenheit den notwendigen Nachdruck zu verleihen.⁴⁰ Obwohl sich Augustinus’ Ansichten über die Pelagianer nach 416 bis in die hintersten Winkel des römischen Weltreiches, in Rom, Alexandria, Bethlehem und Konstantinopel, verbreiteten,⁴¹ bescheinigte Papst Zosimus dem Pelagius am 21. Sept. 417 die ‚absolute fides‘,⁴² und Paulinus war diplomatisch genug, abzuwarten, bis sich das Problem durch ein Reskript des Kaisers Honorius, das am 30. April 418 die Verbannung des Pelagius anordnete, von selbst

³⁷ Aug. ep. 45,2 (p. 123): ‚Nos gratissimum habemus et apud dominum deum nostrum sincerissimae vestrae benignitati gratias agimus, si per vestram operam de Christiani fratris securitate gaudeamus.‘

³⁸ Aug. ep. 186,39 (CSEL 57, 78): ‚Deinde, ut, si quid nostra disputatione deo adiuvante possemus, tua non fides sed fidei contra tales adminiculetur assertio, sicut nos quoque in hanc facultatem tuae germanitatis litteris adiuvamur.‘

³⁹ Presbyter Ianuarius, vgl. Aug. ep. 186,1,1 (CSEL 57, 45): ‚Tandem aliquando providit nobis deus litterarum fidissimum perlatores omnium nostrum merito carissimum fratrem Ianuarium, per quem etiamsi non scriberemus, omnia, quae circa nos sunt, posset sinceritas tua tamquam per viventem atque intelligentem epistolam noscere.‘

⁴⁰ Vgl. die superscriptio *Alypius et Augustinus*.

⁴¹ Siehe die Divjak-Briefe von den Balearen (Consentius), an Kyrill von Alexandria, an Hieronymus in Bethlehem und Atticus, den Patriarchen von Konstantinopel.

⁴² Zos. pap. ep. 3 = *Avell.* 46 (JK 330), c. 2–3; 17 (CSEL 35, 103; 108).

erledigte.⁴³ Augustinus' Freundschaft mit ihm hatte unter dieser Zurückhaltung nicht gelitten, wie die Kontinuität ihres Briefwechsels von 395 bis ins Jahr 421 zeigt.⁴⁴

Zwischen 404 und 408, nachdem Nola zum führenden asketischen Zentrum Italiens aufgestiegen war und bevor Paulinus zum Bischof von Nola ordiniert wurde, ist ein rapider Anstieg diplomatischer Aktivitäten zu verzeichnen. Ein Brief des Augustinus vom März 405 teilt lediglich mit, dass zwei seiner Mitbischöfe, Theasius und Evodius, Paulinus und seine Frau in Nola aufsuchten.⁴⁵ Nichts lässt er darüber verlauten, dass sie im Auftrag der allgemeinen Synode von Karthago vom 16. Juni des Vorjahres zu Verhandlungen an den Hof zu Kaiser Honorius geschickt worden waren. Tatsächlich aber sollten sie ein *commonitorium* für den Kaiser abgeben,⁴⁶ das ihn von Überfällen der Circumcellionen unterrichtete und die Anwendung der Gesetze des Theodosius gegen die Donatisten forderte; für Gewalttaten war dort eine Strafe von 10 Pfd. Gold vorgesehen.⁴⁷ Bei ihrer Ankunft mussten die Gesandten jedoch erfahren, dass der Kaiser wegen eines Attentats auf den Bischof von Bagai bereits Maßnahmen getroffen hatte, die mit den Forderungen der Synode übereinstimmten.⁴⁸ Paulinus hatte einen der Boten, Evodius von Uzalis,

⁴³ Fragmente der *epistula tractoria* in PL 20, 693–704 (JK 343), bes. frg. 2 (p. 694) und Aug. ep. 190,23 (CSEL 57, 159), vgl. zur Verurteilung des Pelagius J. Lössl, *Julian von Aclanum. Studien zu seinem Leben, seinem Werk, seiner Lehre und seiner Überlieferung*, VCS 60, Leiden, Boston, Köln 2001, 267–272. Zwischen Aug. ep. 149 und 186 über Pelagius ist kein Antwortbrief des Paulinus vorhanden—aus Zufall oder absichtlich?

⁴⁴ Zur Dauer des Briefwechsels siehe Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola*, 272. Noch auf dem Totenbett erlaubte Paulinus von der Kirche ausgeschlossenen Pelagianern, die Kommunion in seiner Basilika einzunehmen, vgl. Uran. ep. de obitu 2 (PL 53, 860 f.). Siehe P. Brown, 'The patrons of Pelagius: The Roman Aristocracy between East and West', in: ders., *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine*, London 1972, 212 und D.E. Trout, *Paulinus of Nola. Life, Letters, and Poems*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1999, 228–235 zu den Beziehungen zwischen Paulinus und Pelagius.

⁴⁵ Aug. ep. 80 (CSEL 34/2, 347), siehe unten.

⁴⁶ *Conc. Africae*, Reg. Carth. 93 (CCL 149, 211): 'Commonitorium fratribus Theasio et Evodio legatis ex Carthaginensi concilio ad gloriosissimos religiosissimosque principes missis ...' Empfehlungen waren an den Kaiser und an den Bischof von Rom gerichtet—'litterae ad episcopum Romanae ecclesiae de commendatione legatorum ... vel ad alios ubi fuerit imperator' (CCL 149, 213). J.-L. Maier, *Le dossier du donatisme*, vol. II: *De Julien l'Apostat à Saint Jean Damascène, 361–750*, Berlin 1989, 130, Nr. 74.

⁴⁷ *Conc. Africae*, Reg. Carth. 93 (p. 212): 'Nota est enim et saepe legibus conclamata circumcellionum qua furiunt detestabilis manus ... Simul etiam petendum est, ut illam legem quae a religiosae memoriae eorum patre Theodosio de auri libris decem in ordinatorum vel ordinatos haereticos seu etiam in possessores, ubi eorum congregatio deprehenditur, promulgata est, ita deinceps confirmari praecipiant.'

⁴⁸ Am 12. Februar 405, vgl. Aug. ep. 88,7 (CSEL 34/2, 414); 185,7 (CSEL 57, 25), siehe PCBE de l'Afrique chrétienne 1, Evodius 2, p. 369 und Theasius, p. 1105.

einen ehemaligen Agenten der kaiserlichen Geheimpolizei,⁴⁹ zehn Jahre vorher in Rom kennengelernt.⁵⁰ Wann er und Theasius ihre Italienreise unterbrachen, bleibt im Dunkeln. Augustinus hatte vor dem Auslaufen eines Schiffes nach Italien schnell noch einige ‚flüchtige Gedanken‘ an Paulinus diktiert und versprochen, ihm später einen längeren Brief zu schreiben—mit Augustinus’ eigenen Worten: ‚sobald ich nach der Rückkehr unserer verehrten Brüder, meiner Kollegen Theasius und Evodius, meine Neugier nach Dir zumindest teilweise befriedigt habe.⁵¹ Denn wir hoffen . . . , dass Du schon bald in ihren Herzen und Worten zu uns kommen wirst.⁵² Auch hier zog Augustinus interne mündliche Berichte einer schriftlichen Fixierung der politischen Lage vor, als er versuchte, seinen Freund zu überreden, angesichts der Bedrohung durch die Goten eine Evakuierung seiner gesamten monastischen Gemeinschaft nach Afrika in Erwägung zu ziehen.⁵³ Er hoffte, bei der Rückkehr der Boten mehr über die Reaktion des Paulinus auf seinen Vorschlag und über den Erfolg ihrer Gesandtschaft am Kaiserhof zu erfahren.

Vier Jahre nach ihnen reiste eine andere Delegation unter Leitung des Possidius von Calama im Sommer 408 nach Italien. So wenig wir über ihren Aufenthalt in Nola wissen, so gut sind wir über Ursachen, Hintergründe und Ausgang der Gesandtschaft unterrichtet. Bei seinem Besuch in Nola überreichte der Bischof von Calama seinem Gastgeber Paulinus lediglich ein Empfehlungsschreiben von Augustinus, um ihn anschließend mündlich über die neuesten Ausschreitungen in seiner Diözese zu informieren: ‚Wenn Du . . . von unserem Bruder Possidius selbst gehört hast‘, schrieb Augustinus, ‚was für eine traurige Angelegenheit ihn zu der Freude genötigt hat, bei dir zu sein, wirst du erkennen, dass ich die reine

⁴⁹ Aug. *conf.* 9,8,17 (CCL 27, 142 f.): ‚... consociasti nobis et Evodium iuvenem ex nostro municipio. Qui cum agens in rebus militaret, prior nobis ad te conversus est et baptizatus et relicta militia saeculari accinctus in tua.‘

⁵⁰ Um ihm vor seiner Abreise nach Africa einen seltenen Codex für Alypius zu übergeben (Paul. *Nol. ep.* 3,3; CSEL 29,15): ‚Quod et sanctos viros, quos indice caritatis ipsorum tuo sermone cognovimus, Comitem et Evodium rogavimus, ut scribere ipsi curarent, ne vel parenti Domnioni codex suus diutius deforet ...‘

⁵¹ Aug. *ep.* 80,1 (CSEL 34/2, 347): ‚Proinde pauca haec ilico arripui dictanda atque mittenda prolixioris epistulae me confitens debitorem, cum post reditum venerabilium fratrum nostrorum collegarum meorum Theasi Evodi primum vestri ex parte satius fuero.‘

⁵² Aug. *ep.* 80,1 (CSEL 34/2, 347): ‚Uberius enim ad nos in eorum pectoribus et oribus vos esse venturos iam iamque in Christi nomine atque adiutorio speramus.‘

⁵³ Aug. *ep.* 80,2 (p. 348): ‚... cum dixisses ita te illo, quo felicior uteris, loco perseverare decrevisse, ut, si quid de te aliud domino placuerit, eius voluntatem praeferas tuae ...‘

Wahrheit sage.⁵⁴ Der Bote war der Verantwortliche und der Betroffene zugleich, da er versucht hatte, eine verbotene Prozession der Heiden in Calama aufzulösen und nur mit knapper Not der Lynchjustiz des städtischen Mobs entkommen war.⁵⁵ Aus einem zweiten Augustinus-Brief an Nectarius, einen der verantwortlichen Honoratioren von Calama, geht der Zweck der Legation hervor.⁵⁶ Augustinus reagierte umgehend, indem er Possidius über Nola nach Ravenna sandte, um den Beistand des Kaisers zu erbitten, ohne dies Dritten gegenüber in einem Brief auch nur zu erwähnen. Dem erschrockenen Kurialen von Calama teilte er nur mit, dass die Entscheidung über ihre Bestrafung nicht bei ihm, sondern einzig und allein bei der Regierung liege.⁵⁷

Die Analyse bisher kaum beachteter knapper Noten und Grußadressen erschließt uns durch ihre Einbindung in den historischen Kontext und den Vergleich mit anderen Briefsammlungen, Protokollen afrikanischer Synoden und kaiserlichen Konstitutionen exemplarisch, welche Impulse zur Konfliktlösung zwischen Kirche und Staat für das frühe Christentum von dem Bischofssitz des Augustinus in Hippo ausgingen. So enthüllen paradoxerweise gerade die ‚ungeschriebenen Briefe‘ des Augustinus, die oft nur zwischen den Zeilen zu lesen sind, das breite Spektrum und ganze Ausmaß persönlicher Skandale, juristischer und religiöser Konflikte innerhalb des lokalen Klerus sowie den gnadenlosen Machtkampf im Verlauf von Schismen und politischen Krisen in weit höherem Maße als die Masse der gewöhnlichen Briefe, die für die Öffentlichkeit bestimmt waren. Einer Predigt des Augustinus zum Jahrestag seiner Bischofsweihe entlehnte Caesarius von Arles die Aufzählung dessen, was man von einem Bischof erwartete: ‚Unruhestifter zurechtzuweisen, Kleinmütige zu trösten, sich der Schwachen anzunehmen, Gegner zu widerlegen, sich vor Hinterhältigen zu hüten, Ungebildete zu leh-

⁵⁴ Aug. ep. 95,1 (CSEL 34/2, 506): ‚Proinde ad istam laetitiam, qua vobiscum est frater Possidius, cum ex ipso audieritis, quam tristis eum causa compulerit, hoc me verissime dicere cognoscetis.‘

⁵⁵ Hierzu ausführlich S. Mratschek, *Te velimus ... consilii participem*. Augustine of Hippo and Olympius—a case study of religious-political cooperation in the fifth century, *Studia Patristica* 38, Leuven 2001, 224–232 und neuerdings E.T. Hermanowicz, *Possidius of Calama. A study of the North African episcopate at the time of Augustine*, Oxford 2008, 156–164.

⁵⁶ Aug. ep. 91,8 (CSEL 34/2, 432), cf. 104,5 (p. 585) und *CTh* 16,5,43; 16,10,19 = *ConstSirm* 12, vgl. J.-L. Maier, *Le dossier du donatisme II*, 153–157, Nr. 85.

⁵⁷ Aug. ep. 91,9 (CSEL 34/2, 434): ‚Quid eos, qui restant, nullane censes disciplina coercedos et proponendum aestimas inpunitum tam immanis furoris exemplum? ... a nobis curam officiumque oportet inpendi, quousque videre conceditur ...‘

ren, Träge wachzurütteln, Streitsuchende zurückzuhalten, Eingebildeten Widerstand zu leisten, Streitende zu besänftigen, Armen zu helfen, Unterdrückte zu befreien, Gute zu ermutigen, Böse zu ertragen—and sie alle zu lieben.⁵⁸ ‚Wer das Volk regiert‘ (also auch der Bischof), meinte Augustinus, ‚müsse sich vorher darüber im Klaren sein, dass er der Sklave von vielen ist.⁵⁹

Die Strategie, wie Augustinus mit solchen Grenzsituationen umging, indem er sie nur durch vorsichtige Anspielungen berührte oder ganz darüber schwieg, zeigt, mit wie viel Energie der Bischof seine Ziele verfolgte und mit wie viel Sorgfalt er seine Briefe stilisierte. Es ist auffallend, dass keine Briefe aus der Zeit seiner ‚manichäischen Vergangenheit‘ vor seiner Bekehrung im Jahre 386 vorliegen.⁶⁰ Von seiner Korrespondenz haben etwa 300 Briefe überlebt, die nur einen kleinen Bruchteil seiner ausgedehnten religiösen und sozialen Netzwerke umfassen, und wir besitzen nur 1/14 seiner Predigten, obwohl er schätzungsweise 8.000mal predigte.⁶¹ Umso mehr verwundert es, dass er seine intellektuelle Heimat anderswo suchte: ‚Denn nichts ist besser, nichts angenehmer als das Erforschen der göttlichen Schätze, fern von allem Lärm, bekannte Augustinus in einer seiner Predigten.⁶² ‚Angenehm ist es und gut; immer

⁵⁸ *Homilia sancti Augustini in natale episcopi* (Aug. *sermo* 340,1) in Caes. Arel. *sermo* 232,1 (CCL 104, 919): ‚Corripiendi sunt inquieti, pusillanimes consolandi, infirmi suscipiendi, contradicentes redarguendi, insidiantes cavendi, inperiti docendi, desidiiosi excitandi, contentiosi cohibendi, superbientes reprimendi, desperantes erigendi, litigantes pacandi, inopes adiuuandi, oppressi liberandi, boni adprobandi, mali tolerandi, omnes amandi.‘

⁵⁹ Aug. *serm.* 340 A (MiAg 1, 563): *Debet enim, qui praeest populo, prius intellegere se servum esse multorum.*

⁶⁰ Zu Augustins Haltung gegenüber den Manichäern siehe J. van Oort, O. Wermelinger & G. Wurst (eds.), *Augustine and the Manicheism in the Latin West*, Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht Symposium of the International Association of Manichaeic Studies (IAMS), Leiden, Boston, Köln 2001.

⁶¹ Zur Anzahl der Briefe siehe M. Zelzer, ‚Die Briefliteratur‘, 346 f. Zur Zahl der Predigten P. Allen, ‚It’s in the Post‘, 121, Anm. 97 mit Hinweis auf H.R. Drobner, ‚Studying Augustine. An overview of recent research‘, in: R. Dodaro & G. Lawless (eds.), *Augustine and His Critics. Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner* (London – New York 2000) 33, Anm. 15 und weiterer Literatur.

⁶² Aug. *serm.* 339,4 (SPM 1, p. 115): ‚Nihil est melius, nihil est dulcius, quam divinum scrutari nullo strepente thesaurum: dulce est, bonum est; praedicare autem, arguere, corripere, aedificare, pro unoquoque satagere, magnum onus, magnum pondus, magnus labor. Quis non refugiet istum laborem?‘ Es bleibt offen, ob mit *corripere* (in der Grundbedeutung ‚zupacken‘), faszinieren, mitreißen oder ‚tadeln‘ zu verstehen ist.—Eine interessante Ergänzung bietet C. Rapps Kap. ‚The Episcopate: Work or Honor?‘, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity. The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 2005, 166–171.

wieder öffentlich predigen aber, argumentieren, kritisieren, erbauen, für jeden bereit stehen—das ist eine schwere Last, ein harter Druck, ein mühseliges Werk. Wer möchte sich dem nicht entziehen?’

CHAPTER SEVEN

EINIGE RECHTLICHE UND THEOLOGISCHE FRAGEN ZU DEN ABELOITAE IN AUGUSTINS *DE HAERESIBUS*

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Auf wiederholte Anfrage des Diakons und späteren Bischofs von Karthago, Quodvultdeus,¹ schrieb Augustin in seinen letzten Lebensjahren (429, vielleicht sogar erst 429–430) das Werk *De haeresibus*, eine handliche Zusammenstellung der alten und der neuen Häresien.² Der Katalog geht größtenteils zurück auf das ältere Werk eines anderen: Von den 88 Häresien, die Augustin in *De haeresibus* nennt, sind um die 57 dem *Anacephalaeosis* von Pseudo-Epiphanius entnommen, einer Kurzfassung von Epiphanius' *Panarion*. Darüber hinaus hat sich Augustin auch aus dem *Diversarum hereseon liber* des Filaster von Brescia bedient.³ Nur für die Beschreibung einiger weniger Abweichungen schöpft Augustin aus eigener Kenntnis, so zum Beispiel in Bezug auf die Manichäer.⁴ Quodvultdeus hatte Augustin zudem gebeten, bei jeder Häresie auch anzugeben, warum die Kirche die betreffenden Vorstellungen bestritt, aber dieser Bitte ist der Bischof in den meisten Fällen nicht nachgekommen.⁵

¹ Der erste Lehrstuhlinhaber für Geschichte der alten Kirche und Patrologie an der 1923 gegründeten Katholieke [heute: Radboud] Universiteit Nijmegen, Desiderius Franes OFM (1888–1942), legte 1920 in München seine Dissertation vor zu den Schriften des Quodvultdeus: *Die Werke des Hl. Quodvultdeus, Bischof von Karthago, gestorben um 453*.

² Edition in: *Aurelii Augustini opera*, XIII.2, Turnhout 1969 (Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina 46), 263–358.

³ Zu den Quellen: Gustave Bardy, 'Le „De haeresibus“ et ses sources', in: *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, II, Rom 1931, 397–416.

⁴ Hierzu: Johannes van Oort, 'Mani and Manichaeism in Augustine's *De haeresibus*. An Analysis of *haer.* 46. 1', in: *Studia Manichaica. IV. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus*, eds. R.E. Emmerick u. a., Berlin 2000, 451–463.

⁵ Ep. 221, Quodvultdeus an Augustin, CCSL 46, 273–275, hier 274.34–36: '... breviter, perstrictae atque summatae et opinionones rogo cuiuslibet haeresis poni et, quid contra teneat ecclesia catholica (...).'

Für die Situation in Nord-Afrika—an der Quodvultdeus natürlich besonderes Interesse hatte—haben vor allem die Beschreibungen der Donatisten und der Tertullianer großes Gewicht. Die letzte Häresie, die Augustin behandelt, ist die des Pelagius und der Pelagianer, die er zuvor schon in mehreren Werken widerlegt hatte. Die vorletzte Häresie bezieht sich auf die Abeloiten. Diese soll im Folgenden untersucht werden. Im zweiten Teil von *De haeresibus* wollte Augustin deutlich machen, worin der Kern der jeweiligen Abweichung nun eigentlich bestand, doch dazu ist er nicht mehr gekommen.⁶ Wahrscheinlich ist es darum auch nicht immer ohne weiteres klar, warum er eine bestimmte Auffassung als häretisch klassifizierte. Das ist auch bei den Abeloiten so. Im Folgenden soll verdeutlicht werden, warum Augustin die Abeloiten überhaupt in *De haeresibus* aufgenommen hat.

Die ABELOITEN UND DIE TRADITION DER GEISTLICHEN EHE

Was also behauptet Augustin von den Abeloiten, die er nirgends anders explizit zu erwähnen scheint? Die Abeloiten durften einerseits nicht unverheiratet bleiben, andererseits aber als Ehepaare keine Geschlechtsgemeinschaft pflegen: ‚Non miscebantur uxoribus, et eis tamen sine uxoribus vivere sectae ipsius dogmate non licebat.‘⁷ Sie legten ein Keuschheitsgelübde ‚sub continentiae professione simul habitantes‘ ab, adoptierten aber zwei Kinder, einen Jungen und ein Mädchen, die sie als zukünftige Haushaltsvorstände und Erben einsetzten.⁸ Wenn einer der Eheleute oder eines der Kinder starb, wurde sein oder ihr Platz durch ein anderes Gemeindemitglied eingenommen. Die Kinder blieben ihr Leben lang ihren Adoptiveltern oder deren eventuellen Nachfolgern zugetan.⁹ Ihrerseits schlossen auch die Adoptivkinder einen Vertrag im Sinne ihrer Adoptiveltern (*in eiusdem coniunctionis pacto successores suos futuros*). Auch sie nahmen also sowohl einen Jungen wie ein Mädchen als Kinder an. An Kindern mangelte es den Abeloiten nicht, so zumindest Augustin, denn in ihrer nächsten Umgebung waren immer bedürftige Eltern, die gerne ihre Kinder zur Adoption frei gaben, in der Hoffnung, dass

⁶ *De haer.* Praef. 7, 289.111–112: ‚In posteribus autem partibus, quid faciat haereticum disputabitur.‘

⁷ *De haer.* 87, 339.9–1.

⁸ *De haer.* 87, 339.10–13.

⁹ *De haer.* 87, 340.15–16.

ihnen später ein Erbe anheim fallen würde.¹⁰ Der Anhang der Abeloi-ten befand sich in Augustins eigenem Bistum Hippo in den ländlichen Gebieten (*haeresis rusticana*); tatsächlich ‚befand‘, denn ihre Zahl war stark zurück gegangen und hatte sich zuletzt auf ein kleines Dorf konzentriert. Inzwischen hatte die Abweichung keine Anhänger mehr, alle waren sie (gezwungen?) katholisch geworden: ‚omnes modo correcti et Catholici facti sunt, nec aliquis illius supersedit erroris.‘¹¹ Ihren Namen Abeloi-ten führten sie nach Meinung einiger—und Augustin war sich hierbei offenkundig nicht sicher—auf Abel zurück, den kinderlos gestorbenen Sohn des ersten Menschenpaares, der, obwohl unter dem Alten Gesetz lebend, doch in den Augen Gottes Gnade gefunden hatte.¹² Johannes van Oort folgend soll auch der Bezeichnung *Abeloitae* statt *Abeloim* oder *Abelonii* der Vorzug gegeben werden, da ersteres auch in dem Epilog und der Kapitelliste vorkommt.¹³

Große Bedeutung haben die Abeloi-ten nicht gehabt. Der so genannte Praedestinatus, unser einziger Gewährsmann in diesem Fall, folgt in großen Linien dem Text des Augustin, vermerkt aber auch, dass allein diese Praxis der Kinderadoption die Abeloi-ten von den Katholiken unterschiede.¹⁴ Wo anders werden sie, soweit überschaubar, nicht erwähnt. Auch ihre geographische Verbreitung ist offenkundig auf das ländliche Gebiet der Diözese von Augustin beschränkt geblieben, wo dieser im Lauf der Jahre viel mehr Probleme mit den Donatisten bekam. So hält er es auch für ausgeschlossen, dass Hieronymus, ein in seinen Augen gestandener Häresiologe, diese obskure Gemeinschaft *Abeloitas nostrae regionis haereticos* gekannt habe.¹⁵ Übrigens gibt Augustin nirgends an, dass er selbst einen Anteil in der *correctio* dieser Gruppe gehabt habe, obwohl dies doch auf der Hand läge, da sie ja in seinem Bistum lebten. Zwar hat der Begriff ‚secta‘, wie Augustin die Gemeinschaft nennt, in seinem Wortschatz eine negative Konnotation und wird von ihm vor

¹⁰ *De haer.* 87, 340.16–20.

¹¹ *De haer.* 87, 339.1–4. Zu Recht macht Johannes van Oort darauf aufmerksam, dass es keinen gerechtfertigten Grund gibt zu unterstellen, dass die Abeloi-ten spontan aus eigenem Willen in die katholische Kirche zurückgekehrt seien, vgl.: O. Wermelinger, ‚Abeloim‘, in: Augustinus-Lexikon, I (1994) 5–6; Johannes van Oort, ‚The Augustinus-Lexikon‘, *Vigiliae Christianae* 45 (1991) 376–387, hier 382.

¹² *De haer.* 87, 339.7–8.

¹³ *De haer.*, Epilogus, 285, 343. Van Oort, ‚The Augustinus-Lexikon‘, 382.

¹⁴ Arnobius iunior, *Praedestinatus*, ed. F. Gori, (CCSL 25B), c. 87, 50.3.

¹⁵ *De haer.* Epilogus, 343.27–30.

allem für die von ihm verabscheuten Manichäer gebraucht, aber davon abgesehen ist der Ton dieses Kapitels, verglichen mit anderen in *De haeresibus*, neutral. Zur institutionellen Gliederung der Abeloiten sagt er nichts.

Warum also hat Augustin die Abeloiten in seine Übersicht der Häresien aufgenommen? Hier praktizierten Christen doch eine geistliche Ehe, die nach allgemeiner frühchristlicher Auffassung ein hohes Gut darstellte, zumindest wenn die Eheleute konsequent an ihrem Vorsatz festhielten. Augustin suggeriert interessanterweise nirgends das Gegenteil. Die Jungfräulichkeit, die sich besonders im Zölibat und dann durchweg im sicheren Abstand zum anderen Geschlecht, manchmal aber auch in Form der sexuellen Enthaltsamkeit in der Ehe konkretisierte, wurde in der christlichen Tradition immer hoch geschätzt. Deshalb auch enthielten sich asketisch inspirierte Ehepaare der Geschlechtsgemeinschaft oder wollten sich von Anfang an rein geistlich aneinander binden um die kommende Welt zu antizipieren.

In der Syrischen Kirche lehnten zwar die Enkratiten Ehe und Fortpflanzung ab, aber in den apokryphen Apostelakten, die vor allem in deren Umgebung populär waren, gab es Fälle, in denen Bekehrte einer geistlichen Gemeinschaft von Männern und Frauen beitraten. Ebenso kamen Ehepaare vor, die auf Geschlechtsgemeinschaft verzichteten, übrigens durchweg auf Initiative der Frau hin, ein auffallender Wechsel in der Genderrolle.¹⁶ Auch wenn die Autorität dieser Schriften schon früh bezweifelt wurde, so zirkulierten sie doch auch bei anderen orthodoxen Christen, was sich auch aus der Warnung ergibt, die Augustin an seine Hörer richtete, dass es hier nämlich gerade nicht um kanonische Schriften ging.¹⁷ Ab dem zweiten Jahrhundert lebten einige Asketen mit Jungfrauen zusammen, den Syneisakten oder *virgines subintroductae* und zwar, wie sie selbst behaupteten, in aller Ehrsamkeit und Tugendhaftigkeit. Gerade die permanente Nähe zum anderen Geschlecht ließ die Enthaltsamkeit, verglichen mit strikter Absonderung, umso verdienstvoller erscheinen. Doch die Zeitgenossen bezweifelten, dass sich diese Aske-

¹⁶ Stevan L. Davies, *The Revolt of the Widows: The Social World of the Apocryphal Acts*, Cabbondale Ill. 1980, 32; *Saint Augustine on Marriage*, ed. Elizabeth Ann Clark, Washington DC 1996, Introduction, 2.

¹⁷ *De civ. Dei*, XV, 32.

ten wirklich der Geschlechtsgemeinschaft enthielten.¹⁸ Die Circumcellionen, die radikale und sogar manchmal gewalttätige Gruppe der Donatisten, die, was ihre Inspiration und Vorgehensweise betrifft, eng mit den Messalianern verwandt waren,¹⁹ prahlten mit ihrer zölibatären Lebensweise. Gegner aber wie Possidius, Hausgenosse und Biograf von Augustin, weigerten sich zu glauben, dass die Jungfrauen in ihrer Gefolgschaft diesen Namen auch wirklich verdienten.²⁰ Mit anderen Worten, Enthaltensamkeit genoss ein hohes Ansehen, aber die Aufrichtigkeit des Vorsatzes wurde nicht von vorn herein unterstellt und vor allem dann nicht, wenn es doktrinaire Gegner betraf. Unstrukturierte Beziehungen zwischen den Geschlechtern, ein leichter Angriffspunkt, wurden auf Dauer zu einem fest stehenden Element im häresiologischen Repertoire.²¹ In Bezug auf die Abeloiten enthielt sich, wie gesagt, Augustin, jeder Bemerkung in diese abwertende Richtung, während er doch bezüglich der asketischen Vorschriften der Manichäer nicht zögerte, ihnen Heuchelei vorzuwerfen.²²

In asketischen Milieus bildete sich außerdem früh die Auffassung heraus, dass die Sorge für Kinder nicht oder kaum mit dem praktischen Streben nach religiöser Vollkommenheit zu vereinbaren sei. Dass man aus asketischen Motiven heraus keinen sexuellen Umgang in der Ehe hatte, wurde daher (aber) selten kombiniert mit der Adoption von Kindern von anderen um die eigene Gemeinschaft (oder das menschliche Geschlecht als solches) am Leben zu erhalten, so wie bei den Abeloiten. Eine seltsame Parallele hierzu finden wir allerdings bei den Essenern. Flavius Josephus erzählt über sie, dass sie Enthaltensamkeit und Widerstand gegen die Leidenenschaften als verdienstvoll ansähen. Für sich selbst lehnten sie die Ehe ab, aber sie adoptierten die Kinder von anderen in jungem Alter um sie in dem Geist der eigenen Gemeinschaft zu unterrichten.²³ Ob dies die einzige Methode bei den Essenern war, ihre Reihen aufzufüllen, ist

¹⁸ Klaus Fitschen, *Messalianismus und Antimesalianismus. Ein Beispiel ostkirchlicher Ketzer Geschichte*, Göttingen 1997 (Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, 71), 56; Blake Leyerle, *Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives: John Chrysostom on Spiritual Marriage*, Berkeley 2001, 204–205.

¹⁹ Daniel Caner, *Wandering, begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley 1997, 230–231.

²⁰ Possidius, *Vita Augustini*, 10: ‚sub professione continentium ambulantes.‘

²¹ Dyan Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock*, Princeton 1993, 32.

²² John Bauerschmidt, ‚Contraception‘, in: *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids 1999, 238–239.

²³ Flavius Josephus, *Bellum* 2.120; *Antiq.* 18.20.

zwar unwahrscheinlich, braucht hier aber nicht weiter zu interessieren.²⁴ Vielleicht gibt es (sogar) eine genetische Beziehung zu den Abeloiten: Marcel Simon, ausgewiesener Kenner des nordafrikanischen Judentums, stellt verschiedene sinnvolle etymologische Überlegungen dazu an, doch seine Behauptung: ‚L'on ne se trompera donc pas, j'imagine, en situant en définitive les Abéloniens sur les confins indistincts du christianisme, du judaïsme et du paganisme sémitique‘ hilft uns hier nicht viel weiter.²⁵ Die Herkunftsbestimmung der Abeloiten scheint ein spekulatives Unterfangen.

HEIDNISCHE UND CHRISTLICHE AUFFASSUNGEN ÜBER DIE ELTERLICHE ERZIEHUNGSPFLICHT

Wer seine eigenen Kinder abgibt, vernachlässigt nach heutiger Auffassung seine Erziehungspflicht. Im antiken Rom war dies aber nicht ungewöhnlich und auch nicht verboten. Die Macht des *paterfamilias* gegenüber seiner Familie war immerhin, auch im Fall von Adoption, nahezu absolut.²⁶ Unsere heutigen Wertvorstellungen zu den Interessen der Kinder oder der elterlichen Verantwortung bei der Erziehung gehen von anderen Gewichtungen aus, auch wenn es selbst für damals genug Hinweise für affektive Beziehungen zwischen Kindern und Eltern gibt. Armut wurde offensichtlich als mildernder Umstand beim Weggeben der Kinder gesehen, zumindest aus der Perspektive der schreibenden (und begüterten) Klasse. Nur wenn im Falle des Verkaufs der neue Status eines oder einer Freigeborenen ihn oder sie zum Sklavendasein drohte zu degradieren, reagierte die kaiserliche Gesetzgebung restriktiv. Freiheit schien sozusagen ein höheres Gut als das Leben.²⁷ Juristen befassten sich mit Fragen wie diesen: ob, und wenn ja, unter welchen Bedingungen biologische Eltern ihr Kind zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt wieder zurückfordern konnten; ob die Vermietung eines Kindes sich über dessen 25. Lebensjahr hinaus erstrecken dürfe; und inwieweit abgegebene Kinder

²⁴ Lena Cansdale, *Qumran and the Essenes: A Re-evaluation of the Evidence*, Tübingen, 1997, 30–31.

²⁵ Marcel Simon, ‚Le Judaïsme berbère dans l'Afrique ancienne‘, in: idem, *Recherches d'Histoire Judéo-Chrétienne*, Paris 1962, 30–87, hier 56–57.

²⁶ Jane F. Gardner, *Family and Familia in Roman Life and Law*, 121.

²⁷ Michael Humbert, ‚Enfants à louer et à vendre: Augustin et l'autorité parentale (Ep. 10* et 24*)‘, in: *Les lettres de Saint Augustin découvertes par Johannes Divjak. Communications présentées au colloque des 20 et 21 Septembre 1982*, ed. C. Lepeley, Paris 1983, 189–203, 200.

Recht hätten auf einen Anteil des Erbes ihrer biologischen Eltern hätten. Der Verkauf von Kindern war in jedem Fall kein ungewöhnliches Vorkommnis.²⁸

In der biblischen Tradition liegt der Nachdruck eher auf dem Respekt, den Kinder ihren Eltern schuldig sind, als auf der Erziehungspflicht der Eltern.²⁹ Dass Kinder abgegeben oder sogar verkauft werden, ist im Alten Testament nicht ungebräuchlich. Arme Eltern gaben ihre Kinder notgedrungen an jemanden weg, der materiell besser für die Kinder sorgen konnte. Obwohl im Neuen Testament die Sorge für die Kinder, besonders für die Waisenkinder, allen Christen aufgetragen ist, findet sich doch auch eine Einschärfung des vierten Gebots in Eph. 6,4. Laktantius stand auf dem Standpunkt, dass, wer kein Kind unterhalten könne, auch auf sexuellen Umgang in der Ehe verzichten müsse.³⁰ Ambrosius fand die Praxis, Kinder weg zu geben, sicher nicht gut, doch er erkannte die Not-situation an und hatte auch ein Auge für das Leid der Eltern, die ihr Kind unter diesen Umständen abgeben mussten.³¹

Augustin kannte die Praxis der Kindaussetzung, aber auch die Gesetzgebung in diesem Punkt.³² Zu einer konkreten Frage kam es ca. 422. Menschenhändler, *mangones*, die vor allem aus Galatien kamen, kauften nicht nur Männer und Frauen auf, die von örtlichen Händlern geliefert worden waren, sondern auch Kinder, die von ihren Eltern zum Verkauf angeboten wurden.³³ Als Bischof der Hafenstadt Hippo und als solcher—wenn auch oft *contre coeur*—Schiedsrichter in juristischen Händeln, fühlte sich Augustin für sie verantwortlich. Den Menschenhandel betrachtete er als eine Plage für seine Diözese, obwohl er sicher nicht jedes Mittel gut hieß, um die Armseligen aus ihrer bedrückenden Situation zu befreien. Außerdem ist nichts von weiteren Bemühungen

²⁸ John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children from late Antiquity to the Renaissance*, 1988 [reprint: Chicago 1998], 68.

²⁹ Boswell, *Kindness*, 139.

³⁰ *Institutiones*, 6,20; O.M. Bakke, *When Children became People: The Birth of Childhood in Early Christianity*, Minneapolis 2005, 128.

³¹ *De Nab. Hist.*, 5. 19–25; Bakke, *Children*, 138.

³² Jean Rougé, 'Escroquerie et brigandage en Afrique romaine au temps de Saint Augustin (Ep. 8* et 10*)', in: *Les lettres de Saint Augustin découvertes par Johannes Divjak. Communications présentées au colloque des 20 et 21 Septembre 1982*, ed. Claude Lepeley, Paris 1983, 177–188, hier 185.

³³ Ep. 10* an Alypius, Bischof van Tagaste und Ep. 24* an Eustochius, *Epistulae ex duobus codicibus nuper in lucem prolatae*, ed. Johannes Divjak, Wien 1981, (CSEL 88) 46–51 und 125–128; Vgl. K.R. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome*, Cambridge 1994, 37.

seinerseits bekannt, diesem Handel, der übrigens schon länger bestand, ein Ende zu bereiten.³⁴ Er lehnte sowohl die Entführungen als auch die gewalttätigen Befreiungsaktionen ab, aber auf Grund seiner Kenntnisse der Römischen Gesetzgebung, die er im Rahmen seiner *audientia episcopalis*³⁵ beachten musste, zog er nicht in Zweifel, dass Eltern das Recht hatten im Hinblick auf Arbeit ihr Kind als (zukünftige) Arbeitskraft an Fremde zu vermieten oder zu verkaufen. Nur durfte keine permanente Degradation zum Sklavenstand daraus resultieren—auch in den Augen des Bischofs schien dies eine Hauptbedingung zu sein.³⁶ In diesem Sinn also war die Praxis der Abeloiten aus seiner Sicht nicht abzulehnen.

Eine extreme Form des Weggebens von Kindern war die Kindsaussetzung. Christliche Autoren geben als Grund für ihre Ablehnung der Kindsaussetzung (*expositio*) die Gefahr des Kindsmords an. Tertullian warf den Heiden vor, dass sie das Schicksal ihrer Kinder in die Hände von gut meinenden Fremden legten oder sie durch gut Gestellte adoptieren ließen.³⁷ Ein Kind weg geben brachte auch die Gefahr eines zukünftigen Inzests mit sich—der biologische Vater könnte immerhin einmal in ein Bordell gehen. Dass Augustin die Aussetzung als eine grausame Tat beurteilte, ist bei ihm eher die Konsequenz der Sünde, die nach Ansicht des Bischofs der Aussetzung unvermeidlich voraus ging: die Eltern hatten Geschlechtsgemeinschaft gehabt, obwohl sie keine Kinder zeugen wollten.³⁸ Auf diesen Punkt wird noch zurück zu kommen sein.

Doch bei den Abeloiten ist dies alles nicht der Fall. Das Kind wurde persönlich an Bekannte der Eltern übergeben und blieb in der gleichen Gegend. Augustin wusste jedoch von ungehorsamen Kindern, die durch ihre Eltern verstoßen und enterbt wurden.³⁹ Auch dies ist hier aber nicht der Fall, denn mit der Übergabe an die Abeloiten bezweckten die biologischen Eltern gerade eine lukrative Zukunft für ihre Kinder. Die Abeloiten kauften die Kinder zudem nicht ab, denn die biologischen Eltern gaben sie ihnen, ohne dass von einer expliziten Bezahlung die Rede war. Die neuen Eltern behandelten die Kinder ebenso wenig als

³⁴ Brent D. Shaw, 'The Family in Late Antiquity: The Experience of Augustine', in: *Past and Present* 115 (1987), und in: *Augustine*, eds. J.M. Dunn und Ian Harris, vol. II, Cheltenham-Lyme 1997, 267–315, hier 310.

³⁵ Noel Lenski, 'Evidence for the „Audientia episcopalis“ in the New Letters of Augustine', in: *Law, Society and Authority in Late Antiquity*, ed. Ralph W. Mathisen, New York-Oxford 2001, 83–97, hier 84–85.

³⁶ Humbert, *Enfants*, 192–193.

³⁷ *Ad nationes*, 1.16 (CSEL 20.87).

³⁸ *De nuptiis et concupiscentia*, 1.17. Vgl. Ep. 98.

³⁹ *Ep. ad Galat.* 39; Shaw, *The Family*, 287.

Sklaven, sondern bestimmten gerade ihr gesamtes Erbe für sie. Auch waren die adoptierten Kinder ihnen erkenntlich, denn sie blieben immer für sie sorgen: „usque ad ejus quoque obitum filii serviebant.“⁴⁰

Dass Eltern für ihr adoptiertes Kind sorgten, als ob es ihr eigenes wäre, und dass ein Gefühlsband entstand, war auch im antiken Rom nicht ungewöhnlich und wurde mit gesellschaftlicher Anerkennung honoriert.⁴¹ Christen waren übrigens mit der Vorstellung der Adoption bestens vertraut, da es in verschiedener Hinsicht ihre eigene Identität kennzeichnete. Die Juden, aus denen sie hervor gegangen waren, hatten sie abgelehnt und Gott, der für alle Kinder und besonders für die Geprüften ein Vater ist, hatte die Christen (als seine Kinder) angenommen und sogar über die ursprünglichen Erben gestellt. Und die kanonischen Evangelien begannen mit einer Genealogie, die in Jesus gipfelte, der durch einen traditionell als vorbildhaft gezeichneten Adoptivvater erzogen wurde.⁴² Wenn Augustin über Adoption spricht, tut er dies stets im genannten metaphorischen Sinne. Einmal erwähnt er einen Mann ohne Erben. Dieser werde wohl einen Sohn annehmen, um ihm seinen Besitz zu übertragen, aber es dabei dann auch lassen, denn mehrere Söhne sorgten für eine Zersplitterung der Erbschaft.⁴³

Dass Kinder nicht durch ihre eigenen Eltern erzogen werden, so wie im Fall der Abeloiten, scheint bei Augustin also nicht auf Ablehnung zu stoßen. Über die Erziehung von Kindern durch ihre eigenen Eltern hat er auffällig wenig zu sagen, wie übrigens alle Kirchenväter, außer wenn es um deren Einweisung in den Glauben und die Kirche geht. Zwar wirft er nach seiner Bekehrung seinen Eltern, besonders seinem Vater vor, dass seine eigene sittliche Erziehung zu kurz gekommen sei, und er hat auch nicht das mindeste gegen das (körperliche) Züchtigen von Söhnen einzuwenden, aber ansonsten scheint er Erziehung für etwas Selbstverständliches zu halten.⁴⁴

Letztlich sei darauf hingewiesen, dass die Kinder von den Abeloiten als Folge des Entschlusses ihrer Adoptiveltern lebenslang als Paar füreinander bestimmt wurden. Dass es hierbei um einen biologischen Bruder und eine biologische Schwester gegangen sein sollte, ist unwahrscheinlich, denn Augustin wäre durch die Gefahr des Inzests ohne Zweifel alarmiert

⁴⁰ *De haer.* 87, 340.15–16.

⁴¹ Boswell, *Kindness*, 119.

⁴² Boswell, *Kindness*, 155.

⁴³ Tract. 2 in Joann. 2.1.13 (CCSL, 36, 17–18). Vgl. Shaw, *The Family*, 311.

⁴⁴ Bakke, *Children*, 173–174.

gewesen. Offensichtlich hatten die Kinder hierbei nichts zu bestimmen, aber dass Ehen arrangiert wurden, war in den Augen Augustins ebenso wenig bedenklich. Er hatte nicht die geringste Mühe damit, dass Väter, vor allem wenn es um minderjährige Töchter ging, bei der Eheschließung ihre Macht ausspielten.⁴⁵ Auch in dieser Hinsicht werden wir bei ihm keine Ablehnung erwarten dürfen.

DISKUSSIONEN ZU EHE UND SEXUALITÄT

Es ist wohl kennzeichnend für Augustin, dass bei den vier von den letzten fünf Abweichungen in *De haeresibus*, die er aus eigener Erfahrung beschrieben und vor allem im Hinblick auf die nordafrikanische Situation in seinen Katalog aufgenommen hatte, die Themen der Ehe und Sexualität eine so wichtige Rolle spielen. Die Helvidiani (nr. 84) behaupten, dass Maria nach der Geburt von Jesus keine Jungfrau geblieben sei, sondern mit Josef noch andere Kinder bekommen habe. Dies ist eine interessante Parallele zu den Anhängern von Jovinianus, eines anderen Gegners von Augustin, dessen Ideen der Bischof von Hippo in nr. 82 aufgrund der Äußerungen von Filaster, aber auch auf Grund der eigenen Erfahrung schon behandelt hatte.⁴⁶ Jovinianus verteidigte ausgehend von seiner Ablehnung der Jungfräulichkeit Marias *post partum* die Vorstellung, dass Zölibat und monogame Ehe gleichermaßen verdienstvoll seien. Dies hatte in Rom dazu geführt, dass einige bis dahin untadelige Jungfrauen—*provectae iam aetatis*, so der schockierte Augustin—den Vorzug an den ehelichen Stand gegeben hätten.⁴⁷ Danach kamen die Paterniani an die Reihe, auch Venustiani genannt, die auf Grund der Auffassung, dass der Körper unterhalb der Gürtellinie vom Teufel erschaffen sei, einen nach Auffassung des Bischofs widerwärtigen Libertinismus praktizierten.⁴⁸ Die Häresie 86 betraf die inzwischen zahlenmäßig kleine Gruppe der Tertullianer, die auf ihren unbequemen Ortsgenossen aus dem dritten Jahrhundert, Tertullian, die Meinung zurückführten, dass die Seele ein Körper sei und die kurz vor der Endredaktion von *De haeresibus* in Karthago in die katholische Kirche zurückgekehrt waren (*in Catholicam transierunt*).⁴⁹ Tertullian war in den Augen von

⁴⁵ Shaw, *The Family*, 302.

⁴⁶ *De haer.* 84, 338.1–5.

⁴⁷ *De haer.* 82, 6–12, 337.7–12.

⁴⁸ *De haer.* 85, 338.5–9.

⁴⁹ *De haer.* 86, 6–7.

Augustin erst dann zum Häretiker geworden, als er sich den Montanisten anschloss (*transiens ad Cataphrygas*) und, anders als Paulus, eine zweite Ehe ablehnte. Auf die Tertullianer folgen in *De haeresibus* die Abeloiten.⁵⁰

Die Diskussionen über die Ehe waren um 400 noch voll in Gang.⁵¹ Häresie und Orthodoxie waren in diesem Punkt daher noch nicht auskristallisiert. In der damaligen Praxis zeigt sich zudem eine bemerkenswerte Kontinuität mit heidnischen Ansichten.⁵² Augustin nahm an den verschiedenen Diskussionen teil und er war dabei im Lauf der Zeit mit wechselnden Opponenten in Berührung gekommen und sogar manchmal in die Verteidigungsposition gedrängt worden—sicher nicht die günstigste Ausgangsposition für einen nuancierten und konsistenten Standpunkt. Julianus von Eclanum hielt ihm zum Beispiel seinen manichäischen Blick auf die Ehe vor, denn er betrachtete im Unterschied zum Bischof von Hippo die Konkupiszenz nicht als ein Symptom der menschlichen Unzulänglichkeit, sondern als ein natürliches, also durch Gott selbst gegebenes Mittel zur Fortpflanzung.⁵³ Augustin selbst hatte aber auch in verschiedenen Schriften gegen die Manichäer, natürlich im Hinblick auf die vorgeschriebene Fortpflanzung, die Legitimität der ehelichen Geschlechtsgemeinschaft verteidigt.⁵⁴ In seinen Predigten berief er sich wiederholt auf die *tabulae nuptiales*, die zivilen Eheverträge, die die Zeugung von Nachkommen als Ehezweck nannten.⁵⁵ Und gegenüber Jovinianus, der bezüglich Zölibat und Ehe keinen Unterschied nach geistlichem Verdienst machte, trat er für die Enthaltensamkeit ein, ohne allerdings so weit wie Hieronymus zu gehen, der in seinem scharfen Angriff auf Jovinianus die Ehe tatsächlich als das kleinere Übel charakterisiert hatte. Augustin hielt dagegen, dass zwar das Zölibat besser als die Ehe sei, darum aber die Ehe noch nicht schlecht sein müsse.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ *De haer.* 86, 339.23–24.

⁵¹ David G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy*, Oxford 2007, 283.

⁵² Judith Evans Grubbs, 'Pagan and Christian Marriage: The State of the Question', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2 (1994) 361–412, hier 411.

⁵³ Mathijs Lamberigts, 'A Critical Evaluation of Critiques on Augustine's View of Sexuality', in: *Augustine and his Critics: Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner*, eds. Robert J. Dodaro u. a., London 2000, 176–197, hier 177.

⁵⁴ Vgl. *De nuptiis et concupiscentia*, 2.36; CCSL 42.212.

⁵⁵ David G. Hunter, 'Augustine and the Making of Marriage in Roman North Africa', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11 (2003) 63–85, hier 75–76.

⁵⁶ Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy*, 280, 283.

Angesichts der Macht der *concupiscentia carnis*—Augustin wusste aus eigener Erfahrung, worum es hierbei ging—schien es ihm für seine eigene Generation zwar sehr schwierig, sich in einer Beziehung der Geschlechtsgemeinschaft zu enthalten, aber nicht unmöglich und in geistlicher Hinsicht sicher verdienstvoll.⁵⁷ So stand er zum Beispiel unter dem Eindruck von geistlichen Ehen wie der von Paulinus von Nola und dessen Frau Therasia.⁵⁸ Doch falls die Praxis der Enthaltsamkeit allgemein gebräuchlich werden sollte, fürchteten einige Zeitgenossen von Augustin wohl zu recht, dass das menschliche Geschlecht aussterben würde. Der Bischof von Hippo teilte diese Befürchtungen jedoch nicht. Schließlich lebe man in der Endzeit und ersehne die Wiederkehr des Herrn. Alle Christen, ob verheiratet oder nicht, würden bestimmt gut daran tun, sich ganz der sexuellen Enthaltsamkeit zuzuwenden, denn die verbleibende Zeit sei nur noch kurz.⁵⁹ Sowie ein Ehepaar tugendsamer sei, solle es sich, so Augustin, früher der Geschlechtsgemeinschaft enthalten, denn es sei verdienstvoller, dies freiwillig bei Zeiten zu tun, während es bei fortschreitendem Alter ohnehin durch die Natur eingegeben werde. Wenn sie sich treu blieben und auf ihr gegenseitiges Wohlergehen achteten, sei ihre Gemeinschaft eine des Herzens. Für sie sei eine größere Belohnung bereit gestellt als für die, die die Ehe so leben, wie sie gemeint sei.⁶⁰ Im Prinzip galt dies auch für die Abeloiten, die also faktisch besser die Ideale Augustins beherzigten als die rechtschaffenen Ehepaare aus seiner Diözese. Ihre Wahl des Zölibats gründete sich auch nicht auf selbstsüchtige Motive, wie der Bischof es einigen blasierten Asketen unterstellte, die sich in Wahrheit doch nur ihren familiären Pflichten entziehen wollten.⁶¹ Von den berühmten *bona matrimonii*, die auf Augustin zurückgehen und die bis heute die Pfeiler der lehramtlichen römisch-katholischen Theologie der Ehe sind, war immer das *bonum prolis* das am meisten umstrittene, da niemand in Abrede stellte oder stellt, dass eine Ehe auch ohne Kinder eine vollwertige christliche Ehe ist.⁶²

⁵⁷ *De bono coniugali*, 17.19.

⁵⁸ *Ep.* 27,2; Gillian Cloke, *'This female Man of God': Women and Spiritual Power in the Patristic Age, AD 350–450*, London 1995, 121.

⁵⁹ *De bono coniugali*, 10; Saint Augustin, *Problèmes moraux: texte de l'édition bénédictine*, ed. Gustave Combès, Paris 1948 (Bibliothèque Augustinienne, 2), 46.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁶¹ *Ep.* 262.3.; vgl. Emile Schmitt, *Le mariage chrétien dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin: une théologie baptismale de la vie conjugale*, Paris 1983, 71.

⁶² Vgl. die nach wie vor umstrittene, aber schlüssige Argumentation von Klaus Lüdicke bezüglich der kanonischen Nichtigkeit der Ehe im Falle eines im gegenseitigen

So kann man nicht ausschließen, dass Augustin durch die Abeloiten in eine schwierige Situation manövriert wurde. Ob sein Schweigen zu der Unbotmäßigkeit ihrer Praxis daher rührt? In vielen seiner Beiträge über die Ehe und Sexualität hatte der Bischof die Jungfräulichkeit höher platziert, ohne jedoch Ehe und Sexualität abzulehnen. Diese Ambivalenz gehörte von alters her zum Christentum. Christus hatte Enthaltung empfohlen und dabei auch wenig Respekt vor Familienbanden gezeigt. In den Augen von Paulus war eine zeitliche Enthaltsamkeit für Verheiratete verdienstvoll. Dass der Apostel die Ehe als Heilmittel gegen die Sünde betrachtete, führte bei seinen Kommentatoren dazu, dass der Koitus ins Zentrum des theologischen Interesses am Eheband rückte, obwohl dies auch mit der Abnahme der eschatologischen Nahzeiterwartung zu tun hatte, die zu Paulus Zeiten noch vorherrschend gewesen war. Eine Ehe ohne Sex, so wie sie zum Beispiel die Abeloiten praktizierten, hätte aber den Berechtigungsgrund der Ehe weg genommen und zudem innerhalb der Kirche zu einer Verwischung der inzwischen formulierten Abgrenzung zwischen dem gläubigen Kirchenvolk und der elitären Elite geführt. Dann hätten offenbar ja auch Verheiratete den himmlischen Status antizipieren können.⁶³

Dass Menschen durch Not gezwungen ihre Kinder (*filios suos inopes*) an die Abeloiten übergaben, konnte Augustin begreifen, auch wenn in seiner Beschreibung ihrer lakonischen Gemütsverfassung (*libenter*) bei der Kindesübergabe einige Kritik wegen ihrer Geldsucht anklingen dürfte.⁶⁴ Immerhin gaben sie ihr Kind unter der Voraussicht auf ein Erbe weg, vielleicht auch um ihr eigenes Gesamterbe zu behalten, das durch eine hohe Kinderzahl auf dem Spiel gestanden hätte. Die Handlungsweise der Abeloiten war prinzipiell nicht zu beanstanden, aber sie warf einen Schatten auf das konkrete Sexualitätsleben der katholischen Christen ihrer Umgebung. Außerdem verführten die Abeloiten durch ihre asketische Adoptionspraxis andere zu einem uneigentlichen Gebrauch der Ehe, denn vor allem die Armen wüssten dann, dass sie eventuelle Kinder nicht notwendigerweise selbst groß ziehen müssten.

Einvernehmen beschlossenen Ausschlusses der Nachkommenschaft: Klaus Lüdicke, „Matrimonium ordinatum ad prolem. Ehe und Nachkommenschaft nach dem Recht des CIC 1983“, *Revue de droit canonique* 43 (1993) 99–117.

⁶³ Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, 17, 31.

⁶⁴ *De haer.*, 87, 340.19.

DIE AUTORITÄT DES BISCHOFS

Gerade hierin dürfte dann auch der Grund liegen, warum Augustin grundsätzlich gegen die Abeloiten eingestellt ist. Seiner Ablehnung lag die Ansicht seiner Verantwortung als Bischof einer Diözese zugrunde, die er, vor allem im andauernden Konflikt mit den Donatisten, noch immer unter grossen Mühen zur Einheit versuchte zu führen. Ohne Zweifel war er gegen die Forderung der Abeloiten, als Gemeinschaft außerhalb der Kirche und unabhängig vom Bischof einer höheren christlichen Lebensweise zu folgen. Dabei waren es nicht so sehr ihre Auffassungen und Praktiken, die Anstoß gaben—obwohl sie in einem sensiblen Punkt von der Kirchendisziplin abwichen, welche Augustin schon öfter zu theologischen Interventionen veranlasst hatte. Ihm ging es vor allem um ihre schismatische Position, ein Misstand, auf den er sich, als Bischof einer entzweiten Diözese, besonders konzentrierte.

Wie schon gesagt, hat der Bischof von Hippo, der sich so sehr für die Reinheit der Lehre und Sitten in seiner Diözese eingesetzt hatte und dessen Einfluss weiter spürbar werden sollte, die geplante Fortsetzung des für Quodvultdeus bestimmten Katalogs der Häresien nicht mehr vollenden können. Dieser Teil hätte sich der grundsätzlichen Analyse der Häresien widmen sollen. Augustin hatte festgestellt, dass Epiphanius und Filaster nicht immer dieselben Kriterien anlegten und war sich darüber im Klaren, dass dies die konsistente Redaktion seiner Kompilation beträchtlich erschwerte.⁶⁵ Sicher war er nicht immer exakt in der Abgrenzung des häresiologischen Rahmens und zweifelte sogar manchmal an der Abgrenzung von Schisma und Häresie.⁶⁶ In Bezug auf die Luciferiani erwähnte Augustin zum Beispiel, dass Epiphanius und Filaster diese wahrscheinlich in ihren Katalogen nicht aufgenommen hatten, weil es sich um keine Häretiker, sondern um Schismatiker handelte. Für ihn jedoch gab den Ausschlag, dass die Luciferiani mit hartnäckiger Bestimmtheit an ihrem Schisma (*pertinaci animositate dissensionem*) festhielten.⁶⁷ Augustin beschränkte sich in *De haeresibus* in vielen Fällen lediglich auf die Wiedergabe der Auffassungen und ließ dabei oft in der Schwebe, ob Gemeinschaftsbildung statt gefunden hatte. Das letzte war

⁶⁵ *Ep.* 222.2 (CSEL 57, 447–448).

⁶⁶ G.R. Evans, 'Heresy', in: *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids 1999, hier 424–426. Vgl. Daniela Müller, 'Der augustinische Häresiebegriff als Grundlage für die Ketzerverfolgung im Mittelalter', in diesem Buch.

⁶⁷ *De haer.*, 82, 337.14.

bei den Abeloiten sicher der Fall. Sie grenzten sich durch ihre befremdende asketische Praxis von der rechtmäßigen kirchlichen Gemeinschaft ab, die in Nordafrika ohnehin schon angeschlagen war. Eine solche Herausforderung konnte der Bischof nicht unbeantwortet lassen.

Da es nun für Kirchenleiter seit der Gesetzgebung von Kaiser Theodosius möglich war, den wirkungsvollen Beistand der weltlichen Macht um Hilfe anzurufen—selbst wenn keine explizite Lehabweichung mitspielte—gingen die meisten zeitgenössischen Bischöfe um 400 dazu über, auch kleine deviante Praktiken anzuprangern, um die Einheit der Kirche zu garantieren, besonders wenn diese zu einer selbst gewählten Entfernung aus dem kirchlichen Verband geführt hatten: ‚Any eccentricity in belief and practice might now be regarded as heresy (...)‘.⁶⁸ Augustin war bekanntlich vor krassen Maßregeln nicht zurückgeschreckt, nicht in Bezug auf die Donatisten und ebenso wenig in Bezug auf die Pelagianer. Und vermutlich sind auch die Abeloiten unter Druck gesetzt worden. Denn während noch nicht lange zuvor die Tertullianer in Karthago der katholischen Kirche aktiv beigetreten waren und ihre Kirchengebäude an die katholische Kirche übertragen hatten: ‚in Catholicam transierunt, suam basilicam (...) Catholicae tradiderunt,‘ waren die Abeloiten offenbar zurückgeführt worden, was zumindest auf eine passive Rolle bei ihrer Reintegration hinweist: ‚Qui omnes modo correcti et Catholici facti sunt.‘⁶⁹ Wegen des begrenzten Umfangs ihrer Bewegung bildeten sie keine ernstliche Gefahr für die Einheit der Kirche in diesem Gebiet, was bei den Donatisten sehr wohl der Fall war. Aber die Abeloiten waren mit den Donatisten insofern zu vergleichen, als dass sie Katholiken, deren keusche Ehepraxis der Bischof zwar als suboptimal gekennzeichnet, aber doch eifrig verteidigt hatte, einen Spiegel vorhielten, eben wegen ihrer Radikalität.⁷⁰

Um seine Herde auf dem rechten Weg zu halten, vertraute dieser Hüter außer auf die Gnade von Gott auch auf seine Verkündigung. Dabei konnte er keine Gegenbewegung brauchen, so wie ihm auch das hartnäckige Zirkulieren der apokryphen Apostelgeschichten mit ihren fragwürdigen asketischen *Exempla* äußerst ungelegen kam. Wegen des Grenzcharakters ihrer Bewegung frustrierten die Abeloiten aus dem

⁶⁸ Gerald Bonner, ‚Dic Christi Veritas Ubi Nunc Habitas‘, in: *The Limits of Ancient Christianity. Essays on late Antique Thought and Culture in Honour of R.A. Markus*, eds. William E. Klingshirn und Mark Vessey, Ann Arbor 1999, 63–79, hier 67, 78–79.

⁶⁹ *De haer.* 86, 338.6–8; 87, 339.4–5.

⁷⁰ Bonner, *Dic Christi Veritas*, 75.

Numidischen Hinterland den zentripetalen Normierungsprozess, den Augustin als Bischof von Hippo initiiert hatte, in dem er nicht elitären Vorstellungen den Vorzug gegeben hatte. Darüber hinaus provozierten die Abeloiten durch ihre asketischen Leistungen—zumindest durch ihre darauf zielenden Präentionen—innerhalb der Kirche den hohen sozialen Status der unverheirateten spirituellen Elite, den der Bischof sich selbst und seiner Geistlichkeit vorbehalten hatte.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DER AUGUSTINISCHE HÄRESIEBEGRIFF ALS GRUNDLAGE FÜR DIE KETZERVERFOLGUNG IM MITTELALTER

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Der Gedanke der Häresie, also der von einer kirchlichen Autorität festgestellten Abweichung von einem als allgemein christlich angenommenen Glaubensgut, spielte in der als Mittelalter bezeichneten Periode in Westeuropa erst ab dem 11. Jh. eine größere Rolle. Bekanntlich wurden nach der so genannten Gregorianischen Reform von der kirchlichen Elite die entscheidenden Schritte zu einer stringenten Formulierung der Häresie unternommen, wobei vor allem die rechtliche Verfolgung des Häresiedelikts scharfe Konturen erhielt.

Auf einem sich sozial und religiös verschärfenden Hintergrund verwundert es dabei nicht, dass alle, die nicht zur *christianitas*¹ gehörten, so wie die westliche Kirche es verstand, zu Anhängern des Bösen wurden.² Auf diese wurde gemeinhin das Stereotyp des Ketzers, des Häretikers zugeschnitten.

Die für dieses Stereotyp entwickelten verbalen Bilder—etwa die Ketzer als Füchse im Weinberg des Herrn oder als Wölfe im Schafskleid,³ aber auch als Lepra oder Pest⁴—konnten so überzeugend wirken, weil sie auf dem Hintergrund einer exegetischen Tradition entstanden, die

¹ Zum Begriff der *christianitas* vgl. etwa N. Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom. Jews, Muslims and „Pagans“ in Medieval Hungary*, Cambridge 2001, 42–74.

² Vgl. dazu auch D. Müller, 'Our Image of „Others“ and the Own Identity' in: *Iconoclasm and Iconoclasm. Struggle for Religious Identity*, ed. W. v. Asselt/P. v. Geest/D. Mueller/Th. Salemink (= Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series, vol. 14) Leiden/Boston 2007, S. 107–125.

³ Hierzu grundlegend H. Grundmann, 'Der Typus des Ketzers in mittelalterlicher Anschauung,' in: *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, Stuttgart 1976, I, 313–327.

⁴ Siehe hierzu R. Moore, 'Heresy as Disease,' in: *The Concept of Heresy in the Middle Ages (11th–13th c.)* (Mediaevalia Lovaniensia series I, studia 4) 2. Aufl. Leuven 1976, 1–12.

anerkannterweise seit Origenes mit Typologie und Allegorie arbeitete.⁵ Während die Typologie ja davon ausgeht, dass etwas, was sich historisch bereits ereignet hat, in sich auf etwas anderes verweist, was ebenso historisch wie real ist, geht die Allegorie davon aus, dass neben dem wörtlichen Sinn auch ein spiritueller Sinn verborgen liegt, den es zu entdecken gilt. Wird die Typologie vorzugsweise herangezogen, um das Alte Testament in enge Verbindung mit dem Neuen Testament zu bringen, so findet die allegorische Interpretation überall statt: Hinter dem Wolf verbirgt sich also der Ketzer, der wiederum auf den Teufel als seinen Vater verweist. Dank dieser Methode konnten auch und gerade inmitten der Gemeinschaft der Gläubigen diejenigen entdeckt werden, die nicht sind, was sie scheinen, sondern die als Vorboten des Antichristen zu bewerten sind.

Für diese Auffassungen wurde die Rezeption des Augustinus im Mittelalter wegweisend. Deshalb soll im Folgenden ein Blick auf seine Ausführungen geworfen werden, die der mittelalterlichen Häresiekonzeption und Häretikerverfolgung zu Grunde liegen.

Am Beginn soll nach dem konkreten Kontext gesehen werden, in dem die entsprechenden Begriffe bei Augustinus auftauchen.

I. AUGUSTINUS

Häresie: Wortverwendung bei Augustinus

Zwar räumte Augustinus am Ende seines Lebens ein, wie schwierig es sei, Häresie zu definieren,⁶ trotzdem aber wollte er einen Versuch hierzu wagen, der jedoch wegen seines Todes nicht mehr zur Ausführung kam.

Gleichwohl lassen sich aus seinem Werk einige grundsätzliche Überlegungen zur Definition von Häresie ableiten: Augustinus kennt noch die neutrale Wortbedeutung, wendet sie aber nur selten an.⁷ Stattdessen bevorzugt er, wenn es um die philosophische Häresie geht, den Begriff *sectae*.⁸ Besonderen Anstoß erregt bei ihm die Überlegung, dass die *civitas impia* die unzähligen Meinungsverschiedenheiten der Philosophen

⁵ Grundlegend noch immer zur mittelalterlichen Exegese H. de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, 4 Bde., Paris 1959–1960.

⁶ Augustinus, *Ep.* 222,2; *haer. praef.* 7.

⁷ *Ciu.* 8,12; *Cresc.* 1,15; *haer. praef.* 5.

⁸ *Z.B. lib. arb.* 2,25; *cat. rud.* 23; *conf.* 3,8; *c. Iul.* 4,75 sowie vor allem in *ciu.*: z.B. *ib.* 6,5; 8,8 sq.

ohne eine Entscheidungsfindung hingenommen habe, obwohl es um die Kernfrage nach dem glückseligen Lebens gegangen sei.⁹

Dieser Ansatz ist richtungsweisend bei seinen Darlegungen zum Religionsbegriff, den er vor allem in seiner Schrift *De vera religione*, aber auch in seinen Kontroversen mit dem Manichäismus, Donatismus und Pelagianismus herausarbeitete. Hier zeigt es sich, wie er Häresien und Schismen im Verhältnis zur Religion beurteilt. Die wahre Religion ist für Augustinus weder bei Heiden und Juden noch bei Häretikern und Schismatikern zu finden.¹⁰ Wahre Religion und wahre Philosophie fallen nämlich für ihn ineins. Philosophie, die wirklich Erkenntnis der einen Wirklichkeit und damit auch der Wahrheit Gottes war, musste für Augustinus zwangsläufig auf die Verehrung des einen Gottes abzielen. So war für ihn ein häufiger Fehler der Philosophen, dass sie ihre Suche nach Wahrheit nicht mit der Religion zusammenzubinden in der Lage waren, wo doch Wahrheitsstreben—also Philosophie—und Gottesverehrung—also Religion—sich nicht als etwas voneinander Unterschiedenes gegenüberstehen könnten.¹¹ In der Religion gehören für Augustinus untrennbar Wahrheitssuche und Kult zusammen.¹²

Für Augustinus galt also das Prinzip, dass Lehre und Kult in der Religion übereinstimmen müssen, und gerade in dem Vorgehen der Kirche gegen die Häresie zeigt sich für ihn, wie wichtig dieses Grundsatzprinzip ist. Mit den Häresien gibt es nicht nur keine Übereinstimmung in der Lehre, sondern es besteht auch keine Kult- und Sakramentengemeinschaft. Völlig zu Recht hätten die Häretiker und Schismatiker ihre eigenen Namen und Versammlungen nicht etwa nur deshalb, weil sie sich selbst andere Namen gegeben hätten, sondern weil sie in den Status der *superstitio* hinübergewechselt seien, der dem Status der *religio* diametral gegenüber stehe. Die Häretiker befänden sich im Status der *superstitio*, weil ihnen gerade die die christliche Religion kennzeichnende Einheit der Lehre und der Sakramente fehle. Dabei ist für Augustinus der entscheidende Ausgangspunkt die unterschiedliche Lehre, so dass er auch Menschen mit gleichen Sakramenten, aber unterschiedlicher Lehre von

⁹ Ib. 18,41.

¹⁰ *Vera rel.* V 8 f.

¹¹ *Vera rel.* V 8.

¹² J. Speigl, 'Zur apologetischen und antihäretischen Ausrichtung des Religionsbegriffs Augustins,' *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 86, 2002, 26–43.

der katholischen Gemeinschaft und ihren Sakramenten ausgeschlossen sehen will.¹³

Unterschiedliche Lehre nimmt ihren Ausgang im Irrtum, aber nicht jeder Irrtum bedingt für Augustinus schon Häresie. Der Irrtum bezieht sich im Allgemeinen auf Aspekte der Lehre: Er bestehe in der Aufstellung frevlerischer Lehrsätze,¹⁴ die sich gegen die *regula christianitatis*¹⁵ bzw. gegen die *doctrina apostolorum*¹⁶ richteten und der *catholica veritas* zuwider liefen.¹⁷ Die Ursache solcher *errores* sieht Augustinus in ungenügendem Schriftverständnis und irrigen Interpretationen der christologischen Prädikationen des Neuen Testaments.¹⁸ *Error* wird erst dann zu Häresie, wenn eine willentliche und bewusste Abkehr von der Wahrheit sowie ein starsinniges Festhalten am Irrtum hinzukommen.

Da die Kirche als *catholica* nur eine sein kann, ist die Frage der Abgrenzung gegenüber Häresie ein wichtiges Thema. Generell gelte, dass Häretiker die Kirche verlassen hätten und folglich außerhalb der *ecclesia* stünden.¹⁹ Vordergründig seien Häresien zwar ‚von der Kirche geboren‘ und deshalb ‚Töchter der Kirche‘, aber eben nur *malae filiae*.²⁰ Der Abfall der Häretiker sei darum auch ein beklagenswerter Verlust.²¹ Doch für Augustinus gibt es einen Trost: eigentlich hätten die Häretiker nie wirklich zur Kirche gehört, wie er mit 1 Joh 2,19 argumentiert.²² Dies erklärt für ihn, warum es so viele Antichristen, die noch in der Kirche stünden, gebe²³—um ein Häretiker zu sein, muss man also nicht in offenem Bruch mit der Gemeinschaft leben.²⁴

Die wesentliche Wurzel der Häresie sieht Augustinus im Hochmut, der *superbia*.²⁵ Doch ist *superbia* für ihn nicht nur eine Eigenschaft des Menschen, vielmehr habe die Sünde mit der *superbia* des Teufels

¹³ *Vera rel.* V 9.

¹⁴ *C. Gaud.* 2,10.

¹⁵ *Vera rel.* V 8.

¹⁶ *C. Faust.* 32,17.

¹⁷ *Ep.* 105,11; *c. Faust.* 33,4.

¹⁸ *F. et symb.* 18.

¹⁹ *Ciu.* 18,51; 21,25.

²⁰ 37,27.

²¹ *Ep. Io. tr.* 3,4; *Io. eu. tr.* 61,1.

²² *Ep. Io. tr.* 3,4.

²³ *Ep. Io. tr.* 3,4; *bapt.* 3,26.

²⁴ Vgl. zu dieser Argumentation auch G. Evans, ‚Augustine on Exegesis Against the Heretics,‘ in: F. van Fleteren/J.C. Schnaubelt (eds.), *Collectanea Augustiniana. Augustine, Biblical Exegete*. New York 2001, 145–156.

²⁵ Etwa *ep. Man.* 6,7 oder *vera rel.* V 47.

ihren Ausgang genommen. Damit ist für Augustinus wie für die ältere häresiologische Tradition der letzte Seinsgrund der Häresie der Teufel.

Ein häufig auftauchendes Synonym für Häresie ist bei Augustinus Schisma. Eine Unterscheidung der Begriffe findet sich nur in seinen frühen Schriften.²⁶ Im Verlauf seiner Auseinandersetzung mit den Donatisten führt er die beiden Begriffe immer mehr zusammen, so dass schließlich gilt: Schisma trage immer schon den Keim der Häresie in sich, da es ohne irgendeine Lehرداریferenz nicht entstehen könne. Wesentlich für die Unterscheidung sind nur noch der zeitliche Faktor und das Verharren im Irrtum.²⁷ Als durchaus positiven Nebeneffekt der Häresie wertet Augustinus die Tatsache, dass Häretiker zur Klärung schwieriger Sachverhalte der Schriftauslegung wie der Ausgestaltung der Lehre beigetragen hätten.²⁸

Wie ist nun aber mit den Häretikern weiterhin konkret zu verfahren?

Verfolgung der Häresie

Bei Augustinus zeichnet sich in seinen Äußerungen zur Behandlung der Häretiker eine ambivalente Haltung ab. Ausgehend von seiner Grundüberzeugung, dass sich die *vis tolerantiae*²⁹ als Band der Einheit bewähre, folgert er, dass die Schlechten (*mali*) auch in und außerhalb der Kirche zu ertragen seien, sonst bräche der Bau des Friedens in sich zusammen. Die *malorum tolerantia* ist für ihn ein Bestandteil vollkommener, ungeteilter Liebe.

Doch dies ist nur seine grundsätzliche Linie, im konkreten Fall der Häretiker kommen bei ihm andere Überlegungen ins Spiel. So wandelt sich sein Grundverständnis von *tolerantia* gegenüber der Häresie und Schisma grundlegend. Hier war er der Überzeugung, dass, wenn der quasi Normalfall der *tolerantia* nichts ausrichtete, um Häretiker von ihren irrigen Meinungen abzuhalten, Gewalt, ja *terror*, durchaus gerechtfertigt sei.

Wichtig ist der Kontext, der ihn zu diesem Meinungsumschwung veranlasst hat: Augustinus urteilt von einer Erfahrungstatsache aus, um

²⁶ Etwa *f. et symb.* 21.

²⁷ *Ep.* 87,4; *Gaud.* 2,4; *haer.* 69.

²⁸ *En. Ps.* 54,22.

²⁹ Vgl. zum Problemfeld der Toleranz den hervorragenden Beitrag von Kl. Schreiner, „Duldsamkeit“ (*tolerantia*) oder „Schrecken“ (*terror*): Reaktionsformen auf Abweichungen von der religiösen Norm, untersucht und dargestellt am Beispiel des augustininischen Toleranz- und Gewaltkonzeptes, in: D. Simon (ed.), *Religiöse Devianz*, Frankfurt a.M. 1990, 159–210, dem auch der vorliegende Beitrag wichtige Impulse verdankt.

nämlich dann theologisch über richtig und falsch zu richten: Im Zusammenhang mit der Donatistenverfolgung gab der ‚Erfolg‘ der Anwendung staatlicher Gewalt recht: fortan gab es keine den Gemeindefrieden störende Twiste mehr. Und auch wenn ein Glaubens- und Bekehrungszwang der theologischen Gesamtorientierung Augustinus widersprach, erschien ihm dieses Ziel in erster Linie erstrebenswert.

Hatte sich so Augustinus noch 392 in einem Brief an den Donatistenbischof Maximus³⁰ für friedensstiftende Erörterungen eingesetzt—weil die *ratio pacis* völligen Gewaltverzicht verlangte—so wurde er, auch aufgrund von Bitten kirchlicher Synoden hin, ab spätestens 404 zum Anwalt staatlicher Gewaltanwendung bei der Donatistenbekämpfung.³¹ Diese Einstellungsänderung verdankte sich der Macht erfahrener Tatsachen: wo Worte und Argumente wirkungslos verpufften, mussten die legitimen Träger der Staatsgewalt eingreifen. Und der Erfolg gab ihnen recht: wo die Worte ins Leere gelaufen waren, hatten die staatlichen Zwangsmaßnahmen Erfolg: viele freuten sich nun, meint der Kirchenvater, kraft staatlicher *correctio* von ihrem alten Irrtum befreit worden zu sein. Viele hätten nämlich, durch die Macht der Gewohnheit gefesselt, ihren Sinn nicht zum Besseren verändert, wären sie nicht durch *terror* dazu aufgerüttelt worden, ihre Seele auf die Erkenntnis der Wahrheit zu richten.³²

Augustinus erkennt also Schrecken und Gewalt als legitime Mittel der Bekehrung an, da sie erschüttern und auf neue Wege leiten können.³³ Durch sie würden Irrtum und Bosheit gereinigt, die Ketten der Verstockung gebrochen, der Weg zum Glauben geebnet. Bestrafung ermögliche Besinnung. Strafe erscheint also als Form der Liebe, da sie den Bestraften besser und gläubiger mache.³⁴ Der ‚Nutzen der Angst‘ (*utilitas timoris*)³⁵ zeige sich darin, dass auch Furcht vor Bestrafung die Menschen zur Verehrung Gottes veranlasse. Schrecken zu erzeugen diene letztlich der Rettung der Seelen der Irrenden und Verlorenen. Der von den Gesetzen ausgehende Schrecken (*legum terror*) ist für Augustinus eine heilsame Last (*medicinalis molestia*), die besonders Verstockten und Erkaltenen helfe, die anders nicht zu bessern wären.³⁶ Somit sind Furcht und

³⁰ Ep. 23,6–7.

³¹ So ep. 87, 7–8.

³² Ep. 93,1.

³³ Vgl. auch H. Maisonneuve, ‚Croyance religieuse et contrainte: la doctrine de Saint Augustin,‘ *Mélanges de science religieuse* 19 (1962), 49–68.

³⁴ Ep. 93, III.

³⁵ Ep. 185, VI, 21.

³⁶ Ep. 185, VII, 26.

Schrecken nach Augustinus in der Lage, sittliche Voraussetzungen und geistige Dispositionen zu schaffen, die zu richtigen und freudigen Glaubensentscheidungen bewegten.

Dabei deutet Augustinus die Strafmaßnahmen stets als Handlungen der Liebe: die Kirche wolle Häretiker nicht bestrafen (*punire*), sondern verbessern (*corrigere*).

In diesem Zusammenhang ist auch seine berühmte Auslegung des Gleichnisses vom Gastmahl (Lk 14,16–24) zu sehen, dessen Kernsatz *compelle intrare* für Augustinus deutlich macht, dass die jetzige Kirche, die sich in ihren Machtmitteln von der bescheidenen Urkirche unterschiede, auch das Recht und die Pflicht habe, nicht nur einzuladen, sondern auch zum Guten zu zwingen.³⁷ Am Beispiel der Bekehrung des Paulus, der durch eine körperliche Strafe genötigt worden sei, zum Glauben zu finden, macht Augustinus klar, dass Zwang, der selbstverschuldete Hartnäckigkeit bricht, dem Heil des Irrenden diene.³⁸ Zwang, so will Augustinus vor Augen führen, beseitige nur Hindernisse, die der Hinwendung zum Guten im Weg stünden.

Wie wurden nun diese keineswegs kohärenten und in sich schlüssigen Gedanken in der Folgezeit in der christlichen Gesellschaft rezipiert?

II. REZEPTION IM MITTELALTER

Im Frühmittelalter fanden fast ausschliesslich die auf *tolerantia* zielenden Überlegungen des Kirchenvaters Eingang in das Werk der führenden Theologen.

So rechnete Hrabanus Maurus (um 780–856) im Zuge seiner Überlegungen zur christlichen Duldung auch die Häretiker und Schismatiker zu den Schlechten, die kirchliches Glaubensgut verfälschten. Für Hrabanus verlangte aber die christliche Liebe, dass Schlechte, Irrlehrer und Schismatiker bis ans Ende der Zeit geduldet würden.³⁹ Bei Walahfrid Strabo (808/9–849) wurde gar aus der augustinischen Duldungspflicht von Schlechten eine christliche Herrscherpflicht.⁴⁰ Wazo von Lüttich, der kirchenrechtlich versierte Bischof (1042–1048), interpretiert

³⁷ *Ep.* 173, 10.

³⁸ *Ep.* 185, VII, 22–24.

³⁹ *Expositio in epistolam I ad Corinthos* 13,7, in: PL 112, 122.

⁴⁰ *Carmina* 5,30, 12, in: MGH AA 2, 384.

das Gleichnis vom Weizen und Unkraut (Mt 13,24–30) als Plädoyer für die Duldung von Häretikern.⁴¹

Es fällt auf, dass offenbar in der gesamten früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Periode kein einziger Bibelkommentar die augustinische Auslegung des *compelle intrare* übernahm, selbst nicht Papst Gregor I. (um 540–604), der doch eifrig Augustinus als Autorität benutzte und ihm auch in der Argumentation folgte, dass die weltliche Gewalt gegen Häretiker und Schismatiker vorgehen dürfe.⁴²

Nur situativ wurde im Zusammenhang gewaltsamer Heidenbekehrung in der Korrespondenz von kirchlichen und weltlichen Oberen auf die augustinische Formel zurückgegriffen. Erst durch die Übernahme der Argumentationskette Augustins durch die hochmittelalterliche Kanonistik änderte sich die Situation grundlegend. Nun rückten hochmittelalterliche Kanonisten und Theologen den Vertreter staatlicher Gewaltanwendung ins Zentrum ihres Denkens.

Schon während des Investiturstreites bediente sich Anselm von Lucca (1036–1086) der Lukas-Perikope, um die Anhänger der gregorianischen Reformpartei zum Kampf gegen so genannte Simonisten und die Gefolgsleute des als Häresiarch verurteilten kaiserlichen Gegenpapstes Wibert von Ravenna aufzustacheln.⁴³ Wohl nicht zufällig übernahm er alle einschlägigen Augustinusbriefe in seine eigene *Collectio canonum*, von wo aus sie dann in andere Rechtssammlungen, besonders in die *Concordantia discordantium canonum* des Gratians gelangten (um 1142).

Bei Gratian, lange Zeit wohl zu Unrecht als Kamaldulenserermönch bezeichnet, findet sich sowohl der ‚duldsame‘ wie der ‚schreckliche‘ Augustinus. In Causa 23, *quaestio* 4 seiner später als ‚Dekret‘ bekannt gewordenen Konkordanz bietet er zunächst vier auf Augustinus zurückgehende Canones, die auf eine Duldung der *mali* abzielen. Doch in der *quaestio* 6 derselben Causa, wo er die Frage erörtert, ‚ob die Schlechten zum Guten gezwungen werden dürfen‘ bezieht er sich auf den ‚schrecklichen‘ Augustinus: die Schlechten, so legt Gratian unter Berufung auf Augustinus dar, zu denen auch Häretiker und Schismatiker gezählt werden müssten, dürften durchaus zum Guten gezwungen werden. Inso-

⁴¹ Anselm, *Gesta pontificum Tungrensium, Traiectensium et Leodiensium*, in: MGH SS 7, 227–228.

⁴² Zu Gregor insbesondere die detailreiche Biographie von H.E.J. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII: 1073–1085*, Clarendon Press 1998; oder, jüngst die Studie zu wichtigen Detailfragen, die auch manche Standardurteile über Gregor revidiert: U.-R. Blumenthal, *Gregor VII. Papst zwischen Canossa und Kirchenreform*, Darmstadt 2001.

⁴³ *Liber contra Wibertum*, in: MGH LdL 1, 522–523.

weit überlässt es Gratian seinem Leser, sich für Duldung oder Zwang zu entscheiden—beides ist durch die Autorität Augustinus gedeckt.

Damit war für die Dekretistik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts die Richtlinie vorgegeben. Hierbei fällt auf, dass der Duldungsgedanke zwar nicht ausgeblendet, aber deutlich abgeschwächt wurde, da von dem fast schon stereotyp auftauchenden Unterstreichen der Legitimität kirchlicher Strafpraktiken ohne Zweifel eine relativierende Wirkung ausging. So erinnerte Rolandus Bandinelli, als er vor 1148 das Dekret kommentierte, daran, dass Augustinus der Furcht vor der Hölle eine positive, quasi sündenabwehrende Kraft zugeschrieben habe. Schlechte müssten zum Guten gezwungen werden, damit sie sich das am Anfang Erzwungene schließlich so angewöhnten, dass es zu einer Sache des freien Willens werde.⁴⁴

Für den Bologneser Kanonisten Rufin durften Häretiker sogar mit Waffengewalt zur Rückkehr zum katholischen Glauben gezwungen werden,⁴⁵ während Huguccio (gestorben vor 1210) in seiner Dekretsumme—unter direkter Berufung auf Augustinus—dafür eintrat, dass Christen sich von Häretikern nicht räumlich trennen sollten.⁴⁶ Ebenso hält er mit dem Hinweis auf Augustinus die Verhängung der Todesstrafe für Häresie für falsch. Johannes Teutonicus (um 1180–1252) dagegen meint, dass Schlechte nicht nur gezüchtigt, sondern auch getötet werden könnten,⁴⁷ was er zu Unrecht mit Augustinus begründete, der allenfalls eine Züchtigung durch Rutenschläge gut geheißen hatte. Auch die Scholastik, hier vor allem Thomas von Aquin (um 1225–1274), hält an dem Grundsatz fest, dass Häretiker, die von dem einmal angenommenen und beschworenen Glauben abgefallen seien, selbst mit körperlichen Mitteln zur Erfüllung ihres einmal gegebenen Versprechens—nämlich des Taufgelübdes—zu nötigen seien. Mit Augustinus geht Thomas von der realen Möglichkeit aus, das Unkraut vom Weizen trennen zu können: im Falle der Offenkundigkeit der Häresie bestehe keine Gefahr, den Weizen mit dem Unkraut herauszureißen.⁴⁸ Auch wenn Thomas zunächst dafür eintritt, die Scheidung von Unkraut (also Häretikern) und Weizen (also

⁴⁴ *Summa Magistri Rolandi* (Bandinelli), 94, ed. F. Thaner, Innsbruck (1874).

⁴⁵ *Summa Decretorum*, 403 (ed. H. Singer, Paderborn 1902, 403).

⁴⁶ *Summa super decretum*, ms Vatican lat. 2280, fol. 123^v.

⁴⁷ Johannes Teutonicus, *Apparatus glossarum in Compilationem Tertiam*, I (libri 1–3), ed. Kenneth Pennington, Città del Vaticano (1981), c. 23, qu. 5,1.

⁴⁸ Thomas v. Aquino, *Super evangelium S. Matthaei Lectura*, ed. P.R. Cai, ed. V. recisa, Taurini – Romae (1951), 178.

guten Katholiken) dem endzeitlichen Richterspruch zu überlassen und hierfür vier Gründe aufführt, so ist er doch nicht an einem extensiven Gebrauch der Duldsamkeit interessiert, sondern will diese nur ‚auf Zeit‘ geübt wissen, nicht etwa auf ewig. Von hier aus zieht er Augustinus als Kronzeugen heran, der durch Erfahrung zu der Einsicht gekommen sei, dass viele durch Gewalt zum christlichen Glauben haben bekehrt werden können. Daraus folgert Thomas, dass Häretiker zwar nicht sofort getötet werden dürften, wohl aber nach der ersten oder zweiten Ermahnung.⁴⁹

Doch war Augustinus nicht nur in Fragen der *Häresiebekämpfung* für das Mittelalter meinungsbildend, sondern auch in der Festlegung der *Kriterien* für Häresie: Ausgehend von seinen Darlegungen zu Irrtum und Verstocktheit beim Häretiker wurden als Kennzeichen des Häretikers, an denen dieser quasi untrüglich zu erkennen sei, Hochmut und Verstocktheit festgelegt. Aus Hochmut lasse er sich nicht belehren, stelle sein Wort über das Wort der Kirche, die Gotteswort verkündet, und verharre eigensinnig, und damit gottes- und kirchenwidrig, in seinem Irrtum. Damit sind die beiden klassischen Ketzermerkmale gegeben, die Jahrhunderte hindurch die rechtliche Überführung von Menschen als Ketzer und Ketzerinnen ermöglichen sollten, ganz unabhängig von Aussage und Inhalt des kontrovers Behaupteten. Daneben war Verschlagenheit kennzeichnend für den Häretiker: wie der Fuchs in den Weinberg des Herrn einbricht, wie der Wolf im Schafskleid verbreite er seine Irrlehren, ohne dass er sich offen zu erkennen gebe. Auch diese Konzeption wurzelt in Augustinus Ausführungen vom ‚verdeckten‘ Häretiker. Und so wie Augustinus bereits den Teufel als den eigentlichen Verursacher der Häresie gesehen hatte, so wurde der Häretiker im Mittelalter zum Teufelsdiener⁵⁰ schlechthin.

⁴⁹ Diese Linie setzt sich in der Spanischen Spätscholastik fort und wird sich auch in der konfessionellen Auseinandersetzung des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts finden: Der Zwang zum Glauben wurde gerechtfertigt mit Erfahrung und Erfolg. Ob Francisco de Vittoria, Martin Luther, Jean Calvin oder Robert Bellarmin: sie alle wollten nun Augustinus als Gewährsmann kirchlicher und staatlicher Zwangsmaßnahmen bei dem Delikt der Häresie sehen, wobei die Auslegungen sich deutlich verschärften, bis etwa Bellarmin behauptete, dass Augustinus der Meinung gewesen sei, es wäre gerecht, wenn Häretiker getötet würden. Für Bellarmin war die von ihm verstandene und vertretene ‚Normalität‘ in Fragen der Häresiebekämpfung auf die Erfahrung, die Vernunft und die Autorität des hl. Augustinus gestützt, s. *opera omnia*, ed. J. Fèvre, vol. 3, Paris 1870, 42.

⁵⁰ Siehe A. Patschovsky, ‚Der Ketzer als Teufelsdiener,‘ in: *Papsttum, Kirche und Recht*. FS H. Fuhrmann, ed. H. Mordek, Tübingen 1991, 317–334.

Und noch in einer anderen Hinsicht wirkte Augustinus meinungsbildend:

Ab dem 11. Jahrhundert wurde ein vermehrtes Anwachsen der Häresie in Westeuropa festgestellt. Einerseits hatte die Gregorianische Reform ein starkes Einheitsstreben unter der Kontrolle des Papsttums befördert, andererseits hatte sich ab der zweiten Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts dieser Sachperspektive ein neues Erkenntnismodell zur Seite gestellt: die Gelehrten entdeckten die Schriften des Aristoteles für sich und mit ihm die Grundvoraussetzungen der Logik.⁵¹ Unterschiede konnten nun rational erfasst, bearbeitet und, wenn nötig, aufgelöst werden. Es mag also sein, dass dadurch sowohl Meinungen schneller als abweichend klassifiziert wurden, als auch dass nun erst tatsächlich erkannt wurde, dass es Divergenzen zwischen Glaubensauffassungen gab.⁵² Aber ohne Zweifel führten die Ausbreitung des Fernhandels und die Kreuzzüge nun auch zu häufigeren Kontakten mit Glaubensvorstellungen des östlichen Christentums. All dies bereitete den Boden, dass sich die westlichen Theologen ab dem 12. Jahrhundert einer neuen, organisierten Bewegung gegenüber glaubten, die sie zunächst in Kontroverstrakaten zu widerlegen suchten—auch hierin der Vorgabe Augustinus folgend.

Als sich etwa 1163 der Prämonstratenserabt und enge Freund des damaligen Reichskanzlers Rainalds von Dassel, Eckbert von Schönau, in Köln mit einer dieser ‚neuen‘ Häretikergruppen konfrontiert sah, griff er bei der Beschreibung ihrer Lehren auf ‚seinen‘ Augustinus zurück. Der bei den Kölner Häretikern nicht zu übersehende Dualismus war für Eckbert Grund genug, um in ihnen die Adepten der alten, von Augustinus so überzeugend bekämpften Häresie der Manichäer zu sehen, die er nun Katharer nannte.

Mit seinen *sermones adversus Catharos* hat Eckbert—durch Vergleichen der ‚neuen‘ Ketzerlehren mit den anti-manichäischen Schriften Augustinus—das erste wissenschaftliche Werk über die Katharer geschrieben—auf der Grundlage seiner Hypothese, dass sie, bei allen Abweichungen, im Großen und Ganzen Manichäer seien. Dazu hat er im

⁵¹ Zu diesem Kontext vgl. etwa den Sammelband *Naturwissenschaft, Geisteswissenschaft, Kulturwissenschaft: Einheit—Gegensatz—Komplementarität?*, ed. O.G. Oexle (Göttinger Gespräche zur Geschichtswissenschaft Bd. 6), Göttingen 1998.

⁵² Näheres bgl. dazu etwa bei D. Müller, ‚Ketzer und Ketzerverfolgung,‘ in: *Lexikon zur Geschichte der Hexenverfolgung*, hrsg. G. Gersmann/K. Moeller/J.-M. Schmitt, *historicum.net*, URL: www.historicum.net/no-cache/persistent/artikel/5520/.

Wesentlichen auf das Werk *De haeresibus* des Augustinus zurückgegriffen.⁵³

Eckbert bezieht sich geschickt auf das Beispiel des Augustinus, um sich selbst und seine Kenntnisse über die Häresie zu legitimieren. Denn auch Augustinus habe ja seine Kenntnisse seiner eigenen manichäischen Epoche zu verdanken, so dass er später die Geheimnisse der Manichäer öffentlich machen und mit seinen bekannten Büchern widerlegen habe können.⁵⁴

Vor allem die Passagen, in denen Augustinus die Lehre des Mani beschreibt und in denen er die Hierarchie der Manichäer schildert,⁵⁵ erleichtern Eckbert die Analogieziehung zu den Häretikern der eigenen Zeit. So kann er kurz und bündig erklären, dass er alles, was er über die ‚Ketzer‘ weiß, von denjenigen erfahren habe, die *nun* Katharer genannt werden würden.⁵⁶ Nicht zufällig gibt Eckbert seinem Traktat denn auch ein *excerptum ex Augustino* bei, in welchem er die wichtigsten Texte des Kirchenvaters aus dessen Werken *Contra manichaeos*, *De moribus manichaeorum* und *De haeresibus* seinen gelehrten Lesern zur vergleichenden Lektüre vor Augen führt.

Gerade durch die gezielte Übernahme der Präsensform erweckt Eckbert dabei den Eindruck, dass es sich bei den Manichäern des Augustinus und bei den Häretikern in Köln um die gleiche Gruppe handelte, so dass er auch die von Augustinus geschilderten Strukturen auf die Häretiker der eigenen Zeit übertragen konnte. Als ‚Neu-Manichäer‘ werden diese zukünftig von den Kontroverstheologen und den Praktikern der Inquisition denn auch beschrieben.

⁵³ Vgl. auch U. Brunn, *Des Contestataires aux ‚Cathares‘. Discours de réforme et propagande antihérétique dans les pays du Rhin et de la Meuse avant l’inquisition* (Collection des Études Augustiniennes, ser. Moyen Âge et Temps Modernes, 41), Paris 2006.

⁵⁴ Eckbert, *Sermones*, PL 195, col. 18: ‚... constat quod ipse ante perceptionem baptismi disciplinae Manichaeorum aliquamdiu interfuit, et postea errores eorum et secreta manifeste in libris quos nominavi, descripsit et confutavit‘.

⁵⁵ Wie genau Augustinus Mani und seine Anhänger kannte, untersuchte Johannes van Oort in einer aufschlussreichen Detailstudie: J. van Oort, ‚Mani and Manichaeism in Augustine’s *De haeresibus*. An Analysis of *haer.* 46,1,‘ in: Ronald E. Emmerick, Werner Sundermann und Peter Zieme (eds.), *Studia Manichaica. IV. Internationaler Kongreß zum Manichäismus, Berlin, 14.-18. Juli 1997* (Berichte und Abhandlungen der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sonderband 4), Berlin: Akademie Verlag 2000, 451–463.

⁵⁶ Eckbert, *Sermones XIII adversus Catharos*, ed., PL 195, col. 17: ‚haec omnia nobis veraciter comperta sunt de omnibus istis quos nunc Catharos vocant.‘

Ob der Frühscholastiker Alanus ab Insulis⁵⁷ (ca. 1128–1202) oder die Inquisitoren Moneta von Cremona⁵⁸ (um 1240/60) und Bernard Gui⁵⁹ (um 1262–1331), sie alle begriffen und bewerteten die Katharer im Lichte der augustinischen Manichäismuswiderlegung. Auch die Spätscholastiker, wie etwa Alfonso de Castro⁶⁰ (1495–1558), folgten ihnen hierin, und selbst in den frühneuzeitlichen ‚Ketzerkatalogen‘ überlebten die ‚Neu-Manichäer‘ bzw. Katharer. Dies ist umso auffälliger, als dass ja Augustinus die Manichäer nirgends als *cathari*, wohl aber als *catharistae* bezeichnet hatte. Der Term *cathari*, der nach augustinischer Auslegung den lateinischen *mundi*, den Reinen, entspricht,⁶¹ taucht bei Augustinus dagegen im Zusammenhang mit der Bewegung der Novatianer auf. Als *catharoi* waren die Anhänger des Novatian (um 200–258) bekannt, der wesentlich die Trinitätstheologie des Westens beeinflusst hatte, bevor er sich über der Frage der Zulässigkeit der Wiederaufnahme der *lapsi* (also der während der Christenverfolgung abgefallenen Christen) mit der nizänischen Kirche entzweit hatte.⁶² Ausgangspunkt bei ihnen war eine rigorose Bußpraxis, da der Kirche die Vollmacht zur Vergebung der Todsünden abgesprochen wurde. Die im Osten zahlreichen Mitglieder der novatianischen Kirche nannten sich zudem selbst *catharoi*, die Reinen. Über Augustinus wurden die *catharoi* dann auch Isidor von Sevilla (um 560–636) bekannt, der sie in seinen mittelalterlichen Besteller *Etymologia* einarbeitete. Aber auch über die rechtsgelehrte Tradition, basierend auf dem 1142 entstandenen *Decretum Gratiani*, dürften die *Catharoi* des Novatian den mittelalterlichen Theologen bekannt gewesen sein, auch wenn deren Verfehlungen 325 auf dem Konzil von Nicäa für sehr gering beurteilt worden waren. Für Augustinus waren die

⁵⁷ Alanus, *De fide catholica contra haereticos sui temporis*, ed. PL 210, 305–430.

⁵⁸ Moneta von Cremona, *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses libri quinque*, ed. Th. Ricchini, Rom 1743, Ndr. 1964.

⁵⁹ Bernard Gui, *Manuel de l'Inquisition*, ed. und ins Franz. übers. G. Mollat, Paris 1926, (Les Classiques de l'Histoire de France au Moyen Age 8) Ndr. Paris 2007.

⁶⁰ Alfonso de Castro, *De iusta haereticorum punitione libri tres*, Antverpiae 1568. Dazu etwa D. Müller, ‚Der Häresiebegriff im Werk des Alfonso de Castro,‘ in: F. Grunert/K. Seelmann (eds.), *Die Ordnung der Praxis. Neue Studien zur Spanischen Spätscholastik* (Frühe Neuzeit 68), Tübingen 2001, 333–349 oder zum Gesamtwerk Castros H. Maihold, *Strafe für fremde Schuld? Die Systematisierung des Strafbegriffs in der Spanischen Spätscholastik und Naturrechtslehre* (Konflikt, Verbrechen und Sanktion in der Gesellschaft Alteuropas 9), Köln 2005.

⁶¹ So in *De agone christiano*, cap. 31, PL 40, col. 308; *de haeresibus*, PL 42, col. 32.

⁶² Vgl. hierzu etwa H.J. Vogt, *Coetus sanctorum. Der Kirchenbegriff Novatianers und die Geschichte seiner Sonderkirche* (Beiträge zur Religions- und Kirchengeschichte des Altertums 20), Bonn 1968.

(novatianischen) *cathari* in erster Linie interessant, da sie die Erlaubtheit einer zweiten Ehe ablehnten und die Vollmacht der katholischen Kirche in Frage stellten, indem sie einerseits deren Schlüsselgewalt verneinten und andererseits damit konkret deren Fähigkeit zur Sündenvergebung bestritten,⁶³ Punkte, die sehr wohl auch auf die Kölner Häretiker von Eckbert zutrafen.

Catharistae war hingegen der Ausdruck, wie er von Eckbert unter Bezugnahme von Augustinus verwendet wurde, um eine der drei Gruppen von Manichäern zu benennen, denen eine streng dualistische Lehre zugeschrieben wurde. Hierbei ist es wichtig festzuhalten, dass in der Nachfolge des Augustinus der Begriff *Catharistae* für eine Untergruppe des Manichäismus benutzt wurde und damit für die Erzketzer schlechthin stand, deren Dualismus in den Quellen allgegenwärtig ist, während Augustinus nirgends bezüglich der *cathari* eine Form des Dualismus erwähnte. Eckbert hat also eigenständig die inhaltlichen Aussagen, die Augustinus mit den manichäischen *catharistae* verbunden hatte, auf die Häretiker seiner Zeit, die Neu-Manichäer, übertragen, die nun auch Katharer genannt wurden.⁶⁴

SCHLUSSBETRACHTUNG

Für die gesamte Häresiebekämpfung des Mittelalters—wie übrigens auch der frühen Neuzeit—kam Augustinus eine Schlüsselrolle zu. So ist ihm letztlich die Analogiebildung zu verdanken, die aus Neu-Manichäern Katharer machte, was aber letztlich in einem universalem Häresiekonzept wurzelte:

Ab dem 11. Jahrhundert gehörte es wesentlich zur Konstruktion des Delikts Häresie, diese als ein universales, einheitliches Gebilde von überwältigender Kohärenz zu sehen. Ob spätantike Manichäer oder mittelalterliche Katharer, sie waren letztlich nur Ausformungen der universalen Häresie, die im Gegensatz zur *ekklesia* stand.

Von besonderer Tragweite aber wurden die Auffassungen von Augustinus in Bezug auf Wesenbeschreibung und Verfolgung der Häresie und der Häretiker.

⁶³ So in *de haeresibus*, PL 42, col. 32.

⁶⁴ Vgl. Genaueres auch bei D. Müller, *Nieuwe Katharen. Van toeschrijving naar toe-eigening*. Inaugurale rede Nijmegen 2009.

Sowohl was die Kennzeichnung der Häresie und des Häretikers betrifft, waren seine Argumente die Sonne, in deren Licht die aufkommen- den Häresiebewegungen gesehen und beschrieben wurden. Er bestimmte weitestgehend den Diskurs.

Besonders durch die Charakterisierung des Häretikers als hartnäckig hatte das mittelalterliche Kirchenrecht erreicht, ein fast schon ‚objektiv‘ anmutendes Kriterium festzustellen: Häretiker sind nicht so sehr jene, die—oft unbewusst—einem objektiven Irrtum unterliegen (materielle Häresie), sondern diejenigen, die ihn hartnäckig und bössartig vertreten (formelle Häresie). Besonders stark wirkte sich die Verbindung aus, die Augustinus zwischen der Häresie und dem Teufel zog. So konnte aus dem mittelalterlichen Teufelsdiener letztlich die frühmoderne Hexe werden, die als Zeichen und zur Besiegelung für ihren Glaubensabfall einen körperlichen Pakt mit dem Teufel schließt. Aufgrund der zeitgemäßen Veränderungen in Weltbild und Lebensgefühl wurde die Überlegung, dass Häretiker ‚verdeckt‘ in der *civitas dei* operieren zum seelenangstgetränkten Massenwahn, der in der ehrbaren Hausfrau wie in der buckligen Alten, im honorablen Bürgermeister wie im kleinen Kind die Adepten des Teufels am Werk sah.

Denn gerade in der Frage, wie rechtlich mit Häretikern zu verfahren sei, wurde lange Zeit überwiegend dem späteren, dem ‚schrecklichen‘ Augustinus gefolgt. Was aber für Augustinus noch situative Ausnahmeregelung war, wurde von Mittelalter und Frühneuzeit in den Rang des Normativen erhoben und mit dem Hinweis auf die Legitimität der kirchlichen Strafgerichtsbarkeit abgesichert.

Dass gerade für das Mittelalter Augustinus zur Autorität in Fragen der Häresiebekämpfung wurde, erklärt sich nicht zuletzt auch mit der parallel zur Spätantike empfundenen Situation, in der ein vorgebliches Anwachsen der Häresie die Einheit der Christenheit aufs Neue ernsthaft bedrohte.

Die Übertragung des Delikts der Majestätsbeleidigung auf die Häresie fand ja nicht erst durch Innozenz III. statt, sondern schon in der Spätantike.⁶⁵ Der Kaiser (später auch der Papst) hat als der von der göttlichen Macht eingesetzte Repräsentant für die Aufrechterhaltung des Allgemeinwohls und der öffentlichen Ordnung Sorge zu tragen. Je mehr diese Güter bedroht sind, desto mehr müssen außergewöhnliche Mittel benützt werden, um sie zu schützen.

⁶⁵ Siehe hierzu auch D. Müller, ‚Aspekte der Ketzerverfolgung unter den Römischen Kaisern bis Justinian,‘ *The Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, Bd. 60, 2008, 175–193.

Die weltliche Gesetzgebung war sehr viel schneller bereit, auch ‚letzte‘ Mittel anzuwenden, um dieses Ziel zu erreichen. Wohl letztlich unter dem Eindruck einer zunehmenden Verschlechterung der Verhältnisse—theologisch gesehen im Überhandnehmen der *civitas diaboli* und politisch im Machtverlust großer Einflussbereiche zu Gunsten des jungen Islam—rangten sich die führenden Theologen und kirchlichen Amtsträger zu einer Akzeptierung der weltlichen Linie durch. Doch wurde dabei lange Zeit Wert gelegt auf den besonderen Strafcharakter der kirchlichen Bußen und Strafen in Nachfolge des Augustinus: Besserung des Abweichlers war das eigentliche Ziel; nur wenn dieses unter keinen Umständen zu erreichen war, sollten Gewaltmaßnahmen gerechtfertigt sein, und selbst dies immer im Bewusstsein, dass nicht Rache oder Vergeltung, sondern *amor correctionis* Triebfeder dabei sein müsse.

Flankierend wurde mit der Rezeption des römischen Rechts auch die Legitimierung der Kaisergesetze durch Augustinus als Mittel der göttlichen Vorsehung übernommen: Hierdurch gewannen sie einen neuen Charakter: Die Gesetze stellten nun nicht mehr primär einen Strafkodex dar, sondern wurden als ‚heilende‘ Strafen mit dem Ziel der Bekehrung der Sünder angesehen. Damit aber hatte Augustinus nicht nur die Begrifflichkeit der Häresiebekämpfung vorgegeben, sondern auch die christliche Untermauerung der verfolgenden Strafinstanz—wobei sowohl Papst als auch Kaiser sich in der Nachfolge der römischen Kaisertradition sahen.

Nicht übersehen werden darf bei all dem, dass Augustinus situationsbedingte Entscheidungen getroffen hatte, die sich dem Kontext der damaligen Donatistenbekämpfung verdankten; um die Einheit der Kirche zu retten, plädierte Augustinus in einer konkreten historischen Situation für die Anwendung von Gewalt durch den christlichen Staat. Damit aber war die Mine gelegt, die in dem Augenblick zündete, in dem die Kanonisten des Mittelalters die von Augustinus vorgebrachten Argumente gerade ihrer situativen Verwurzelung entkleideten und sie in Prinzipien allgemeiner Gültigkeit umschmiedeten. Offen muss bleiben, ob dem ansonsten so geschulten Logiker Augustinus die weitreichenden Konsequenzen seines Ansatzes tatsächlich verborgen blieben oder ob er sie nicht ‚billigend‘ in Kauf genommen hat.

CHAPTER NINE

JUDAISM, AUGUSTINE AND POPE BENEDICT XVI ON THE PLURALITY OF OPINIONS

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For reasons that will not be immediately obvious to the reader, Johannes van Oort is equally fascinated by all three parties mentioned in the title. He has been involved in Augustine's alleged Jewish sources since, in his dissertation, he proposed an influence of the Jewish-Christian *Pseudoclementines* upon Augustine.¹ One can hardly hope to match van Oort's subsequent impressive series of studies on the Jewish elements in Augustine.² Van Oort's appreciation of pope Benedict XVI is perhaps harder to explain.³ An ecumenical approach to protestantism is hardly pope Benedict's daily concern. His former fellow student Cardinal Kasper seems more the one steering that wheel, with pope Benedict handling the brakes. I guess that pope Benedict's conviction that Augustine is not just an antiquated source of knowledge but a highly relevant guide for modern man, is what fascinates van Oort. Even in his painstaking historical research, van Oort has always searched after the relevance of Augustine for problems and challenges of our time. It seems appropriate then, to deal with the issue of plurality of opinion in these three parties. Without suggesting in the least a direct historical influence between the Jewish sources to be treated presently, and Augustine, I am convinced of

¹ J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's 'City of God' and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities*, Leiden: Brill 1991.

² Perhaps culminating in: J. van Oort, 'Iudaei', in: C. Mayer u.a. (Hrsg.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Band III, Fasc. 5/6, Basel: Schwabe Verlag 2008, 781–792, and idem, 'Iudaeos (Aduersus -)', in: C. Mayer u.a. (Hrsg.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Band III, Fasc. 5/6, Basel: Schwabe Verlag 2008, 792–796.

³ But see now the first and final pages in J. van Oort, 'Jews and Judaism in Augustine's *Sermones*', in: Gert Partoens, Anthony Dupont & Mathijs Lamberigts (eds.), *Ministerium Sermonis. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on St. Augustine's Sermones ad Populum. Turnhout-Leuven, May 29–31 2008* (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 53), Turnhout: Brepols Publishers 2009, 243–265.

a profound similarity in outlook. After dealing with both Judaism and Augustine, I will confront the results with a modern thinker on the same topic, the theologian Joseph Ratzinger.⁴

1. JEWISH PERSPECTIVES ON PLURALITY OF OPINIONS

The sources in the Talmud dealing with plurality of opinions are quoted so often that one may well hesitate to quote them once more. Still, their significance is not so easy to assess. The story of the Tannaitic rabbi Joshua in debate with his contemporary rabbi Eliezer (2d century CE),⁵ the two most important pupils of rabban Johanan ben Zakkai, is often told to prove the rabbinic predilection for debate and differences of opinion. Before we relate the long but fascinating story it is perhaps necessary to consider what its aims were. It can hardly be meant as a factual account of things that happened as described. In addition, we know that quite a few Jewish groups have barely left a trace in the whole of Rabbinic literature, at least not in a positive sense: (Jewish) Christians of different shades, Samaritans, Gnostics, Sadducees, Essenes, to mention only the most important ones. It is obvious that rabbinic literature has narrowed down Jewish tradition in the first centuries of the common era, by excluding literature written in Greek, such as Philo, by rejecting or assimilating into Talmud and midrash stories that we can find more extensively in pseudepigrapha of Jewish origin, but preserved and here and there Christianized by the Church(es). The formation of the Biblical canon itself is a testimony to that consolidation, both on the Jewish and on the Christian side.⁶ Having said this, our task remains to assess what kind of pluralism the story wants to convey. Here and there we will interrupt the story for some commentary:

(There is an oven which R. Eliezer declared clean and the sages unclean).

It has been taught: On that day R. Eliezer brought forward all arguments of the world and they were not accepted. Then he said: 'Let this carob-tree prove that the halakha prevails as I state,' and the carob was (miraculously) uprooted to a distance of one hundred cubits, and according to others

⁴ I switch from Benedict XVI to Joseph Ratzinger to express the level of a free theological exchange.

⁵ Cp. W. Bacher, *Die Aggada der Tannaiten*, I, Strassburg 1903, p. 123 ff. R. Joshua takes the lenient stance in the controversies.

⁶ See the collection of articles in: E.P. Sanders (ed.), *Jewish and Christian Self-definition. Volume 2: Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period*, London 1981.

four hundred cubits. But they said: 'The carob proves nothing.' He again said: 'Let, then, the spring of water prove that so the halakha prevails as I state.' The water then began to run backwards. 'No proof can be brought from a stream of water,' they rejoined. He again said: 'Then, let the walls of the beth ha-midrash prove that I am right.' The walls were about to fall. R. Joshua, however, rebuked them, saying: 'If the scholars of this college are discussing upon a halakha, wherefore should ye interfere!' They did not fall, for the honor of R. Joshua, but they did not become again straight, for the honor of R. Eliezer and they are still in the same condition.

The story is carefully phrased and it is obvious that the actual point of debate is only secondary to the more fundamental question of how a debate should be conducted. The different miracles may even have a specific meaning: the collapsing walls are of a more violent nature than the first miracles, threatening as they do the life of the scholars present. Note as well the humorous elements: although the walking tree is impossible there is debate as to the actual distance; the walls of the *beth ha-midrash* are still reclining.

He said again: 'Let it be announced by the heavens that the halakha prevails according to my statement', and a heavenly voice went out saying: 'Why do you quarrel with R. Eliezer? The halakha is as he states!' R. Joshua then arose and proclaimed [Deut. 30:12]: "'The Law is not in the heavens.'" How is this to be understood? R. Jeremiah stated: 'It means, the Torah was given already on mountain of Sinai, and we do not pay attention to a heavenly voice, as on mount Sinai you have written in the Torah [Ex 23:2]: "To incline after the majority."'

Undoubtedly the violence of the walls is even intensified by appealing to a heavenly voice. The 'bat qol', literally 'daughter of the voice', is sometimes translated as 'echo', indicating that the speaking of the full word of God has ceased, leaving merely the 'bat qol'. The 'bat qol' quite often quotes Scripture which indicates that it not intends/pretends to give a new revelation, but rather to point out an actual revelatory significance of an existing text from Scripture. Sometimes, the 'bat qol' is cooing like a dove (Babylonian Talmud *Berakhot* 3a), which brings the phenomenon close to the heavenly voice at Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. Furthermore, it might be compared with the 'tolle lege'-experience described by Augustine. In that case a child (innocent as a dove) calls to read Scripture.⁷ The surprising thing is that in the story of the rabbis, the heavenly voice is refuted by R. Joshua's double quotation of Scripture. The first quotation:

⁷ *Confessions*, VIII, 12.

‘the Law is not in the heavens’, emphasizes that the Torah is no longer in heaven, but in the hands of man, i.e. entrusted to his responsibility. Clearly, this story advocates the ‘democratic’ or rather the rational, debate about Scripture over an appeal to charismatic inspirations to settle the truth. Apparently, charismatic phenomena are not rejected outright—the story itself tells of a heavenly voice—but its authority to settle disputes is contested by appealing to the Torah itself. The second quotation from Scripture is meant to underline a democratic principle: to follow the majority. Obviously, this is not what R. Eliezer does, who stands alone with his opinion. One might wonder, however, whether such a democratic principle is applicable in religion. The prophets do not seem to base their message upon a majority vote either! Undoubtedly, Rabbinic tradition regards itself as the legitimate heir of the prophets, but that does not imply the continuation of prophecy in the same form: the era of prophecy is closed. We should keep in mind that this rabbinic theology should not be taken as a factual description, as we know of prophetic phenomena in Josephus, the New Testament and so on. Still, even pseudepigrapha take care to attach their revelations to a biblical figure, such as Henoch, Moses and Elijah, hence before the close of prophecy.

The quotation from Ex. 23:2 seems rather curious, when one takes into account its context. It states:

Thou shalt not follow a multitude to [do] evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest [judgment]. (King James Version)

The obvious meaning would be *not* to follow the majority! Apparently, we have to do here with rabbinic hermeneutics of Scripture, managing to extract from it a democratic principle applicable in Rabbinic times. If I should not follow that majority in evil, I might conclude that in other cases I definitely should follow the majority. Of course, one might object how one can know beforehand whether a case is evil or not? If that were possible I would follow the majority only because I know already the right decision. Actually, this debate is conducted further by the *Tosafot* to Babylonian Talmud *Baba Metsia* 59b, pointing to another famous story:

Three years there was a dispute between the school of Shammai and the school of Hillel, the former stating: ‘The halakha is in agreement with our views,’ and the latter stating: ‘The halakha is in agreement with our views.’ Then a *bat qol* went out and said: ‘Both are the words of the living God and the halakha is in accordance with the school of Hillel.’ What made it, that the school of Hillel was entitled to have the halakha fixed in agreement

with their ruling? Because they were kind and modest, and studied both their own rulings and those of the school of Shammai and even mentioned the words of the school of Shammai before theirs.

(Bab. Talmud Eruvin 13b)

It has not escaped the attention of the commentators of the Talmud that here a *bat qol* seems to decide the debate whereas in our story its authority is rejected. To solve this problem, one may point to the fact that the Talmud itself already adduces additional reasons why the (more lenient) school of Hillel should be favored. Ironically, one of the reasons is that they continue to mention the opinions of the school of Shammai, even before their own. The school of Shammai might not have succeeded in such a broadminded view of the debate. Apart from mnemotechnical reasons—rendering the opinion of others is the only way for later generations to understand what was at stake—there seems to be a certain distinction between the absolute truth and a decision made for practical reasons. The opinions of the school of Shammai are not rejected because they are intrinsically wrong, but because the halakha asks for clear guidelines on behalf of the community, to be followed by at least a majority. Hence the community is an important element in making decisions. It should be noted that the issue at stake is not about matters of theology or of exegesis, but of religious jurisdiction, which makes a decision vital. It may even be argued that the dissenting groups within Judaism were eventually ejected, not because of their persuasions, but because on their deviance from practical halakha, such as the religious calendar (Qumran), sacrifice in Jerusalem (Samaritans), or change of resting day (Christians).⁸ Still, the difference between Judaism and Christianity as orthopraxy versus orthodoxy should not be exaggerated. Church fathers conducted heated debates about ministry, participation in the Eucharist and baptism, whereas Rabbinic literature excluded groups from the World to Come upon doctrinal grounds as we will see later on.

A pious opinion even suggests that the decisions of the school of Shammai will be followed in messianic times. Incidentally, Jesus' opinion on marriage according to Matthew (5:32 and 19:9) is closer to the school of Shammai than to the school of Hillel, whereas the golden rule and other ethical maxims are close to Hillel.

⁸ Nevertheless, *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:12 is more 'theological' in that it excludes those who deny the resurrection of the dead, those who hold that the Torah is not from heaven, and the *apíqoros* [cp. Greek *Epikouros*] from the World to Come. The first and the third clause of this ruling may have been directed against the Sadducees.

Historically, things may have been less smooth but rabbinic wisdom suggests that the disputes between the school of Hillel and the school of Shammai were 'for the sake of heaven,' in contrast to the dissension between Moses and Korah (Mishna Avot 5:20).⁹

To return to our story, there are two more episodes to relate:

R. Nathan met Elijah (the Prophet) and questioned him: 'What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do at that time?' He answered: 'God laughed and said: "My children have overruled me, my children have overruled me."'

The meeting between a rabbi and the prophet Elijah should not surprise us, as Elijah shows up quite often both in the Talmud and in the New Testament. The humorous ending is not without its depth: the Almighty himself is pleased when His children manage to take their God given responsibility. Quite often, in modern quotations the story breaks off here. For our purpose, however, it is important to pursue the story until its rather grim ending.

It was said that on the same day all the cases of purity, on which R. Eliezer decided that they were clean, were brought and burned in fire. And they voted and excommunicated him (literally: 'they blessed him,' a euphemism). They said: 'Who will go and inform him?' 'I will go,' R. Aqiba answered, 'lest an unsuitable person would inform him and would find the whole world destroyed.' What did R. Aqiba? He dressed himself in black and wrapped himself with black and sat at a distance of four cubits from R. Eliezer. 'Aqiba,' R. Eliezer said to him: 'Aqiba, what is the matter today?' He answered: 'Master! it seems to me that your colleagues have separated themselves from you.'¹⁰ Thereupon he too rent his garments, put off his shoes, removed his seat and sat on the floor, and his eyes began to flow.¹¹ Then the world was smitten: a third of the olive crop, a third of the wheat, and a third of the barley. According to others, even the dough which was already in the hands of the women became spoiled. A Tanna taught: Great was the calamity on that day, as every place on which R. Eliezer cast his eyes was burned. And also Rabban Gamaliel, who was travelling in a ship, when a huge wave arose to drown him. He said: 'It seems to me that this is on account of none other than R. Eliezer b. Hyrkanos.' He then arose and prayed: 'Lord of the Universe, it is open and known before thee that not for the sake of my honor, or the honor of my parents I acted so, but for thy glory, to prevent a quarrel in Israel.' And the sea then became quiet.

⁹ Compare Gamaliel's principle in Acts 5: 38.

¹⁰ Note that R. Aqiba does not state that R. Eliezer has been excommunicated. It even sounds as if the colleagues have excommunicated themselves.

¹¹ All are signs of mourning.

Although the story of R. Joshua and R. Eliezer is often quoted to illustrate the rabbinic predilection for plurality of opinions, this continuation nearly seems to prove the opposite. The excommunication of R. Eliezer is viewed as a catastrophe of cosmic dimensions.¹² And still we have not yet reached the end of the troubles.

Ima Shalom, the wife of R. Eliezer, was a sister of Rabban Gamaliel. Since that time she prevented her husband from falling upon his face.¹³ It happened, however, in a day which was New Moon, and she erred, thinking that this day was the first of the month (in which the falling upon the face is not customary). According to others, a poor man knocked at the door and she was going to give him some bread, and when she returned she found her husband falling on his face, and she said to him: 'Arise, you have killed my brother!' In the meantime it was heralded by the house of Rabban Gamaliel that he was dead. R. Eliezer asked her: 'Whence did you know this?' She answered: 'I have a tradition from the house of my grandfather that all gates are closed for prayers, except for the gate of wounded feelings.' (Babylonian Talmud Baba Metsia 59b)

In spite of the grim ending, the meaning of the story seems to be that, according to rabbinic principles, the majority decides after a debate with rational arguments.¹⁴ Again, in spite of the cosmic catastrophe accompanying the ban on R. Eliezer, (which may be seen as a warning that this should be avoided at all costs), the thrust of the argument does not change in favor of a decision according to R. Eliezer.

We may summarize that our story conveys the importance of debate between equals over an appeal to divine inspiration to decide a discussion. The inherent violence of appealing to charismatic authority is demonstrated by the miracles of the walls and even more by the heavenly voice itself that proposes to settle the dispute. Against that, R. Joshua brings forward the revelation of Scripture, henceforth accessible to everyone and entrusted to human responsibility. The story wants to convey rules for religious debate, not with outsiders or with schismatic groups, but within the own religious community of people who share basic convictions. Still, the truth within that community is essentially pluralistic, even when decisions have to be taken. In addition, the decisions are based upon a majority vote (although a majority of an elite: the Rabbis!). The

¹² Incidentally, the harshness of R. Eliezer is proven by another debate in which he holds, against R. Joshua, that all pagans are excluded from the World to Come. See Bab. Talmud Sanhedrin 105a; W. Bacher, *Die Aggada der Tannaiten*, I, Strassburg 1903, p. 134.

¹³ Probably out of fear that his supplication for being offended would be so strong as to kill her brother.

¹⁴ For a telling example of this principle, see *Mishna Eduyot* 5:7.

truth aimed at is of a rather practical nature: the majority of the community should be able to uphold the halakhic decision taken. Even an appeal to Scripture as such does not settle the debate. Here, another famous story should be kept in mind. Moses ascends to receive the Torah and sees how God adorns the letters with crowns. Upon his question he receives the answer that there will be a man who will explain not only the words but even the letters with the crowns. Upon Moses' request to meet that man he finds himself on the last bench in the study house of R. Aqiba. He does not understand a word of the latter's speech, but is comforted when at the end R. Aqiba says: 'This is the Torah of Moses from Sinai.' (Babylonian Talmud *Menachot* 29b).¹⁵ This positive pluralism 'from within' should be duly distinguished from negative pluralism 'on the fringe', denying basic tenets of Judaism such as revelation. A third form of pluralism, that of wholly other religions may be considered neutral. As long as the gentiles live in accordance with the Noahide commandments, they are fully in touch with 'salvation.'¹⁶ Hence the membership of the Jewish people is no prerequisite of salvation for gentiles.

Presented schematically:

1. Pluralism from within: positive;
2. Pluralism on the fringe: negative;
3. Pluralism from outside: neutral.

Rabbinic pluralism extends itself to the hermeneutics of Scripture, to such an extent that even Moses himself could not understand the explanation of what he has received as revelation. We will see that it is precisely this astounding hermeneutics which form a striking parallel with Augustine's hermeneutics of Scripture.

2. AUGUSTINE AND HIS DEBATE OVER SCRIPTURE

It is not our aim to expound Augustine's elaborate hermeneutics of Scripture, to which he devoted *inter alia* a separate treatise. For our purpose his debate with unnamed opponents over the interpretation of

¹⁵ Again, one should read the story until the grim end: Moses asks to be shown Aqiba's reward and sees how he is tortured to death because of his study of the Torah. Moses realizes the greatness of this man and proposes to give the Torah to Aqiba instead of to himself. But God refuses.

¹⁶ Idolatry is forbidden, but the principal debate whether Noahides have to believe in revelation cannot be treated here.

Scripture in his *Confessions* is highly interesting, as it shows a growing awareness in Augustine himself.¹⁷ Like in the debate between R. Joshua and R. Eliezer, the actual point of debate is less important to us, than the way the search for truth ends up in an affirmation of pluralism. Augustine's initial stand is quite self assured, pointing to the depth of God's word:

Will you say that these things are false which Truth tells me, with a loud voice in my inner ear? (XII, 15,18)

His opponents, however, do not consider Augustine's interpretation as wrong. Augustine had just wished to those who think superficially that they be killed by God's sword, (figuratively) in order to live as profound thinkers. It is curious that both the rabbinic story and Augustine contain an element of violence, although in a metaphoric way, to be overcome by genuine exchange. The Rabbinic story related how upon request of R. Eliezer the walls threatened to collapse upon the scholars present, Augustine invokes God's word to kill the superficial in order to make them profound. Augustine's opponents do not belong to that category, however, and his rather aggressive metaphor is not applicable to them.

Now, I would like to discuss a little further, in thy presence, O my God, with those who admit that all these things are true that thy Truth has indicated to my mind. Let those who deny these things bark and drown their own voices with as much clamor as they please. (Confessions XII, 16, 23)

Augustine prefers to continue the discussion with those who accept the truth which he heard as an inner voice. The others he will persuade or they will get dust in their eyes. The problems are, however, with those who accept Scripture and revelation:

Who honor thy Scripture set before us by the holy Moses, who join us in placing it on the summit of authority for us to follow, and yet who oppose us in some particulars, I say this: 'Be thou, O God, the judge between my confessions and their gainsaying.'

The problem for Augustine is that they continue to challenge his inner truth as the only one valid:

For they say: 'Even if these things are true, still Moses did not refer to these two things when he said, by divine revelation, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' By the term 'heaven' he did not mean

¹⁷ Next to the Latin text, I use the translation by Albert Outler, *Confessions*, Library of Christian Classics, Philadelphia 1955.

that spiritual or intelligible created order which always beholds the face of God. And by the term “earth” he was not referring to unformed matter.’

‘What then do these terms mean?’

They reply, ‘That man [Moses] meant what *we* mean.’

(Confessions XII, 17, 24)

Passing over the actual debate over the first line of Genesis which mentions heaven and earth, we understand that obviously Augustine’s opponents do not consider Augustine’s idea wrong *per se*, but claim that Moses, the writer of Scripture, had something else in mind. Augustine proceeds by pondering over the possibility of different opinions, brought forward in mutual love, being equally true.

When all these things have been said and considered, I am unwilling to contend about words, for such contention is profitable for nothing but the subverting of the hearer. But the law is profitable for edification if a man use it lawfully: for the end of the law ‘is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned’. (...) (Confessions XII, 18, 27)

Having mentioned love as a criterion for the right interpretation of Scripture, Augustine seems to relax a little.

And how would it harm me, O my God, thou Light of my eyes in secret, if while I am ardently confessing these things—since many different things may be understood from these words, all of which may be true—what harm would be done if I should interpret the meaning of the sacred writer differently from the way some other man interprets? Indeed, all of us who read are trying to trace out and understand what our author wished to convey; and since we believe that he speaks truly we dare not suppose that he has spoken anything that we either know or suppose to be false.

(*ibidem*)

Augustine ventures upon a daring track of hermeneutics: Scripture does not communicate things that are wrong, so there is room for different interpretations which may all be true.

Then he takes one more bold step:

Therefore, since every person tries to understand in the Holy Scripture what the writer understood, what harm is done if a man understands what thou, the Light of all truth-speaking minds, showest him to be true, although the author he reads did not understand this aspect of the truth even though he did understand the truth in a different meaning?

(*ibidem*)

In a quite modern way, Augustine argues that the intention of the author cannot be decisive for the meaning of the text. The author, be he even

Moses himself, is not determinative for the multiple meanings to be extracted? from Scripture. One may understand what God reveals to him, even when Moses had no inkling of these true meanings.

But in the midst of so many truths which occur to the interpreters of these words (understood as they can be in different ways), which one of us can discover that single interpretation which warrants our saying confidently that Moses thought thus and that in this narrative he wishes this to be understood, as confidently as he would say that this is true, whether Moses thought the one or the other? (XII, 24, 33)

Augustine draws a final consequence from his exploration of truth: who would be able to assess in the midst of so many true interpretations, which one Moses himself had intended? He decides then that no one should argue that only his opinion coincides with what Moses himself had intended. With this he refutes his opponents, but implicitly also himself. In the following section, Augustine expounds his hermeneutics of pluralism to the full and even decides to collect many interpretations, in order to avoid excluding truth by only propagating only one interpretation, be it even a true one!

Thus, when one man says, 'Moses meant what I mean,' and another says, 'No, he meant what I do,' I think that I speak more faithfully when I say, 'Why could he not have meant both if both opinions are true?' And if there should be still a third truth or a fourth one, and if anyone should seek a truth quite different in those words, why would it not be right to believe that Moses saw all these different truths, since through him the one God has tempered the Holy Scriptures to the understanding of many different people, who should see truths in it even if they are different? Certainly—and I say this fearlessly and from my heart—if I were to write anything on such a supreme authority, I would prefer to write it so that, whatever of truth anyone might apprehend from the matter under discussion, my words should re-echo in the several minds rather than that they should set down one true opinion so clearly on one point that I should exclude the rest, even though they contained no falsehood that offended me. Therefore, I am unwilling, O my God, to be so headstrong as not to believe that this man [Moses] has received at least this much from Thee. Surely when he was writing these words, he saw fully and understood all the truth we have been able to find in them, and also much besides that we have not been able to discern, or are not yet able to find out, though it is there in them still to be found. (XII, 31, 42)

Augustine even considers the possibility that Moses had not understood all of the meanings that God revealed to future generations (XII, 32, 43). By doing so, his hermeneutics constitute a clear parallel to the story quoted above, in which Moses himself did not understand the

explanation of R. Aqiba of Moses' Torah from Sinai. We might wonder what is the place of these daring hermeneutics within the whole of Augustine's thought. Is not Augustine the theologian who recommends the heretics to be compelled to enter? Did not Augustine in his debate with the Manichaean Faustus even refuse to counter popular slander about hideous crimes perpetrated by the Manichaeans, although Faustus explicitly asked for it?¹⁸ The notorious issue of the *massa damnata*, the majority of people being destined to hell because of original sin, is another position of Augustine, that prevents us from heralding him as the champion of tolerance and pluralism.¹⁹ His openness to Biblical hermeneutics becomes all the more important in that light. The way he describes this pluralism as a gradual process of awareness enhances its authenticity.

Just like in rabbinic literature, we cannot deduce from this pluralism a general openness to different opinions for example in other religions and cultures. *Ours is a pluralism from within*, an appreciation of other interpretations while acknowledging the limitations of one's own perspective. Basic parameters e.g. about the inspiration of Scripture form the common ground in both. Again just like in rabbinic literature, we may conclude that in the *Confessiones*, Augustine develops basic rules of debate within the Christian community. In both religions, pluralism should not be avoided, on the contrary it is a testimony of God's rich revelation, if conducted in a spirit of love. What is more, the variety of interpretations does more justice to divine truth than one opinion only, even a true one.

The rule of pluralism of opinions serves the religious community from within. Apparently, it is meant not to overcome dissension as such, but to avoid schismatic tendencies and internal strife. Only by accepting pluralism as God-given, a religious community will manage to do justice to each and every person sharing the love and faith of that community. In addition, it should be kept in mind that neither of the two testimonies deal with the positive significance of other religions. One the one hand,

¹⁸ Cf. my article, 'Mani, Augustinus en de kabbala over eten en sex: een vergelijking', in: J. van Oort & P. van Geest (eds.), *Augustiniana Neerlandica*, Peeters Leuven 2005, p. 66. Augustine refuses to counter the popular slander about the Manichaeans professing that he as a former *auditor* of the Manichaeans could have no knowledge of what happened among the elect. It does not prevent him from bringing forward the same accusations against the Manichaeans about hideous crimes as true events later on.

¹⁹ It should be noted that Augustine is an exception in Patristics, to be taken up by the Reformation. See: F.A. Sullivan, *Salvation outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response*, New York 1992.

this modern issue cannot be solved by merely pointing to old sources, on the other hand, the focus is upon pluralism *within* the own religious community, which is no less a challenge in our days.

Presented schematically:

1. Pluralism from within: positive;
2. Pluralism on the fringe: negative;
3. Pluralism from outside: *negative*.

Still we note the similarity of the first kind of pluralism. It is no exaggeration to state that these hermeneutics, be they Jewish or Augustinian, are of great actual relevance. The question remains whether these hermeneutics have really had an impact upon subsequent theology. Augustine himself has the reputation of a self-assured theologian and bishop, who knows to draw the lines hard and fast, rather than of a thinker who is prepared to criticize his own claim of the truth and allows himself (gradually!) to do justice to his opponents. How does Joseph Ratzinger, who has been involved with the issue of pluralism quite intensely, manage to do justice to these hermeneutics?

3. JOSEPH RATZINGER ON PLURALISM

It is not exaggerated to state that the unity of truth has been Ratzinger's main concern during his theological career. He describes how the letter *Dominus Jesus* (2000), the document emphasizing salvation in Christ for all religions, evoked a cry of indignation both within and outside the Church: this document was based upon intolerance and religious arrogance, obsolete in our modern society. Ratzinger answered: 'The Catholic can only ask in all humility the same question which Martin Buber posed to an atheist: "But suppose it is true?"' This answer demonstrates clearly how for Ratzinger pluralism comes close to indifferentism and relativism. Still the reference to the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber answering an atheist (in reality a Hasidic story) adds an ironic, because pluralist, flavor to his own answer: the Christian truth appears to be analogous to the Jewish answer to atheism. As such, Ratzinger's answer does not wholly solve the problems around *Dominus Jesus*, as it obscures possible theological shortcomings behind a wholesale reference to the mystery of Christ. Still, it shows Ratzinger's central *Anliegen*, which we want to explore a little further.

Already in 1964, he pleads for a more refined approach in which different types of religion should be distinguished. The claim by universalist religious thinkers, especially in Hinduism, that the Christian truth should be integrated into a more encompassing mystical religiosity, does no justice to Christianity. The uniqueness of the historical event of Jesus Christ cannot be subordinated to more 'universal' non-historical religiosity. Hence, the monotheist religions starting in Israel establish a revolutionary rupture in which an active, personal God, separated from man and acting within history, should be distinguished from a mystical, non-personal, meta-historical divinity fusing with human identity.²⁰ In retrospect Ratzinger prefers to speak about a personal idea of God *vis a vis* a mysticism in which the identities of God and man tend to fuse. The matter is further complicated by the fact that the historical and mystical type of religion do not only characterize different religions but can be found in one and the same religion, including Christianity with its mysticism and *theologia negativa*. Anyway, Ratzinger's plea for the historical revelation of Christ as the primary event in Christianity, not to be superseded by mystical insights, is unambiguous. Likewise, Judaism and Islam will have their own founding historical revelatory events that can be viewed as analogous to Christianity. In any case, Ratzinger argues, rightly I think, that referring to a mystical realm *above all religions* cannot constitute the unity between all religions. Which privileged persons would have access to this meta-historical realm by which all historical religions would be relegated to a secondary level?²¹

It turns out, however, that Ratzinger is quick to dismiss all attempts at a pluralism of truth as relativism. The famous story of the three blind men before an elephant, one feeling a kind of tree (the leg) another a sheet (the ear) and a third the curved softness (the trunk), cannot count upon the sympathy of Ratzinger. He denounces the story as another attempt to make relative the central truth of Christianity, viewing other religions as equal variations upon a divine truth that cannot be grasped. The story holds good only when one implicitly knows about the existence of the whole elephant, Ratzinger objects. The story could perhaps

²⁰ See J. Ratzinger, 'Einheit und Vielfalt der Religionen. De Ort des christlichen Glaubens in der Religionsgeschichte' (1964, dedicated to Karl Rahner), in the collection of articles: idem, *Glaube—Wahrheit—Toleranz. Das Christentum und die Weltreligionen*, Herder Verlag Freiburg 2005, pp. 28 ff.

²¹ See my article: 'Stilte is lofprijzing to U [Silence is praise to thee], Wegen en grenzen van de mystiek in de interreligieuze dialoog,' in J. Frishman & G.A.F. Hellemans (eds.), *Het christendom en de wereldreligies. Dialoog en confrontatie*, Utrecht 2008, pp. 188–212.

be read otherwise, however, than as a confirmation that all religions should stick to their own truth and that Christianity should not bring the truth of the gospel to all peoples. Incidentally, the origin of the story is inner-Buddhist and does not deal with other religions. Even within the interreligious context, its meaning might be perceived differently from Ratzinger's exegesis. One might argue that precisely because the blind perceive differently, this emphasizes the need to exchange, pointing as it does to the persuasion that in some way other religions have experience with God's loving care in a way unknown. Only by listening to each other there is the change of getting a broader perspective upon God's mystery. The question of a hierarchy of truth is not solved by this story, only it is assumed that all three are in some way in touch with God. The dim awareness of the whole elephant teaches Christians that they can learn as well from the piety of other religions. I do not think that this theological humility would damage the Christian persuasion of God's salvation offered in Christ, as long as I am prepared to open myself as well to the other's experiences with God's divine care.

Ratzinger draws a rather clear-cut picture: the history of Christianity shows only two possible perspectives upon non-Christian religions: preparing the way to Christianity, or: being a stumblingblock to the true message of Christ. This reserved Yes and categorical No to other religions is the most we can achieve, Ratzinger argued in 1964. Again it seems that this Patristic model of *praeparatio evangelica* should be understood as an expression of the all-encompassing joy of living with Christ, not as a genuine judgment of other religions, some of which were not even known by then.²² In addition, the hierarchy of truth presupposes a bird's eye perspective which eventually does not do justice to the believer's perspective of *receiving* God's grace, not measuring and comparing it.

From the sixties onward, Ratzinger's attitude towards pluralism has become even more severe, as it seems. Still, he rejects the exclusivist approach of Karl Barth, in which belief stands opposite to religion. The inclusivist approach of Rahner, who considers other religions as 'anonymous Christianity', guided by Christ to the way to salvation without knowing it, maintains the uniqueness of Christ combined with an

²² The dual attitude towards non-Christian wisdom is admirably captured in the metaphor of the gold and silver taken out of Egypt: intended for the tabernacle or for the golden calf? Hence it can be used both for service to God and for idolatry. See: Origen, *Philocalia* 13,2; Augustine, *Confessions* VII,9,14, and my article: 'Het goud en zilver uit Egypte, verdiend loon of diefstal?', in: idem, *Hamer op de rots*, Hilversum 1989, pp. 109–149.

appreciation of other religions as included in salvation.²³ Ratzinger rejects the pluralist approach in which Christ is no longer the unique way to salvation, as it considers all religions as equal (Hick, Knitter).²⁴ Ratzinger seems to opt for inclusivism, but surprisingly, Ratzinger seems to be dissatisfied as well with this schematic approach to religions. 'Should not the ultimate respect for the mystery of God's acting be the guideline?' (p. 44). This, however, seems precisely to be the objective of the story of the three blind men and the elephant! The Christian persuasion of salvation in Christ is a persuasion out of inner conviction and of joy, and as such irresistible, but is not based upon a negative verdict of other religions and does not become stronger by such a verdict. Obviously, Ratzinger considers relativism as the great threat to the message of Christianity and he rightly demonstrates how the seeming tolerance of relativism turns out to be a defense mechanism against all truth claims of religion. To avert the truth claim of one religion I point to the other religions, but their truth claims I avoid by pointing again to other religions, and so on. It seems that in order to avert this real danger, Ratzinger does not allow himself to elaborate upon the necessity of pluralism within Christianity, as a God given variety of opinions. In rabbinic hermeneutics we discovered an inner-Jewish appreciation for differences of opinion, comparable to Augustine's inner-Christian differences in Bible hermeneutics. In both it turned out that this pluralism was not due to a preliminary lack of knowledge to be clarified later on with the increase of knowledge. This pluralism was a direct consequence of the divine wisdom infinitely transcending human perception. The Rabbis advocated a democratic principle, or rather a democracy of the religious elite and even the importance of what the majority of the religious community is prepared to maintain. For Ratzinger, however, the democratic principle is denounced as yet another attempt to create a religion after one's own taste.²⁵

Appreciation for the other's opinions is presupposed in this hermeneutic pluralism, which can only be realized out of a theological humil-

²³ J. Ratzinger, *Glaube—Wahrheit—Toleranz. Das Christentum und die Weltreligionen*, pp. 42–43. Historically, especially the Jesuits have advocated this kind of approach. See my article: 'Outside the Church no Salvation? The Legacy of Cyprian' (forthcoming).

²⁴ Here the word pluralism appears in another meaning than used by us above. Note again that the affirmation of equality likewise presupposes a bird's eye perspective, in which the position of the believer is abandoned in favor of comparing and measuring, what cannot be compared.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 104 f. One should keep in mind, however, that the election of the pope is subjected to democratic principles as well.

ity. This theological humility should not be confused with relativism. It seems that in the hermeneutics of Scripture, Ratzinger rightly states that exegesis nowadays does not manage to bridge the gap between their discipline and theological reflection. Implicitly, methodical abstention from a religious perspective by the exegete easily becomes a principal rejection of theology. Still, one could apply here the concept of a pluralism of opinions, even if the overall perspective is lacking. Theological humility would point the way to cooperation between the different perspectives, such as between exegetes and theologians.²⁶

The letter *Dominus Jesus*, issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2000, when Ratzinger was prefect, addresses itself to 'Bishops, theologians, and all the Catholic faithful'. It sees a big threat in the world of today: 'The Church's constant missionary proclamation is endangered today by relativistic theories which seek to justify religious pluralism' (Introduction §4). Characteristic of the approach is that this justification of religious pluralism is not seen as a possible answer to new challenges in the world of today: the dialogue with Judaism and Islam, but as wrong conceptions by theologians. As a matter of fact, protests by Jewish and Hindu thinkers against the exclusiveness of this letter were countered by pointing to the addressees of the letter: bishops, theologians and the Catholic faithful. It is, however, difficult to address Catholics only with a letter that is spread worldwide with an impact upon the major world religions. The threat of relativism is a genuine threat, but is not an invention by theologians. It is an attempt to cope with the wholly new situation of encounters with other religions on a global scale. As far as Judaism is concerned, pope John Paul II has used the phrase 'our elder brother' to account for that wholly new relationship, after World War 2 and after the sad history of anti-Semitism.²⁷ One cannot blame theologians that they search for new ways to account for this new situation, realizing that the old conviction of Judaism being blindfolded is no longer applicable. Hence, the letter should first and foremost face this challenge and address itself to Judaism, more than to

²⁶ Ratzinger's identification of historical exegesis with the temptation of the devil in the desert seems quite remote from the hermeneutical pluralism. See J. Ratzinger, *Jezus van Nazareth*, Tielt 2006 [Dutch edition], p. 54: "The antichrist tells us in the disguise of strict scholarship that exegesis of the Bible combined with belief in a living God would be fundamentalism. Only *his* exegesis which pretends to be scientific and in which God does not say anything and has nothing to say would be of actual relevance".

²⁷ One gets the impression that John Paul II's initiative to pray together with the world religions in Assisi, is hardly condoned by Ratzinger, see: *ibidem*, pp. 87 ff.

other religions. It seems to me that because of the threat of relativism, the letter has reduced this challenge of the encounter with other religions to a disciplinary measure against theologians. The challenge from without has been reduced to a combat of pluralism from within or rather on the fringe. Hence we will search in vain for a pluralism from within as professed by both Rabbinic tradition and Augustine.

In a schedule:

1. Pluralism from within: not mentioned;
2. Pluralism on the fringe: negative;
3. Pluralism from outside: neutral.

It should be emphasized that the massive denial of salvation to all non-Christians has hardly any foothold in the history of Catholic Christianity, including Cyprian en Tertullian, and cannot be attributed to Ratzinger either. His attitude is neutral, on the assumption that in one way or another, these people may be oriented towards Christ. Hence Ratzinger's attitude is comparable to the Rabbinic attitude towards the gentiles. In addition, the plea for democratic decisions as found in Rabbinic tradition as well as the theological humility as professed by Augustine are themes that are not lacking in Ratzinger's discourse. They are 'denounced,' however, as a threat to basic tenets of Christianity, hence they are relegated to a pluralism 'on the fringe.' The fear of relativism explains why there is no room in Ratzinger's discourse for a God-give variety of opinions, allowing for theological humility. Apparently, the challenge to experience a variety of opinions within the Church as a God-given treasure constitutes a major challenge for the future. Both Judaism and Augustine, *bien étonnés de se trouver ensemble*, may serve as an inspiration for that.

CHAPTER TEN

LE FILS PRODIGE VU PAR AUGUSTIN: UN PAS VERS L'EXCLUSIVISME DE LA GRÂCE

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I. INTRODUCTION

L'une des principales questions que se posent actuellement les spécialistes d'Augustin est de savoir si l'interprétation du thème de la grâce représente ou non une rupture dans la pensée de l'évêque d'Hippone. Cette rupture serait principalement due au conflit pélagien,¹ mais ses débuts pourraient néanmoins se situer déjà au moment de la rédaction du *Ad Simplicianum*.² Augustin aurait sensiblement modifié son interprétation de telle sorte que l'on peut quasiment distinguer deux conceptions de la grâce. La grâce telle Augustin la définit lors de ses conflits avec les Pélagiens, est marquée par la prise de conscience de la nature déchue de l'homme. La grâce est alors la notion qui représente l'acte divin par lequel l'homme est sauvé. La grâce peut aussi être la première phase de la prédestination, car cet acte divin, étant un acte souverain, ne peut être influencé par les mérites de la vie humaine: si Dieu est souverain, Il a

¹ Le débat sur cette question se poursuit depuis quelque temps. C. Harrison a soutenu qu'il existe une grande continuité dans la pensée augustinienne. Voir C. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology: an Argument for Continuity*, Oxford, 2006. Voir aussi G. Ring, «Der Anfang des Glaubens: Verdienst oder Gnade», *Augustiniana* 54 (2004), pp. 177–202; V.H. Drecoll, *Die Entstehung der Gnadenlehre Augustins*, Tübingen, 1999; P.-M. Hombert, *Gloria gratiae. Se glorifier en Dieu, principe et fin de la théologie augustinienne de la grâce*, Paris, 1996.

² C'est notamment K. Flasch qui a soutenu cette hypothèse, mais elle n'a pas eu beaucoup de suite: K. Flasch, *Logik des Schreckens. Augustinus von Hippo. Die Gnadenlehre von 397. Zweite verbesserte Auflage mit Nachwort 1995*, Frankfurt, 1995; idem, *Augustin. Einführung in Sein Denken*, Stuttgart, 2008 (1994²). Son interprétation est soutenue par G. Greshake, *Gnade—Geschenk der Freiheit, eine Einführung*, Mainz, 2004. Il en va de même pour H. Chadwick, *Augustine of Hippo, a Life*, Oxford, 2009, qui écrit: «In 397 replying to Simplician, Augustine writes overture to a coming drama» (p. 81). Par contre, bien que C. Salles ait intitulé son livre, *Saint Augustin, un destin africain*, Paris, 2009, elle ne parle qu'à peine du rôle de la grâce et de la lutte pélagienne sur le thème notamment du destin de l'homme.

le droit d'accorder sa grâce à qui il veut. De plus, puisque sa volonté n'est pas une volonté muable et sujette au temps, mais puisqu'elle règne d'éternité en éternité, ce choix est aussi un choix de toute éternité; elle existe depuis toujours, bien qu'elle se réalise dans le temps. Telle est donc la conception de la grâce au temps du conflit d'Augustin contre les Pélagiens, au moment de sa réponse à Simplicien, en 397/398.

L'autre interprétation de la notion de la grâce remonte aux premiers écrits d'Augustin, rédigés au début de son sacerdoce. La grâce est dans ce cas le nom théologique de la présence divine dans l'existence humaine, elle relève de l'existence humaine, et équivaut à une force permettant à l'homme d'atteindre la réalité divine. Certes, Augustin a toujours insisté sur le fait que Dieu est insaisissable pour l'esprit humain,³ mais il semble suggérer que la grâce est aussi une présence divine à l'intérieur de l'homme qui le dirige en lui montrant la voie menant à Dieu. Cette conception de la grâce se rencontre non seulement dans les premières œuvres d'Augustin mais aussi dans le *De Trinitate*, achevé vers 425/6.⁴

Il est donc nécessaire de se poser les questions suivantes : Augustin a-t-il modifié sa conception originale de la grâce ? L'a-t-il fait à l'époque du conflit pélagien ou déjà auparavant, lors de la rédaction du *Ad Simplicianum* ? Ou alors : les caractéristiques de cette conception tardive de la grâce sont-elles déjà présentes dans ses premières réflexions sur ce sujet ? Dans ce second cas, la grâce a toujours été le moyen de l'élection, séparant les hommes en élus et rejetés.⁵ Dans le premier cas, elle est la force venant de Dieu qui permet de Le découvrir—concept influencé par le néoplatonisme.⁶ Il faut également se demander si Augustin a modifié sa conception de la grâce ou s'il a uniquement travaillé sur une pensée qui lui était déjà propre au moment de sa conversion.

³ Voir T.J. van Bavel, « Wij moeten leren het onuitspreekbare op onuitsprekelijke wijze te zien. Theologie en spiritualiteit in Augustinus' De Trinitate », dans P. van Geest & J. van Oort (eds.), *Augustiniana Neerlandica. Aspecten van de spiritualiteit van Augustinus*, Leuven, 2005, pp. 165–185 ; P. van Geest, *Stellig maar onzeker. Augustinus' benadering van God*, Budel, 2007.

⁴ Voir R. Kany, *Augustins Trinitätsdenken*, Tübingen, 2007.

⁵ Voir G. Bonner, *Freedom and Necessity, St. Augustine's Teaching on Divine Power and Human Freedom*, Washington, 2007 ; et, sur ce livre, la critique de Ph. Cary, « On Gerald Bonner, *Freedom and Necessity, St. Augustine's Teaching on Divine Power and Human Freedom*, Washington 2007 », *Augustinian Studies* 39 (2008), pp. 295–297. Cf. V. Grossi, « La ricezione agostiniana della predestinazione, difficoltà antiche e moderne », *Augustinianum* 49 (2008), pp. 191–221.

⁶ Voir P. Carey, « Inner Grace: Augustine in the Tradition of Plato and Paul », dans idem, *Outward Signs, The Powerlessness of External Things in Augustine's Thought*, Oxford, 2008.

II. LE THÈME DU FILS PRODIGE. LES *CONFESSIONS* ET LE *SERMON* 112A

Quand l'on parle de conversion, du rôle de la grâce, d'un retour vers Dieu qui n'est en fait rien d'autre qu'une redécouverte de Dieu, on pense immédiatement à l'histoire du fils prodigue. Quelle est l'interprétation que donne Augustin à cette parabole?⁷ À cette histoire d'un fils qui part avec les biens de son père, les dissipe et ensuite prend conscience que sa vie est en péril; qui à ce moment-là se souvient de son père et décide de retourner vers lui? Arrivé chez son père, le fils est accueilli les bras ouverts, revêtu d'une robe splendide, devenant ainsi le protagoniste d'une grande fête. Car «il était mort et il est revenu à la vie». Son frère aîné en revanche, ignore ce qui vient de se passer entre son père et son frère cadet et ne le découvre que par hasard: il a entendu la clameur d'une fête et demande ce qui se passe. Il apprend ainsi que cette magnifique fête est donnée en honneur de quelqu'un dont le seul mérite est d'être retourné chez lui parce qu'il n'avait plus de quoi se nourrir. Cela lui semble tout à fait injuste et il décide, malgré les efforts de son père, de ne pas participer à la fête, car il ne veut pas se réjouir du retour d'un homme qui a vécu dans la débauche. Lui, en revanche, a toujours travaillé sans jamais transgresser les ordres de son père. Examinons maintenant de quelle façon saint Augustin a interprété cette parabole si connue.

Le thème du fils prodigue revient relativement souvent sous sa plume, mais peut-être moins qu'on ne le croirait. Certes, dans les *Confessions* on en trouve de multiples allusions. Il existe aussi deux grands commentaires, retenus dans le *Sermon* 112A et dans les *Quaestiones Evangelicae* II, 33, où l'évêque d'Hippone en parle amplement, mais en dehors de cela l'histoire ne figure pas dans les écrits augustiniens. Aucune trace ne se retrouve, par exemple, dans les œuvres polémiques contre Julien, si ce n'est une seule allusion au retour du malheureux fils chez son père.⁸ Cette

⁷ J. van Oort a examiné ce passage biblique dans son *Augustinus' Confessiones. Gnostische en christelijke spiritualiteit in een diepzinnig document*, Turnhout, 2002. Il y voit une allusion aux repas sacrés des Manichéens et aussi une opposition contre ces derniers. Le texte du *Sermo* 112A paraît bien contenir d'ailleurs quelques allusions au manichéisme. Quand Augustin commente le fait que le fils cadet à un moment donné s'adresse au souverain du pays, il l'explique en disant que ce souverain n'est autre que le diable: «Ab egestate irruit in quemdam principem regionis illius. Intellegitur iste princeps daemoniorum diabolus (S. 112A, 3)». L'homme qui est sous l'emprise du mal et qui heureusement se souvient du bien, qui se tourne vers Dieu.

⁸ *Contra Iul.* IV, 3, 28 où Augustin explique que l'âme qui connaîtrait sa faim se

absence surprend encore plus si l'on considère que le thème d'un fils qui est accueilli sans qu'il puisse se vanter d'un seul mérite serait la parfaite illustration de l'importance de la grâce et même de l'élection. Augustin aborde ce passage bien connu une seule fois dans les *Quaest. Eu.* II, 33 :

« Non sum dignus uocari filius tuus. » Hoc enim uult fieri per gratiam, quo se indignum esse per merita fatetur.

Il met en avant que le fils cadet est reçu chez lui en vertu de la grâce que lui donne son père mais ne poursuit pas la pensée en se référant au fils aîné qui semble insister sur le fait qu'une vie sans mérites ne mérite pas la grâce. Apparemment donc, les thèmes de la grâce et du mérite n'apparaissent guère dans l'exégèse augustinienne de ce texte. Si Augustin ne se sert pas de cette parabole dans la polémique contre les Pélagiens c'est qu'elle ne lui paraît pas appropriée pour montrer son point de départ dans la matière de la grâce face aux Pélagiens. Pourtant, si tel est le cas, quelle est alors son approche ?

Je me limiterai dans cet article au texte du *Sermon 112A*, car il constitue le commentaire le plus détaillé d'Augustin sur Luc 15. C'est un texte qui se lit sur plusieurs niveaux et qui pourrait être situé à plusieurs époques de la vie d'Augustin ; malheureusement, il est difficile de le dater avec précision ; il a été probablement écrit longtemps avant le conflit pélagien, mais cette remarque ne nous avance guère. Les recherches récentes montrent à quel point il est difficile de dater correctement les *Sermones ad populum*.⁹ Pourtant, en vertu de la grande ressemblance entre les *Quaest. Eu.* et le *Sermon 112A*, on peut envisager que ce dernier a été prêché aux environs de 400.¹⁰

Avant d'aborder les points essentiels de ce sermon, il est nécessaire de considérer la façon dont Augustin a parlé de ce passage biblique dans les *Confessions*, le seul livre où il s'est fréquemment servi du thème du fils

lèverait et retournerait chez le père : « Sapit haec qui fatigatus fame reuertitur ad semetipsum, et dicit : Surgam, et ibo ad patrem meum. »

⁹ Comme le dit expressément H.R. Drobner, « The Chronology of St. Augustine's 'Sermones ad populum' », *Augustinian Studies* 31 (2000), pp. 211–218 ; idem, « The Chronology of St. Augustine's 'Sermones ad populum' II : 5 to 8 », *Augustinian Studies* 34 (2003), pp. 49–66 ; idem, *Augustinus von Hippo, Sermones ad populum. Überlieferung & Bestand. Bibliographie, Indices*, Leiden, 2000. Voir aussi, P.-M. Hombert, *Nouvelles recherches de chronologie augustinienne*, Paris, 2000.

¹⁰ Comme le suggère déjà A. Kunzelmann, « Die Chronologie der Sermones des Hl. Augustinus », *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, Roma 1931, pp. 417–520. Cf. C. Mohrmann, *Sint Augustinus. Preken voor het volk, handelende over de Heilige Schrift en het eigen van den tijd*, *Monumenta christiana*, Utrecht, 1948, p. 202. La raison de cette datation se trouve dans les importants parallèles entre les *Quaest. Eu.* et le *Sermon 112A*.

prodigue. Augustin s'y réfère en mettant en évidence les ressemblances entre cette parabole et sa vie personnelle.¹¹ Voici les grandes lignes de la douzaine de passages concernés : Augustin insiste sur la distance qui, dans sa propre vie, le séparait longtemps de Dieu.¹² Il a erré,¹³ il se trouvait dans un pays lointain,¹⁴ il vivait loin de la face de Dieu.¹⁵ Ces motifs le conduisent à affirmer que lui aussi avait gaspillé ses talents et qu'il était devenu un pays de besoins;¹⁶ il était devenu quelqu'un qui ne ressemble plus à Celui qu'il l'avait créé; il était devenu un pays de dissemblance.¹⁷ La distance qui règne entre lui et Dieu peut être décrite comme une « aversion » qui défigure l'être humain. Plus on est loin de Dieu, moins on lui ressemble; plus on est devenu une terre de besoin, moins on est image de Dieu; l'homme qui vit loin de Dieu est donc un être défiguré. Il s'agit alors de se convertir et de ne pas se laisser entraîner par des envies et des voluptés. Pour Augustin, l'essentiel de cette parabole consiste apparemment dans les mouvements de l'aversion et de la conversion, ce qui est, en quelque sorte, compréhensible. Les *Confessions* sont aussi le récit de sa conversion personnelle et il est donc logique qu'il insiste sur les mouvements qui l'ont éloigné de Dieu ou qui l'ont rapproché de Lui.

Ce qui frappe le lecteur une nouvelle fois est que le thème de la grâce n'est pas présent dans le récit de la vie d'Augustin. En effet il ne mentionne nulle part l'élément de la grâce que le père accorde à son fils cadet alors qu'il y avait suffisamment matière pour en parler, ne fût-ce que parce que le fils aîné exprime clairement que son frère ne mérite pas d'être accueilli les bras ouverts. Il y avait donc d'amples raisons de parler de la grâce divine, mais Augustin s'y refuse. Quand il fait référence à cette parabole dans les *Confessions*, il le fait en mettant en valent le thème de la distance. Il répète sans cesse que le fils prodigue est perdu, qu'il

¹¹ Voir J. Brachtendorf, *Augustinus « Confessiones »*, Darmstadt, 2005 et J.M. Farrel, « The Rhetoric(s) of St. Augustine's Confessions », *Augustinian Studies* 39 (2008), pp. 265–291.

¹² *Conf.* VII, 10, 16: « Et inueni longe me esse a te in regione dissimilitudinis ».

¹³ *Conf.* II, 10, 18: « Defluxi abs te ego et erravi ».

¹⁴ *Ibid.* IV, 16, 30: « Profectus sum abs te in longinquam regionem, ut eam (sc. fortitudinem meam) dissiparem in meretrices cupiditates ».

¹⁵ *Conf.* I, 18, 28: « Quaesiui uultum tuum; uultum tuum, Domine, requiram; nam longe a uultu tuo in affectu tenebroso ».

¹⁶ *Conf.* II, 10, 18: « Et factus sum mihi regio egestatis ».

¹⁷ *Conf.* VII, 10, 16. Augustin emprunte cette tournure à Plotin, *Ennéade* I, 8, 13, qui l'avait empruntée à Platon, *Politique* 273d6. Voir P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin*, Appendice VII, La « Région de dissemblance » dans la tradition néo-platonisante, Paris, 1968, pp. 404–440.

se trouve dans un pays lointain et qu'il s'est égaré. On peut supposer qu'au moment de rédiger ce sermon, Augustin se sert encore de façon quasi automatique du schéma plotinien de l'aversion et de la conversion. Ainsi dans les *Confessions* le thème du fils prodigue apparaît sous une seule forme, celle du motif du retour. En va-t-il de même pour le *Sermon* 112A ?

III. ANALYSE DU *SERMON* 112A

Augustin fait débiter ce sermon non pas par une approche personnalisée mais en rappelant que les deux fils représentent l'un, le peuple juif et le peuple des païens, l'autre, le peuple chrétien.¹⁸

Homo habens duos filios, deus est habens duos populos; maior filius, populus est Iudaeorum; minor, populus gentium.

Mais les apparences sont trompeuses. Il ne s'agit pas essentiellement d'une comparaison entre le peuple chrétien et le peuple juif. Non, les allusions au thème de la Trinité sont dominantes. Le sermon commence par dire que le fils tenait sa fortune du père. En termes bibliques cela signifie qu'il tenait de lui sa substance: «*substantia a patre accepta*». Le mot est repris tel quel du texte biblique, ce n'est pas un choix d'Augustin. N'empêche qu'il a pu en profiter. Le mot «*substantia*» étant trop important dans un discours théologique. Un même élément se trouve à la fin du sermon, là où Augustin répète les mots que le père adresse à son fils aîné. Il s'agit de deux tournures: «*tu mecum es semper*», et, «*omnia mea tua sunt*», qui peuvent parfaitement figurer dans le cadre d'une théologie trinitaire, illustrant le principe que les «*opera ad extra indivisa sunt*». En effet ces tournures peuvent être appliquées à la deuxième et à la troisième personne de la Trinité. Ainsi, le début et la fin du sermon présentent des tournures qui permettent d'y lire des éléments d'une théologie trinitaire. Dès lors, on pourrait supposer qu'Augustin a voulu parler non seulement de sa propre vie et de celle du fils prodigue, mais aussi de la vie du Fils en tant que seconde personne de la Trinité. Ce sermon se laisse donc lire à plusieurs niveaux. Naturellement, il y a l'histoire du fils prodigue qui ressemble beaucoup, aux yeux d'Augustin, aux péripéties de son existence personnelle, mais cette lecture personnalisée n'est pas ce qui l'intéresse

¹⁸ Ce parallèle se rencontre chez autres auteurs de cette époque tels Chrysologue et Chrysostome. Voir W.H. ten Boom, *Provocatie. Augustinus' preek tegen de Joden*, Kampen, 2006.

le plus dans ce contexte : en effet la lecture prend une autre tournure, celle de la théologie trinitaire.

Ce ne sont pas seulement des expressions telles que « substantia », « tu mecum es semper » et « omnia mea tua sunt », qui nous frappent, c'est aussi la notion du « retour ». Ce retour n'est pas uniquement un retour d'un fils chez son père, mais aussi un retour dans le sens plotinien du mot.¹⁹ À mes yeux, cet élément plotinien est important car il indique en quelque sorte une vision plus large que celle que nous trouverons ultérieurement. Nous rencontrons à plusieurs reprises dans le texte le mot « redire » :

ut prius ad se rediret; redite praeuicatores; surgit et redit; redierat enim ad cor; redierat ad cor iratus; promeriturus patris bonum redierat; frater rediens de agro; redit tamen in iudaeis; frater tuus redit; redi ad dominum; si de reditu fratris gaudeas.

Or, dans presque toutes ces phrases, le verbe s'applique au fils cadet, il n'y a qu'une fois que le mot est aussi utilisé pour le fils aîné. Toutefois, même si le verbe n'est utilisé qu'une seule fois pour le fils aîné, il est évident que le retour chez le Père n'est pas uniquement un mouvement appartenant au fils cadet. Il s'agit des *deux* fils qui doivent rentrer chez eux. Or « chez eux » signifie chez leur Père. Apparemment, Augustin a voulu dire que les occupations différentes des deux fils ne constituent pas l'élément le plus important; ce qui importe, c'est qu'ils rentrent tous les deux; mais si donc la nature de leurs occupations n'est pas décisive, il faudra conclure que le retour auprès de Dieu, le fait d'être accepté par Lui, ne dépend pas des mérites de chacun d'entre eux. Cette théologie trinitaire nous apprend qu'il existe un repli sur soi qui est en même temps un repli sur Dieu. En rentrant chez nous, nous rentrons aussi chez Dieu.²⁰ Néanmoins, l'importance de ce retour ne relève pas de la nature et des qualités de notre vie qui peut être soit une vie pleine de vertus soit une vie dominée par le péché. Peu importe, l'essentiel dans la vie, c'est qu'il n'existe pas de vie dans le vrai sens du mot sans ce repli sur soi qui est en même temps un repli sur Dieu.²¹ La connaissance de Dieu consiste principalement dans ce retour en soi qui est un retour chez

¹⁹ Voir W. Kühn, « Se connaître soi-même : la contribution de Plotin à la compréhension du moi », dans G. Aubry & F. Ildefonse (eds.), *Le moi et l'intériorité*, Paris, 2008, pp. 127-149.

²⁰ Sur ce retour en soi, comparez, E. Bermon, « Analyse du De Trinitate de Saint Augustin », dans M. Caron, *Saint Augustin*, Paris, 2009, pp. 53-76, surtout p. 74.

²¹ Voir W. Kühn, *Se connaître soi-même*, pp. 127-149; Ibid., G.O. Daly, *Le moi et l'autre dans les Confessions d'Augustin*, pp. 151-164.

Dieu. Que dit donc cette théologie trinitaire? Que le rapport entre être humain et être divin n'est pas caractérisé par un fossé infranchissable, car il existe un lien de parenté entre le Père et ses deux fils. On peut dire qu'ils sont de la même substance, il n'existe pas un clivage entre la substance divine et tout ce qui provient de Dieu, ni entre Dieu et la création. Ceci implique que l'être humain—qui, naturellement, ne se trouve pas à la même hauteur que le fils de Dieu—est lui aussi de la même substance que le Père. Certes, il l'est sur un niveau infiniment plus bas, mais il l'est. Nous le constatons à la fin du texte, où Augustin explique dans quel sens il faut entendre l'expression «*omnia mea tua sunt*».²² Il existe un lien de parenté entre Dieu et chaque autre être qui rend non pertinente la question des mérites. On ne retourne pas chez Dieu en vertu des mérites, on retourne chez Lui en vertu de la parenté qui existe entre Dieu et l'homme. Il n'est point nécessaire de parler ici des mérites, mais il n'est point nécessaire non plus de parler de la grâce. Ce n'est pas en vertu de la grâce conférée qu'on retourne chez Dieu, on y retourne car «*rentrer chez soi*» équivaut à «*rentrer chez Lui*». On ne peut guère surestimer l'importance de ces deux éléments. Ce qui importe dans la vie et dans la foi, ce n'est ni la question des mérites ni celle de la grâce, ce qui importe c'est le lien de parenté. La réalité est structurée selon un principe de parenté, où nous pouvons distinguer des niveaux supérieurs en inférieurs, mais qui ne forment qu'une seule réalité. Dans cette réalité, il peut y avoir des générations, des engendremens et des retours, mais elle n'est pas structurée selon un principe de division (voire de séparation) entre Créateur et créature. Dans ce sens, la réalité ne peut être moralisée. Entendez par là que la réalité divine n'est pas accessible en vertu de nos actes. Le retour auprès du principe le plus élevé ne se produit pas en raison des vertus, mais en raison d'une seule réalité indivisée. Certes, elle est structurée selon des niveaux différents, mais elle n'est pas fracturée. Le retour chez Dieu n'a donc pas besoin d'être mérité. On est toujours chez soi: «*tu semper es mecum*». Et: «*omnia mea tua sunt*». De nouveau, la relation entre le principe le plus élevé et les engendremens venant de ce principe suprême n'est pas moralisée. Disons que le rapport entre Dieu et l'être humain est comparable à un lien

²² S. 112A, 13: «*Tu mecum es semper, et omnia mea tua sunt. Numquid, quia tua sunt, fratri non sunt? Quomodo tua sunt? Communiter habenti, non separate iurganti. Omnia, inquit, mea tua sunt. Quae dicit ipsius esse, tamquam in possessionem dedit. Numquid caelum et terram subdidit, aut sublimitates angelorum? Non oportet sic intellegi; neque enim vere subdendi nobis erunt angeli, ad quorum aequalitatem nos perventuros dominus in magna mercede promittit: Erunt, inquit, aequales angelis Dei.*»

d'amour où l'un et l'autre se rapprochent et s'éloignent l'un de l'autre. C'est par amour que le fils est généré et qu'il sort de chez le père, c'est par amour aussi qu'il rentre ensuite chez le père. Dans ce cas aussi, il ne faut pas comprendre l'amour comme une caractéristique romantique : l'amour est ce mouvement éternel entre s'éloigner et se rapprocher ; c'est le mouvement impliquant que « se connaître » est toujours se reconnaître. L'amour est amour de soi, mais ce soi est aussi l'autre dont je suis sorti. Un fils est toujours le fils de tel ou tel père et porte en lui ce père. Quand il veut se connaître, il connaîtra son père. Sa connaissance est toujours aussi reconnaissance de son père.

Mais c'est là que les difficultés commencent. Ce mouvement vers l'intérieur présuppose que l'homme peut trouver des traces de vérité dans son esprit, son cœur et son âme. On pourrait dès lors s'attendre à un développement du thème du retour en insistant sur le fait que celui qui rentre en lui et qui retrouve son cœur, retrouve aussi Dieu, conformément à la phrase célèbre du début des *Confessions* : « notre cœur est inquiet tant qu'il ne trouve pas son repos en Toi ». ²³ Le cœur est ainsi considéré comme la demeure de la vérité, que l'on peut oublier mais qui ne disparaît pas. La vérité subsiste et Dieu est toujours présent à l'intérieur de l'homme, pourvu qu'on sache s'en souvenir. C'est en effet dans la mémoire qu'on trouve les éléments les plus anciens de la connaissance de Dieu qui permettent de Le découvrir dans notre cœur. ²⁴ Nous avons un Maître Intérieur qui nous apprend comment trouver la vérité, c'est-à-dire sa propre présence. De nouveau, le repli sur soi est toujours un repli sur Dieu : on ne peut se découvrir soi-même sans découvrir Dieu. Le soi de l'être humain ne peut être conçu sans y impliquer la présence divine ; l'autoportrait ne peut être réalisé sans y joindre un portrait de Dieu ; ²⁵ on croit se voir tel qu'on est dans le miroir, mais cet être n'est pas une réalité sans la présence divine. ²⁶ Même plus, sans la présence divine en nous, il nous est impossible de parler de nous-mêmes en termes d'être. Dans l'autoportrait, l'autre est toujours présent. Voilà en effet la découverte insensée d'Augustin : l'homme ne peut se définir sans parler de Dieu. Donc un retour vers soi implique toujours un retour vers Dieu ; rentrer dans son cœur impliquera toujours y trouver la présence divine.

²³ « Tu excitas, ut laudare te delectet, quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te ». Voir aussi, E. Kern, *Saint Augustin. Les Confessions, Livre X*, Paris, 2008.

²⁴ Voir E. Bermon, *Le cogito dans la pensée de Saint Augustin*, Paris, 2001.

²⁵ Voir M.A. Smalbrugge, *God en de geboorte van het zelfportret*, Amsterdam, 2009.

²⁶ Cf. *Soliloques* II, 6, 10.

Telle pourrait être l'argumentation dans ce sermon, mais il n'en sera pas ainsi. Augustin parlera abondamment du cœur du Fils prodigue, mais les termes dans lesquels il s'exprime ne font plus penser aux influences plotiniennes. Ce sont des mots durs :

Il rentre dans son cœur. Mais pour le casser ... Il fut en colère contre lui-même afin de se punir. Entendez par là, pour punir le mal en lui. Il était rentré afin de mériter la bonté de son père. Chacun qui se repent est en colère contre lui-même. Car, parce qu'il est en colère, il se punit. Et c'est de là que viennent tous ces mouvements de celui qui se repent, qui se repent réellement, qui en souffre réellement. C'est pour cette raison qu'on s'arrache les cheveux, qu'on se habille avec un manteau poilu, qu'on se frappe la poitrine. Ce sont certainement des indices du fait que l'homme sévit contre lui-même, qu'il est en colère contre lui-même. Ce que fait la main de l'extérieur, la conscience le fait de l'intérieur. Dans sa pensée, elle se frappe, elle se coupe et, pour le dire encore plus vrai, elle se tue. En se tuant, elle se présente comme sacrifice : un esprit contristé est une offrande à Dieu, car Dieu ne méprît pas le cœur attristé et humilié. On peut donc conclure qu'en cassant son cœur, en l'humiliant en en le coupant, on le tue.²⁷

Selon ce texte, il est impossible de penser que l'homme peut rentrer chez son père en rentrant chez lui. Le retour vers soi implique tout d'abord la mort du cœur. C'est à l'intérieur du cœur que la conscience peut sévir contre lui-même et qu'il veut en quelque sorte se débarrasser de lui-même.²⁸ Ce n'est plus l'amour qui est le véhicule qui nous rapproche de Dieu, c'est la confession de nos péchés.²⁹ Il faut quitter son cœur

²⁷ S. 12A, 5 : « Redierat enim ad cor, ut obtereret cor ... Iratus est sibi puniturus, sed suum malum ; promeriturus patris bonum redierat. Dixit iratus, secundum quod dicitur : Irascimini, et nolite peccare. Omnis enim paenitens irascitur sibi ; nam, quia irascitur, punit se. Inde motus illi omnes in paenitente, quem uere paenitet, qui uere dolet ; inde auulsio capillorum, inde circumcinctio cilicii, inde pectoris tunsio. Certe omnia haec indicia sunt hominis saeuientis in se, et irascentis sibi. Quod facit forinsecus manus, hoc facit intrinsecus conscientia ; in cogitationibus percutit se, caedit se, et, ut uerius dicamus, occidit se. Offert enim occidendo se sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus ; cor contritum et humiliatum Deus non spernit. Proinde ille atterens cor suum, humilians, caedens, occidit cor suum. »

²⁸ Comme l'exprime J.J. O'Donnell, « Augustine's Unconfessions », dans J.D. Caputo & M.J. Scandon (eds.), *Augustine and Postmodernism. Confessions and Circumfession*, Bloomington, 2005, pp. 212-221 ; p. 218, il s'agit d'une « repudiation of the self in favour of some larger or other truth ». Voir aussi E. Kern, *Saint Augustin. Les Confessions, Livre X*, qui décrit cette mort du moi ainsi : « Le moi d'Augustin n'a rien à dire de lui-même », p. 45.

²⁹ Voir D. Tracy, « The divided Consciousness of Augustine on Eros », dans S. Bartsch & Th. Bartscherer (eds.), *Erotikon, Essays on Eros Ancient and Modern*, Chicago/London,

orgueilleux et devenir humble.³⁰ Soudainement, on voit un mouvement tout à fait autre. On ne voit plus un retour paisible, allant de pair avec une prise de conscience de l'éloignement; on voit au contraire un être humain qui se rend compte qu'il n'est pas digne de vivre, qui se rend compte que l'être humain mérite la mort et qu'il est sensé se tuer soi-même. Encore qu'il faille admettre que, de nouveau, le rapport entre ce pauvre être humain et Dieu n'est pas un rapport moralisé. De nouveau, ce n'est pas une question de mérites: on est coupable, qu'on le sache ou non; peu important nos faits et gestes. Car, remarquons-le bien, Augustin ne se pose pas la question de savoir pourquoi le fils cadet se sent pécheur. Il a reçu son héritage; il l'a gaspillé, certes. En vérité, cela n'implique pas encore qu'il n'en avait pas le droit. Le fait d'avoir gaspillé ce qui lui appartient, le fait d'être parti, ne le rend pas encore pécheur. Il n'a pas besoin de se justifier devant qui que ce soit. Telle est la réalité d'un héritage. Pourtant, Augustin ne le remarque pas. Peut-être parce que, dira-t-on, le texte lui-même dit que le fils se considère pécheur, car il se propose de dire à son père: «j'ai péché contre le ciel et contre toi; je ne suis plus digne d'être appelé ton fils». C'est correct. Mais justement parce que ce fils représentait en première instance le mouvement économique de la Trinité, on pourrait s'attendre à ce qu'Augustin se pose la question de savoir en quoi consiste en fait le péché de ce fils. En effet, dans le cadre d'une théologie trinitaire, le départ du fils est un acte de la part de Dieu ayant pour but de sauver l'être humain. Donc ce qu'on lisait en première instance—que le repli sur soi est toujours un retour chez Dieu et que ce mouvement vers soi et vers Dieu est l'essentiel de l'existence, mais qu'il ne relève pas d'une approche moralisée—est abandonné ici en faveur d'une notion de corruption de l'être humain.³¹ On ne parle plus d'une seule réalité où le départ ou la sortie évoquent déjà le retour, on parle ici d'un être déchu qui doit être accueilli par un père miséricordieux. La tournure «je ne suis plus digne d'être appelé ton fils» prend alors une signification amère, car il s'agit d'un fils qui n'est plus un fils. Il faut comprendre par là qu'il n'y a plus une seule réalité indivisée, il y en a deux, celle de Dieu et celle de l'homme. Le modèle de la théologie trinitaire ne fonctionne plus; le Fils n'est plus fils unique,

2005, pp. 91–106, ainsi que la réponse à Tracy, *ibid.*, V. Izmirlieva, *Augustine Divided: A Response to David Tracy*, pp. 107–112.

³⁰ S. 112, 5: «Reliquerat cor superbus, redierat ad cor iratus».

³¹ Voir W.E. Mann, «Augustin on Evil and Original Sin», dans E. Stump & N. Kretzman (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, Cambridge 2001, pp. 40–48.

il est l'équivalent de n'importe quelle autre créature. Donc lui aussi est caractérisé par la distance qui existe entre lui et cet être qui n'est plus l'être suprême vers lequel on revient toujours, mais un père qui peut faire ce qu'il veut. Il ne s'agit plus d'un père qui accueillera toujours son fils, il s'agit d'un père qui peut décider dans l'un ou dans l'autre sens. Le schéma plotinien du retour en soi a été ainsi renversé et remplacé par un schéma estimé chrétien. En effet, « estimé chrétien », mais qui ne l'est que dans un certain sens. Car le schéma chrétien auquel on a affaire ici ne se fonde plus sur la théologie trinitaire, mais sur une théologie de la grâce qui ne se sert pas encore de ce nom. Pourtant, il s'agit ici d'une théologie où chacun peut encore profiter de la grâce. La grâce n'est pas encore exclusivement conférée aux élus. On n'est pas encore dans une théologie de la prédestination. Car connu le discours augustinien se poursuit-il ? En insistant sur le fait que ce fils est en quelque sorte un exemple pour tous les fidèles ; une fois que ce fils a tué son cœur, son père l'accueille avec grand amour, l'embrasse et l'étreint. Entendez par là, dit Augustin, il pose le Christ sur lui.³² Il élève ce fils perdu en lui donnant le Christ, ce qui est symbolisé par le fait qu'il commande de le revêtir et de lui mettre un anneau autour du doigt. Ce sont des éléments qui représentent des trésors, mais ces trésors sont, à leur tour, des dons venant de l'Église, offerts par les serviteurs de l'Église. Les ministres de l'Église sont là pour distribuer les trésors de l'Église,³³ et pour donner tout ce qui symbolise le Christ. Le Christ est symbolisé par ce veau gras qui fut tué et qui représente dès lors le repas solennel par lequel on participe au Christ.³⁴ C'est un exemple pour tous les autres, pour ceux qui viennent de loin mais qui entrent dans l'Église, c'est pour eux que le Christ est tué et chacun est admis à ce repas.³⁵ J'attire l'attention sur cette dernière phrase :

³² S. 112A, 6 : « Incubuit in illum occurrens ; id est, super collum eius posuit brachium suum. Brachium patris, filius est. »

³³ Ibid., 7 : « Iubet ergo pater proferri ei stolam primam, quam peccando Adam perdidit. Iam accepto in pace, iam exosculato filio iubet proferri stolam, spem immortalitatis in baptismo. Iubet dari anulum, pignus Spiritus Sancti, et calciamenta in pedes in praeparatione Evangelii pacis, ut speciosi essent pedes annuntiantis bonum. Hoc ergo Deus per seruos suos facit, hoc est, per ministros Ecclesiae. Numquid illi de suo dant stolam, de suo anulum vel calciamenta ? Ministerium debent, officium impendunt ; ille dat, de cuius recessu et de cuius thesauro ista proferuntur. »

³⁴ Ibid., 7 : « Iussit occidi et uitulum saginatum, id est, ut admitteretur ad mensam, in qua christus pascitur occisus. »

³⁵ Ibid., 7 : « unicuique enim de longinquo uenienti et ad ecclesiam concurrenti tunc occiditur, quando praedicatur occisus, cum ad corpus eius admittitur. Occiditur uitulus saginatus, quia qui perierat inuentus est. »

tous ceux qui viennent de loin peuvent se rendre à la table de Dieu : « **unicuique** enim de longinquo uenienti et ad ecclesiam concurrenti tunc occiditur. » Certes, c'est une grâce que de pouvoir en profiter, mais ce n'est pas une grâce qui est réservée exclusivement à quelques-uns. Ainsi le veau tué est la figure du Christ; rien ne donne matière à supposer à que ce fils cadet représente lui-même le Christ. Au contraire, ce fils n'est plus l'équivalent de la deuxième personne de la Trinité, c'est un être humain comme les autres. Il est pécheur, il doit confesser ses fautes. La trame de la théologie trinitaire a été abandonnée, il s'agit maintenant d'une théologie de la grâce mais au sens large du mot : au moins, c'est ce qu'il paraît quand on lit les paroles sur la nécessité de tuer son propre cœur.

Ce texte nous réserve encore des surprises. Un peu plus tard, Augustin revient sur le rôle du fils aîné, en le comparant à nouveau au peuple juif qui, comme nous l'avons déjà vu, doit lui aussi retourner chez son père. Il s'agit d'une double conversion. Cette fois-ci en revanche, Augustin souligne que le retour du peuple juif chez le Père équivaut à un retour dans l'Église. Certes, il est vrai que le fils aîné peut se vanter du fait qu'il ne s'est pas éloigné du père et qu'il a toujours gardé ses commandements;³⁶ n'empêche que ce fils aîné n'est pas sans fautes : il dit qu'il aurait aimé d'avoir un chevreau pour festoyer, mais il ne l'a jamais eu alors que son père a fait préparer un veau gras pour accueillir ce fils perdu. Or, explique Augustin, le fait de désirer un chevreau indique le désir du péché. Le père ne peut lui offrir un chevreau; tout ce qu'il peut offrir c'est le veau gras. Qui est ce veau ? C'est le Christ. Le Christ qui était mort, mais qui est revenu à la vie. Car c'est là que se trouve le sens de la tournure : ton frère était mort, mais il est redevenu vivant, il était perdu, mais il a été retrouvé.³⁷

³⁶ Ibid., 12 : « Nos tenemus scripturas dei, et non recessimus ab uno deo; non expandimus manus nostras ad deum alienum : unum illum novimus, ipsum semper colimus, qui fecit caelum et terram. Ibid., 13 : ostendens iudaeos, quia longe non abierunt porcos pasceri, unum Deum non deseruerunt, idola non adorauerunt, daemoniis non seruierunt. Non de omnibus loquor : ne uobis occurrant perdit et seditiosi iudaei; illi occurrant, a quibus isti reprehenduntur, graues, seruantes mandata legis. »

³⁷ Ibid., 14 : « Omnia, inquit, mea tua sunt. Si pacificus fueris, si placheris, si de deditu fratris gaudeas, si epulae nostrae non te contristent, si non remaneas praeter domum, quamuis iam ab agro ueneris, omnia mea tua sunt. Epulari autem nos oportet et gaudere, quia Christus pro impiis mortuus est, et resurrexit. Hoc est enim quod dictum est : quia frater tuus mortuus erat, et reuixit; perierat, et inuentus est. »

IV. LES TROIS NIVEAUX DE L'INTERPRÉTATION

Augustin passe ici d'une image à l'autre, en sorte que nous avons trois images du fils cadet. Tout d'abord, bien qu'Augustin commence par dire que les deux fils représentent deux peuples, les premiers indices que donne le sermon se réfèrent non pas à ces deux peuples, mais à la Trinité. Ce qui importe au premier abord, c'est le fait qu'à l'intérieur du Père, il existe un mouvement qui consiste en une sortie de chez lui et un retour chez lui. Ce retour est caractérisé par le fait que la sortie n'a pas produit une rupture dans la réalité. Il n'existe pas, dans ce concept, une stricte division entre le Créateur et la créature ; il existe une seule réalité où les mouvements divers ne servent qu'à mettre en avant l'unité qui en est le fond. Voilà la première interprétation qu'Augustin paraît donner à cette parabole. Certes, il se sert habilement des tournures qui figurent dans le texte biblique, mais cela ne l'empêche pas de jouer avec ce thème, notamment en insistant sur des citations comme *tu mecum es semper*. Il est important de souligner que cette théologie trinitaire demande aux deux fils le même mouvement, celui du retour. La différence entre les deux frères n'est donc pas essentielle, la distance entre eux est relative. Cette théologie place l'unité au-dessus des différences et souligne que l'être suprême est en quelque sorte la substance que nous partageons tous et qui appartient à nous tous. Le texte l'indique clairement : « *Quomodo omnia ma tua sunt ? Vere omnia dei nostra, non tamen omnia subdita* ». C'est une théologie qui définit l'être suprême comme le patrimoine de tous.

Or, cette interprétation change à partir du moment où Augustin se met à la place du fils cadet et comprend que celui-ci se considère comme un pécheur car il a dit qu'il n'est plus digne d'être appelé « fils ». C'est à ce moment que l'idée d'une seule réalité, où la sortie de chez le père n'implique pas une rupture, est franchement abandonnée. Cette fois-ci, il faut prendre conscience qu'en vertu des péchés, le fils est en effet un fils prodigue et que le retour auprès du père n'est pas un mouvement qui fait partie de la nature de la réalité, mais qui demande une véritable conversion. Cette conversion (entendue comme « retour ») a lieu non par amour, mais par culpabilité, ce n'est pas le fils qui est animé par l'amour, c'est le père. Or, ce retour qui débute par la culpabilité demande que le cœur d'un tel être soit brisé ou que le pécheur parvienne à tuer son cœur, se vide de lui-même, s'anéantisse. À partir de ce moment, la suggestion que les deux fils représentent deux peuples domine l'interprétation ; ils doivent tuer leur cœur, ce que les Juifs ne parviennent pas à faire, car

ils se vantent d'être en possession de la Loi et veulent rester en dehors de la maison. Pour quelle raison ? Pour qu'ils ne soient pas mélangés avec des coupables païens,³⁸ car eux, ils sont restés près de Dieu et n'ont pas transgressé la Loi.³⁹ C'est aussi à partir de ce moment qu'Augustin parvient à se reconnaître lui-même dans le texte. Il peut se considérer comme un païen, un membre de ceux qui sont venus après le peuple de l'Alliance ; il peut se voir comme quelqu'un vivant loin de Dieu et errant dans l'ignorance, ne connaissant ni loi ni Dieu. Il était donc quelqu'un qui avait bénéficié de la grâce que Dieu accorde au pécheur. Selon cette interprétation, la notion de la grâce est importante, encore que la notion de la grâce ne figure pas telle quelle dans le texte. C'est le mot « *misericordia* » qui revient ici souvent sous la plume d'Augustin—une miséricorde qui élève le pécheur⁴⁰ et qui n'est pas uniquement réservée à quelques élus, mais à quiconque veut rentrer dans l'église. Cette fois, la distinction entre le Créateur et la créature est claire et nette. Certes, on peut encore rejoindre Dieu, mais ce retour ne se réalise que par la grâce de Dieu. Dieu qui appelle chacun à rentrer dans l'Église.

Toutefois, en introduisant la notion de l'Église, l'interprétation donnée au fils cadet change pour une troisième fois, car ceux qui ne rentrent pas dans l'Église, ne seront jamais près de Dieu, mais resteront en dehors de la réalité divine. Le thème de la différence entre les peuples juif et chrétien est repris ici, mais avec une différence essentielle. Il y avait ces deux peuples, les païens devenus chrétiens et les juifs. Les premiers étaient loin de Dieu, les seconds ne le furent point, car le peuple juif était le peuple qui avait reçu la Loi et qui était resté près de Dieu. Mais les temps ont changé. Rester chez Dieu n'est plus une question de garder la Loi, mais une question de retour dans l'Église. On est passé du temps de la Loi au temps de la grâce, la grâce, bien entendu, prise dans un sens large, puisqu'elle est ouverte à tous ceux qui la désirent. Mais soyons clair, elle se trouve uniquement à l'intérieur de l'Église. Or, l'Église, c'est le corps du Christ. Donc si les juifs veulent rentrer dans l'Église, ils doivent se convertir en

³⁸ Ibid., 12 : « *Agnoscent enim vocem suam in euangelio, in illis Iudaeis superioribus dicentibus : scimus quoniam iste peccator est.* »

³⁹ Ibid., 12 : « *Nos tenemus scripturas dei, et non recessimus ab uno deo ; non expandimus manus nostras ad deum alienum : unum illum nouimus, ipsum semper coluimus, qui fecit caelum et terram.* »

⁴⁰ Ibid., 6 : « *Occurrit illi pater. Quid est : occurrere, nisi misericordiam praerogare ? Cum adhuc, inquit, longe esset, occurrit illi pater misericordia motus. Quare ille motus misericordia ? Quia iam iste confectus miseria. Incubuit in illum occurrens ; id est, super collum eius posuit brachium suum. Brachium Patris, filius est : dedit ut Christum portaret ; quae sarcina non onerat, sed subleuat.* »

confesser le Christ comme le Fils de Dieu. Mais en dernière instance, le Christ n'est personne d'autre que ce fils. Il suffit de voir en lui le thème de la mort et de la résurrection. Car c'est pour cette raison qu'Augustin écrit :

Epulari autem nos oportet et gaudere, quia Christus pro impiis mortuus est et resurrexit. Hoc est enim quod dictum est: quia frater tuus mortuus erat, et reuixit; perierat, et inuentus est.

Ainsi le peuple juif doit aussi se convertir.⁴¹ Augustin insiste lourdement sur ce point: ce n'est qu'en se réjouissant, en étant en paix et en ne restant pas en dehors de la maison, que les choses du père seront aussi celles du fils aîné :

Si pacificus fueris, si placeris, si de reditu fratris gaudeas, si epulae nostrae non te contristent, si non remaneas praeter domum, quamuis iam ab agro ueneris, omnia mea tua sunt.

V. CONCLUSION

Nous sommes ainsi passés d'une interprétation large du rapport entre Dieu et l'homme à une interprétation qui estime qu'il n'y a qu'une seule relation imaginable, celle que l'on vit dans l'Église. Qu'est-ce qui est l'essentiel dans l'Église? Confesser qu'on s'est éloigné de Dieu et qu'on cherche sa présence. Cette présence, toutefois, n'est plus une omniprésence, étant réservée aux membres de l'Église; il y a une différence entre les élus et ceux qui ne le sont pas, lesquels devront se passer de la présence divine. On entrevoit ici une première ébauche d'une théologie de la prédestination. Le *Sermon 112A* laisse deviner un Augustin développant une pensée qui se revêt d'une certaine rigueur théologique. On fait partie de ceux qui sont les bien-aimés de Dieu ou on ne le fait pas. En fin de compte, la décision d'appartenir à Dieu, de se rapprocher de Lui, ne nous appartient plus. C'est à Dieu que revient le choix. Augustin fait ses adieux, dans ce sermon, à une théologie plus large, qui donne plus d'espoir à l'homme. L'espoir appartient désormais à Dieu.

⁴¹ Ce que, naturellement, il ne fera pas. Voir P. Veyne, *Quand notre monde est devenu chrétien (312-394)*, Paris, 2007, qui écrit « Et, corrélativement, avec la christianisation, les Juifs vont se renfermer sur eux-mêmes et leur religion va se retrouver solipsiste » (219). Voir aussi P. McKechnie, *The First Christian Centuries. Perspectives on The Early Church*, Leicester, 2001, 87 ss. « The Separation between Christianity and Judaism ».

CHAPTER ELEVEN

TRACES OF AUGUSTINIAN 'GNOSIS' IN JULIANUS POMERIUS' *DE VITA CONTEMPLATIVA*

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1. INTRODUCTION: JULIANUS POMERIUS AND HIS *DE VITA CONTEMPLATIVA*

Not much is known about the life of Julianus Pomerius. The only two primary sources that say something about his life, are *De viris illustribus* of Isidorus Hispalensis¹ and the *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* of Gennadius.² Both these sources only offer cryptic details and no specific date can be linked to his life. Pomerius moved from Mauretania to Gallia at the end of the fifth century, probably to escape the consequences of the attacks of the Vandals.³ This must have been before 484, because that is the year in which Gunthamund, who was more tolerant of the church, came to rule.⁴ The only date that can be linked to Pomerius' life with certainty is 497, the year that Caesarius (the later bishop of Arles) became a pupil in Pomerius' school for rhetoric in Arles for a short time.⁵ According to Gennadius, Pomerius was ordained as priest in Gaul.⁶ He already enjoyed considerable respect in his own lifetime: Bishop Ruricius asked him on several occasions to move to Limoges,⁷ and Ennodius (the later bishop of Pavia) in turn tried to convince him to establish himself in Italy.⁸ C.F.A. Arnold⁹

¹ *De vir. ill.* XXV (PL 83:1096).

² *De script. eccl.* XCVII (PL 58:1117–1118).

³ C.F.A. Arnold, *Caesarius von Arelate und die Gallische Kirche seiner Zeit* (Leipzig, 1894) 84.

⁴ Julianus Pomerius, *The contemplative life*. Translated and annotated by sister Mary Josephine Suelzer. Ancient Christian Writers. No. 4 (New York, 1947) 173.

⁵ See *vit. Caes.* I,8 (PL 67:1004).

⁶ *De script. eccl.* XCVIII (PL 58:1117).

⁷ *Ep.* XVII (PL 58:79–80).

⁸ *Ep.* VI (PL 63:39–40).

⁹ Arnold, *Caesarius von Arelate*, 82.

is of the opinion that Pomerius was once head of a monastery in North Africa, and that he at one stage or the other after having established himself in Gaul, became head of a monastery near Arles. In 499 Caesarius 'after the death of the abbot' became head of this monastery.¹⁰ If this abbot was Pomerius, it means that he died somewhere around the year 500.

Pomerius wrote four works: *De anima et qualitate eius*, *De virginibus instituendis*, *De contemptu mundi et rerum transitarum* and *De vita contemplativa*. However, the last mentioned work is the only one that survived in its entirety. It was probably written after he had become a priest.¹¹ This was the first manuscript on Christian spirituality with this title and was highly regarded until late in the Middle Ages.¹² It consists of three books with 25, 24 and 34 chapters respectively. The work describes the ideals of a contemplative and an active life and also includes a discussion of virtues and vices. The first two books are addressed to bishops and the third to believers in general.

2. JULIANUS POMERIUS AND AUGUSTINE

It is generally accepted that Pomerius and Caesarius of Arles were greatly responsible for the preservation and appreciation of the works of Augustine in the Western Church.¹³ The importance of *De vita contemplativa* precisely lies in the fact that it gives one an idea of how Augustine was interpreted in those times.¹⁴ Pomerius makes no secret of his boundless awe for Augustine and he also states clearly in this work that he follows Augustine:

The holy bishop Augustine, keen in mind, charming in eloquence, skilled in human learning, zealous in ecclesiastical labors, celebrated in daily disputations, self-possessed in his every action, Catholic in his exposition of our faith, penetrating in the solution of problems, prudent in the refutation of heretics, and wise in explaining the canonical writings—he, I say, whom I have followed in these little books to the best of my ability ...¹⁵

¹⁰ See *vit. Caes.* I, 11 (PL 67:1006).

¹¹ Julianus Pomerius, *The contemplative life*, 8.

¹² K. Ruh, *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik*, 1: *Die Grundlegung durch die Kirchenväter und die Mönchstheologie des 12. Jahrhunderts* (München, 1990) 139.

¹³ Julianus Pomerius, *The contemplative life*, 3.

¹⁴ W.E. Klingshirn, *Authority, Consensus and Dissent: Caesarius of Arles and the Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul* (PhD Dissertation, Stanford University, 1985) 61.

¹⁵ *De vit. cont.* III.31.6 (PL 59:517): 'Sanctus Augustinus episcopus, acer ingenio, suavis

The Augustinianism displayed in *De vita contemplativa* is 'broad, moderate, and thoroughly practical in character.'¹⁶

3. AUGUSTINE AND GNOSTICISM

Several philosophers and religious figures influenced Augustine, amongst them Cicero, Mani, Plotinus, Ambrosius and, not least, the apostle Paul. In the research on influences on Augustine, Neoplatonism certainly received the most attention.¹⁷ However, next to the Catholic component no single phase in his spiritual development is as important as the gnostic one. Manichaeism is indeed a 'gnosis'—religious knowledge to which access is gained by way of the revelation contained in a sacred discourse. Gnosis is not a philosophy.¹⁸ At any rate, ancient gnosis culminated and in a certain sense also ended in Manichaeism. Augustine chose this religion especially because of its rationality, and evidently commended it as a higher form of Christianity. He was a member of this sect¹⁹ from his nineteenth year. Only later (nearly ten years later) did he feel deceived in these expectations.²⁰ Even after he departed from the religion of Mani, the gnostic component guided the Catholic component permanently.²¹

The gnostic component that remained with Augustine manifested in several phenomena, such as asceticism²² and Christocentricity.²³ How-

eloquio, saecularis litteraturae peritus, in ecclesiasticis laboribus operosus, in quotidianis disputationibus clarus, in omni sua actione compositus, in expositione fidei nostrae catholicus, in questionibus absolvendis acutus, in revincendis haereticis circumspectus, et in explicandis Scripturis canonicis cautus; ipse ergo, quem in his libellis pro possibilitate secutus sum ...'. The translation is that of Suelzer.

¹⁶ See Julianus Pomerius, *The contemplative life*, 6.

¹⁷ See R.A. Herrera, 'Augustine: Spiritual Centaur?', in: F. Van Fleteren, J.C. Schnaubelt & J. Reino (eds.). *Collectanea Augustiniana. Augustine Mystic and Mystagogue* (Bern, 1994) 159–165.

¹⁸ S. Lancel, *St Augustine*. Translated by Antonia Nevill (London, 2002) 33.

¹⁹ Augustine himself calls them in *Confessiones* III.12.21 a *secta fugienda* (PL 32:692).

²⁰ *Conf.* V.6.10–7.13.

²¹ J. van Oort, 'Van Vergilius en Mani tot de catholica: Augustinus' oorspronkelijke spiritualiteit', in: P. van Geest & J. van Oort (eds.). *Augustiniana Neerlandica. Aspecten van Augustinus' spiritualiteit en haar doorwerking* (Leuven, 2005) 29. See also J.J. O'Donnell, 'Augustine's Idea of God', *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994) 25–36.

²² See P.H. Fick, *Julianus Pomerius as mistikus—'n dogma-historiese studie* (PhD Dissertation, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa 2007) 77–91.

²³ See J. van Oort, 'Augustinus als mysticus', in: K. Bouwman & K. Bras (eds.), *Werken met Spiritualiteit* (Baarn, 2001) 158, and J. van Oort, 'The Paraclete Mani as the Apostle of Jesus Christ and the Origins of a New Church', in: A. Hilhorst (ed.), *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought* (Leiden – Boston, 2004) 145.

ever, in this article I limit myself to Augustine's mysticism²⁴ and its influence on Pomerius. One might indeed set gnosis alongside mysticism. The aim is a vision, which can be set alongside gnostic knowledge. But there is a difference. The mystic believes that in the vision there is a foretaste of conditions after death. Gnosis, on the other hand, is not particularly interested in experiencing the conditions after death; rather it is a question of obtaining a proper comprehension of one's self, the world, and God. In gnosis it is not a matter of a mere experience, in which cognitive perception is, for the most part, eliminated, but actually of a cognition. Thus it readily speaks of learning.²⁵

This distinction between experience (Neoplatonism) and cognition (Gnosis) is important, since it is ultimately a criterion to distinguish between the Neoplatonic and Manichaean aspects of Augustinian mysticism. The influence that the *libri Platonici* (as Augustine himself calls them)²⁶ had on him, did not so much lie in the reception of intellectual information, but it created a spiritual aptness within him that enabled him to withdraw in contemplation with the accompanying emotional intensity that can be described as a mystical experience.

There are three parts in the *Confessiones* of Augustine that are regarded as proof of mystical experiences. The first two parts appear in book seven of the *Confessiones* (VII.10.16 and VII.17.23) and deal with Augustine's relentless and passionate search for the truth—a truth that he believed would satisfy his spiritual hunger permanently and would lead to joy and fulfilment.²⁷ The third part appears in *Confessiones* IX.10.23–24 and is a description of a mystical experience that Augustine had together with his mother in Ostia shortly before her death. This passage is rich in phrases that he got from Plotinus and illustrates how Neoplatonism offered him the language to speak about his experience.²⁸

However, if one wants to determine the gnostic influence on these mystical experiences, the question should be asked whether they awarded Augustine deeper knowledge of God. Geybels²⁹ makes important con-

²⁴ See J. van Oort, 'Augustinus als mysticus', in: G. Quispel *et alii*, *Mystiek in onze tijd. Wat Westerse mystici van vroeger en nu ons te zeggen hebben* (Zeist, 1993) 27.

²⁵ W. Foerster, *Gnosis. A Selection of Gnostic Texts*, 1, *Patristic evidence*. Translated by R. McL. Wilson (Oxford, 1972) 2.

²⁶ *Conf.* VII.9.13 (PL 32:740).

²⁷ See J.M. Quin, 'Possible mystical passages in the Confessions', in: F. Van Fleteren & J.C. Schnaubelt (eds.), *Collectanea Augustiniana. Augustine Mystic and Mystagogue* (Bern, 1994) 264.

²⁸ See H. Chadwick, *Augustine* (Oxford, 1986) 69.

²⁹ H. Geybels, 'Augustinus een mysticus?', in: P. van Geest & J. van Oort, J. (eds.),

clusions in this regard, especially with respect to the Ostia experience: The specific event should epistemologically rather be seen as a final point than a starting point. Within the context of the description of what happened here, the mystical experiences prove rather to be the reward for a certain spiritual path than the point of departure for new theological insights. The experience does not immediately generate new knowledge of God. It does generate a deeper religious and existential view of man, the capacities and limitations of man and man's dependence on mediation. In the epistemological field a mystical experience such as this one is rather a possibility near the end of a journey than being an event from which point a religious search starts. Augustine's religious experiences in Milan and Ostia certainly influenced his will and knowledge, but in an existential rather than an epistemological sense. The experience confirmed what he already believed and did not deliver any new intellectual insights into the mysticism of who God is. The empirical knowledge of God was more important to Augustine than a mystical experience in any case (that is, an intense and overwhelming emotional experience). The style and content of his work indicates intense religious experience in the sense of empirical knowledge, and from there emerged the close relation between knowledge and love in his theology. For Augustine experience is equal to empirical knowledge. Religious doctrines should not only be understood, but also experienced. Reason should penetrate the heart. It is probably here that one should see the influence of the gnosis.

This cognitive aspect can also be traced in the other two mystical experiences described in the *Confessiones*. Regarding the first experience, Augustine amongst other things says:

He who knows the Truth knows that Light; and he that knows it knoweth eternity. Love knoweth it. O Eternal Truth, and true Love, and loved Eternity! Thou art my God; to Thee do I sigh both night and day. When I first knew Thee, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was that which I might see, and that yet it was not I that did see. And Thou didst beat back the infirmity of my sight, pouring forth upon me most strongly Thy beams of light, and I trembled with love and fear.³⁰

Augustiniana Neerlandica. Aspecten van Augustinus' spiritualiteit en haar doorwerking (Leuven, 2005) 145–147.

³⁰ *Conf.* VII.10.16: 'Qui novit veritatem, novit eam, et qui novit eam, novit aeternitatem. Caritas novit eam. O aeterna veritas et vera caritas, et cara aeternitas! Tu es deus meus, tibi suspiro die ac nocte. Et cum te primum cognovi, tu assumpsisti me, ut viderem esse, quod viderem, et nondum me esse, qui viderem. Et reverberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei radians in me vehementer, et contremui amore et horrore' (PL 32:742). The trans-

Regarding the second mystical experience he says:

... and thence, again, I passed on to the reasoning faculty, unto which whatever is received from the senses of the body is referred to be judged, which also, finding itself to be variable in me, raised itself up to its own intelligence, and from habit drew away my thoughts, withdrawing itself from the crowds of contradictory phantasms; that so it might find out that light by which it was besprinkled, when, without all doubting, it cried out, 'that the unchangeable was to be preferred before the changeable;' whence also it knew that unchangeable, which, unless it had in some way known, it could have had no sure ground for preferring it to the changeable. And thus, with the flash of a trembling glance, it arrived at that which is.³¹

It is necessary to indicate in the light of the nature of Pomerius' work what Augustine means with the term *contemplatio*. In this regard Torchia rightly warns: 'It would be wrong to separate contemplation from mysticism in any radical fashion in an Augustinian context. Both approaches to God involve the soul's concentration on higher truths, without recourse to the senses.'³² In 388, not long after his break with the Manichaeans, Augustine writes *De quantitate animae* on request. In this work he distinguishes seven activities of the soul. Butler³³ sees this part (XXXIII, 70–76) as 'the nearest approach to a formulation of mystical theology' that one can find in Augustine's works. The seventh and highest activity of the soul is the *visio et contemplatio veritatis*,³⁴ an intellectual vision of God. Although properly the reward of the saints in heaven, it is anticipated to a certain degree by some in this life. Two years later, in 400, Augustine speaks in *De consensu evangelistarum* of the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa* as *duae virtutes*. The *vita activa* is the road and the *vita contemplativa* is the aim. The vision of God is the ultimate goal.³⁵

lation of passages from the *Confessions* is that in P. Schaff (ed.), *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1956).

³¹ *Conf.* VII.17.23: 'Quae se quoque in me comperiens mutabilem erexit se ad intelligentiam suam et abduxit cogitationem a consuetudine, subtrahens se contradicentibus turbis phantasmatum, ut inveniret quo lumine aspergeretur, cum sine ulla dubitatione clamaret incommutabile praeferendum esse mutabili, unde nosset ipsum incommutabile—quod nisi aliquo modo nosset, nullo modo illud mutabili certa praeponeret—et pervenit ad id, quod est in ictu trepidantis aspectus' (PL 32:745).

³² N.J. Torchia, 'Contemplation and action', in: A.D. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1999) 235.

³³ C. Butler, *Western Mysticism. The Teaching of Augustine, Gregory and Bernard on Contemplation and Contemplative Life* (New York, 1968) 48.

³⁴ *De quant. an.* XXXIII.76 (PL 32:1076).

³⁵ *De cons. evang.* I.5.8 (PL 34:1045–1046).

Contemplatio is therefore accompanied by the so-called *visio Dei*, the intellectual contemplation of God's essence and presence. This is clearly evident from what Augustine wrote between the years 392 and 420 in his *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. In *Enarratio in Psalmum* XL.1 he sees in the description of the thirst of the deer an image of man's longing for God. Man's soul thirsts for knowledge and God is the Fountain. Ultimately intellectually understanding God, is *contemplatio*. However, man also has an inner eye that yearns to see the Light.³⁶ Augustine's pursuit of the *visio Dei* can also not be severed from his view of man having been created in the image of God. The soul in itself has to return to God who created it. To be with God is to realise this image: to remember Him, to know and to love Him. This is what the reformation of the image of God in man comprises.³⁷

Another key passage from Augustine's work important for his comprehension of *contemplatio* is the twelfth and last book of *De Genesi ad litteram*, which he wrote between 401 and 414. He refers to different places in the Bible where there are references to paradise, and he especially emphasizes two: Where Jesus promises his fellow crucified the paradise and the paradise to which Paul was snatched away. In relation to the last mentioned, he deals with Paul's statement that he has been snatched away to the third heaven, and then especially the fact that he does not know whether this was in the body. To solve the problem of understanding Paul's words, Augustine distinguished three ways of contemplating: bodily, spiritually and intellectually. He illustrates this in view of the commandment that one should love one's neighbour:

The first is through means of the eyes with which the letters themselves [= of the commandment] is seen, the second is through the spirit of man with which one thinks of one's fellow man (even if he is absent) and the third is through means of intuition of the intellect with which love itself is seen when it is comprehended.³⁸

The intellectual contemplation, he says, is the most magnificent of the three.

³⁶ *En. in Ps.* XLI.9 (CC 38:467).

³⁷ See G.B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform. Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (New York, 1967) 200–201.

³⁸ *De Gen. ad lit.* XII.6.16: 'Unum per oculos, quibus ipsae litterae videntur; alterum per spiritum hominis quo proximus et absens cogitatur; tertium per contuitum mentis, quo ipsa dilectio intellecta conspicitur' (PL 34:458).

4. TRACES OF AUGUSTINIAN 'GNOSIS' IN POMERIUS' *DE VITA CONTEMPLATIVA*?

According to Mary Josephine Suelzer³⁹ there are only four places in *De vita contemplativa* that show special similarities to Augustine's *Confessiones*, namely I.1, II.3.5, VIII.2.5 and XII.18. There is no part in *De vita contemplativa* that one can, as with Augustine's mystical experiences in the *Confessiones*, call a Neoplatonic rapture of the senses. The reason for this is that *De vita contemplativa* is a pastoral guide and moreover a requested work in which autobiographical references would have been unsuitable. He therefore says that a contemplative life here on earth benefits from meditation and reading of Scripture, but that pastoral zeal is the proof that the priest/bishop has made the contemplative life his own.

Concerning the intellectual, with the emphasis on knowledge (gnosis), a clear influence can be detected. Pomerius gives the following definition at the very beginning of his book:

The contemplative life, in which the intelligent creature (*creatura intellectualis*), purified from all sin and restored in every part, is destined to see its Creator, takes its name from 'contemplating'—that is, 'seeing'. If this is so, that life in which God can be seen is to be regarded as contemplative.⁴⁰

Semantically he equates *contemplare* and *videre*. Later on in the work he also makes the important pronouncement 'reason is the eye of the mind'.⁴¹

Pomerius names four activities that the bishop shares in a contemplative life that can not be withheld from him: knowledge (*notitia*) of future and hidden things, freedom from worldly pressures, studying Scripture and the contemplation of God. However, the first and the last of these activities are things that will only be experienced perfectly in the future dispensation.⁴²

³⁹ See Julianus Pomerius, *The contemplative life*, 200.

⁴⁰ *De vit. cont.* I.1.1: 'Contemplativa vita, in qua Creatorem suum creatura intellectualis ab omni peccato purgata, atque ex omni parte sanata visura est, a contemplando, id est, videndo, nomen accepit' (PL 59:418–419).

⁴¹ *De vit. cont.* III.27: '... rationem, quae est acies mentis ...' (PL 59:509).

⁴² *De vit. cont.* I.13.1: '... quia sive secundum opinionem quorundam nihil aliud vita contemplativa quam rerum latentium futurarumque notitia, sive vacatio ab omnibus occupationibus mundi, sive divinarum studium litterarum, sive quod his probatur esse perfectius, ipsa visio Dei; non video quid impedimenti sanctis sacerdotibus possit offeri quominus ad haec quatuor quae commemoravi perveniant. Duo enim, primum et ultimum, id est, rerum latentium futurarumque notitia, et ipsa visio Dei, incomparabiliter praestantiora erunt in illa vita beata quam in ista ...' (PL 59:429).

Although he strongly emphasises the future contemplation of God, Pomerius states unequivocally that the follower of the contemplative life already experiences considerable joy here on earth through exerting his intellect:

For, in truth, the contemplative life even on earth delights its lovers by a consideration of future blessings and illumines with the gift of spiritual wisdom those who devote themselves to it with the whole bent of their minds, as far as can be done in this life ...⁴³

He sees faith as inseparably bound to contemplating God: every person who shares in the contemplative life 'will see there what they believed here.'⁴⁴ He leaves significant space for the cognitive when it comes to faith:

And yet, because there all things will be comprehended, but together and entirely, one should not on that account despair of at least some knowledge in this frail body. For, although the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things, still, so far as possible, the human mind, which its Creator made to His own image, should strive even here to see God intellectually by faith ...⁴⁵

Regarding the relation between faith and reason Pomerius says:

From this it may be gathered that faith does not come from reason, but reason comes from faith; nor does he who understands believe, but he who believes understands; and he who understands does good.⁴⁶

In Book III Pomerius dedicates a large section to praising love (charity). Amongst other things he deals with 1 Corinthians 13:2, which places faith before knowledge. His explication of this gives special insight into his view of knowledge:

⁴³ *De vit. cont.* I.5.1: 'Quoniam quidem contemplativa vita hic quoque amatores suos futurorum bonorum consideratione delectat, ac sibi tota mentis intentione vaccantes, quantum in hac vita fieri potest' (PL 59:423).

⁴⁴ *De vit. cont.* I.4.1: 'Quod hic crediderunt, ibi videbunt' (PL 59:421).

⁴⁵ *De vit. cont.* I.6.2: 'Nec sane quia ibi rerum omnium notitia non per partes, sed simul et tota videbitur, ideo saltem qualiscunque in hoc fragili corpore desperatur. Etsi enim corpus quod corrumpitur, aggravat animam, et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem; tamen in quantum potest humana mens, quam suus Creator ad suam fecit imaginem, studeat etiam hic intelligibiliter Deum videre per fidem, ut eum plenius videat, eum pervenerit munere ipsius Conditoris sui speciem ... ipsam speciem ad quam per fidam spiritualiter ambulando pervenimus, insatiabili delectatione videmus' (PL 59:424).

⁴⁶ *De vit. cont.* I.19: 'Unde datur intelligi quod non fides ex intellectu, sed ex fide intellectus existat; nec qui intelligit credat, sed qui credit intelligat, et qui intellexerit, bene agit' (PL 59:433).

For prophecy will not be needed there because, being accomplished, it will have led to what it promised; and there will be no need of knowledge, which like a kind of lamp enlightens the faithful in the night of this world, because in the perpetual day of that life the living Sun will shine upon the just; and the knowing of the mysteries and faith itself will not be necessary because Christian perfection will have arrived at what was signified by mystery and believed by faith.⁴⁷

5. CONCLUSIONS

The fact that Pomerius' *De vita contemplativa*, which can indeed be regarded as a mystical work, shows no sign of ecstatic experiences can amongst other things be ascribed to the nature of the text. Yet it is clear from the above-mentioned that it also has to do with the fact that the 'gnostic' element of Augustine found more resonance with Pomerius than the Neoplatonic.

Cognition and learning, even within the sphere of faith, is of special importance to Pomerius: the creature should strive even here to see God intellectually by faith. The eschatological *visio Dei* plays an important role in Pomerius' thoughts, but even relating to this he does not sever it from reason, because for him reason is the eye of the mind and even if the contemplative only finds perfect fulfilment in the life hereafter, followers should dedicate themselves to it with the whole bent of their minds. In fact, in this life knowledge is a kind of lamp for the faithful in the night of this world.

There are indeed traces of Augustine's gnosis visible in Pomerius' work. In this article only the knowledge aspect received attention, although it seems at first sight that Pomerius' Christological disposition in *De vita contemplativa* also shows gnostic traits. However, this still has to be researched.

⁴⁷ *De vit cont.* III:14.2: 'Quia nec prophetia ibi opus erit, cum ad illud quod futurum promittebat, impleta perduxerit; nec scientia, quae velut lucerna quaedam in huius saeculi nocte fideles illuminat, cum in illius vitae die perpetuo Sol vivus iustis effulserit; nec mysteriorum notitiae, aut ipsa fides necessaria erit, quando ad ea per mysterium significabuntur, et credebantur ex fide, perfectio Christianae pervenerit' (PL 59:495). See also III.30.3 where he uses similar language.

PART TWO

STUDIES IN MANICHAEISM:
ORIGINS & MYTH; DOCTRINES & CULT;
DIFFUSION & ART

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE MANICHAEAN COSMOGONICAL MYTH AS A 'RE-WRITTEN BIBLE'

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Considering the studies on Manichaean doctrine and the complicated myth of Mani one can clearly discern two main lines: a Zoroastrian one and a Gnostic-Christian one. In the past years, more and more attention has been paid to the Gnostic roots of Manichaeism.

The Gnostic-Christian constituent of the Manichaean cosmogony should be connected with the fact that Mani grew up and was educated in a Jewish-Christian community of βαπτισταί in Mesopotamia.¹ We therefore might suppose that the cosmogony of the Bible had become one of the principal sources for Mani's cosmogonical teaching.

Much research has been done in the field of Bible interpretation and Biblical parallels found in Gnostic texts.² At first sight the complicated and fantastic Gnostic mythology differs cardinally from the Old Testament Creation story. But the Gnostic myths show many parallels with the legends that were developed in the early Christian tradition on the basis of the Genesis story. In turn, these Christian legends show striking parallels with Jewish exegeses of the Bible.³

The attitude of the Gnostics toward the Old Testament is not as radically antagonistic as it might look. A more precise analysis shows that

¹ The principal source on this topic is the so-called Cologne Mani Codex: L. Koenen, C. Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex: Über das Werden seines Leibes. Kritische Edition aufgrund des von A. Henrichs u. L. Koenen besorgten Erstedition* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Papyrologica Coloniensia. Vol. XIV), Opladen, 1988.

² See on this topic G.P. Luttikhuisen, *Gnostic Revisions of Genesis Stories and Early Jesus Traditions* (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies, 58), Leiden – Boston, 2006; A.F.J. Klijn, *Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature*, Leiden, 1977.

³ The recent literature on this topic see in: J. van Oort, 'Biblical Interpretation in the Patristic Era, a "Handbook of Patristic Exegesis" and Some Other Recent Books and Related Projects', *Vigiliae Christianae* 60 (2006), 80–103.

Gnostic myths describe mainly the things lacking (or very slightly reflected) in the Biblical canon, such as the prehistory of the world, a detailed cosmogony, the genesis and nature of some cosmic powers (angelology and demonology), a detailed account on the creation of men, cosmic eschatology etc. On the other hand, Gnostic texts almost completely ignore the central topic of Biblical canon, namely the earthly history of mankind.

Where did Gnosticism take its basis for such speculations? Naturally there was a strong syncretistic substratum, which in the case of Manichaeism was reinforced with Iranian elements. But one of the principal sources can be found in early Christianity.

It is no coincidence that some legends of the Talmud and the first Midrashim find their analogies in the Biblical exegeses of early Christian authors. We can say that there was a common Jewish-Christian heritage, emerging from some oral legendary traditions in intertestamental Judaism.

Early Judaism approached these topics with considerable caution. The *Mishnah*, the earliest part of the Talmud (second half of the second century BC—end of the second century of our common era), strictly prohibits mystical speculations:

Moed, Haggigah 2.1. The forbidden degrees may not be expounded before three persons, nor the Story of Creation before two, nor [the chapter of] the Chariot⁴ before one alone, unless he is a Sage that understands of his own knowledge. Whosoever gives his mind the four things it were better for him if he had not come into the world—what is above? what is beneath? what was beforetime? and what will be hereafter?⁵

We see that the *Mishnah* forbids speculations exactly on the four topics that are of the greatest interest for Gnostics: 1) the highest heavenly spheres, the nature of the divine world, angelology; 2) demonology; 3) the prehistory and detailed story of the creation; 4) eschatology. But the Jewish Haggadah contains rich legendary material on these “not recommended” themes. Here we find a developed mythology (for example the doctrine of two עולמות “worlds” or “ages”, i.e. *aeons*), based on certain interpretations of Holy Scripture. Not infrequently, and in a most para-

⁴ I.e. the mystical speculations on the vision of the heavenly throne-chariot in Ezek. 1:4 ff.

⁵ *Der Babylonische Talmud. Mit Einschluß der vollstaendigen Mišnah*. Hrsg. v. L. Goldschmidt, Den Haag, 1933. The English translation is quoted from the edition: *The Mishnah*. Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and brief Explanatory by H. Danby, Oxford, 1964, 212–213.

doxical way, some very fantastic legends go back to a very literal exegesis of the Biblical text.

In this paper I limit myself to early Judaic sources, such as some Talmudic treatises and the Midrash *Bereshit Rabbah*,⁶ as well as to a Midrash on *Genesis* the final redaction of which was finished at about AD 500 and which contains references to authorities from the end of second until the fourth century, i.e. just the early period of Gnosticism and the beginnings of Manichaeism.

There is also a very important common feature in the legends of the Haggada and Gnostic mythology: both of them are mostly secondary by their origin, i.e. they return to an interpretation of the text, to a paraphrase or even an allegory. This common tendency of Late Antiquity also influenced the Judaism of the time, including its exegesis of the Bible.

Already the earliest known Targumim are not simple Aramaic translations of Holy Scripture, but also contain interpretations, additions and sometimes paraphrases of the Biblical text. In the first chapters of *Genesis* in the Palestinian *Targum Neophyti*⁷ we find parallels to a basic cosmogonical principle of the Gnostics—creation of the world through “mediators”, younger deities or lower celestial powers. The Targum develops tendencies presented e.g. in Proverbs 8 and represents hypostatized categories, such as *ממרא* *Word* or *חכמה* *Wisdom*, as instruments or even subjects of the creation.⁸ There are other interesting interpretations in this Targum: for example, Adam and Eve, eating from the tree of wisdom, have not *known* good and evil, but became able to *discern* between good and evil (*למגורו בין טב לביש*).⁹ This may represent the first step to the ‘inverse’ Gnostic interpretation of this episode of *Genesis*, based on the concept of the knowledge as an absolute and indisputed good.

Up to the present, little attention has been paid to the problem of the relation between Talmudic Haggadah and Manichaean mythology. Nevertheless the juxtaposition sometimes yields very interesting results.

⁶ Here and further on the following edition is used: *Midrash Bereshit Rabbah*. Critical Edition with Notes and Commentary by J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck, 2nd edition, Jerusalem, 1996, Vol. 1–3. The quotations in English are from *Genesis Rabbah. The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis* by J. Neusner, Vol. I–III, Atlanta, 1985.

⁷ *Neophyti 1. Targum Palestinense. MS de la Bibliotheca Vaticana*. Ed. A. Díez Macho, Tomo I, *Genesis*, Madrid-Barcelona, 1968.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 3. See the research of this text in: *Targum du Pentateuque*. Traduction des deux recensions complètes avec introduction, parallèles, notes et index par Roger Le Déaut, Tome I, Genèse, P., 1978, 74–83.

⁹ *Neophyti*, 3 ff.

At first sight the Manichaean cosmogony has little to do with the cosmogony of Genesis. Yet, numerous parallels emerge from a comparison of the Manichaean myth (in its earliest variants) with the early Jewish legends concerning the creation of the world and beginnings of mankind.¹⁰ There are astonishing parallels with the Manichaean dualistic doctrine of two principles, the system of ten cosmic elements, the division of light and darkness, the first “theogony”, the creation of the material world, etc.

Let us compare the initial Manichaean myth about the creation, of the battle of the deity called Primal Man, and of the light elements with the Haggadic interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve, their creation and fall.

We must first notice that the name of the Manichaean deity is identical with the designation of Adam in the Talmud and Midrashim: **אדם הראשון** *the first man* or *the first Adam*. (cf. the expression *primus Adam* in 4 Ezra 3:21).

This designation is not explicable from the Manichaean doctrine per se. The Manichaean Primal Man has nothing to do with the creation of man: he is neither a prototype nor a subject in this episode (the corresponding roles are played by other deities). Nevertheless we can see that the description of Adam created *in the image* and *likeness* of God has received a “secondary” mythological interpretation already during the first centuries of our common era. The First Man in the Midrashim and Talmud possesses many attributes of a deity, including his gigantic stature, shining beauty and immortality. Even his soles shine “like two disks of sun” (Babylonian Talmud, *Babab Batrah*, fol. 58a).

Bereshit Rabbah VIII: I. When the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam (lit. the first Adam), He created him as a lifeless mass (**גלם**), extending from one end of the world to the other. Thus it is written (Ps. 139:16).

Ibid., VIII: X.R. Hoshiaia said: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, the ministering angels mistook him (for a divine being) and wished to exclaim (Holy) before him.

IX: V. Rabbi Hama b. R. Hanina said: Adam deserved to be spared the experience of death (lit. not taste the taste of death).

XII: VI. 1. The six (which they lack) correspond to the six things which were taken away from Adam, viz., his lustre (**זיון**), his immortality (**חיי**, lit. his life), his height (**קומתו**), the fruit of the earth (**פרי הארץ**), the fruit of trees (**פרי האילן**) and the luminaries (**מאורות**).

¹⁰ Much material concerning these topics is collected in the fundamental work of L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, Vol. I, Philadelphia, 1947.

(.....) *R. Aibu said*: His height was cut down and reduced to one hundred cubits.

Even the androgynous image of the First Man, reminiscing of the well-known myth by Plato, is reflected in the Midrash. Another commentary to Gen. 1:27 says:

Bereshit Rabbah VIII: I. Rabbi Jeremiah (b. Eleazar) said: When the Holy one, blessed be He, created Adam, he created him a hermaphrodit (Greek *androgynous*, אנדרוגיניזם), for it is said: 'Male and female He created them'.

R. Samuel b. Nahman said: When the Holy one, blessed be He, created Adam, he created him double-faced (Greek *פרצופים*), then he split him and made him of two backs (*or* bodies), one back on this side and one back on the other side.

The conception of androgynous deities, so well attested in Gnostic doctrine, is not directly reflected in Manichaeism, where the sex ('male and female') is exclusively a property of the dark powers. But traces of such an initial concept can be found in the sources, e.g. in the metamorphoses of the twelve Maidens of Light seducing the male and female archons, according to their sex, and in the likeness of beautiful women or handsome youths,¹¹ evidently goes back to the concept of a Gnostic 'male virgin'.

If the image of the Manichaean Primal Man is really an allegorical interpretation of the Talmudic 'first Adam', he must have a female counterpart. At first sight the creation of woman seems to have no analogy in the story of Primal Man. But one can discover some features of this interpretation in another episode of the genesis of the Manichaean "pantheon", namely in the story of the genesis of the elements of light or the Living Soul.

The definition 'Living Soul' in Manichaean texts is attributed to the pentade of light elements, which serve as the 'garments' and weapons or 'armour' (ζαλῶμε) of Primal Man in the primordial cosmic battle with the forces of evil. Evidently, the term נפש חיה, Syr. ܢܦܫܐ ܚܝܐ *living soul* goes back to Gen. 1:20.21.24, where it designates the living beings in the earth, and perhaps to Gen. 2:7, where it is a definition of Adam after receiving the breath of life. But in Haggadic texts this expression also receives an original interpretation:

¹¹ This myth of the 'seduction of archons', taken from Mani's canonical book *The Treasure of Life*, is expounded in several anti-Manichaean sources, for instance by Evodius, *De fide contra Manichaeos* XIV, in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* XLII, 1142–1144.

Bereshit Rabbah XIV: X. "And man became a living being (lit. living soul)". Jehudah b. Rabbi said: This teaches that He provided him with a tale, like an animal, but subsequently removed it from him, for the sake of his dignity.

This is reminiscent of the beast-like state of the earthly Adam in some Manichaean sources (e.g. Theodoret I, 26¹²). Further (*ibid.* XXI: III) the saying "Let the land produce a living soul" is treated: This is (said about) the spirit of the first Adam.

Some Coptic Manichaean texts make mention of a Maiden, an emanation and helper of Primal Man, participating with him in the battle against the forces of darkness. She is called his *soul* or *the living Fire* and is identical either with the light elements in whole (i.e., the Living Soul) or with the first element captured by the dark powers:

The Maiden of Light,
who is the Living Fire. (...)
His¹³ beloved Daughter.
.... of her Father,
who died for her brethren.¹⁴

... and he¹⁵ produced from himself his Maiden equipped with five powers,¹⁶ that she might fight against the five abysses of the Dark.¹⁷
(...) he shewed to them¹⁸ the Maiden who is his soul.¹⁹

One may also compare the definition of the Living Soul in another part of the book, i.e. in the 'Psalmi Sarakōtōn':

O my Maiden, my Beloved, the living fire.²⁰

In a Jewish exegesis of Gen. 2:23 "she shall be called 'woman' (אִשָּׁה)" in the book *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer*,²¹ Ch. 12, the same definition 'Fire' is attributed to Eve:

¹² *Theodreti episcopi Cyrensis Haereticorum fabularum compendium*, Liber I, in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* 83, Paris 1859, 377–382.

¹³ I.e. of the Primal Man.

¹⁴ *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*. Ed. by C.R.C. Allberry (Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection, vol. II), Stuttgart, 1938, 137.22–28.

¹⁵ The Primal Man.

¹⁶ G. Wurst translates it as 'divided into five powers': G. Wurst, *Die Bema-Psalmen* (The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library, *Psalm Book, Part II*, Fasc. 1 [CFM, I]), Turnhout, 1996, p. 38.

¹⁷ Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 10.7–9.

¹⁸ To the archons.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 10.11–12.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 148.27.

²¹ *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer* (*The Chapters of Rabbi Eliezer the Great*). According to the Text of the Manuscript belonging to Abraham Epstein of Vienna. Translated and

And when an help-maid had been built for him, his name was called 'esh (fire), and she was called 'esh (fire).

We can see that the explanation is based on the similarity and identical writing of the words ܡܝܢ *'iš man* and 'eš *fire*.

The connection between the First Man and the primal elements is well attested in both Jewish and early Christian writings in the first centuries of our common era. Biblical exegesis adopted the Hellenistic doctrine of the elements and successfully combined it with the enumeration of primal substances in the first chapter of Genesis. The exegetic texts on the creation from elements, including Josephus, Talmudic treatises and Syrian sources, are investigated in a book by A. Toepel.²²

The idea of the creation of Adam from the primal elements is also constantly repeated in various sources. Such a legend is for example attested in Ch. 55 of the Latin *Vita Adae et Evae* (on this book see below). The earliest writings containing this legend are Philo, *De opificio mundi* 146, and the *Hermetica*.²³

An example of a Syrian exegesis of this kind may be found in the *Cave of Treasures* of the sixth or seventh century.²⁴ This book describes the creation of Adam from the four elements, or from the four constituents attributes of the elements: *cold, warm, dry and wet* (cf. the opposition of *dry and wet* and *heat and cold* in the cosmogonical passages of the Coptic Manichaean texts, e.g. *Kephalaia* 27.2–3, 78.26, 80.28–29, 92.21–22, 119.21 etc.)

Further, the elements of light (or the Living Soul) are constantly defined in Manichaean sources as the *garments* or the *garments of light* of Primal Man, which he puts on for the battle and subsequently takes off. The passage of Gen. 3:7 (Adam and Eve *realized they were naked*) can be

Annotated with Introduction and Indices by G. Friedlander, 4th Edition. New York, 1981. The final redaction of this book belongs to the 9th century, but it contains legends descending from a much earlier time. See the note of G. Friedlander in the 'Introduction', p. liv: 'The Creation Legends, which go back to the Books of Enoch and Jubilees as well as to the Books of Adam and Eve, contain material which is earlier than the first century CE.'

²² A. Toepel, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden im syrischen Buch der Schatzhöhle. Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung* (CSCO, vol. 618. Subsidia, t. 119.), Lovanii, 2006, 27–69.

²³ Toepel, *op.cit.*, 66–68.

²⁴ C. Bezold, *Die Schatzhöhle. 'Mē'ārath Gazzē' (The Cave of Treasures/La Caverne des Trésors). Eine Sammlung biblischer Geschichten aus dem sechsten Jahrhundert jemals Ephraem Syrus zugeschrieben. Syrischer Text und arabische Version, herausgegeben nach mehreren Handschriften zu Berlin, London, Oxford, Paris und Rom mit deutscher Übersetzung und Anmerkungen*, Amsterdam s.a. See the story of the creation of Adam on pp. 10–12 of the Syrian text.

considered as a source for this Manichaean myth, if we remember how it is treated in the early Haggadah. Here this verse is compared with a subsequent verse: *The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife* (3:21).

But the Haggadah interprets the Biblical expression כְּתוּנֹת עוֹר *garments of skin* ('or) as כְּתוּנֹת אֹר *garments of light* ('or) and concludes that Adam and Eve wore *garments of light* before the fall, but lost them after the fall and therefore *realized they were naked* (*Bereshit Rabbah* XVIII: LVI and XX: XII, *Zohar* I, 36b, *Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer* 14, *Targum Jerushalmi* on Gen. 3:7 and 21). See e. g. *Bereshit Rabbah* XX: XII:

In R. Meirs Torah it was found written, "Garments of light (אֹר). This refers to Adams garments, which were like a torch". <.....> R. Isaac the Elder said: They were as smooth as a fingernail and as beautiful as a jewel.

Several sources name *the garments of the first Adam* among the things created at the end of the sixth day, in the evening of Shabbath (Babylonian Talmud, Gemara, *Pesahim*, fol. 54 a–b; *Sifre* 355, *Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan* a. o.). *Zohar* I, 36b says that before the fall they wore *garments of light*, and after the fall they put on *garments of skin*. Very interesting is the exegesis of *Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer*, Ch. 14:

What was the dress of the first man? A skin of nail (צַפְרִין—or saffron.—E.S.), and a cloud of glory covered him. When he ate of the fruit of the tree, the nail-skin was tripped of him, and the cloud of glory departed from him, and he saw himself naked.

Other sources show that this is an early interpretation. The same idea is attested in Philo, *Quaestiones in Genesim* I,53. The tradition around the celestial garments of Adam and Eve, created in the beginning, is also developed by early Church fathers (Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* III,23,5; Tertullian, *De pudic.* 9, *De resurr.* 7; Origen, *Contra Celsum* 4.40; Pseudo-Justinian, *Quaestiones . . . ad Orthodoxes* VI,1293; Moses Bar Kepha, *De Paradiso* 84A; Theodoret, *on Gen.* 3:27). Perhaps they are identical to the celestial garments of the righteous mentioned for example in the Books of Enoch and in the Kabbalah.

The similarity between the Manichaean image and the Jewish interpretation is especially evident when we consider the book which is based on the first chapters of Genesis and known under the title *Vita Adae et Evae*.²⁵ A direct line between the Jewish interpretation and the

²⁵ *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve*. Second Revised Edition. Ed. by G.A. Anderson & M.E. Stone, Atlanta, 1999.

Manichaean myth may be traced through the witness of the *Vita Adae et Evae*. This pseudepigraphic work, originally written in a Semitic language and preserved in many different versions, describes the story of Adam and Eve before and after their fall. Of special interest for us are the lamentation of Adam on the loss of Paradise and the scene of his death and ascension: angels come from heaven, reach out their hands to the soul of Adam and ascend with him to heaven, where he will dwell until the end of the days; then he will sit on a throne. Eve remains on the earth weeping and she begs to die together with Adam. We observe that this story is parallel to the Manichaean myth about Primal Man, where the Living Soul is analogous to Eve. In the Coptic *Kephalaia* there is a special *Chapter about the Elements who wept*.²⁶

Striking parallels are also revealed in the exposition of the elements as primary constituents of the Manichaean cosmos. Manichaean teaching constructs a system of ten elements, two pentads of opposing dark and light elements:

Dark	Smoke	fire	wind	water	darkness
Light	air	fire	wind	water	light

It is generally assumed that the Manichaean doctrine of primal elements is of Greek origin. This conclusion, however, provides no answer to some crucial questions, e.g.: 1) why light and darkness, known as two main principles, stay also as two equal elements in the decade, and 2) why there is differentiation between air / smoke and wind. Also, the number of five equal elements in each principle does not follow so evidently from the Greek doctrines (where the fifth element, when it does exist, is a principal one and stays above the four others). All this becomes clear when we consider the Haggadic legends about the beginning of creation.

Interpreting the first verses of Bible (Gen. 1:1–6), the Talmudic and Midrashic authorities identify the existing of some ten “principles”:

Rab Jehudah said: Rab said: Ten things are created in the first day, and they are: earth and heaven, Tohu and Bohu, light and darkness, wind and water, measure (מדת) of day and measure of night.

(Babylonian Talmud, *Chagigah* II, fol. 12a)

There are also other sources which give a number of eight ‘elements’ of creation (*Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer*, Ch. 3, names heaven, earth, light,

²⁶ *Kephalaia*. Ed. H.J. Polotsky & A. Böhlig. Stuttgart, 1940, p. 148.21–151.4. English translation in I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary*, Leiden – New York – Köln, 1995.

darkness, Tohu, Bohu, spirit (wind), water). Here we can see the same structure of ten elements distributed in five pairs (some of them opposite) as in the Manichaean doctrine; wind, light and darkness belong to these group. (The concept “air” does not occur in the Bible; in the post-Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic it is expressed by a Greek loan word).

It would be senseless to deny a basic Greek constituent in the Manichaean doctrine of elements, but we can suppose that the system of elements was completed or corrected, following the interpretation of these Biblical verses.

The other Manichaean pentad of 5 νοερά, i.e. intellectual categories, passes through all the cosmogony and its hierarchies:

	intelligence	reason	thought	counsel	intention
Syrian	ܢܘܥܡ	ܢܘܝܐ	ܢܘܚܐ	ܢܘܚܡܐ	ܢܘܚܝܐ
Greek	νοῦς	ἔννοια	φρόνησις	ἐνθύμησις	λογισμός
Coptic	ܢܘܥ	ܡܝܥܝܬܐ	ܡܝܥܝܬܐ	ܡܝܥܝܬܐ	ܡܝܥܝܬܐ
Latin	mens	sensus	prudentia	intellectus	cogitatio

This pentad may be correlated with the five corresponding virtues: love, faith, perfection, long-suffering and wisdom. For instance in the Coptic ‘Psalms of the Bema’ it is said:

He²⁷ gave light by his love (ἀγάπη) to our Intelligence (νοῦς); he made his faith shine in our Reason. Implore him.

He brought perfection to our Thought, long-suffering to our Counsel. Implore him.

He bestowed Wisdom (σοφία) on our Intention that it might be as butter for us. Implore him.²⁸

This concept may go back not only to popular forms of a Hellenistic philosophical doctrine (Platonism or Stoicism), but also to Biblical interpretations in early Judaism. In any case, we find correspondences to these five terms in Aramaic and Syrian versions of Wisdom literature. The study of the Peshitta and Targumim leads to a supposition that both the idea and terms of this pentad perhaps go back to an Aramaic version of Proverbs. It may be a development of the idea of personified Wisdom like an instrument or subject of creation. Consider, for example, this passage in the Babylonian Talmud (*Chagigah*, *ibid.*) on intellectual and ethical categories:

²⁷ Mani, here identified with the Paraclete promised in the Gospel of John.

²⁸ *A Manichaean Psalm-Book* 23.14–19.

R. Zutra Bar Tobiah said: "Rab said: The World is created with ten things (or words, sayings: דברִים)—with wisdom (חכמה), understanding (תבונה), knowledge (דעת), power (כח), rebuke (נערה), strength (גבורה), righteousness (סדק), justice (משפט), faithfulness (חסד) and mercy (רחמים).

Moreover, from this context we may explain the origin of a special meaning for the fourth member of the intellectual pentad: Counsel (in the Syriac sources ܡܚܫܒܬܐ *maxšabta'*, in the Greek and Coptic ones ἐνθιμήσις). This term can also designate the active creative principle. For example in the *Kephalaia* the twofold deity, who will create an eschatological entity, is called *Counsel* (ΕΝΘΥΜΗCIC or CAXNE) of Life,²⁹ Matter as a creator of the material world is called *Counsel of Death*,³⁰ and in the chapters concerning the material world *counsel* is the creative power dwelling in trees, being the cause of their life and growth.³¹

The origin of the attribution 'creative principle' to the term 'Counsel' can be explained only by means of the Haggadic material. The same Semitic word which denotes *counsel* in the Syrian Manichaean sources—Hebrew מחשבתה, Aramaic ܡܚܫܒܬܐ *maxšabta'*—is translated by Jastrow in his Dictionary as *thought, plan* and J. Levy's Dictionary as *Gedanken, Absicht, Plan*.³² In Midrashim we find this term in the following context:

Bereshit Rabbah I: IV. In the beginning God created: six things preceded the creation of the world; some of them were actually created, while the creation of the others was already contemplated.³³ The Torah and the Throne of Glory were created. The creation of the patriarchs was contemplated (<...>) the creation of Israel was contemplated (<...>) the creation of the Temple was contemplated (etc.).

Ibid., IX: III. Rabbi Judan in Rabbi Isaacs name: Before even a creature is created, his thought (מחשבתו) is already revealed to Thee.

Another Midrash, *Leviticus Rabbah* XXIX:1 (to Lev 23:24), says about the prehistory of Adam:

In the first day he came to the (Gods) intention (עלה במחשבתה).

²⁹ E.g. *Kephalaia* 28.34–29.11.

³⁰ E.g. *Kephalaia* 26.18.

³¹ *Kephalaia* II (pp. 244–291). Ed. A. Böhlig, Stuttgart, 1966. p. 247.25–248.10.

³² *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*. Compiled by M. Jastrow, Vol. I–II. New York, 1950, vol. II, 764 B; J. Levy, *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midrashim*, Bd I–IV, Berlin-Wien, 1924. Bd II, p. 25B–26A.

³³ Lit. 'there was a thought' or 'a plan (מחשבתה) to their creation'.

Even the primordial envy and aggression of the lower (or dark) principle, a fundamental premise of the Manichaean cosmogonical myth which seems to be so typically Iranian, can be found in the Jewish Biblical interpretation of the first centuries of our common era. The opposition between *העולם הזה* *this age* (or *world*) and *העולם הבא* *the coming age* (*world*) is evident; the dichotomy of “higher ones” and “lower ones”, which forms the basis of cosmology in, for instance, the Coptic Manichaica, can be traced to Jewish sources (one may compare the title of the Qumranic writing *War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness*).

We can find even textual concurrences between Gnostic speculations and Jewish exegesis. Thus, the so-called *Gospel of the Egyptians* or *The Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit* (NH III,2 and IV,2) contains a definition: *ΠΡΟΣΜΟΣ ΕΦΘ ΜΠΙΝΕ ΝΤΕΥΨΗ* *the world which is the image of the night* (III 2, p. 51.4–5).³⁴

Jewish exegetes give the following commentary on Ps. 92:2: ‘to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night’:

Your love in the morning: [it concerns] each one who enters into the coming world, which is the image of the morning. *And your faithfulness at night:* each one who enters into this world, which is the image of the night.³⁵

The definition in the Nag Hammadi writing is evidently incomplete and must derive from a complete variant that describes the opposition, as it is attested in Jewish exegesis.

In Chapter 73 of *Kephalaia* the *envy of Matter* is regarded as a primary cause and power of the cosmogonical “catastrophe”.³⁶ First of all, this formula is reminiscent of the saying in the deuterocanonical book of the Bible that names the *envy of the devil* as the cause for the coming of death into the world (Wisdom 2:24). But the early Midrash cited above contains also traces of the same doctrine: the “lower” earthly creatures envy the “higher” creatures, i.e. the celestial powers. In this way the saying *The earth was tohu wa-bohu* (Gen. 1:1) is interpreted. The Midrashic authorities corrected the two obscure words as *toha wa-boha* and translated it as *bewildered and astonished*:

³⁴ Nag Hammadi Codices III, 2 and IV, 2. *The Gospel of the Egyptians* (*The Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit*). Edited with translation and commentary by A. Böhlig and F. Wisse in cooperation with P. Labib (Nag Hammadi Studies IV), Leiden, 1975, 98.

³⁵ See this saying in *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer*, p. 127. Parallels to it are attested in the Babylonian Talmud, *Pesachim* 2b, *Chagiga* 12b, *Baba m.* 23b, *Avoda Zara* 3b; Palestinian Talmud, *Chagiga* 77c.

³⁶ *Kephalaia* I, 178.24–180.26.

Bereshit Rabbah II: II.R. Abbahu said: “⟨...⟩ Thus *the earth set bewildered and astonished (toha wa-boha)*, saying, “The celestial beings (lit. the higher ones) and the terrestrial (lit. lower) ones were created at the same time: yet the celestial beings fed by the radiance of the Shechinah, whereas the terrestrial beings, if they do not toil, do not eat. Strange it is indeed. ⟨...⟩ Thus *the earth set bewildered and astonished*, saying, “The celestial beings and the terrestrial ones were created at the same time: why do the former live, whereas the later are mortal?” Therefore the earth set bewildered and astonished.

A rather bold hypothesis presents itself. The ancient authors writing on Manichaeism often designate it as a doctrine of *two principles (beginnings, origins)*. This seems to be not only a definition, but also a kind of title, deriving perhaps from the initial words of a canonical book of Mani. Cf. the first citation from a canonical book of Mani made by the Arabic author an-Nadim in the 9th chapter of his *Fihrist al-‘Ulūm*:

Mani said, ‘The origin of the world was [composed of] two elements, one of which was light and the other darkness.’³⁷

May we suppose that the expression goes back to the first word of Genesis *בראשית* in the *beginning*, where *ב* is treated as the cipher *ב*, i.e. 2?

Thus, when the cosmogony of Genesis and the story of Adam and Eve, expounded in Jewish biblical commentaries and Pseudepigrapha, are compared with the Manichaean myth in its developed form, reconstructed chiefly from the Coptic Manichaica, the following scheme emerges. (Additions from the apocryphal *Vita Adae et Evae* and other sources are given in italics.)

Manichaean canon	Bible and Biblical interpretations
‘In the beginning God (plural) created the heavens and the earth.’	There were two principles, (two gods?), the higher and the lower one.
‘Then the earth was <i>tohu wa-bohu</i> (formless and empty), darkness was over the surface of the deep’, etc.	The Darkness was formless and hideous, placed in the depth.
The heaven, earth, darkness, depth, spirit (= wind), water, light and darkness are enumerated.	The Light and the Darkness had ten elements: air/smoke, wind, fire, water and light/darkness.

³⁷ B. Dodge (ed. & transl.), *The Fihrist of al-Nadim: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture* (Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies 83), vol. I-II, New York – London, 1970, vol. I, 777.

God 'separated the light from the darkness'.	The Light and the Darkness were separated. Once the Darkness began to wage war against the Light.
The waters were separated, the sky and dry ground between the higher and lower waters were formed.	The mixed area between the higher and lower principle (divided into the Dry and the Wet?) was formed.
The sea and the dry land were created.	Matter falls to the Dry and Wet.
The land produced plants.	Matter produced five trees, prototypes of plants.
Living creatures (the 'living soul') were created.	Demons of five dark worlds, prototypes of living creatures (?), were born from the fruits of trees.
"God created man in his own image" (in Midrashim and Targum: <i>the Wisdom takes part in the creation, other celestial beings give advices</i>).	Light (the Father of Greatness, the Mother and all the aeons?) produced the Primal Man.
God put Adam in the garden of Eden (where two trees grew) "to work it and take care of it".	The Primal Man was destined to go down in the mixed area (where the trees grow) and stop the way to Darkness.
A help-maid was created for Adam. <i>They wore garments of glory or light.</i>	The elements of Light, the "Soul", were produced for the Primal Man and became his help and "garments of light".
Adam and his wife ate the fruit of the tree <i>and knew the taste of death.</i>	Primal Man and the Soul (Wirgin) began to wage war, they touched the evil principle ("knew the taste of death") and were captured by it.
"They realized they were naked", <i>for the garments of life were taken away from them.</i>	The "garments of Light", i.e. the elements, were taken away from Primal Man.
"They hid from the Lord Gor among the trees of the garden".	They were captured in the mixed area.
God called Adam, he heard and answered.	The Father called the Primal Man, he heard and answered ('Call and Answer' were born).
Adam and his wife were expelled from Eden <i>and could not come back.</i>	Primal Man and the elements remained bound in the mixture (i.e. the material world) and could not ascend.

They wept, mourning the lost Eden.

The elements wept (see one of the chapters in the *Kephalaia*).

Adam called his wife Eve (interpreted as “living”).

From this moment the captured elements of light are called “Living Soul”.

Adam and his wife were mourning because of their fall (in the Greek version of “Vita Adae and Evae” it is expressed with the words θλίβω, θλίψις).

Primal Man and the Living Soul were mourning because of their fall and capture in the Matter (in Coptic texts it is expressed with the words **ΘΛΙΒΕ, ΘΛΙΨΙC**).

When Adam died, the angels descended to him, gave him their hands and took him to heaven.

The Living Spirit descended to the Primal Man, gave him the right hand and took him to heaven.

Eve remained on the earth, mourning and weeping.

The Living Soul remained in the material world, mourning and weeping.

The angels purified Adam and raised him to the third heaven, where he will remain until the end of days.

The Living Spirit raised the Primal Man to the highest area of the cosmos and purified him, but he will remain in the material heaven until the end of days.

Eve will join together with Adam.

After the creation of world the Living Soul began to be purified and arise. It will be finished in the end of days.

In the last days Adam will sit on the throne, the devil and his powers will be overthrown and damned.

In the end of days the Primal Man will set on the throne, the Darkness and its powers will be overthrown and damned.

It should be noted that in the Manichaean canon this story is repeated again in a more ‘normal’ way. The cosmogony is followed with the story of Adam and Eve, which (until some moment) corresponds more or less literally to the Gnostic variant of this Biblical account.

We can even suppose then the heretics called *minim*, mentioned many times in the Talmud and Midrashim, were adepts of a Gnostic school, for their arguments is not difficult to recognize, e.g.:

The heretics asked R. Simlai: How many deities created the world?
(*Bereshit Rabbah* VIII: IX)

In the same Midrash these heretics ask:

With whom did He consult (saying “Let us create”)?

In *Midrash Tanhuma* we find a discussion with *minim*, who try to prove that archangels took part in the creation. Evidently the *minim* argue that there were several creators.³⁸ The book *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, third century of our common era, ascribes to the *minim* a completely dualistic saying: ‘There are two powers’.³⁹

A. Vööbus supposed that the earliest Syrian Christians, during the time before the Peshitta was written, used early Targumim as their own versions of the Old Testament, for they are written practically in the same Aramaic as the language of the Eastern Church.⁴⁰ If this is true, the early Eastern Christians would receive the Targumic interpretations together with the Biblical text.

Perhaps there was an allegorical interpretation of Genesis in Aramaic speaking Eastern Christianity, which used legendary tradition explaining various points of their doctrine. These legends in particular, joined together, written and systematized in the early communities of Mani’s predecessors, could give rise to the Manichaean cosmogonical myth. They have also survived in the Jewish Haggadah.⁴¹

³⁸ *Midrash Tanhuma*. Ed. S. Buber, Jerusalem, 1964. *Bereshit* 1.1, 1.7.

³⁹ *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, ed. J.Z. Lauterbach, 232. See on this M. Hirshman, *A Rivalry of Genius. Jewish and Christian Biblical Interpretation in Late Antiquity*, New York, 1996, Ch. 1.

⁴⁰ A. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient. A Contribution to the History of Culture in the Near East*, Vol. III (CSCO Vol. 500. Subsidia, Tomus 81), Lovanii, 1988.

⁴¹ See the earlier article in Russian: E.B. Smagina, *Tolkovaniya na knigu Bytiya v iudaizme kak istochnik manikheyskogo kosmogonicheskogo mifa*. Mir Biblii, Moscow, 2001, vol. 8, 28–37.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SIMPLICIUS ON MANICHAEAN COSMOGONY

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INTRODUCTION

Simplicius of Cilicia was a sixth century pagan philosopher and commentator on Aristotle. He was a member of a group of philosophers who preferred exile in Persia (531–533 CE) when the Platonic Academy in Athens was closed by order of the Emperor Justinian in 529 CE.¹ Simplicius' commentary on the *Encheiridion* (Manual) of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus furnishes us with one of only two refutations of the Manichaean system (although not specifically described as such) written from a pagan philosophical rather than Christian theological point of view. For long the standard edition of the Greek text of the extract from Simplicius, Commentary on the *Encheiridion* had been that of F. Dübner in *Theophrasti Characteres ... Epicteti Enchiridion cum Commentario Simplicii* in the Didot series (Paris 1840) 69.46–72.145. An English translation of the Commentary was made at the end of the seventeenth century; it is *Epictetus his morals, with Simplicius his comment, made English from the Greek by G. Stanhope* (London 1694) 207–214.² A major landmark in the study of this unique polemic against the Manichaeans is the article of Ilsetraut Hadot, 'Die Widerlegung des Manichäismus im Epiktetkommentar des Simplikios', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 51 (1969) 31–57. This provides translation (in German) of almost the entire section against the Manichaean system as well as improved readings in the text of Didot.

¹ Cf. Agathius, *Historiae* II, 28–31, ed. R. Keydell (Berlin, 1967) 77, 4–82. 16. Cf. U. Hartmann, 'Geist im Exil. Römische Philosophen am Hof der Sasaniden' in Monika Schuol et al. (eds.), *Grenzüberschreitungen—Formen des Kontakts zwischen Orient und Okzident im Altertum*, Oriens et Occidens, 3 (Stuttgart, 2002) 125–160.

² There is now available *Simplicius, On Epictetus (Handbook 1–26)* translated by T. Brennan and C. Brittain (London 2002).

This has now been completely surpassed by the same author's major edition of the commentary of Simplicius: *Simplicius, Commentaire sur le Manuel d'Épictète—Introduction et édition critique du texte grec par Ilsetraut Hadot*, *Philosophia Antiqua* Vol. 66 (Leiden, 1996). This contains a long and masterly discussion of the section of the *Commentary* devoted to the refutation of the Manichaean system on pages 14–44.

Like Proclus, Simplicius criticizes the dualist system typified by the Manichaeans without naming his adversary. There is no question, however, that Manichaeism was the intended target as the author is well-informed on several aspects of Manichaean cosmogony and his attack is not just aimed at dualism in general but in very specific details of the Manichaean cosmogonic myth. He even claims that he was citing their own words verbatim: Ταῦτα γὰρ ἔστιν αὐτῶν τὰ ῥήματα (l. 44). An obvious question is: Where did Simplicius acquire this accurate knowledge of the Manichaean system? His brief sojourn in Persia in the company of other philosophers was a possibility, but he was unlikely to have been able to consult Manichaean texts in Middle Persian. Another possibility is that it was in Harran (Carrhae), the Roman frontier city which stayed pagan until the reign of Heraclius and where the philosophers might have sojourned on their return to the Byzantine Empire.³ However, as texts like *Capita VII Contra Manichaeos* attributed to Zacharias of Mitylene show, there was still a considerable amount of genuine Manichaean material or summary of Manichaean teachings by their opponents available in the time of Justinian. (SNCL)

TRANSLATION

The only existing English translation of this section of Simplicius' commentary on Epictetus *Enchiridion* (*Manual*) is the work of two scholars whose focus is on Neo-Platonism and provides minimal annotation. This new translation, which forms the bulk of the article, has been made from the Manichaean angle; this is reflected in the comments which elucidate the text with special emphasis on new light shed upon Mani's religion from this source. It aims to produce a readable translation of Hadot 1996 with adjustments to her text and interpretation where it has been deemed

³ Cf. M. Tardieu, 'Sabiens coraniques et "Sabiens" de Harrân', *Journal Asiatique* 274 (1986) 1–44, esp. 23–25. See also useful remarks on the route taken by Simplicius in idem, *Les paysages reliques—Routes et haltes syriennes d'Isidore à Simplicius* (Louvain-Paris, 1990) 108–111 and 156–160.

necessary. The footnotes accompanying the translation provide detail of these and some additional information. They also refer forward to the exegetical Notes A–H provided by SNCL which follow the translation and which site this chapter in the wider context of relevant Manichaean literature. In making the translation, elucidation of meaning has been a priority. This has involved some restructuring of the Greek syntax to conform more with normal English usage.

Just as a target is not set up so that someone can miss it, neither is there natural evil existing in the world.

Epictetus *Enchiridion* (*Manual*) ch. 27.⁴

Because the nature and existence of evil have not been properly understood, discussion about this subject has become a reason for irreverence towards divine things and has undermined the principles of proper moral education; it has assailed those who do not correctly understand its origins with unresolved difficulties. For if one were to say of the prime cause of evil that there are two prime causes of existence, the good and the bad, many great absurdities result from this. How has this basic axiom being a unity and also applying to two antithetical situations covered them both? It can only be from a single cause in both cases. How can these things be wholly antithetical unless they are classed as things of the same general kind? The answer is that things which differ are simply not the same as things which are opposed. One would not describe white as the opposite of cold or hot. Opposites are things which are classed together but lie at opposite poles within the classification. Both being colours and classed as such, white is opposed to black.⁵ By the same reckoning hot is opposed to cold, their classification being the sense of touch. For this reason it is impossible for opposites to be prime causes: their classification must have existed prior to them. And indeed because one thing must predate many things, then either each of the many must perforce be a single entity on account of the participation of the very first one to exist, or else it must be nothing at all.⁶ Furthermore if a single prime entity exists which is antecedent to every individual entity and from this entity each individual entity is multiplied into many—all beauty proceeds from primordial

⁴ The Stoics believed that Logos (God) was only responsible for good and rational things in the world. 'Natural' evil could not be his work in creation.

⁵ Or more literally: 'White and black are opposites, having colour as their common classification, since they are both colours.'

⁶ This seems to mean that a classification involves many (at least more than one) things. If we wish to reduce the many things to a single one (its prime cause), we are left with that one alone; if we seek its prime cause, there is nothing from which it can come. A prime cause is by definition as far back as you can go.

divine beauty and all truth proceeds from original divine truth—it necessarily follows that many prime causes stretch back to a single prime cause, and that that single prime cause is not divisible into parts as each of the others is. It is the prime cause overriding all prime causes; it is unique and all-encompassing; from its own nature it provides to all others the means of evaluating a prime cause; it remains of like nature to the others after each has been eliminated in the manner proper to each.⁷

Those who say that there are two principles, the good and the evil, the good being described by them as God, cannot say that God is the cause of all things and justly extol him as Pantocrator, Lord of All, and ascribe supreme and complete power to him. They must only ascribe to him half of the total power, if this is so. They cannot consider him the source of good and the giver of light, even when they call him the mainspring of goodness and light. What manifold blasphemies upon God necessarily spring from what they say. Indeed they present him as a coward, as one who is afraid that the evil lurking on his borders might even enter his own domain. By reason of this cowardice, unjustly and to his own detriment, he consigned to evil his own limbs—limbs which are souls which, as is said, have committed no sin up to that point—so that he might save the rest of the good creation;⁸ in the same way that they say that a general, when the enemy are attacking, exposes a part of his own army to them so that he may save the rest.⁹ That is the meaning of their words, though they don't perhaps express it that way. They would have it that in consigning the souls, or in ordering them to be consigned, he either forgot what he was doing or he else was ignorant¹⁰ of what suffering lay in store for the souls made over to the forces of evil. Their fate was to burn in flames and fry, as they say, and undergo every kind of torture, even though they never committed a single sin in their past life and all this when they were limbs of God. The upshot, in their view, is that sinful souls among them—and these are not murderers or adulterers or those who commit the most execrable of crimes as a result of their depraved way of life, but those

⁷ This means, I take it, that in order to go back to the prime cause each of the others must be appropriately eliminated. The Platonic *ἰδέα* lies behind all this.

⁸ In the Manichaean story of the 'First Creation' the First Man was evoked by the Father of Light to be his champion against the powers of evil who were threatening his realm. The First Man was assisted by forces variously described as his 'sons' or 'arms' ('limbs' in Simplicius). Together they offered themselves as bait to the evil forces and were devoured making necessary a 'Second Creation'. Cf. H.J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road* (San Francisco 1993), p. 10.

⁹ See Note A.

¹⁰ An Homeric allusion: ἧ λάθεται ἡ οὐκ ἐνόησεν (*Iliad* IX 537).

who refuse to say that there are two principles of everything, the good and the bad,—these very souls no longer turn to good but, according to them, remain in adherence to evil. The consequence is that God himself remains incomplete since he has lost limbs.

According to their belief—heaven forbid that I should say this!—God is a fool and does not know what is good for him since he cannot recognize the nature of evil; for how could evil have entered into the realm of good since from the beginning of time the bounds of good and evil had been set apart and distinguished according to their separate qualities, as even these men admit? By whom were they set apart? They cannot answer that. Obviously it must have been spontaneous action¹¹—and this would make spontaneous action¹² a universal principle in their thinking—or stem from one being or thing acting on behalf of two beings or things. In order for this to be so, before the world came into existence they must have made an apportionment on earth of the three quarters, east, west and north, giving these to goodness, but assigning evil to south.¹³ And, what is more, they suppose the five repositories of evil to be some sort of caves¹⁴ and fill them in their imagination with trees and animals, both terrestrial and aquatic, which are always fighting and which are in the process of being devoured by the five-shaped monster;¹⁵ and yet they would have it that they all remain alive just as do the trees and animals of the original creation. Since the locations of good and evil

¹¹ Or: 'accident'? Hadot translates αὐτόματον as 'hazard', 'chance' at 61 and 62. Surely it means a spontaneous coming into being, a self-creation, not a random one? However, LSJ does allow the meaning 'accident' for αὐτόματον.

¹² Or: 'accidental occurrence'?

¹³ Lit.: 'Before the world existed among them they made as it were a division on earth, the three parts, giving east, west and north to good, but south to evil.' Simplicius regards it as absurd that the four quarters should exist *before* the creation of sky, sun and stars. See Note B.

¹⁴ See Note C. In the Coptic Psalm-Book passage the five storehouses are equated to smoke, fire, wind, water and darkness which are instigated by their 'counsel' to internal fighting and then to an attack on the Realm of Light. It is not hard to imagine that in some versions of the story they were given the form of loathsome animals and this version may be reflected in the words of Simplicius here. The realm of darkness of the Psalm-Book is 'figuratively related to five types of animal-shaped demonic beings—bipeds, quadrupeds, flying creatures, swimming creatures, and crawling creatures.' Klimkeit, *Gnosis*, p. 9. Cf. Augustine *de haer.* 46,7 (Müller). The Zoroastrian overtones are unmistakable. The *xrafstras*, animals of the evil or *Daevic* creation, are described in similar terms in the Younger Avesta. Cf Yt 21 1, V 16 12 etc.

¹⁵ See Note D. The king of the Dark Realm 'has faces corresponding to those of the beings he rules—the faces of a demon, a lion, an eagle, a fish and a dragon.' Klimkeit, *Gnosis*, p. 9.

were essentially separate from the beginning, how was it possible for evil to enter the realm of good? How was it possible for what remained its unperishing antithesis to be host to its exact opposite? In the same way white, while remaining white, would have to be black, and light, while remaining light, would have to encompass darkness.¹⁶ If we agree that this is impossible, how can it be rational, even assuming a cowardly and unjust god, for him to surrender the soul to evil¹⁷ and, as they think, to be beset by troubles from that time right up to the present? God is then ultimately incapable of redeeming that soul and cannot do so in the future because, as previously mentioned, in their view souls remain in a state of evil for the rest of time and for eternity? They say that God could not foresee this eventuality. And yet they say that evil foretold the sending of the future messenger¹⁸ and devised plans against it. Since good cannot master evil, how much finer would it have been for good, rather than to become embroiled with evil, to allow evil to consort with itself. Remember that they claim that evil, like good, is neither created nor destroyed. Moreover if one were to challenge their contention that these descriptions 'neither created nor destroyed' and 'without beginning or end' apply equally to good and evil, they might counter 'what description could be more fine-sounding?'¹⁹

We turn now to how they describe the world's creation.²⁰ They talk about certain 'pillars' and don't mean those which, in the words of the poet, 'hold apart the land and sea,'²¹ for they don't think it proper for any of their statements to be interpreted in the language of myth.²² As one of their sages explained to me, they believe that the pillars are made of

¹⁶ σκότος can be masc. or neut. So it could be lit. 'darkness encompassed light while it still remained light.'

¹⁷ Lit.: 'How in addition to cowardice and injustice is it not also folly.'

¹⁸ In the Manichaean story of the 'Third Creation' the Father of Greatness evoked as his champion the Third Messenger whose task was to extract and purify the Light Particles retained by the powers of darkness. There followed the 'seduction of the Archons'. See Note G.

¹⁹ The question must be apodosis to the preceding condition. I assume an elipse by translating 'they might counter.'

²⁰ Or ironically: 'What stories they tell about the world's creation!' The pillars as part of the construction of the universe are described in the Middle Persian *Šābuhragān* text M 98 I and M 98 I. Cf. M. Hutter, *Manis kosmogonische Šābuhragān-Texte* (Wiesbaden 1992) pp. 10–23. Hutter regards this material as deriving from one of Mani's own canonical works.

²¹ Columns of Atlas; Pillars of Hercules (*Odyssey* IX 54).

²² See footnote 28.

strong stone and their capitals are sculpted.²³ They have twelve apertures one of which opens each hour.²⁴ Their explanations of the reasons for eclipses reveal a wondrous excess of sagacity. They say that evil things linked together in the world's creation cause disturbance and disarray in their common motions and that the light-bringers cast some kind of veils in front of themselves owing to their desire to have no part in the confusion caused by these creatures.²⁵ This phenomenon explains the eclipses which are their method of self-concealment under the veils. What absolute rubbish they talk on this subject! Out of all the heavenly bodies they only honour the two major light-bringers, claiming that these alone belong to the realm of good and despising the others as belonging to the realm of evil.²⁶ They do not regard the moon's light as deriving from the sun, but see it as souls which the moon draws up from the earth as it waxes and brings into the presence of the sun as it wanes.²⁷

Why go any further? They fabricate some monsters which can hardly be dignified with the title 'fables'. They don't treat these things as fables or regard them as representing something else, but trust the reports of them as true.²⁸ They imagine evil as a fivefold monster made up of lion and fish and eagle and I can't remember what else. They fear it as though it were about to attack them. Such is the measure of their impiety towards God in these stories of theirs and the amazing thing is that they made up all this nonsense through ostensibly pious respect for him! Since they did not wish to name God as the cause of evil, they have invented a separate first cause of evil, making it equal in value and power to the first cause of good; but it is even more potent, since up to this point in time evil seems to have

²³ Lit.: 'They are sculpted on top'; see Note E.

²⁴ See Note F.

²⁵ See Note G.

²⁶ According to the Sogdian cosmogonic fragment M 178 the zodiac houses the demons of darkness; the twelve constellations and seven planets 'rule over the whole Mixed World, and set them in opposition to each other'. Similarly *Kephalaia* 167,14–15. See I. Gardner and S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from Roman Empire* (Cambridge 2004) p. 15.

²⁷ A similar explanation of the phases of the moon is attested in Manichaean literature. See, for example, Text F in Klimkeit, *Gnosis*, pp. 231–232: M 7980–7984. Cf. Hutter *Šābuhragān-Texte* pp. 36–115. See I. Gardner and S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts*, p. 21.

²⁸ '... it can be misleading to describe Manichaean doctrine as myth; and it was certainly not intended as an allegory. For the believer, the teachings were absolute truth: an eclipse of the sun was not an illustration of the powers of darkness against the light, it was visible evidence of the forces of evil in attack against those of good. Mani emphasised that the reality of his teachings was apparent to the senses.' I. Gardner and S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts*, p. 11.

been successful in all its undertakings. In the teaching of these men this force of evil seems to be everywhere holding out against goodness and contriving in every way to destroy it.²⁹ These people say that God has voluntarily commingled with evil and has behaved, according to them, in a cowardly, unjust and mindless manner up to the present day. The result is that in avoiding to name God the cause of evil, they subscribe to every manner of wickedness;³⁰ in the words of the proverb they escape the smoke, only to fall into the fire.³¹ Such is the extent of their impiety in discussing god.

Their discussion,³² as far as it is within its power, destroys the basis of moral education and removes our position *vis à vis* the truth. It introduces the strong principle of evil which is neither created nor destroyed, which pushes souls into wickedness in such a way that they do not have it in their power to commit or refrain from sin. So powerful is the compulsion under which they act that according to this doctrine evil cannot even be overcome by God himself. This should have led them to think that if the souls commit murder or adultery or any of the aforementioned sins under *force majeure*, being pushed into it against their wills, they would be guiltless. The reason is that involuntary acts resulting from compulsion are not culpable and are pardoned by God and by the laws. Nor again is it completely sinful or wicked, if one is justified in supposing that we do such things under the influence of stronger incentives. Therefore if in their search for the reason why these things are evil they have postulated the prime cause of evil, then, since evil itself is subject to evil and is compelled to act by it, there is no longer such a thing as evil. This is the nice turn their argument takes! If there is no such thing as evil, then there is no such thing as the prime cause of evil. To conclude, if a prime cause of evil does actually exist—and they say it does—it cannot be evil, nor can it be the prime cause of evil.³³ (JSS)

²⁹ This makes more sense than the text in Hadot which could mean 'to avoid destruction'. My translation has ms. justification since B omits μή here.

³⁰ Or: 'They ascribe to him every manner of evil'.

³¹ See Note H: 'Out of the frying pan into the fire' is our version!

³² Taking the previous word λόγος as subject of διαφθείρει.

³³ This *reductio ad absurdum* argument is more clearly stated if we paraphrase: 'It cannot be evil, since there is no such thing as evil (already proved) nor can it be the prime cause of evil, because you cannot have the prime cause of something which does not exist.' Q.E.D.

NOTES

A—ll. 42–44: ὥσπερ στρατηγός ... διασώσῃ. ‘In the same way that they say that a general, when the enemy are attacking, exposes a part of his own army to them so that he may save the rest.’ The idea that the Primal Man and his Light-Armour were surrendered as a bait is loosely paralleled by the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book (*Ps.-Bk.* CCIII, pp. 9.31–10.2) in which the image of the shepherd and the lamb was used. See also Tit. Bostr. I,17 (p. 9.17–24).

B—ll. 64–65: τὰ μὲν τρία μέρη ... κακῷ. ‘They must have made an apportionment on earth of the three quarters, east, west and north, giving these to goodness, but assigning evil to south.’ Cf. Theodoretus, *haer.* XXVI and Sev. Ant. *Hom.* 123, p. 154, 14–16.

C—ll. 65–66: καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὰ πέντε ... ὑποτίθενται. ‘They suppose the five repositories of evil to be some sort of caves’ Cf. the following passage from *Ps.-Bk.* CCIII, 9.17–21 in Allberry’s translation: ‘However, the kingdom of darkness consists of five storehouses³⁴ which are smoke and fire and wind and water and darkness; their counsel creeping in them, moving them and raising them to make war with one another.’ Simplicius is one of the very few sources in Greek which provides this important analogy of the caves as ‘storehouses.’ Cf. Augustine *De mor. Manich.* IX (14), p. 100.7: *quinque antra elementorum*.

D—ll. 66–68: καὶ δένδρα ... ἐσθιόμενα. ‘... and fill them in their imagination with trees and animals, both terrestrial and aquatic, which are always fighting and which are in the process of being devoured by the five-shaped monster.’ The Pentamorph (lit. ‘the five-shaped’) is a reference to the Prince of Darkness whose ‘head’ according to Manichaean sources in Arabic cited by Ibn an-Nadim (*Fihrist* ed. Flügel p. 329) is described thus: ‘His head was like the head of a lion, his body like that of a sea serpent, his wings like those of a bird, his tail like that of a whale, and his four legs like those of a donkey.’ (unpublished translation by M. Laffan for *Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum*) This is interestingly paralleled by Simplicius’ own less graphic description of the bestial nature of the Pentamorph later in the account (ll. 108–109): πεντάμορφόν τι ζῷον ...

³⁴ Coptic **ⲧⲁⲙⲓⲉⲓⲟⲛ** from Greek **ταμεῖον**.

συγκείμενον. 'They imagine evil as a fivefold monster made up of lion and fish and eagle and I can't remember what else.'

E—ll. 91–92 ἐκ κραταίου ... νομίζουσι. 'they believe that the pillars are made of strong stone and their capitals are sculpted'. The reference to the twelve pillars here may contain a confused reference to the Pillar of Light which in Manichaean mythology consisted of Light Particles. In Middle Persian texts it was equated with a Zoroastrian deity—*srwšhr'y* (Cf. Sogdian *srwš*(')*rt* (*bygy*) and Turkish *srošart*), i.e. the righteous Sraoša. The Parthian version of the term is more graphic: *b'm* 'stwn (cf. Sogdian *β'mystwn*) 'Radiant Pillar' and closer to Mani's original Syriac 'Pillar of Glory', Ephr., *Mani* 208. 37/38; Copt. ΠΙΣΤΥΛΟΣ ΜΠΕΛΥ *Ps.-Bk.* ψαλμοὶ Σαρακωτῶν p. 133.24; Cf. Gr. ὁ στῦλος τῆς δόξης *Acta Arch. Gr.* 8,7, p. 13 11/12 (ap. Epiph. *haer.* LXVI, 26,8 p. 60. 11/12). The translation of the term into Chinese is variously 'Precious Column of Diamond' or 'Adamantine Pillar' (*Traité* ms. 1.325) and 'Adamantine Image Column' (*Hymnscroll* § 365)—the latter reminds us of ἀναγλύφους in this passage of Simplicius.

F—ll. 92–93: καὶ δώδεκα ... ἀνοιγομένης. 'They have twelve apertures one of which opens each hour.' The divisions of the day into twelve and not twenty four hours is a typical feature of Manichaeism and is attested to in most Manichaean sources. According to Coptic texts the twelve hours of the Third Messenger (ΤΡΙΜΗΝΤΕΝΑΥΣ ΝΟΥΝΟΥ *Ps.-Bk.* CCXXIII, p. 133, 16/17) and the twelve members (ΜΕΛΟΣ) are the Five Sons of the Primal Man and the Five Sons of the Living Spirit together with Call and Answer. Cf. *Ps.-Bk.* CCXXIII, p. 133.23–27. In Syriac sources the Twelve Maidens (TbK. XI, p. 316.2) each corresponding to a sign of the zodiac are also the twelve hours. The 'twelve doors' or 'twelve gates' feature in an important Manichaean text on Cosmogony in Sogdian (M178 II R 20 (85)—V 8 (105) edited and translated by W.B. Henning in 'A Sogdian Fragment of the Manichaean Cosmogony' (*BSOAS*, 1948, pp. 306–318). Cf. Hadot, *Commentaire*, p. 120: 'rty pr wyspw sm'nyy xii xii xw dbrt' ptysc'nd o o 'rtms tym 'nyt iv iv dbr' pr ctf'r qyr' n s'r mns'c'nd o 'wrδ kw 'ty x' fryštyt' škwnd o 'rty wyny x sm'nytyy xw δβ'nzq'wyy δs' βryywr fswx xcyy o 'rtyšn ms x' βry' βrywr fswx 'rtpr xii xii δβrt' ky 'ty wy' sm'nyty 'škwnd o pr 'yw 'yw δβrw vi vi pδynd

mns'cnd o 'rty pr 'yw 'yw pðynd qwn'nd xxx xxx w'crnd 'ty wy' 'yw 'yw w'crnyy xii xii 'yzt pr 'yw 'yw³⁵ prs' clxxx qpyð qwn'nd 'ty pr ðβtyk prs' clxxx 'ty wy' wyspy' qpyðyyh ykšyšt 'ty dywt ßynd'nd 'ty pryqyšnd 'rty 'ww nyrkt cn stryštyy ptyyn pryqyš'nd. 'They fixed twelve gates to each firmament, and, moreover, towards each of the four directions they placed another four gates in that place where those (forty)³⁶ angels are.³⁷ The thickness of the ten firmaments is one hundred thousand parasangs; again, (the thickness of) the layer of air between them is ten thousand parasangs; and to each of the twelve gates which are in each of the firmaments they fixed six thresholds, and for each threshold they made thirty bazaars,³⁸ and in each bazaar they made twelve rows; for one side they made one hundred and eighty stalls and for the other side one hundred and eighty stalls. In every stall they bound and enclosed yakshas and demons; they enclosed the males separately from the females.' [translation JSS] Again Simplicius is the only Greek source for this rather obscure Manichaean *terminus technicus*.

G—ll. 96–97: παραπετάσματα τινα ... ἐκείνων. 'they cast some kind of veils in front of themselves owing to their desire to have no part in the confusion caused by these creatures.' Simplicius is one of the few polemicists (if not the only one) to use the word παραπέτασμα. In this section he seems to allude to events in the 'Third Creation' myths and all the turmoil in the universe caused by the 'Seduction of the Archons.' To counter this the Third Messenger evoked the Pillar of Glory. This served as a path to bring redeemed Light particles to the Sun and Moon which are called 'Light vehicles' conveying souls to the New Paradise in highest heaven. There they could remain untroubled by the chaos and turmoil below.

³⁵ Henning supposed that the scribe may have omitted a line here which he constructs as 'yzt ii ii prs' pr 'yw' in each row two sides.

³⁶ Add for clarity from preceding paragraph.

³⁷ The verb is literally 'are' not 'stand' (pace Henning).

³⁸ *w'crn* is the Sogdian form of the word *bazaar*. Henning deduced from this that the other words here must be identified as parts of a bazaar: 'yzt' = a 'street' or 'row'; 'prs' = a 'side' of the 'street' or 'row'; 'qpyð' = a 'shop' or 'stall'. Henning 1948 pp. 312–313 notes a series of Turkish words which he identified as borrowings of Sogdian 'qpyð'. A small fragment M548 contains similar material: 'in every threshold] are thirty bazaar each, in each bazaar 12 rows, in each row [3]60 stalls. Those [bazaars], stalls, rows ... [therein] are [fettered] all demons that ...'

H—ll. 120–121: καὶ κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν ... ἐμπεπτώκασιν. ‘In the words of the proverb they escape the smoke, only to fall into the fire.’ The same is cited by Titus of Bostra (*Adv. Manich.* I,1, p. 1.15–16): καὶ καπνὸν, ὥς φασι φεύγων, ἐμπέπτωκεν εἰς τὸ πῦρ. (SNCL)

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE VEIL AND REVELATION OF THE FATHER OF GREATNESS

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For many years, Johannes van Oort has focused on the importance of the Latin Manichaean tradition with regard to the personal history and theology of Saint Augustine. It therefore seems right to introduce this small contribution by emphasising that it is the Latin tradition which has preserved the information that makes a special Manichaean *theologoumenon* understandable, i.e. the eschatological notion that at the end of times the Father of Greatness will withdraw the veil and reveal His countenance or image for the rest of the divine world. Thus Augustine's friend Euodius of Uzala writes in his *De fide contra Manichaeos*:

Behold what a victory and triumph that the God of Manichaeus has obtained! For having lost a part of Himself, He is in mourning, as the same Manichaeus will say; He has a veil before Himself to soothe His pain, so that He should not see the corruption of His own part. For today the divine substance which he mentions, is subject to the race of Darkness like clay to a potter. This is written in their first book of the *Treasury*.

Ecce victoria, ecce triumphus, qualem fecit Manichaei deus. nam post amissam partem suam in luctu est, sicut Manichaeus idem dicet, velum contra se habet, quod dolorem eius temperet, ne corruptionem partis suae videat. hodie enim divina quam commemorat substantia subiacet genti tenebrarum ut lutum figulo. hoc in eorum primo libro Thesauri scriptum est.¹

¹ Euodius, *De fide* 13, I. Zycha, Sancti Aureli Augustini *Contra Felicem, De natura boni, Epistula Secundini, Contra Secundinum, accedunt Evodii De fide contra Manichaeos, et Commonitorium Augustini quod fertur praefatione utriusque partis praemissa*, rec. I. Zycha, CSEL 25 (VI,2) (Vienna 1892) 955,27–32. Cf. also Augustine, *C.Faust.* 22,12, I. Zycha, Sancti Aureli Augustini *De utilitate credendi, De duabus animabus, Contra Fortunatum, Contra Adimantum, Contra Epistulam Fundamenti, Contra Faustum*, rec. I. Zycha, CSEL 25 (VI,1), Vienna 1891, 599,29–600,3: 'But why are they not displeased by the fact that our God sees that His work is good, because their God, since the time when He immersed His limbs into the Darkness has placed a veil before Himself? For He did not do that because He sees that His work was good, but because He would not look, since

Only Euodius shows us that the eschatological doctrine is connected with a protological theme where the Father of Greatness began hiding Himself and, furthermore, only Euodius makes us certain that this notion is derived from Mani's own writings, i.e. the *Treasury of Life*.

At the end of my monograph from 1996, *Studies in the Sermon on the Great War*, I dealt briefly with the eschatological theme about the revelation of the image of the Father of Greatness,² which is *inter alia* mentioned in the *Manichaean Homilies* 41,11–17 and a number of other texts.³ In the end, being implored by the gods to do so, the Father of Greatness will remove the veil and reveal His image.⁴ The monograph stressed that this eschatological doctrine corresponds to Manichaean expectations of what is to happen immediately after death—or, to put it differently, that the collective eschatology corresponds to the individual eschatology: This is primarily because the souls after death will also see the image of the deity, and this is sometimes also expressed in the way that veils will be withdrawn.⁵ The monograph always sought to find the functional meaning of Manichaean teaching, and even though this was

it is evil' (*cur autem istis non displicent, quod deus noster opus suum vidit, quia bonum est, quandoquidem deus eorum cum membra sua mersit in tenebras, velum contra se posuit? non enim quod fecit, vidit, quia bonum est; sed noluit videre, quia malum est.*)

² N.A. Pedersen, *Studies in The Sermon on the Great War. Investigations of a Manichaean-Coptic text from the fourth century* (Aarhus 1996) 392–398.

³ The revelation of the image of the Father of Greatness is also the topic of the Coptic *Kephalaia* 5,12–18; 73,16–74,9 and 103,6–7.10–30 (ed. C. Schmidt, H.J. Polotsky, and A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia* I,1 [Stuttgart 1940]), the Parthian *M 2 / II / (V)* (ed. F.C. Andreas and W.B. Henning, 'Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan III', *SPAW*, phil.-hist. Kl. [Berlin 1934] 7–8), and the Turkish text *T. II D. 173a*, leaf 2 (A. von Le Coq, 'Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho I', *APAW* 1911 [Anhang, Abh. VI] 10–11).

⁴ It should be noted that also other Manichaean texts mention that the Father is hidden; cf. *Kephalaia* 151,19–22 (ed. Schmidt, Polotsky, and Böhlig 1940); *A Manichaean Psalm-Book* II (ed. C.R.C. Allberry [Stuttgart 1938]), 1,7–8; 133,20–21; more remotely 171,27; *T. Kell. Copt. 1*, 210–11 (I. Gardner, *Kellis Literary Texts* 1, ed. by I. Gardner with contributions by S. Clackson, M. Franzmann and K.A. Worp, Dakhleh Oasis Project; Monograph No. 4, Oxbow Monograph 69 [Oxford 1996]) 2.

⁵ The deity is Jesus in *Psalm-Book* II, 61,14–15; 62,11; 64,12; 79,24–25; 81,2. But it is not necessarily Jesus: Thus a psalm to Jesus first refers to the image of Jesus (*Psalm-Book* II, 84,24–26) and then to 'the joyous image of my mother, the holy Virgin' (translation Allberry 1938), and here there is a reference to the withdrawal of veils (84,30–33). Cf. also *Psalm-Book* II, 73,7–8; 88,10; 225,8; *Kephalaia* 235,15–17. When it is said in *T. Kell. Copt. 2*, Text A 5, b140–143 that 'I have come to rest in the kingdom of the house, for the Father of the Lights has revealed his image to me' (ed. and translation Gardner 1996, 15), the reference which is in perfect tense is clearly also to the fate of an individual soul after death and not to the final revelation (against the interpretation in Gardner 1996, 30). The same is probably the case with the reference to 'veils' in deteriorated contexts in *Psalm-Book* II, 127,29 and *Man. Hom.* 52,10 (ed. N.A. Pedersen [Turnhout 2006]).

sometimes expressed too crudely, this approach was also very fruitful, and I still think that it is possible, for example, to find the reason for the doctrine that the Father of Greatness is hidden in the individual's hope that the core of its soul, its archetype, remains unsullied by evil and suffering.

It is not my intention here, though, to discuss the texts about the revelation of the image of the Father of Greatness or their possible function for Manichaean believers, but rather to look at the possible religio-historical roots in Judaism of the two themes: (a) the veil that covered the Father and (b) the revelation of his image.

Euodius and Augustine use the Latin word 'velum' for the veil that covered the Manichaean God, and what is interesting is that it is also this Latin word which is used as loan-word in the Coptic texts, obviously via Greek (οὐρανόν): In the *Manichaean Homilies* 41,14–15 it is [ΠΟΥ]ΗΛΟΝ and likewise ΠΟΥΗΛΟΝ in *Psalm-Book* II, 84,30, and ΝΟΥΗΛΟΝ in 127,29. *Man. Hom.* 52,10 uses two loan-words ΠΚΑΤΑΠΕΤΑΣΜΑ ΜΗ ΝΟΥΗΛΟΝ, 'the curtains and the veils', but it is not absolutely certain that ΠΚΑΤΑΠΕΤΑΣΜΑ ΝΟΥΑΙΝΕ, 'the curtain of Light' mentioned in *Kephalaia* 71,27 is the same veil as the veil of the Father of Greatness.

The idea seems to originate from circumstances in courts and palaces of the ancient Near East where the king could be separated from the court by a curtain which he might draw back in order to speak to his guests face to face.⁶ But first and foremost, it seems obvious to connect this idea with the Jewish tradition about a curtain covering the throne of God, which has been investigated by Otfried Hofius in his *Der Vorhang vor dem Thron Gottes* from 1972.⁷ Hofius's point of departure was the references to a heavenly καταπέτασμα in Hebrews 6:19 f. and 10:19 f., which Ernst Käsemann had interpreted as being derived from a Gnostic tradition.⁸

⁶ Cf. O. Hofius, *Der Vorhang vor dem Thron Gottes. Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Hebräer 6,19f. und 10,19f.*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 14 (Tübingen 1972), 20 n. 113 about how this feature is mentioned in rabbinical texts and used metaphorically about God's revelation. The curtain is called יָלִיק, which is again the Latin loan-word *velum*. These rabbinical texts, according to Hofius, do not refer to notions of the real existence of a curtain in heaven but, as far as I can see, such notions also presuppose the existence of real curtains in palaces. This, however, is not stressed in Hofius since he considers the curtain in the temple to be the only important origin of the Jewish idea.

⁷ Hofius 1972.

⁸ E. Käsemann, *Das wandernde Gottesvolk. Eine Untersuchung zum Hebräerbrief*,

However, Hofius demonstrated convincingly that there were actually two different traditions and that both of these were not Gnostic in origin but Jewish.

The first tradition concerns a curtain, פרגוד, which covers the throne of God.⁹ The second tradition concerns a veil separating earth from heaven, which is called וילון in the rabbinical sources—as already mentioned, the Latin loan-word *velum*. Similar ideas about a veil separating heaven and earth are also found in Hellenistic Judaism, but they may have been developed independently of the rabbinical idea.¹⁰

The tradition about the פרגוד is that it covers the throne of God and makes it impossible for angels and pious ones to see Him. God's words may, however, be heard from behind the veil, and some of the highest ranking angels are also allowed access behind the curtain. This tradition is mostly found in texts related to the so-called Merkabah Mysticism. Gershom Scholem has argued that this tradition must at least stem from the second century AD, even though many of the texts mentioning this פרגוד are somewhat later.¹¹ It has been argued that the Merkabah Mysticism contains many reminiscences from the ancient temple cult of Israel¹² and Hofius has argued on this basis that the פרגוד should be understood as the heavenly counterpart of the veil between the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies in the temple in Jerusalem.¹³ The mentioning of the high priest entering the inner sanctuary behind the curtain in Hebrews 6:19f. and 10:19f. shows that this epistle also contains the tradition about the פרגוד.¹⁴

In the Jewish tradition, men and angels cannot see God. If they do so, they will die. So the function of the פרגוד is to protect the outsiders. The goal in the Merkabah Mysticism is to see the enthroned God. Hebrews 12:14 also mentions the seeing of God. Thus the idea of the פרגוד is connected to the broader Jewish theme about 'seeing God'.¹⁵

Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 55, NF 37 (Göttingen 1939) 135–151.

⁹ Hofius 1972, 4–19.

¹⁰ Hofius 1972, 19–27.

¹¹ G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York 1954) 72.

¹² Thus J. Maier, *Vom Kultus zur Gnosis. Studien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte der 'jüdischen Gnosis'. Bundeslade, Gottesthron und Märkābāh*, Kairos: Religionswissenschaftliche Studien 1 (Salzburg 1964), 18 ff., 131 ff.

¹³ Hofius 1972, 12.

¹⁴ Hofius 1972, 49–75.

¹⁵ Cf. Hofius 1972, 6–19, 74–75.

In Gnostic sources, there are also traditions about curtains and veils, which are probably derived from both of the Jewish traditions even though the precise way is often problematic to determine. One version of these traditions allows the *καταπέτασμα* to be created by the highest God between the divine Pleroma and the fallen world. In another version, the curtain has its origin in the fall. There are also traditions about curtains separating the different eons from each other.¹⁶

Returning to the Manichaean sources, it seems most probable that the Manichaean conception is related to the first tradition about the *פרגוד*. For one thing, the Manichaean veil is only separating the Father from the rest of the divine world, but not heaven from earth. For another thing, the Manichaean theme about the *velum* is also connected with the theme about seeing God. Even though the Jewish sources use the same Latin loan-word, *velum*, as the Manichaeans when referring to the veil separating earth from heaven, it is obviously not here that a link should be searched for.

A clear difference between the Jewish and Manichaean traditions, however, seems to be that while the function of the *פרגוד* is to protect the outsiders, it is the function of the *velum* to protect the Father of Greatness from seeing the suffering of the outsiders, his 'own part'. But this difference may be explained by the ontological difference between Judaism and Manichaeism: The divine hypostases in Manichaeism share the same substance as the Father of Greatness, and therefore seeing cannot be destructive. Furthermore, the idea that seeing God is destructive would not fit the Manichaean dualism very well, where it should rather be Darkness that is destructive.

Hofius also stresses that 'Der Vorhang vor dem Thron Gottes markiert den tiefen Abstand, der zwischen Gott und seinen himmlischen Dienern bzw. zwischen Gott und der ihn umgebenden Himmelswelt besteht. Er ist damit Ausdruck für die überweltliche Hoheit, Reinheit und Heiligkeit dessen, der in einem unzugänglichen Lichte wohnt und so von allen seinen Geschöpfen qualitativ geschieden ist.'¹⁷

One could say that the Manichaeans have tried to retain this aspect of 'transcendence' on their own premises. It was not because of an ontological degradation that the Father of Greatness should be isolated from the divine world, but it was necessary since he should not get in contact with evil as his evocations had to do. This point also makes it doubtful that the

¹⁶ Hofius 1972, 28–48.

¹⁷ Hofius 1972, 16.

Manichaean idea should be influenced by the Gnostic traditions about a curtain since the Manichaean ontology does not work with a fall in the divine world.

The second theme that is the subject of this article is the idea that at the end of times, the Father of Greatness will reveal His image. The word used in the *Manichaean Homilies* 41,15 is **ἑἱκὼν**, i.e. the Greek εἰκών, while the Parthian word used in M2 a 141 (V II), *pâdgirb*, means 'shape' ('Gestalt'); according to Walter Bruno Henning, the word used in the Turkish text T. II D. 173a, leaf 2, *körk*, means both shape and image, thus corresponding both to the Coptic and Parthian words.¹⁸ But the word used in *Kephalaia* 73,22 is 'face', **ἑἱς** (**πῆἑς**, 'his face', cf. likewise [**πῆἱς**] in the restored lacuna in *Kephalaia* 73,18), and this brings us to the Biblical tradition and Revelation 22:4, where it is said: καὶ ὁψονταὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, and likewise Matthew 5:8: μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὁψονταὶ.

The idea in Revelation and Matthew forms part of a broader Jewish and Biblical theme concerning the 'seeing of God', which is not always connected with eschatology. In this context, however, it is the eschatological use which is of relevance. In Jewish traditions 'seeing God' is linked to the moment of death, bestowed on the righteous ones after death and after the resurrection of the dead and in the times of Messias or afterwards.¹⁹ This means that here also the theme comprises both 'individual' and 'collective' eschatology.

I have, however, not found any reference to Jewish texts combining the theme of the curtain covering the throne of God with the eschatological version of the theme of 'seeing God'. This special combination might be the work of Mani himself, but the two themes he combined, he certainly found in earlier traditions. Mani might have found these traditions among the Baptists, with whom he grew up, if their Elchasaite Jewish-Christian identity also included such ideas.

¹⁸ Andreas und Henning 1934, 8 n. 5.

¹⁹ Concerning these traditions cf. H.L. Strack & P. Billerbeck, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus erläutert aus Talmud und Midrasch*, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch I (München 1965) 206–215, furthermore D.E. Aune, *Revelation* 17–22, Word Biblical Commentary 52C (Colombia 1998) 1179–1181; R. Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge 1993) 142; A. Hanson, 'The Treatment in the LXX of the Theme of Seeing God,' in: G.J. Brooke, B. Lindars (eds.), *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings. Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings (Manchester 1990)*, Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 33 (Atlanta, Georgia 1992) 557–568.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE TREASURE OF THE MANICHAEAN SPIRITUAL LIFE

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Some years ago I published a paper on the letter P. Kell. Copt. 32, addressed to the Manichaean catechumen Eirene who lived on the Dakhleh Oasis in the 4th century CE Egyptian Roman town of Kellis.¹ The letter is noteworthy for its adaptation of Matt 6:19–20 in exhorting this woman to lead a strong spiritual life, as well as praising her for what she is already accomplishing. While there are a variety of phrases scattered through the letter that describe or praise the woman, (e.g. she is ‘God-loving, good-loving’, a ‘daughter of the holy church’), a number of images are brought together in relation to her to build up a general theme about riches: acquiring riches and storing them; treasuries or storehouses in heaven (the sun and moon); building a house with solid foundation that is secure from thieves or from moths; the good tree and its fruit; the fruit of the good tree that is love emitting light.

P. Kell. Copt. 32 is addressed to an individual woman in a small Manichaean community at a particular time and in a rather isolated geographical location. While the identity of the letter writer is unknown, it was probably someone not so isolated as Eirene, who travelled at least to other Manichaean communities in the Nile valley.²

Many of the Coptic personal letters found at Kellis, like this one to Eirene, give an insight into the everyday life and concerns of the community, as well as some idea of their rich spiritual life. But how typical

¹ M. Franzmann, ‘An “heretical” use of the New Testament: a Manichaean adaptation of Matt 6:19–20 in P. Kell. Copt. 32,’ in: C. Breytenbach, J. Thom, and J. Punt (eds.), *The New Testament Interpreted. Essays in Honour of Bernard C. Lategan*, *Novum Testamentum Supplementum* 124 (Leiden, 2006) 153–162. For the edition and translation of the letter, see I.M.F. Gardner (ed.), *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis 1*, *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Monograph 9* (Oxford, 1999) 213–217.

² See the discussion on the identity of the letter writer in Gardner, *Coptic Documentary Texts*, 213–214, n. 218.

are these Manichaeans believers at Kellis, at least in the way they express what is of importance for their spiritual life? In what follows I investigate for a variety of Manichean texts from a wide range of geographical locations the central image of treasure and its associated images found in the letter to Eirene.

GAINING AND PRODUCING TREASURE³

1. *Becoming poor to become rich by ministering to the poor (Elect)*

While the person who writes to Eirene makes use of Matt 6:19–20, he does not include the last verse that completes the pericope, Matt 6:21 ('For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'),⁴ as one might have expected, since it occurs elsewhere with some frequency in Manichaean sources—five times in the major teaching text of the *Kephalaia* alone as a direct quote,⁵ as well as elsewhere in paraphrase or as a strong influence on passages where the metaphors of treasure and heart are linked. The lack of inclusion of Matt 6:21 in the letter is also surprising since Eirene is not only someone who stores up treasure, she is also depicted as a 'good tree', whose good and loving deeds for the community and the Elect have their outcome in good fruit that 'never withers, which is your love that emits radiance every day' (vv. 4–5), thus combining the image of the heart or love with her good stewardship of spiritual treasures. The related images of treasure and heart are used to support Manichaean teaching about turning away from the world of darkness and those material or physical goods that belong to it and tempt the hearts of believers away from the world of Light.

It is paradoxically those who divest themselves of earthly riches who receive heavenly riches. PsB 195.1–5, for example, speaks of the 'rich ones of the earth [who] became poor for his sake', leaving behind them riches, fields and orchards, and even their families.⁶ What awaits such people is

³ See the early work on treasure and associated images in V. Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus* (Köln, 1978) 45–70.

⁴ All references to the New Testament are from *Holy Bible. The New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha* (Nashville, 1990).

⁵ I.M.F. Gardner (ed.), *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The edited Coptic Manichaean texts in translation with commentary*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 37 (Leiden, 1995) 307.

⁶ All references to the *Manichaean Psalm Book* (PsB) are from C.R.C. Allberry (ed.), *A Manichaean Psalm-Book: Part II, Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection 2* (Stuttgart, 1938).

a treasure house or palace in the heavens, described as a world of jewels in the Parthian hymn M 749/v/7.⁷ Another Parthian hymn, M 5860 I (T II D 138), speaks of the spiritual palace prepared for those who strive for purity, courtesy, and poverty (r/ii/6–9; v/i/3–4).⁸ The teaching is not unlike Matt 5: 3: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,’ but far closer in this instance to the parallel in Lk 6:20: ‘Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God,’ since here real physical poverty is the ideal, as well as a spiritual detachment from emotional ties in the physical world.

What is given away is received by the Manichaean ‘poor’, the Elect, who rely for their subsistence on the alms given by catechumens. Thus almsgiving to the Elect, which involves depriving oneself at the same time, is the special task of the catechumens who wish to gain spiritual riches. The Turkish Manichaean text T II D 173b, 2 makes this quite clear in an exhortation which uses the related ideas of deprivation, the evil of material possessions, alms for the poor Elect, wholehearted belief, and eternal reward, again with a link to the Gospel of Matthew (Matt 10:42):

And the Messiah Buddha ... deigned to say this: ‘Throw away this (your) evil possession which belongs to the demons, and give it as alms to a very needy elect. (But) you (yourself) go hungry, you (yourself) endure pain and thus fill your treasure-house in eternity. And with your whole heart believe this: the reward for (a piece of) bread and a cup of water (given as alms) will never vanish, but is sure.’⁹

Mani’s description of the perfect catechumen in Keph 229.4–10 uses much the same set of related ideas: the catechumen must ‘withdrawn his consideration from the world and set his he[art] on the holy church.’¹⁰ He must care for the church even more than his own house. This perfect catechumen ‘has placed all his treasure in the e[l]lect men and women.’ The catechumens set their hearts on the Elect rather than on their earthly treasure (their ‘house’), and thus the Elect are the repositories of the

⁷ C. Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag. Manichäische Festtagshymnen. Edition der mittelpersischen und parthischen Sonntags-, Montags- und Bemahymnen*, Berlin Turfantexte 22 (Turnhout, Belgium, 2004) 157.

⁸ Reck, *Gesegnet*, 127–128. See also, similarly, the palace of Light in Parthian hymn M 30/v/ii/6–8; Reck, *Gesegnet*, 177.

⁹ A. von Le Coq (ed.), *Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho III*, Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 1922, Nr. 2 (Berlin, 1922) 11–12. English translation from H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic texts from Central Asia* (New York, 1993) 326.

¹⁰ All references to the *Kephalaia* (Keph) are from Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*.

'real' treasure of the catechumens. Eirene is one such catechumen who, while she may not have given all her possessions away—she is most likely involved, as are other Kellis Manichaean women, in the weaving or tailoring trades—nevertheless she has set her heart on the Elect and supports them through her almsgiving, as we know from the evidence of P. Kell. Copt. 33. The exhortation to believers to give away everything could not have been meant to be taken literally for each catechumen, since the Elect relied entirely for their existence upon the almsgiving of the catechumens and other patrons.

2. *The poor (Elect) who gain and release treasure*

The Elect are the poor who paradoxically are the repository of treasure for the catechumens. Those who are richest spiritually are those who rely on alms from others. The food they receive as alms from catechumens (Keph 208.27–29), is consumed in order to purify it and release the light trapped in the darkness of the material world (217.11–16) which when released is stored in the ships of light, the sun and the moon, by which the light is taken to the heavens. One of these ships, the Moon, is piloted by Jesus the steersman who ferries souls to the Light (PsB 151.131–152.7). It is in these light ships that Eirene too stores her spiritual treasure:

She who has acquired for herself her riches and stored them in the treasures that are in the heights, where moths shall not find a way, nor shall thieves dig through to them to steal; which (storehouses) are the sun and the moon. (vv. 7–13)

The Elect release the light in the food that they eat and return it to the realm of Light. Thus they too remain poor as they divest themselves even of the spiritual riches they receive. The light restored to the realm of Light comes from the sons of the Primal Man left behind in the darkness of the material world, the light described in the *Chinese Hymn Scroll* as precious treasures, bright pearls, and the flesh and blood of Jesus (H. 252–254).¹¹

While the treasure of the Light that is released is clearly linked in this passage with Jesus, even as he is also one of the means by which the light is returned to the heights via the ship of the Moon, he is also the basis of the paradigm for both catechumens and Elect who give up riches in

¹¹ All references to the Manichaean Chinese Hymn Scroll (H) are from H. Schmidt-Glintzer, *Chinesische Manichaica mit textkritischen Anmerkungen und einem Glossar* (Wiesbaden, 1987). For the relationship of Jesus to the Primal Man, see M. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings* (London, 2003) 109–117.

order to become spiritually poor as a way of restoring the light lost in the darkness. In clear reference to Phil 2:5–11, Manichaean sources present a Jesus who provides the pattern of the one who divests himself of spiritual garments and gifts to become poor in order to save those who belong to the Light. PsB 193.13–197.8 describes the descent of Jesus the Apostle to the earth—he, a God, becomes man (194.2), taking on the likeness of the flesh, the likeness of a man, which is a garment of slavery (194.1–3). Similarly, Keph. 12.21–27 speaks of Jesus the Christ, ‘our master’, who ‘received a servant’s form, an appearance as of men.’

3. *Gaining treasure by other religious activity or observance*

Simply by living as a catechumen or an Elect, by following Jesus, the believer produces treasure, as the *Manichaean Tebessa Codex* tells us, using Matt 6:20, that those who follow him are those who desire heavenly tabernacles and a wealth of good things that cannot be taken away.¹² Christ is the foundation of the spiritual life and observance of the believer, summed up by the image of the believer who builds up treasure upon Christ as the foundation. In PsB 188.25–189.29 the believer is exhorted to build with treasures—the gold of virginity, the silver of continence, the jewels of prayers—upon the foundation/foundation stone of the saviour, Christ, and not to build in the night so that the thief may seize the house. In a related image, those who follow the way of virginity have Christ for their Bridegroom, in whose bride-chambers riches can be hidden away so that no one can find the way to them, and where the believer receives grace, the garlands of victory, and a crown (PsB 80.13–22). In PsB 53.21–23, the believer is said to have a treasure in a tower, the foundation of which is set upon the rock of Christ.

One of the most frequent images used for those who observe virtuously the precepts of Manichaeism is the good tree,¹³ as already mentioned in relation to Eirene. While catechumens like Eirene may spend their entire life as believers doing good and producing rich spiritual fruit within the limited geographical setting of their village, those who go out

¹² J.D. BeDuhn & G. Harrison, ‘The *Tebessa Codex*: A Manichaean treatise on biblical exegesis and church order,’ in: P. Mirecki & J.D. BeDuhn (eds.), *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the recovery of Manichaean sources* (Leiden, 1997) 33–87, esp. 46.

¹³ For the image of the tree in general in Manichaeism, see Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache*, 7–44, and V. Arnold-Döben, ‘Die Symbolik des Baumes im Manichäismus,’ *Symbolon* 5 (1980) 14–15. For the image of the good and the bad tree more specifically, in relation to the Matthean/Lukan paradigm, see J.K. Coyle, *Manichaeism and Its Legacy* (Leiden, 2009) 65–88.

beyond the community to preach in the Manichaean mission also gather or produce fruit. In Keph 245.19–24 they are said to be like farmers who gather in the harvest of treasure (good fruit) from good trees, who are those believers whom they have enabled to grow as good trees through their preaching. The passage describes the rewards that these farmers receive:

You yourselves be good farmers! Do the fa[rm]ing of righteousness. Preach and enlighten every soul! Open the eyes of the people and reveal to them [li]fe and death; so that you [like]wise may [become r]ich by your preaching.

The good trees have their origin in Jesus the Splendour, who in coming to Adam, cuts down bad trees, burns them, and plants good trees to produce good fruit (Keph. 53.18–54.9). The two images of tree and treasure come together as individual images used in relation to Eirene—she is a good tree; she gather and stores up treasure—but they are joined here in a single image for the results of the Manichaean mission; it produces the treasure of good fruit from the good trees. The two images are also used in conjunction in the Manichaean *Chinese Hymn Scroll*, which describes Jesus as the Tree of Life, adorned with many incomparable and wonderful jewels, giving wisdom through its fruits, and being an unfailing treasure house with all kinds of jewels for the poor and needy (H. 7–8, 12, 14).

Finally, believers not only produce treasure, they are themselves treasure. In Keph. 204.17–22, Mani exhorts his hearers:

You to[o, my] b[elo]ved ones, struggle in every way so that you will become good pearls and be accounted to heaven by the light diver. He will come to you and bring [you] back to [... the] great chief merchant, and you will rest in the life for e[ve]r.

Believers, of course, share in the Living Soul which has been trapped in the darkness of the material world. Their treasure is a share of the Living Soul, described itself in PsB 207:18–209:10 as treasure carried on board a ship and stolen by pirates or thieves commanded by the Son of Evil, and then spread and scattered in their worlds.

4. *The Treasure of the Gospel*

Bowls found in front of the Manichaean temple in Jinjiang, China, contain the inscription: ‘The Treasure of the Religion of Light’.¹⁴ If preaching

¹⁴ See the report by S. Lieu and K. Parry, *Manichaean and (Nestorian) Christian*

is a means of harvesting good fruit filled with the treasure of light, it is because the very religion that the Manichaeans follow is a treasure of light, which is found in all its richness in the teaching of Mani. Mani's great Gospel, which we know of only from secondary sources, is entitled *The Treasure of Life*,¹⁵ and in the Turkish 'Great Hymn to Mani', he is described as preaching the jewel of the Gospel Book thoroughly ('Erweckten Lebewesen wie wir hast Du das Kleinod der Evangeliums-Lehre gründlich gelehrt;' v. 34).¹⁶ Of course Mani's teaching both mirrors and frequently repeats the teaching of Jesus.¹⁷ As the one who appears to have used the self-referent 'Apostle of Jesus Christ', Mani speaks of walking in the world 'according to the image of our Lord Jesus' in CMC 107.12–14; M 801 in the Manichaean *Book of Prayer and Confession* addresses him as 'God Christ';¹⁸ and the *Chinese Hymn Scroll* speaks of him as the New Jesus and God (H. 152). Mani's treasure that initiates and permeates the new spiritual way for believers like Eirene is a treasure found primarily in Jesus.

LOSING TREASURE

We have seen how Eirene is exhorted to build so that the thief cannot break in, and her treasure is also stored in the heights where neither thief nor moth can attack it. Concern for the security of treasure occurs often in connection with the imagery about storing it. PsB 63.10 and 66.31 speak of the psalmist who has laid up an imperishable treasure in a place to which thieves cannot find a way. We have already noted PsB 188.25–189.29 above, where a thief may break in if the building is completed in the night rather than the day.

If the thief breaks in, the treasure of the soul is lost or stolen bit by bit. The *Book of Prayer and Confession* describes an Elect who has been remiss in keeping the commandments. His treasure, the Living Self, is

Remains in Zayton (Quanzhou, South China), <http://www.anchist.mq.edu.au/doccentre/Zayton.htm> (accessed 30 November, 2009).

¹⁵ A. Adam, *Texte zum Manichäismus*. Kleine Texte für Vorlesungen und Übungen 175 (Berlin, 1969) 2–5; I. Gardner & S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 2004) 159–160.

¹⁶ W. Bang and A. von Gabain, 'Türkische Turfan-Texte III. Der große Hymnus auf Mani', *Sitzungs-bericht der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1930) 191.

¹⁷ See the summary in Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings*, 15–17.

¹⁸ W.B. Henning (ed.), *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*, *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1936, Nr. 10 (Berlin, 1937) 19.

taken away from him because he has left his gates open, i.e. the gates of his bodily senses. Little by little, day by day, demons enter and a small part of his soul is destroyed.¹⁹

CONCLUSION

The images of treasure and the heart of the Manichaean believer used together clearly provide an important theme for texts and teaching from Egypt and China and the communities of the Silk Road in between. This brief examination of the use of images in relation to Manichaean believers about treasure and associated concepts of poverty, almsgiving, building for storage and security, religious observance and mission, Light, good trees and good fruit, raises two important points.

Even such a brief overview of the imagery about treasure has demonstrated clearly that what is said to, and of Eirene in the Kellis letter addressed to her is not at all unusual within the scope of Manichaean texts and teachings available to us. The overview thus further supports the conviction that the corpus of letters left to us by the small group of Manichaeans living in Kellis is an extremely important and invaluable source for learning of the everyday lives and spiritual concerns of fairly typical Manichaeans.

It has been important to note the central role that Jesus plays for these themes and images. Jesus sets the foundation for building for treasure; he is the primal Tree of Life from which all other good trees take their pattern; he is the tree of treasure that gives wisdom and offers riches to the poor; he pilots the ship which stores the treasure of light and ferries it to the realm of Light; his life and descent into the world provides the pattern for believers who become poor to attain spiritual riches; his gospel preached and expanded upon by Mani is the treasure given to the poor that bears fruit in the harvest of the Manichaean mission; and so on. Thus he is the basis of core spiritual activity by believers; he enables it, and is the repository of the treasure which is produced by it. All activity of gaining and producing and being treasure has its source in him.

While this paper examines but one theme related to the spiritual life, it is a frequent and important one for Manichaean teaching and prayer, and strengthens the conviction that the spiritual life and work of the Manichaean believer is firmly centred on the figure of Jesus, and that

¹⁹ Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*, 37–38.

Christology is a central aspect of the Manichaean system. In the larger schemes of Manichaean cosmology and cosmogony the figure of Jesus may not stand out beyond all others, but in the everyday life of believers, whether Elect or catechumen, Jesus is the central figure.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

MANICHAEAN RITUAL PRACTICE AT ANCIENT KELLIS: A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE MEANING AND FUNCTION OF THE SO-CALLED *PRAYER OF THE EMANATIONS**

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The Manichaean text commonly referred to as *The Prayer of the Emanations* is generally supposed to have been preserved in a single extant copy. This copy was written in Greek on a (reused) wooden board, probably in the first half of the IVth century CE and—one imagines—somewhere in Egypt. It was a fine production; and recovered complete in one piece from the rear courtyard of House Three at Ismant el-Kharab during excavation in February 1992.¹ The papyrologist in attendance at the time was R.G. Jenkins, who published the *editio princeps* in 1995.² The text was subsequently re-published in 2007 in the definitive Dakhleh Oasis Project monograph series, now as P. Kellis VI Gr. 98. On this occasion the Greek edition was prepared by K.A. Worp, with the English translation

* This paper was first read to the VIIth International Congress on Manichaeism, held in Dublin during September 2009 under the auspices of the International Association of Manichaean Studies and the Chester Beatty Library. Professor Dr. Johannes van Oort was the IAMS president at that happy occasion.

My thanks to those scholars who have so generously shared their unpublished work with me or provided comment during the writing of this paper: François de Blois, Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, Enrico Morano, Fernando Bermejo Rubio and Klaas Worp.

¹ The excavations were directed by Colin A. Hope of Monash University, and held under the aegis of the Dakhleh Oasis Project.

² R.G. Jenkins, 'The Prayer of the Emanations in Greek from Kellis (T. Kellis 22)', *Le Muséon*, CVIII, 1995: 243–263. For the record: I joined the Dakhleh Oasis Project in 1991, after the recovery of Manichaean texts from Ismant el-Kharab had become apparent. However, I did not take part in the following fieldwork season in Egypt. On the return of the Australian team to Melbourne in 1992 R.G. Jenkins related the discovery of this remarkable piece to me, and I was able to suggest some relevant references in Manichaean literature for him to use in his publication (as it was apparent to me that it belonged to that religious tradition).

and commentary by myself.³ There have also been two other detailed scholarly discussions of the text in recent years, focussed on the issue as to whether it is in fact of Manichaean authorship, a question that I believe this present paper will make redundant.⁴

In brief summary: This extant version is a superior production, written in 132 lines, and has the appearance of a master from which copies might be made.⁵ It is headed by a title, l. 1—generally to be translated as—‘*Prayer of the Emanations* (Εὐχή τῶν προβολῶν)’; and ends with the same, ll. 131–132 ‘*The Prayer of the Emanations* is finished (Ἐπληρώθη ἡ τῶν προβολῶν εὐχή)’. In fact, Khosroyev has argued that the Greek is better understood as an objective genitive, thus *The Prayer to the Emanations*; and I would agree that this gives a more literally accurate representation of its purpose (as subsequent discussion will make clear).⁶ We can note also that the term προβολή is not found in the body of the text, and that one could reasonably query whether the title is itself original.

The majority of the text is made up of ten stanzas (for want of a better word) of greatly varying length, each beginning the same: ‘I worship and glorify (Προσκυνῶ καὶ δοξάζω) . . .’. We can return to further discussion of the term προσκυνέω later; but, of course, its specific meaning is ‘obedience’ or ‘prostration to’ a superior or divine being. For the moment: each of these stanzas is directed to a somewhat different being or group

³ I. Gardner, *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 2*, (= P. Kellis VI), Oxbow Press, Oxford 2007: 111–128. For the record: K.A. Worp autopsied the text in Bashendi in the mid 1990s with myself present; though, such is the fine scribal hand and excellent preservation of the piece, there is little variation of substance from Jenkins’ edition. The English translation and commentary were primarily written by myself, but I discussed both in detail with M. Choat (who prepared the Greek index for P. Kellis VI) and benefited from suggestions and references that he made. I note also that S.N.C. Lieu and myself published a slightly revised version of Jenkins’ translation in our *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004: 194–196.

⁴ A. Khosroyev argued against a Manichaean context in his paper: ‘Zu einem mani-chäischen (?) Gebet’, in *New Perspectives in Manichaean Research*, (Acts of the Vth International Congress on Manichaeism, 2–8 September 2001, Napoli), ed. A. Van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo, Brepols, Turnhout 2005: 203–222. I discussed (and mostly rejected) these arguments in my commentary in P. Kellis VI. More recently, Fernando Bermejo Rubio, although in agreement with my views, has published an extended treatment of the text and its literary parallels in order to evidence even more firmly its Manichaean authorship: ‘Further Remarks on the Manichaean Nature of Εὐχή τῶν προβολῶν (P. Kell. Gr. 98)’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 168, 2009: 221–238.

⁵ I will refrain from further description of the piece, as it has been amply discussed by Jenkins 1995 and in P. Kellis VI.

⁶ Khosroyev op. cit. 2005: 210; and at more length my comments in P. Kellis VI.

of such. The first is (not surprisingly) the Father himself, i.e. the supreme transcendent God; then subsequently the emanated gods, angels and so on to finally end with the righteous themselves. There is apparent a kind of descent in the divine hierarchy from the eternal realm to the present and immediate; and thus the last of what I have called the ten stanzas then turns into a heartfelt prayer for favour and help, so that the one reciting the words may themselves attain eternal life. Finally, from ll. 124–130, the text switches to the third person:

Blessed be he who prays this prayer frequently, or at least on the third day, with a pure heart and forthright speech, asking for forgiveness of sins. Amen.

Obviously, these lines may be supposed to be secondary to the main text itself. This ‘main text’ can therefore be summarised in terms of the ten ‘obeisances’ directed to the following:

1. The great Father of the lights.
2. All the gods, angels, splendours, enlighteners and powers.
3. The great powers, the shining angels.
4. The shining mind, king, Christ.
5. The living God.
6. The great light-givers, the sun and moon and the virtuous powers in them.
7. The five great lights.
8. All the gods, all the angels.
9. All the shining angels.
10. All the righteous.

This rather bare listing would benefit from an extended discussion, as various issues arise. For instance, are the terms in no. 2 simple synonyms, or do they reflect subtle gradations of emanated divinity or perhaps variations in function? Similarly, is the list as repetitive as it appears at first sight, or are perhaps the angels of e.g. no. 8 a different group to those of no. 9? Furthermore, in my commentary of 2007 I suggested that there might be some corruption or misunderstanding in textual transmission at no. 5; for not only has the Father been praised already at the start, but on this occasion he is presented in the stanza as a demiurge. It seems more likely that no. 5 refers to the Living Spirit (i.e. the demiurge), sometimes termed ‘the father of life’ (from which term the confusion might have arose), rather than the supreme God. However, it is not my intention here to start to discuss all this. Many of the points and suitable parallels have

been rehearsed in previous publications, and my purpose here is not a detailed commentary on the text itself.

In fact, I find myself surprised to be returning to discussion of *The Prayer of the Emanations* so soon after publishing what was my considered opinion about the text. This paper is occasioned only by one of those rare but wonderful moments of real discovery that reward research. It occurred—one might say—by accident. I have recently been (re-)reading al-Nadim's account of Mani and the Manichaeans in his *Fihrist* (catalogue); which was written in Arabic in the Xth century CE, but utilised a range of earlier sources.⁷ For my on-going work on Mani's *Epistles* I have made a careful study of the important listing of the titles of such which are found there, and thus François de Blois kindly sent me his unpublished working translation of the whole section from the *Fihrist*.⁸ I used this again as I prepared a paper to read at a conference this July in Oxford: an attempt to understand the enigmatic chapter titles of Mani's *Book of Mysteries*,⁹ which, again, are preserved only in al-Nadim's work. Just before I left for Europe I had the opportunity to read the whole of de Blois' typescript, and was astonished when I came to the well-known section on the Manichaean daily prayers.¹⁰

⁷ See the preliminary discussion by F. de Blois, 'New Light on the Sources of the Manichaean Chapter in the *Fihrist*', in *New Perspectives in Manichaean research*, (Acts of the Vth International Congress on Manichaeism, 2–8 September 2001, Napoli), ed. A. Van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo, Brepols, Turnhout 2005: 37–45.

⁸ N.b.: Although the translation is unpublished as such, it stands behind his contributions on this source to the *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts. Volume II. Texts from Iraq and Iran*, ed. F. de Blois, N. Sims-Williams, Brepols, Turnhout 2006. One may search the relevant entries there.

⁹ I. Gardner, 'Mani's *Book of Mysteries*: Prolegomena to a New Look at Mani, the 'Baptists' and the Mandaean'; 28th Aram International Conference, on 'The Mandaean', 9–11 July 2009, The Oriental Institute, Oxford. (The paper will be published in the *Aram* journal).

¹⁰ I thank F. de Blois for permission to quote from his working translation. I have made some slight changes to the format, and removed the Arabic terms and his footnotes. In the text of the third prostration I have at one point followed an alternative translation given by de Blois in a footnote, since the comparison to the Greek makes it apparent that this must be the correct reading. Elsewhere, it is again clear that knowledge of the Greek text would make improvements to the reading of the Arabic possible; but I have preferred to leave the translation as I received it. The parallel to *The Prayer of the Emanations* is somehow more immediately apparent in de Blois' translation (which highlights the text of each prayer in bold), when compared to e.g. that of B. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim*, Volume II, Columbia University Press, New York & London 1970: 790–791. Nevertheless, the fact that I had previously not noticed this is rendered only slightly more palatable by the knowledge that I am in good and substantial company. Nevertheless, I confess: *mea culpa*.

And [Mani] imposed prayers, four or seven:

And this means that a man stands and washes himself with flowing water, or with something else, and faces the greater luminary (i.e. the sun by day or moon by night) standing. Then he prostrates himself and during his prostration he says:

Blessed is our guide, the paraclete, the apostle of light;

Blessed are his angels, the guardians;

Praiseworthy are his luminous armies!

He says these words while he is prostrate, and (then) stands up and does not remain prostrate but stands upright.

Then he says in the second prostration:

Praiseworthy art thou, oh luminous one, Mani, our guide;

root of illumination and branch of life, mighty tree that is all cure!

And he says in the third prostration:

I bow down and give praise with pure heart and truthful tongue to the great God, the Father of the Lights and their origin:

Praiseworthy, blessed art thou,

and all thy greatness,

and thy realms, the blessed ones, whom thou hast evoked.

Praiseworthy are thy armies and thy pious ones and thy word and thy greatness and thy contentment; on account of the fact that thou art the God who is all truth and life and piety.

Then he says in the fourth one:

I give praise and bow down to all the gods,

and all the luminous angels,

and all the lights,

and all the armies,

which are from the great God.

Then he says in the fifth one:

I bow down and give praise to the greatest armies;

and to the luminous gods, who with their wisdom have transfixed and dislodged the darkness and restrained it.

And he says in the sixth one:

I bow down and give praise to the great, luminous father of greatness who has come forth from eternities.

And so forth until the twelfth prostration. And when he has finished the ten prayers, he begins with another prayer and in it they have a (formula of) praise which we do not need to mention.

As for the first prayer (of the day), it is at noon;

and the second prayer is between noon and the setting of the sun;

then the sunset prayer after the setting of the sun;

then the prayer of nightfall three hours after sunset.

And in each prayer and prostration he does as he did in the first prayer;

and it is the prayer of the (Third) Messenger.

I will start with a couple of preliminary comments. In the first place, when al-Nadim comments that Mani imposed four or seven prayers, previous scholars are certainly correct that the four are for the Hearers and the seven are for the Elect.¹¹ In the account above al-Nadim provides details of the practice of the former group, the lay followers of the religion. Secondly, the comment that there are twelve prostrations, but ten prayers, has caused some previous scholars to suggest emendations to the text. However, I believe the solution is this: Mani is said to have imposed the prayers; but the first two are in fact blessings upon Mani, and have thus been added to the original practice.¹² The prayers properly start at what al-Nadim gives as the third prostration, and follow a regular pattern where each begins: 'I bow down and praise ...'. These then are the ten prayers, from three to twelve as it were; although unfortunately al-Nadim only gives the text of the first four.

Now, it is apparent that the first three of al-Nadim's four are almost exactly the same as the first three stanzas of *The Prayer of the Emanations*, each beginning with the same phrase: 'I bow down and praise', thus Προσκυνῶ καὶ δοξάζω.

Prayer 1:

(De Blois tr. from the Arabic)

I bow down and give praise with pure heart and truthful tongue to the great God, the Father of the Lights and their origin:
Praiseworthy, blessed art thou,
and all thy greatness,
and thy realms, the blessed ones, whom thou hast evoked.
Praiseworthy are thy armies and thy pious ones and thy word and thy greatness and thy contentment; on account of the fact that thou art the God who is all truth and life and piety.

(Gardner tr. from the Greek)¹³

I worship and glorify the great Father of Lights, from pure insight,
with speech without deceit.

¹¹ See further the discussion by F. de Blois, 'The Manichaean Daily Prayers', in *Studia Manichaica*, (Acts of the IVth International Congress on Manichaeism, Berlin, 14–18 July 1997), ed. R.E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, P. Zieme, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2000: 49–54.

¹² De Blois conjectures a similar solution in a footnote.

¹³ Here I have preferred to leave the translation essentially as it was published in P. Kellis VI in 2007; though one could very easily (without violence to the Greek) make some changes to (English) word choice, order, format and so on, in order to highlight the closeness of the two versions.

You have been glorified and honoured: You and your greatness and the all-praiseworthy aeons; for you in glory have perfected their foundation.

They have been glorified: your power and glory, and your light and word, and your greatness and the aeons of blessing, and all your will. For you are God, the basis of every grace and life and truth.

Once allowance is made for certain translation choices, virtually every clause is replicated in the two versions. For instance, given (as I will argue below) that the original text was in Aramaic, and that we are comparing a Greek translation of that found in IVth century Egypt to an Arabic text utilised by Manichaeans in the Abbasid empire, it is obvious that 'with pure heart and truthful tongue' corresponds to 'from pure insight, with speech without deceit'. Further detailed examination of the Greek and Arabic texts will illuminate this, but for the moment the basic point is clear.

Prayer 2:

(De Blois tr. from the Arabic)

**I give praise and bow down to all the gods,
and all the luminous angels,
and all the lights,
and all the armies,
which are from the great God.**

(Gardner tr. from the Greek)

I worship and glorify all gods, all angels, all splendours, all enlighteners, all powers: Those which are from the great and glorious Father; those which subsist in his holiness, and by his light are nourished, being purified of all darkness and malignance.

In this stanza there are four categories of emanated gods in the Arabic, and five in the Greek. Plainly, the 'armies' in the former are the same as the 'powers' in the latter. The 'splendours' (φέγγος) and 'enlighteners' (φωστήρ) of the Greek text are both well-known categories in Coptic Manichaean literature (counting *ⲛⲣⲓⲉ* for 'splendour'),¹⁴ and it is probable that these two have been combined into the 'lights' of the Arabic version (rather than their being duplicates of the one term). Of more significance, the Greek text is longer, including an extended series of clauses about the emanations after the statement that they are from God.

¹⁴ E.g. see the discussion in P. Kellis VI (commentary to P. Kellis Gr. 98, ll. 16–18).

Prayer 3:

(De Blois tr. from the Arabic)

**I bow down and give praise to the greatest armies;
and to the luminous gods, who with their wisdom have transfixed and
dislodged the darkness and restrained it.**

(Gardner tr. from the Greek)

I worship and glorify the great powers, the shining angels: Having come forth with their own wisdom, and having subjected the darkness and its arrogant powers that were desiring to make war with the one who is first of all; these are they who put heaven and earth in order, and bound in them the whole foundation of contempt.

Again, the Greek text is significantly longer, for the actions of the light against the darkness are given in some detail. Thus, the rather sparse comment in the Arabic that the luminous gods ‘restrained it’, equates in the Greek to ‘bound in (heaven and earth) the whole foundation of contempt’.¹⁵

Prayer 4:

(De Blois tr. from the Arabic)

**I bow down and give praise to the great, luminous father of greatness
who has come forth from eternities.**

(Gardner tr. from the Greek)

I worship and glorify the one generated of the greatness, the shining mind, king, Christ: The one who came forth from the outer aeons into the ordered reality above, and from there to this created reality below; (etc, an extended account of Christ the redeemer follows).

At this point the two versions seriously diverge. The Arabic has a brief stanza apparently in praise of the Father of Greatness, whilst the Greek has a long one devoted to Christ. Still, the Arabic stanza is oddly placed, since God has already been praised (as one would expect) at the start. Also, I wonder if the rather curious ‘who has come forth from eternities’ in fact corresponds to the Greek ‘who came forth from the outer aeons’. In this case, the Arabic version is not so much a different tradition to the Greek, but instead an instance where (perhaps for religious reasons in a Muslim environment) the stanza has been drastically foreshortened. The

¹⁵ Incidentally, Bermejo *op. cit.* 2009: 223, n. 18, suggests that ὑπεροψία here should better convey ‘arrogance’; and this is probably correct.

account of Christ, his descent and his redemptive work in the world has been completely omitted, leaving little more than an incoherent remnant.

Unfortunately, al-Nadim (or his source) fails to record any of the following stanzas. It is my working hypothesis that the version found in the Arabic tradition would have continued to replicate the Greek rather closely. Also, a number of hints from this brief discussion point to the Greek text being a fuller and better version of the prayers, i.e. that the Arabic shows some erosion of true Manichaean terminology. This I strongly suspect to be the case: The Greek text should have priority. There is certainly need for a more extended study than I have had the opportunity to make here. However, I want now to look at some of the implications of this discovery, and to map out areas for further research. I believe these to be remarkably rich.

In the first place, the ritual context for *The Prayer of the Emanations* now becomes clear. The wooden board does indeed contain the text of the ten prayers that accompanied the physical prostrations at the heart of the practice of daily prayer. Also, this version, like that in the *Fihrist*, was one that specifically belonged to the catechumens rather than to the elect.¹⁶ The verb προσκυνέω, with which each prayer ('stanza') starts, needs to be understood in its full sense of 'prostrate'. The board itself seems to have been an exemplar, from which copies could be made, or possibly the text of the prayers learnt by heart. It seems unlikely (from its layout and fine preservation) that it would have been held during prayer itself.

We know a certain amount about this ritual from other sources. Augustine comments (presumably drawing on his own experience as a catechumen in the 370s CE):¹⁷

¹⁶ This is suggested by its find-site in a domestic context (i.e. House Three) at Ismant el-Kharab (ancient Kellis); but seems proved by the tenth prayer to 'all the righteous', where the subject speakers express their fervent hope for release from reincarnation (μετενσωμάτων). This must represent the perspective of the catechumens or hearers. (The same point is noted by Bermejo *op. cit.* 2009: 234 n. 86, who has also in personal communication suggested that the passage could be understood as an example of the hearers asking for intercession from the elect, such as is discussed in *kephalaion* CXV). In this case, one wonders how the prayers of the elect would have differed from what we have here.

¹⁷ Augustine, *de Haeresibus* XLVI.18, in I. Gardner, S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004: 191. Similarly, (from a primary Manichaean source), e.g. *Keph1* (= H.J. Polotsky, A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1940, 1966, ed. W.-P. Funk 1999, 2000) 192, 29–30, 33–193, 1: 'The first work of the catechumenate is fasting, prayer and almsgiving ... And prayer is this: (The catechumen) prays to the sun and the moon, the great light-givers.'

In the daytime they offer their prayers towards the sun, wherever it goes in its orbit; at night, they offer them towards the moon, if it appears; if it does not, they direct them towards the north, by which the sun, when it has set, returns to the east. They stand while praying.

As Bermejo aptly comments: "Christian heresiologists interpreted this feature *in malam partem*, as a sign of heliolatry or selenolatry".¹⁸ Famously, the pagan Neo-Platonist Alexander of Lycopolis was more careful in his comment:¹⁹

... they honour the sun and moon above all else, not as gods, but as the way which allows access to God.

This is an important witness from Egypt at the start of the IVth century. But, there is convincing evidence that the practice of using sun and moon as the *qibla* for prayer does indeed derive from Mani himself (as may already be implied in al-Nadim). Al-Biruni is known to have had access to canonical writings, from one of which he quotes Mani himself:²⁰

The other religious bodies blame us because we worship sun and moon, and represent them as an image. But they do not know their real natures; they do not know that the sun and moon are our path, the door whence we march forth into the world of our existence (into heaven), as this has been declared by Jesus.

Nevertheless, there is a certain disingenuity about this claim that the sun and moon are simply the path towards the heavenly realm, (though certainly they were in a very literal sense staging-posts for the souls in their ascent); and this brings us back to the meaning of the title given to the Greek text and especially the term 'emanations (προβολή)'. It is well-known that the sun and moon were not simply 'ships' to transport the liberated souls, but that they also housed the 'thrones' of many of the emanated gods during the time of mixture.²¹ There they dwelt, to

¹⁸ Bermejo op. cit. 2009: 230. n. 62; with references to Augustine, c. *Faust.* 14.11, 20.6.

¹⁹ Alexander Lycopolitanus, c. *Manichaei opinioniones disputatio* V, in Gardner – Lieu, op. cit. 2004: 181.

²⁰ This is probably from *The Book of Mysteries*; tr. following E.C. Sachau, ed., *Alberuni's India*, I, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London, 1910: 169. The story of how al-Biruni obtained his copy of Mani's writings is found in his preface to an index of al-Razi's writings; cf. (e.g.) J.C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony*, Hebrew Union College Press, Cincinnati, 1992: 18–19 + nn. 68–70.

²¹ On the terminology of 'ships' see e.g. *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts. Volume I*, ed. S. Clackson, E. Hunter, S.N.C. Lieu, Brepols, Turnhout 1998: 172a (s.v. 𐭮𐭥𐭩). According to *Keph1* 82, 29–83, 1 the Messenger, Great Spirit and Living Spirit have their thrones in the 'ship of the day' (i.e. the sun); whilst Jesus Splendour, the First Man and the Virgin

be invoked and ready to aid the plight of souls trapped in the material worlds. The use of the term *προβολή* for a divine emanation, for which there are many examples in the Coptic Manichaica, has been well noted in earlier discussions.²² But this newly-uncovered context of prayer ‘to the sun and moon’ demands reference to the *Acta Archelai*:²³

However, all the emanations (αἱ δὲ προβολαὶ πᾶσαι), Jesus who is in the little ship (i.e. the moon), the Mother of Life, the twelve steersmen, the Virgin of Light and the Third Messenger, who is in the large ship (i.e. the sun), and the Living Spirit ...

Probably this is the clue to the title given the Greek text on the wooden board recovered from Kellis, which now can be glossed something like: (*The Set of Ten*) *Prayers to the Emanated Gods in the Sun and the Moon*. Of course, this is not entirely and literally accurate, for instance God the Father (= the Father of Lights) is hidden from the visible universe. Equally, it is the fifth prayer/stanza that is specifically directed to ‘the great light-givers (τοὺς μεγάλους φωστῆρας), both sun and the moon and the virtuous powers in them’. But I think licence can be given to understand this as the meaning behind the title. However, I am still inclined to question whether the title is original; indeed, I think it probably is not.

Further, these ‘prayers’ (Greek *εὐχή*, Arabic *salah*) are presumably also inferred by naming the act of worship or prostration (*προσκύνησις*) itself, as when Mani teaches a man ‘about the rest (of the hands), the commandments and prostration before the light-givers (τὴν εἰς τοὺς φωστῆρας προσκύνησιν)’.²⁴ Interestingly, this Greek term does not seem

of Light have theirs in the ‘ship of the night’ (i.e. the moon). Although there are some variations in the accounts, the living presence of the gods in the sun and moon is a core tenet of Manichaean teachings from all regions.

²² E.g. see the discussion in P. Kellis VI (commentary to P. Kellis Gr. 98, l. 1); and further *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts*. I, op. cit. 1998: 44b, 81a (s.v. *προβολή*). A systematic study of the *Kephalaia* in fact reveals three types of usage: (a) general, plural and basically synonymous with terms such as ‘gods’ or ‘powers’ (e.g. *Keph1* 73, 19–20; 126, 10–13); (b) plural and in parallel to the same there are also emanations of the Land of Darkness (e.g. *Keph1* 68, 21); (c) in the singular there is a first, second and third emanation, each referring to a specific set of gods (e.g. *Keph1* 34, 27; 35, 4). A study of the *Psalm-Book* evidences the same.

²³ *Acta Archelai* 31, 6/XIII, 2, in Gardner – Lieu, op. cit. 2004: 187.

²⁴ *Cologne Mani Codex* 128, 10–12. This important passage is also noted by Bermejo, op. cit. 2009: 230 (as well as a number of the other texts I am using here). Clearly, it is a kind of summary of the essence of the religion. The ‘rest (*ἀνάπαυσις*)’ is a technical term referring to control of the hands so as not to harm the Cross of Light, see e.g. *Keph1* 192, 9–11 where the Coptic word *ḥṭan* is used in its place (this *kephalaion* LXXX provides a

to be found in the Coptic Manichaica. As a verb (i.e. for προσκυνέω) the preferred word is **ογωϣ**;²⁵ but what should be used for the ritual itself (i.e. for προσκύνησις) is not so certain.²⁶

Let us turn now to the important consequences of this new understanding of *The Prayer of the Emanations*. Firstly, there can no longer be any doubt that the text is Manichaean. My own previous comments, reinforced by Bermejo's recent study, were probably sufficient to demonstrate this. But the parallel in the *Fihrist*, and thus the realisation that we have recovered the text of this central Manichaean ritual act (i.e. the daily prayers), surely puts the matter beyond discussion.

Secondly, it has on occasion been suggested that the community at Kellis may somehow not have been fully 'Manichaean'. Whilst this has always seemed to me unjustified, (and to raise all sorts of other difficulties); the idea is no doubt built upon the remarkable 'Christian' tone and style of the letters and other documents found there and ascribed (largely by myself as general editor) to this group. The notion results from an incorrect understanding of the religion. I have argued elsewhere that Mani most profoundly thought himself to be Christian, the apostle of Jesus Christ and servant of his 'good saviour'. Whilst the trajectory of historical development certainly created something we can characterise as another religion; nevertheless, at this time and place (IVth century Egypt), the self-understanding of the community associated with Kellis as being a 'holy church' is precisely what one should expect.

succinct summary of practice that should be compared in general). The Greek and Coptic word φωστήρ is, equally, a technical usage with reference to the sun and moon; and is found repeatedly in Manichaean literature (also Bermejo *op. cit.* 2009: 230 with selected references in the notes).

²⁵ Notice should also be taken of the important text at *Homs* (= H.J. Polotsky, *Manichäische Homilien*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1934) 54, 22 where **rike** is used to describe the very physical action of bending in prayer. For prostrating before the *bema* the term **скаркѣ** is found at *Homs* 53, 2 and *PsBk2* (= C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book. Part II*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1938) 13, 27. Note also *PsBk2* 214, 9–10: **αγсκαркѣ αγκαλх νεγпєт** [**αγ**]ογωϣ[**τ**] **неq** ('they prostrated, they bent their knees, they worshipped him').

²⁶ Of course, **ογωϣ** (also fem. **ογεϣτε** at *Homs* 22, 9f.) can be used as a noun, as repeatedly in *kephalaion IX*; but there it does not quite have the technical meaning as regards this specific ritual. There is the intriguing usage of **κλιςις** (pl.) in P. Kellis V Copt. 19, 17: It appears to be the title of some (Manichaean?) book, following after the 'sayings (**ρημα**)'. It would seem conceivable that the term is used for ritual practice ('prostrations?'), although it is not found with this sense elsewhere in the Greek or Coptic Manichaica. Alternatively, with these two terms, Makarios' instructions to his son may have switched suddenly from the copying of religious literature to Matheos' grammatical education, viz.: 'Study your verbs and inflexions!'.

Anyway, the conclusion of this paper's research is that the community not only knew, but presumably also undertook, the daily prayers; and, further, that they had essentially the same text (or one even more authentic in its detail) as their co-believers centuries later in the Abbasid empire. This serves to integrate the ritual practice of the Kellis community with that of the world-wide Manichaean church. The important implication, then, is not why references e.g. to the *pascha* are to be found in this body of material; but, rather, how this material can help us to understand the real identity of so-called Manichaean faith and practice.

Nevertheless, there are valid questions to be asked about the actual exercise of this ritual at Kellis. According to al-Nadim's account, the prayers should be undertaken four or seven times a day; depending on whether you are an Elect or a Hearer (as we understand this). There is other evidence to support the account. For instance, the famous Uighur confessional prayer for the lay followers asserts:²⁷

There is a rule to direct four prayers to the God Azrua, the God of the sun and the moon, the fivefold God and the Buddhas with complete attention and with an earnest heart, daily.

F. de Blois has made a study of the available evidence, including important and detailed information from al-Biruni about the times of prayer, (some of) their names, and the number of prostrations at each occasion.²⁸ His conclusion is that al-Nadim's account, in the times given for the prayers, 'describes the practice of Manichaeans who had apparently

²⁷ *Xuastvanift* X, 1; in H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, Harper, San Francisco 1993: 303; also see the Sogdian version (evidencing thus an earlier east Iranian version), *ibid.* p. 306.

²⁸ F. de Blois, *op. cit.* 2000. Incidentally, I do not agree with his argument that the *Xuastvanift* 'should be understood to mean that the four prayers, as a whole, were devoted to the worship of the four-fold god' (p. 53). It would seem a more obvious reading to suppose that the four prayers were identified with four different divine recipients, amongst which we can identify the second prayer (to the God of the sun and the moon) with the sunrise (and second) prayer-time in al-Biruni's account, which was directed to the Messenger. This would indeed be appropriate for the rising of the 'ship of living fire' (to borrow a term from the Coptic tradition). Consequently, if we merge the two accounts and slightly vary the terminology to achieve a 'neutral' rendering: We can well suppose that the dawn prayer was to God the Father, the sunrise to the Third Messenger (strongly identified with the sun), the noon to the living soul (ascending on its heavenly journey), and the nightfall to the prophets (and perhaps particularly Jesus who was strongly identified with the moon). This may be slightly hypothetical; but it makes good sense.

adjusted their prayer-times to coincide exactly with the four public and visible prayers of the Muslims'.²⁹ Thus, the account of al-Biruni, with its dawn—sunrise—noon—nightfall times of prayer for the hearers, would preserve a more authentic Manichaean tradition.

If we turn now to *The Prayer of the Emanations*, there is no such detailed account. Rather, we find the somewhat problematic comment (ll. 124–130):

Blessed be he who prays this prayer frequently, or at least on the third day, with a pure heart and forthright speech, asking for forgiveness of sins.

I have previously discussed at some length the various options for understanding the clause translated here as 'at least on the third day' (ἢ καὶ τριτῆς ἡμέρας).³⁰ However, the identification of the ritual concerned changes the matter. In particular, Khosroyev's suggested emendations to read 'three times a day' become much more attractive.³¹ I will come back to this issue shortly, because we can adduce some new evidence that will conclude this matter more or less definitively. The issue remains about the relationship of any 'three times daily' instruction to the widely attested 'four times daily' practice of the hearers. Still, one thing is certain: Here there is good evidence for a ritual practice of daily prayer and prostration that precedes the rise of Islam by some centuries. This is a more than interesting matter for the history of religions.

Our final topic is the fascinating question of the ultimate provenance of the text, its author and language of composition. It has generally been supposed that *The Prayer of the Emanations* was composed in Greek, but the idea of its translation from that language into Arabic is inherently problematic. Of course, much of the heritage of late antiquity was translated from Greek into Arabic, often through the medium of Syriac; but, as regards Manichaean literature, the situation was rather different. Aramaic was the 'core' language, the native language of Mani and the power-base of the early community. We can characterise the spread of Manichaean texts as follows:³²

²⁹ De Blois, *op. cit.* 2000: 51.

³⁰ See the discussion in P. Kellis VI (commentary to P. Kellis Gr. 98, l. 126).

³¹ Either τριτῇ ἡμέρᾳ or τρι(ς) τῆς ἡμέρας.

³² This is intended purely for general illustration. There are certainly many issues of detail that are glossed over, e.g. the special status of Middle Persian (and in particular the *Shabuhragan*), the complex interrelationship of the various Middle Iranian languages or dialects, the question as to whether texts were translated directly into Coptic from Aramaic/Syriac.

(west) Aramaic/Syriac › Greek › Coptic and Latin
 (east) Aramaic/Syriac › Middle Iranian › Turkish and Chinese
 (centre) Aramaic/Syriac › Arabic

Furthermore, it would seem unlikely that a text so important as the daily prayers would have been composed in Greek, which represents a secondary stage of development for the religion. Therefore, my hypothesis, on realising the proper context for *The Prayer of the Emanations*, was that the text must have been composed in Aramaic; and most probably by Mani himself.

It is known from canon lists that Mani composed *Prayers* and (two) *Psalms*, which are usually counted as a single work and numbered last in the traditional sequence of seven scriptures (plus the 'drawing' known as the *Picture-Book*).³³ There are in fact many fragments in Middle Iranian languages (Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian) of two hymn-cycles known as *The Blessings of the Great Ones* (*Wuzurgan Afriwan*) and *The Blessings of the Little Ones* (*Qasudagan Afriwan*). These are known to have been composed by Mani in Aramaic, and must belong to his *Prayers and Psalms*. Although there has been reference to these for many years by scholars working on the Turfan collection, and some fragments have been published, the material has not been systematically made available and is very difficult to access.³⁴ However, this situation is about to change, as D. Durkin-Meisterernst and E. Morano are near finalising their eagerly awaited edition.³⁵ Here I record my great thanks to these scholars who advanced me a copy of their manuscript as I prepared this paper in August 2009.

³³ Again, I abbreviate here what would otherwise be an extensive account, but of little relevance to our purposes. See, e.g., the discussion and texts quoted in Gardner and Lieu, op. cit. 2004: 151–156 (see also 164); and the very useful material collected in chapter 1 of J.C. Reeves, op. cit. 1992.

³⁴ The most widely-available account is probably H.-J. Klimkeit, op. cit. 1993, 30–31; and see M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1975: 91–92 (texts af and ag). E. Morano has given some account of the on-going work in his conference papers: 'A Manichaean *Oratio Dominica*', in: *New Perspectives in Manichaean research*, (Acts of the Vth International Congress on Manichaeism, 2–8 September 2001, Napoli), ed. A. Van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo, Brepols, Turnhout, 2005: 277–285; 'ymyn 'hynd: The Beginning of Mani's Psalm *Wuzurgan Afriwan* in Parthian and Middle Persian', in *New Light on Manichaeism*, (Acts of the VIth International Congress on Manichaeism, August 2005, Flagstaff), ed. J.D. BeDuhn, E.J. Brill, Leiden – Boston 2009: 213–223.

³⁵ D. Durkin-Meisterernst and E. Morano, *Mani's Psalms. Edition of the Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian Fragments in the Turfan Collection*, Brepols, Turnhout 2010.

I do not wish to anticipate the painstaking work of my colleagues just before it is published, and so will confine myself to brief comment. As I suspected and hoped, a remarkably close and undoubted parallel to the Greek and Arabic has been preserved, albeit fragmentarily, in various Middle Iranian remnants.³⁶ It would indeed be most surprising if there had been no trace of this crucially important text in the Turfan collection. I can demonstrate the parallel by reproducing the start of the first prayer from Sogdian, Arabic and Greek:

(Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano tr. from the Sogdian)

I worship and bless with a pure mind and with a true tongue the great ruler of the gods, king God Zurwa who is the father and ancestor of all the luminous gods.

(De Blois tr. from the Arabic)

I bow down and give praise with pure heart and truthful tongue to the great God, the Father of the Lights and their origin:

(Gardner tr. from the Greek)

I worship and glorify the great Father of Lights, from pure insight, with speech without deceit.

Furthermore, whilst al-Nadim in the *Fihrist* only recounted the first four of the ten prayers, the Parthian tradition at least clearly continues to the end in parallel to the Greek. One can immediately read, if only partially preserved, the texts of prayer four (to Christ/the light-mind), six (to the sun and moon) and prayer seven (to the five great lights).³⁷ Prayer nine (to all the shining angels) is virtually complete, and I will quote it in parallel to the Greek as it demonstrates the stability of the text tradition:

(Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano tr. from the Parthian)

I worship and bless all the angels who are ruling in the whole world, and (who) restrain the demons and all badness; and receive (?) the whole community of the righteous from ... and also protect from the demons and who nurture goodness.

(Gardner tr. from the Greek)

³⁶ This is the section *nmč br'm* 'I worship'. The fragments are primarily preserved in Parthian, although the incipit of prayer one is certainly also recorded in Sogdian.

³⁷ In fact, a careful examination of the Parthian fragments shows that only the second of the ten prayers remains wholly unattested in that language.

I worship and glorify all the shining angels: who rule the totality of the universe, and subdue all demons and all the evil; and protect righteousness and defend it from the wicked demons, and cause the good to grow in it.

Of especial interest, the final instruction added as a kind of postscript to the text of the prayers in the Greek tradition, is also represented in the Middle Iranian. Here a Parthian manuscript certainly reads 'three times daily', and this would seem to settle the matter. The Greek text of *The Prayer of the Emanations* should be emended and previous lengthy discussion about the identity of 'the third day' can now be regarded as redundant. Of course, the issue of how this relates to the 'four times daily' practice of the hearers remains. But both the Greek and the Parthian seem to say that the prayers should be repeated frequently, or at least three times a day. Possibly the solution is that the seven times practice of the elect and the four times practice of the hearers were gradual developments that achieved fixity over time, and that at the start the situation was more flexible.³⁸

One further point: In this Parthian manuscript the postscript to the daily prayers occurs immediately before the start of *The Blessings of the Great Ones* (*Wuzurgan Afriwan*). Indeed, the editors have been unable to determine exactly how this section of their text relates to the two psalms of Mani. It is found in association with the latter in the manuscript tradition, but may not be exactly part of them. This receives support from the Greek and Arabic versions, where the text of the daily prayers certainly circulated independently.³⁹ Whilst the Middle Iranian evidence can be taken to confirm the Aramaic source language of the text, and strongly supports authorship by Mani himself, its exact placing or function within his scriptures remains a matter for future research.

Clearly, what is now needed is a synoptic edition prepared by specialists in the full range of extant texts. I would also suspect that further traces of this essential ritual may be found elsewhere in Manichaean literature.

³⁸ A fragmentary passage is preserved in Middle Persian, where immediately before the start of *The Blessings of the Great Ones* there is text that could correspond to the final instructions for the daily prayers. In this instance it may be possible to read 'three or (?) four'; (the 'four' is certain but the preceding text is not). This could support my hypothesis of a developing tradition.

³⁹ Al-Nadim comments that: '... when he has finished the ten prayers, he begins with another prayer and in it they have a (formula of) praise which we do not need to mention'. Possibly the following 'formula' might correspond to *The Blessings of the Great Ones*, which would help to explain the Middle Iranian manuscript tradition.

But I want to conclude here by addressing what has seemed to be one of the most problematic features of *The Prayer of the Emanations*. A major reason why Manichaean authorship has been questioned in the past is that many of the familiar 'great gods' of the tradition are not named in the text; for instance, there is no Living Spirit, nor Primal Man nor Mother of Life. Nor, of course, do they appear in the Arabic or Middle Iranian versions. Bermejo in his very recent study of the Greek text wonders whether some proselytising purpose might lie behind this apparent omission; or whether the fact that the text was for internal use within the community might have made such details unnecessary.⁴⁰

I think there is a different, and remarkably interesting, reason. If the text is by Mani, then it would be perhaps the most extensive and coherent example of his work that we possess. As such, it is what I would call 'pre-scholastic'. In a recent paper I have made a start at trying to set out how I understand the Manichaean tradition to have developed, and how we might attempt to excavate the available literature to arrive at Mani's own religious identity and experience.⁴¹ It seems to me that much of what we recognise as 'Manichaean' already belongs a certain way along a trajectory of development away from its true origin, what I have called 'Mani's authentic Christian voice'. Just as in his *Epistles*, significant sections of which are now finally becoming available;⁴² so too in the daily prayers much of what we think of as 'technical terminology' has not yet achieved its developed form. That, I suggest, is why this text has appeared somewhat unfamiliar and 'un-Manichaean'.

⁴⁰ Bermejo, *op. cit.* 2009: 238.

⁴¹ I. Gardner, 'Towards an Understanding of Mani's Religious Development and the Archaeology of Manichaean Identity', in C.M. Cusack, C.H. Hartney (ed.), *Religion and Retributive Logic: Essays in Honour of Professor Garry W. Trompf*, E.J. Brill, Leiden 2010: 147–158.

⁴² In particular see 'Section A' of P. Kellis VI.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

MANICHAEISM IN LATE ANTIQUE GEORGIA?

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Since the 1970s a growing body of scholarship has exposed the intimate connections of Caucasia and Iran in pre-modern times.¹ The various Georgian and Armenian peoples shared many institutions and concepts with the neighboring Iranians and were physically connected to Iran through commerce, migration, war, and marriage. The historiographical literature produced by the Armenians and the K'art'velians—the indigenous inhabitants of K'art'li (Iberia) in eastern Georgia—is a brilliant witness to their association with the Iranian Commonwealth.² All of the histories written in early medieval Caucasia contain Iranian substrata and a few of these texts, including the Armenian *Epic Histories*³ of the late fifth

¹ Herodotus reported that the Caucasus Mountains were 'as far as Persian rule reaches ...' (III.97). For southern Caucasia, see (e.g.): David Marshall Lang, 'Iran, Armenia, and Georgia,' in *The Cambridge History of Iran* 3/1 (Cambridge, 1983) 505–536; Nina G. Garsoïan, 'Iran and Caucasia,' in *Transcaucasia, Nationalism, and Social Change: Essays in the History of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia*, Ronald Suny ed., rev. ed. (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996) 7–23; Cyril Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Washington, D.C., 1963); and Florian Knauss, 'Ancient Persia and the Caucasus,' *Iranica Antiqua* 41 (2006) 79–118. For Georgia (e.g.): Stephen H. Rapp Jr., 'The Iranian Heritage of Georgia: Breathing New Life into the Pre-Bagratid Historiographical Tradition,' *Iranica Antiqua* 44 (2009) 645–692; and Iulon Gagoshidze, 'The Achaemenid Influence in Iberia,' *Boreas* 19 (1996) 125–136. For Armenia (e.g.): Garsoïan, 'The Locus of the Death of Kings: Iranian Armenia—The Inverted Image,' in *The Armenian Image in History and Literature*, Richard G. Hovannisian ed. (Malibu, Calif., 1981) 29–35, and eadem, 'Prolegomena to a Study of the Iranian Aspects in Arsacid Armenia,' *Handēs amsōreay* 90 (1976) 177–234, both repr. in her *Armenia between Byzantium and the Sasanians* (London, 1985); Boghos Levon Zekiyan, 'The Iranian Oikumene and Armenia,' *Iran & the Caucasus* 9/2 (2005) 231–256; and the works of James Russell cited below.

² The earliest specimens of Georgian and Armenian literature were composed in the fifth century, within several decades of the invention of distinctive scripts for the two languages.

³ *The Epic Histories Attributed to P'awstos Buzand* (Buzandaran Patmut'iwnk'), Nina G. Garsoïan trans., Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies 8 (Cambridge, Mass., 1989).

century and the Georgian *Life of the K'art'velian Kings* and *Life of Vaxtang Gorgasali* of the late eighth/early ninth century, are saturated with Iranian and Iranian-like imagery. Iranic social patterns and models of kingship survived Christianization and the turbulent transition from late antiquity to the medieval era: in eastern Georgia these persisted into the ninth century, some 150 years after the Arab conquest of the Sasanian Empire and some 500 years after the Christian conversions of the dynasts of southern Caucasia.⁴

The longstanding nexus of Caucasia and Iran extended into the religious sphere. The prevalence of Mazdean and Zoroastrian ideas among the Armenians has been well documented,⁵ and while literary and archaeological materials are more limited for K'art'li, they likewise attest a substantial Zoroastrian presence.⁶ Especially in the pre-Christian era, Caucasian Zoroastrianism tended to be syncretic and adaptable with plentiful local elements. After the kings of Armenia and eastern Georgia embraced Christianity in the early fourth century, a comparable situation prevailed: prior to the Christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries, Caucasian Christianity was remarkably inclusive, pluralistic, and flexible.⁷ Rigid hierarchies and orthodoxies were established later, particularly as 'national' churches crystallized from the sixth century.

⁴ Rapp, 'Iranian Heritage of Georgia.'

⁵ James R. Russell, *Zoroastrianism in Armenia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987) and idem, *Armenian and Iranian Studies*, Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies 9 (Cambridge, Mass., 2004).

⁶ The literature on this subject is large and growing. Ivane Javakhishvili [Dzhavakhishvili, Dzhavakhov] and N.Ia. Marr theorized that the pantheon of pre-Christian deities attested in the early Georgian historiographical and hagiographical traditions essentially masked a local form of Zoroastrianism: Javakhishvili, *K'art'veli eris istoria* 1, repr. in his *T'xzulebani* 1 (T'bilisi, 1979) 78–187 and 323–332; and Marr, 'Bogi iazycheskoi Gruzii po drevne-gruzinskim istochnikam,' *Zapiski vostochnago Otdeleniia imperatorskago russkago arkheologicheskago Obshchestva* 14/1 (1902) 1–29. See also: V.A. Lukonin, *Kul'tura sasanidskogo Irana* (Moskva, 1961) 81; *Sak'art'velos istoriis narkvevebi* 1, Giorgi Melik'ishvili ed. (T'bilisi, 1970) 365; I. Gagoshidze, 'Iz istorii gruzino-iranskikh vzaimootnoshenii,' in *Kavkaz i Sredniaia Aziia v drevnosti i srednevekov'e (istoriia i kul'tura)* (Moskva, 1981) 102–115; idem, 'K'art'lishi k'ristianobis damkvidrebis istoriisat'vis,' *Literatura da xelovneba* 2 (1999) 146–150; I. Surguladze, *Mit'osi, kulti, rituali sak'art'veloshi* (T'bilisi, 2003) 175–176; and T. Gamsaxurdia, 'Pitiasshis institutis sakit'xisat'vis,' in *Midzghvnili t'amar gamsaxurdias 70 clisadmi* (T'bilisi, 2007) 34–54. The scholarly literature and sources are surveyed in Rapp, 'Iranian Heritage of Georgia.'

⁷ Consider the synthesis of the 'pagan' Moon deity and St. George (Giorgi): Javakhishvili, *K'art'veli eris istoria* 1, 88–99, summarized in his 'St. George and the Moon-God,' M. Tseretheli trans., *The Quest* 3/3 (Apr. 1912) 528–545; Michael Tarnishvili, 'Le Dieu Lune Armazi,' *Bedi Kartlisa* 11–12 (1961) 36–40; Georges Charachidzé, *Le système religieux de la Géorgie païenne* (Paris, 1968) 435–490; idem, 'L'invention du "dieu lune"

Of all pre-modern religions, perhaps none was more syncretic and cosmopolitan than Manichaeism. As is well known, its founder, Mani (216–276), was born into a family of royal Parthian descent in southern Mesopotamia and grew up in a Jewish-Christian gnostic sect, probably an Elchasaite community.⁸ Mani drew upon Eurasia's diverse heterodox religious and philosophical traditions—which circulated widely along the ancient Silk Roads—in fashioning a new universal faith.⁹ Although scholars continue to debate whether the foundations of Manichaeism are primarily Iranian or Semitic, Mani's selective adaptations owed much to Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism. Our understanding of Manichaean beliefs was greatly expanded by the discovery in 1969 of the Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis (CMC), the Cologne Mani Codex, through which the special place of ideas and images appropriated from Christianity became even sharper. Mani imagined himself as the world's last prophet, succeeding and superseding Zoroaster, Buddha, and Jesus. So great was Christianity's influence that Mani's followers referred to their leader as an apostle of Jesus Christ and 'a new Christ.' Manichaeans could even identify themselves as 'Christians' insofar as they were adherents of Christ's teachings *as interpreted by Mani*.¹⁰

In his study of Silk Road religions, Richard Foltz maintains that '[i]n general, there would appear to be a connection between the success of a religion in winning converts and the readiness with which the substance of that religion was translated into local vernacular ... [S]uccessful

en Géorgie,' in *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 143/2 (1999) 429–434; and I. Surguladze, 'Sviatoi Giorgii v gruzinskikh religioznykh verovaniiaxh,' in *Ochkhari* (T'bilisi, 2002) 369–373. For a model of social conversion and cultural syncretism in pre-modern Eurasia, see Jerry H. Bentley, *Old World Encounters: Cross-Cultural Contacts and Exchanges in Pre-Modern Times* (New York – Oxford, 1993) 3–28.

⁸ Samuel N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China: A Historical Survey* (Manchester, 1985) 30–33; Richard C. Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road: Overland Trade and Cultural Exchange from Antiquity to the Fifteenth Century* (New York, 1999) 73; and J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of His Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden – New York, 1991) 199–235.

⁹ In Mani's words, 'The religion that I have chosen is in ten things better than the other, earlier religions. First: The earlier religions restricted themselves to only one country and one language. But my religion is known in all countries and in all languages and is taught in the most faraway countries ...' Josef Wisenhöfer, *Ancient Persia from 550 BC to 650 AD*, Azizeh Azodi trans. (London – New York, 1996) 206–207.

¹⁰ Van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon* 228–234, and Gilles Quispel, 'Mani, the Apostle of Jesus Christ,' in: *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou* (Paris, 1972) 667–672, repr. in his *Gnostic Studies* 2, Uitgaven van het Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul 34 (Istanbul, 1974) 230–237.

translation is not merely linguistic; meaningful analogs must be found for symbols and concepts.¹¹ This pattern helps to explain why Manichaeism enjoyed enormous popularity throughout Eurasia and northern Africa between the third and ninth centuries. So grand was its syncretic and cosmopolitan appeal that Christian bishops, Zoroastrian priests, and Muslim scholars all deemed Mani's 'heresy' to be one of their greatest threats. Persecutions, a severely fractured religious hierarchy, and the dearth of state support¹² sealed the demise of Manichaeism. Without adherents to broadcast and safeguard its written heritage, for a long time Mani's teachings and activities were known almost exclusively through hostile polemical tracts such as that written by St. Augustine, who himself had once belonged to a Manichaean congregation.¹³

Eastern Georgia's close association with the Iranian Commonwealth, where Mani was based in the third century, and Caucasia's status as one of Afro-Eurasia's most vibrant zones of cross-cultural encounter and exchange raise the question of whether Manichaeism ever existed among the K'art'velians of eastern Georgia.¹⁴

The foremost religious event in late antique Caucasia was the Christianization of its southern sector. Indeed, the monarchs of K'art'li and Armenia were among the first anywhere in the world to convert to Christianity: Mirian III was baptized in the 320s or 330s¹⁵ and his Armenian counterpart Trdat had preceded him by a few years, perhaps ca. 314. But

¹¹ Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road* 17.

¹² Despite Mani's calls to effect the conversion of kings and emperors, Manichaean missionaries enjoyed little long-term success in this regard. The two noteworthy exceptions are third-century Iran under Shāpūr (while Mani and his faith secured Sasanian protection, the Great King himself did not convert) and, considerably later, in Central Asia under the Uighurs in the eighth and ninth centuries. For the ultimate failure of Manichaeism, see Garth Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton 1993) 72–76.

¹³ E.g., Van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon* 1–163.

¹⁴ This essay is concerned with the late antique kingdom of K'art'li in eastern Georgia. For the western Georgian domains (including Kolxet'i/Colchis, Egrisi, Lazika, and Ap'xazet'i/Abkhazia), the unification of eastern and western Georgia into a single polity, and the relevant toponyms see Davit' Muskhelishvili, *Sak'art'velo IV–VIII saukuneebshi* (T'bilisi, 2003), and Rapp, *Studies* 413–440.

¹⁵ The traditional date is ca. 337, although some recent publications have calculated 326: L. Pataridze, 'Gak'ristianeba 'k'art'lis c'xovrebi' mixedvit', in *K'ristianoba sak'art'veloshi* (T'bilisi, 2000) 8–15; and Muskhelishvili, *Sak'art'velo IV–VIII saukuneebshi* 24–26. For an attempt to synchronize the event with the solar eclipse of May 319, see M.Sh. Gigolashvili, R.I. Kiladze, V.J. Kukhianidze and G.T. Ramishvili, 'On the Date When Christianity Became the State Religion of Georgia,' *Astronomical and Astrophysical Transactions* 26/4–5 (Aug. – Oct. 2007) 199–201.

as the archaeological record shows, Christianity had penetrated southern Caucasia well before these royal baptisms.¹⁶ Moreover, the existence of Jewish communities in Mc'xet'a (Mtskheta), the royal seat, and nearby Urbnisi in the first four centuries AD is testified by the oldest Georgian liturgical manuscripts (produced between the fifth and tenth centuries and having a Jerusalemite provenance), the earliest Georgian historiographical texts (seventh century and later), and remnants of material culture.¹⁷ These K'art'velian Jews seem to have played a significant role in the Christianization of eastern Georgia. The connection with the Holy Land did not end there. The first Christian missionaries who came to K'art'li were quite possibly adherents of the early Palestinian tradition, though it must be acknowledged in certain instances—e.g., the anachronous association of St. Nino with the fifth-century Patriarch Juvenal—extant sources have projected later connections with Jerusalem back upon an earlier time. This having been said, Christians of K'art'li and Palestine were in contact already in the fifth century, as the activities of Peter 'the Iberian' confirm.

No existing source for the initial conversion of the K'art'velian monarchy to Christianity is contemporaneous with the event. The earliest witness is Rufinus' *Ecclesiastical History*, which was composed in Latin around the year 400. The oldest Georgian narrative, which agrees with the main points of Rufinus' account, is the anonymous, seventh-century *Conversion of K'art'li*, one of the core components of the medieval corpus *Mok'c'evay k'art'lisay*.¹⁸ In the ninth/tenth century, this text formed the backbone of the embellished *Life of Nino*. *The Conversion* accentuates the role of the Roman Empire and especially Constantine 'the Great' in establishing bishops and priests in eastern Georgia once Mirian had recognized the Christian God. To this emphasis *The Life of Nino* adds the contribution of the Jews of Mc'xet'a.¹⁹ For example, the text counts

¹⁶ David Braund, *Georgia in Antiquity: A History of Colchis and Transcaucasian Iberia 550 BC – AD 562* (Oxford, 1994) 239, who adds: 'It seems that Christianization was not simply accepted at the centre and thence imposed from there. Indeed, it seems that in Iberia the king was a relatively late convert to Christianity.'

¹⁷ T'amila Mgaloblishvili, *Klarjuli mravalt'avi* (T'bilisi, 1991) 172–173. This volume contains a lengthy English summary, 'The Klardjeti Polycephalon' 466–490.

¹⁸ *Mok'c'evay k'art'lisay*, 'The Conversion of K'art'li,' is named for this component. To limit confusion, titles of individual texts are translated and those of medieval corpora are transliterated.

¹⁹ Mgaloblishvili, *Klarjuli mravalt'avi* 165–182 (although the received *Conversion of K'art'li* is a product of the seventh century, layers from the fourth and fifth centuries are discernable); eadem [Mgaloblishvili], 'Juden und Christen in Georgien in den ersten

the Jewish priest Abiat'ar and his daughter Sidonia among Nino's earliest converts. On the basis of these and other materials, T'amila Mgaloblishvili has identified two distinct strands of K'art'velian Christianity in the third and fourth centuries: a hybrid 'Jewish-Christianity' reflecting the Jewish/Aramaic tradition and which flourished until the conversion of Mirian, and 'Hellenistic Christianity,' a Graeco-Roman formulation initially implanted in eastern Georgia by the clerics dispatched by Constantine.²⁰ Indeed, throughout her publications Mgaloblishvili has stressed the pivotal role of Jewish-Christians in the Christianization of eastern Georgia.²¹

The timing of Mirian's baptism raises the question of whether Manichaeism—and its adapted Christian heritage—influenced and perhaps even established a foothold in late antique K'art'li. Not surprisingly, the received sources are limited, but valuable evidence is preserved in fragments of Manichaean manuscripts, two early Sasanian inscriptions, and early medieval Georgian literature. The non-Georgian sources, which are altogether familiar to researchers today, were specially analyzed in 1963 by Giorgi Ceret'eli (Tsereteli) in his *Iveria mesame saukunis (a.c.) iranul cqaroebshi (Iberia in Third-Century [AD] Iranian Sources)*. Unfortunately, besides a brief excerpt, this important work remained unpublished.²² One of the aims of this essay is to introduce Ceret'eli's research to a wider scholarly community. In a broader sense, it seeks to encourage the integration of Georgian and Western scholarship devoted to Manichaeism, early Christianity, and Caucasian history.

Mani lived at a time when the disparate peoples of Eurasia were being drawn together as never before through the long-distance communication and exchanges of the Silk Roads. He was cognizant of the success achieved by Christian and Buddhist missionaries and made the dissem-

christlichen Jahrhunderten,' in *Juden und Christen in der Antike*, J. van Amersfoort and J. van Oort eds. (Kampen, 1990) 94–100; and eadem and Iulon Gagoshidze, 'The Jewish Diaspora and Early Christianity in Georgia,' in *Ancient Christianity in the Caucasus*, Mgaloblishvili ed., *Iberica Caucasia* 1 (Surrey, 1998) 39–58.

²⁰ Mgaloblishvili, *Klarjuli mravalt'avi* 168–182 and 201.

²¹ Mgaloblishvili, *Klarjuli mravalt'avi* 170–171, also stresses the Jewish-Christian contribution to recording the story of Mirian's conversion.

²² The unpublished work was—and is presumably still—kept in Ceret'eli's personal archive at the Giorgi Ceret'eli Institute of Oriental Studies, T'bilisi. For the published extract, see Ceret'eli, 'Sak'art'velos iranul saxelcodebat'a istoriisat'vis,' in *Sak'art'velosa da k'art'velebis aghmnishvneli uc'xouri da k'art'uli terminologia*, G. Paichadze ed. (T'bilisi, 1992) 92–106, with English summary, 'Towards the Iranian Designations of Georgia' 105–106. This article was prepared for publication by V. Axvlediani.

ination of his ideas through missionary activity a high priority. Mani personally led missions within the Sasanian Empire and even to India. As we would expect, Manichaean missionaries were also dispatched to nearby Caucasia. In 1981, Werner Sundermann published a Sogdian fragment attesting a mission sometime between ca. 250 and ca. 275 by Mār Gabryab, one of Mani's disciples, to a Christian kingdom called *Ryβ'n/*Rēvān*.²³ In *Ryβ'n/*Rēvān* Gabryab cured the king's daughter of an illness and subsequently secured the conversion of the royal house and its subjects. Mār Gabryab was compelled to return to this country, however, because the locals reverted to Christianity during Easter. At this point the text abruptly ends. *Ryβ'n/*Rēvān* seems to be associated with Armenia, Samuel Lieu going so far to equate **Rēvān* with the Armenian city Erevan.²⁴ James Russell has cautioned that '[a]s far as we know, no Armenian king was ever converted to Manichaeism, nor was Armenia a Christian country at the time of Gabryab's life and career.'²⁵ Fortunately, we possess other evidence. The Prophet Mani himself is reputed to have written a letter to the Armenians, but the epistle has not survived.²⁶ In addition, the Manichaean adaptation of Aramaic writing may well have influenced Maštoc', the inventor of the Armenian script still used today.²⁷

Entire Manichaean texts were devoted to the subject of mission, yet only scattered fragments in Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Uighur, and other languages have come down to us. Many of these were recovered between 1902 and 1914 by four German expeditions to eastern Turkestan and the Turfan oasis in Xinjiang. A few of the fragments may contain information about eastern Georgia. Of particular importance is M216b, which was translated by W.B. Henning back in 1944:

... [he saw] the figure of the Apostle [Mani] and fell on his face and became unconscious. The people were [amazed]. Thereupon [they] prayed: 'To us ... Jesus ... we shall ...' ... he overcame the teachings of the [other]

²³ Werner Sundermann, *Mitteliranische manichäische Texte kirchengeschichtlichen Inhalts*, Berliner Turfantexte 11 (Berlin, 1981) 3.4, 45–49.

²⁴ Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* 76–77.

²⁵ James R. Russell, 'A Manichaean Apostolic Mission to Armenia?', *Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies* 1, N. Sims-Williams ed. (Wiesbaden, 1998) 24, repr. in his *Armenian and Iranian Studies* 896. This Manichaean tale may have been predicated upon Armenian traditions about the apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew and the Christian conversion of King Trdat.

²⁶ Russell, 'On the Origins and Invention of the Armenian Script', *Le Muséon* 107/3–4 (1994) 321, repr. in his *Armenian and Iranian Studies* 569.

²⁷ Russell, 'Origins and Invention of the Armenian Script' 320–322.

religions by their own evil. Hßz' [Haßzā], the Waručān-Šāh [said]: 'What is all this talk about?' They said: 'It is ... but ...' Hßz' ...²⁸

M216b does not identify the Manichaean missionary,²⁹ but it appears that he bested his religious rivals in an intellectual contest and that Haßzā, the king of Waručān, was apprised of the episode. Fragments T II K X 9 U237 + D = U297, which are written in Uighur and are closely related to M216b, preserve part of a speech delivered by Haßzā.³⁰ M2230 similarly names Haßzā in the context of a Manichaean mission. None of these specify the name of the missionary. Yet another fragment alludes to a (different?) mission led by Mani to Waruzān, which must be the same place as Waručān. The local king had a vision of Mani and thereafter the prophet was invited to explain his religious beliefs. Subsequently, the monarch lent his support to Manichaeism, perhaps even becoming a convert.³¹

When these fragments were first made available to scholars, the toponym Waručān/Waruzān was unknown. The extremely fragmentary condition of the sources only compounded the mystery. Henning tentatively located Waručān to the southwest of Balkh in modern-day Afghanistan, but this identification was highly speculative.³² Researchers scoured Eurasian sources for additional references to Waručān/Waruzān and

²⁸ W.B. Henning, 'Waručān-Šāh,' *Journal of the Greater India Society* 11/2 (1944) 85–90, 85–86 for his trans. of M216b, repr. in W.B. Henning—*Selected Papers = Acta Iranica: Encyclopédie permanente des études iraniennes* n.s. 6 (1977) 225–226. See also Jes P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings*, Persian Heritage Series 22 (Delmar, NY, 1975) 21. The fragment is described in Mary Boyce, *A Catalogue of the Iranian Manuscripts in Manichaean Script in the German Turfan Collection*, Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Institut für Orientforschung, Veröffentlichung 45 (Berlin, 1960) 16. M216c has Mani proselytizing in Seleucia (Vēh-Ardašīr) and then dispatching 'Adda the Bishop' to Byzantium (Byzans): Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature* 21.

²⁹ Earlier scholarship sometimes identified Mār Ammō—who was active in eastern Iran and Inner Asia—as the leader of this mission: Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, 'Manichaean Kingship: Gnosis at Home in the World,' in Manfred Heuser and Klimkeit, *Studies in Manichaean Literature & Art*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 46 (Leiden – Boston, 1998) 215, originally published in *Numen* 29 (1982) 17–32. For Mār Ammō, see also fn. 58 below.

³⁰ *Manichäisch-türkische Texte*, Peter Zieme ed., Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients, Berliner Turfantexte 5 (Berlin, 1975) § 21, 50–52. See also: Werner Sundermann, 'Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer I,' *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13 (1986) 61; and Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* 106 and fn. 138.

³¹ Klimkeit, 'Manichaean Kingship' 215.

³² Henning, 'Waručān-Šāh' 87–89, and Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 28–29.

eventually discovered similar toponyms in two Sasanian inscriptions from the third century.³³

The first of these, the Great Inscription of Šāpūr on the Ka'ba-yi Zardušt at Naqsh-e Rostam (designated ŠKZ and sometimes called the *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*), enumerates the lands under direct Sasanian control. A country called Virčān is described as an integral part of Ērān proper.³⁴ A related reference appears in ŠKZ's list of leading imperial officials, which includes Hamazasp, king of Virčān (Parth. *Xmzasp Vryš[č]n MLKA*, MPers. *Amčspy Vl-rv[y]čān*).³⁵ When Henning published his initial investigation of M216, he knew only ŠKZ's Middle Persian text, and the identification of its Virčān then remained an enigma. Once the Parthian and Greek portions of the inscription were publicized, however, Henning³⁶ and other specialists grasped the correspondence between Greek Iberia and Middle Iranian Virčān.³⁷ Because Iberia renders the Georgian K'art'li, Virčān must therefore refer to the eastern Georgian kingdom based at Mc'xet'a.³⁸ Since this discovery, the majority of academics—including Giorgi Ceret'eli, Werner Sundermann, and Samuel Lieu—has identified Waručān with K'art'li/Iberia.³⁹

³³ See Ceret'eli, 'Sak'art'velos iranul saxelcodebat'a istoriisat'vis' 96–97 and 106, and idem, *Iveria* 20–21. For a review of the literature, see also Stephen H. Rapp Jr., *Imagining History at the Crossroads: Persia, Byzantium, and the Architects of the Written Georgian Past* 1, unpub. Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, 1997) 169–172.

³⁴ ŠKZ: A. Maricq, *Classica et Orientalia* (Paris, 1965) 47–49; Martin Sprengling, *Third Century Iran: Sapor and Kartir*, (Chicago, 1953) 14 and 21–22; and idem, 'Shahpuhr I, the Great on the Kaabah of Zoroaster (KZ)', *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 57/4 (Oct. 1940) 409. See also Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 56–89. For an overview of Sasanian intervention in third-century Caucasia, see Marie-Louise Chaumont, 'Conquêtes sassanides et propagande mazdéenne (III^{ème} siècle)', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 22/4 (1973): 664–710, 701–707 for K'art'li.

³⁵ See also Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 240–241.

³⁶ W.B. Henning, 'Two Manichaean Magical Texts with an Excursus on the Parthian Ending -ēndēh', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 12 (1947–1948) 49 (n. 1), who points out that he acquired access to the Greek and Parthian versions of ŠKZ only in 1945, after the publication of 'Waručān-Šāh'. See also: G. Haloun and Henning, 'The Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light', *Asia Major* n.s. 3/2 (London, 1952): 206 (n. 9); and Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 18–25.

³⁷ Philippe Gignoux, *Glossaire des inscriptions Pehlevies et Parthes*, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum*, supplementary series 1 (London, 1972) 36.

³⁸ E.g., Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 20–21, summarized in T'eo Ch'xeidze, 'Sak'art'velosa da k'art'velebis aghmnishvneli terminebi sashualo sparsulsa da part'ul enebshi', in *Sak'art'velosa da k'art'velebis aghmnishvneli uc'xouri da k'art'uli terminologia*, G. Paichadze ed. (T'bilisi, 1992) 107–120, with English summary, 'The Terms Designating Georgia and the Georgians in Middle Persian and Parthian' 118–120.

³⁹ Sundermann, *Mitteliranische manichäische Texte* 14; idem, Werner Sundermann, 'Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer III', *Altorientali-*

Ceret'eli went further by equating ŠKZ's King Hamazasp and M216b's King Hßz'/Haßzā,⁴⁰ a conjecture we accept. For its part, the received medieval Georgian historiographical tradition attests two K'art'velian kings named Amazasp,⁴¹ the last of which it places towards the end the second century, perhaps between 185 and 189.⁴² This second Amazasp is mentioned in the ca. 800 *Life of the Kings*, a text addressing eastern Georgia's pre-Christian history and usually credited to Leonti Mroveli.⁴³ In 1996 additional information came to light with the discovery of an incomplete Greek inscription at Baginet'i in Mc'xet'a:

... Anagranēs, the foster-father [*trofeus*] and steward [*epitropos*], dedicated the bath, constructed by his own means, to ... the daughter of Vologasēs [, king] of Armenia, and the wife of Amazaspos, great king of the Iberians [*basileōs Ibērōn megalou Amazaspou*].⁴⁴

sche Forschungen 14 (1987) 43, 78–79, and 88; idem, 'Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer II,' *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13 (1986) 285–286 and 305; idem, 'A Manichaean Collection of Letters and a List of Mani's Letters in Middle Persian,' in *New Light on Manichaeism: Papers from the Sixth International Congress on Manichaeism*, Jason David BeDuhn ed., Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 64 (Leiden – Boston, 2009) 262–264; Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* 77; and *Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum = Dictionary of Manichaean Texts* 3/1, Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst ed. (Brepols, 2004) 345. Cf. Vladimir Minorsky, 'Addenda to Ḥadūd al-ʿĀlam,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17/2 (1955) 265, who raises the possibility that the kingdom of Waručān is to be equated with Gurzivān (Qurzumān).

⁴⁰ Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 131–133. See also Henning, 'Two Manichaean Magical Texts' 49, n. 1.

⁴¹ By this time the name Amazasp had long been used by the K'art'velian elite, as is attested in the Greek inscription naming the Roman Emperor Vespasian (r. 69–79) found in Mc'xet'a: Giorgi Ceret'eli [Tsereteli]: 'Grecheskaia nadpis' epokhi Vespasiana iz Mtskheta,' *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 2 (1960) 123–133. See also Braund, *Georgia in Antiquity* 227–231.

⁴² Precise regnal dates for many the early K'art'velian monarchs and presiding princes are hotly contested. Unless otherwise noted, we have followed Cyril Toumanoff, *Les dynasties de la Caucasic chrétienne de l'Antiquité jusqu'au XIX^e siècle: Tables généalogiques et chronologiques* (Roma, 1990), although it should be emphasized that many authorities in Georgia disagree with his conclusions. On the difficulties of establishing the authentic sequence of K'art'velian kings for the second-fourth centuries, see Burkhard Meißner, 'A Belated Nation: Sources on Ancient Iberia and Iberian Kingship,' *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan* 32 (2000): 177–206, esp. 193–202. Meißner has a strong preference for Graeco-Roman sources and his essay lacks a single reference to the essential publications of Ivane Javakhishvili, Giorgi Melik'ishvili, and Cyril Toumanoff (e.g.).

⁴³ The treatment of Amazasp II is relatively extensive, which may be proof of his importance: *The Life of the Kings*, Qauxch'ishvili ed. (Tbilisi 1955) 55–57. See also Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 152.

⁴⁴ *Sak'art'elos berdznuili carcerebis korpusi*, T'. Qauxch'ishvili ed. 2 (T'bilisi, 2000) 227–228, and its German summary, 'Griechische Inschriften in Georgien' 339.

On paleographic grounds this monument has been confidently dated to the second-third centuries AD. Depending upon its date, the inscription might well attest a king named Amasaspos/Amazasp at the end of the second century. Indeed, if Vologasēs was actually *king* of Armenia, as the editor T'inat'in Qauxch'ishvili has reasonably surmised (the inscription is damaged at this point), then Amasaspos must have ruled in the second century because the only two Armenian Aršakuni (Arsacid) kings named Vałarš, i.e., Vologesēs/Vologasēs, reigned at that time: Vałarš I (r. 117–138/140) and Vałarš II (ca. 180–191). This would seem to substantiate the existence of an eastern Georgian ruler named Amazasp towards the end of the second century as is claimed in *The Life of the Kings*. Alternately, owing in large measure to the difficulties posed by the missing parts of the inscription and the notoriously problematic chronology of the third-century Armenian Aršakunis,⁴⁵ the Baginet'i inscription might refer to the Amazasp of Manichaean and Sasanian sources of the late third century. Notwithstanding, the present authors concur that M216b records a genuine Manichaean mission to K'art'li, but clearly the identification of Haßzā with an Amazasp of the late second century is chronologically impossible, for the latter would have reigned prior to Mani's birth in 216. Therefore, there must have been an eastern Georgian king Amazasp in the second half of the third century. But can we say anything else about him?

One possibility holds that Sasanian and Manichaean sources preserve the name of a K'art'velian king who has been neglected or forgotten by received Georgian historiographical literature. While unlikely, we cannot completely dismiss this prospect: surviving Georgian historiographical texts are based upon earlier oral and written materials but in their received form they were composed several centuries after Amazasp's rule. The manuscripts transmitting them are even later.

In an attempt to reconcile Georgian, Sasanian, and Manichaean sources, Giorgi Melik'ishvili proposed that *The Life of the Kings*' second Amazasp, M216b's Haßzā, and ŠKZ's Hamazasp were one and the same because the medieval Georgian historian chronologically misplaced his account of Amazasp II.⁴⁶ Thus, there were only two kings named

⁴⁵ See, e.g.: Cyril Toumanoff, 'The Third-Century Armenian Arsacids: A Chronological and Genealogical Commentary,' *Revue des études arméniennes* n.s. 6 (1969): 233–281; and Nina Garsoïan, 'The Aršakuni Dynasty (AD 12–[180?]-428),' in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Richard G. Hovannisian ed. 1 (New York, 1997) esp. 70–71, 94.

⁴⁶ Giorgi Melik'ishvili, *K istorii drevnei Gruzii* (T'bilisi, 1959) 46 and esp. 391–395;

Amazasp, and Amazasp II actually ruled in the later third century, not a hundred years before as is reported by *The Life of the Kings*. But the problem of a possible King Amazasp of the late second century is left unsettled because of the recently discovered Baginet'i inscription. There is, however, another interpretation. Cyril Toumanoff perceived no chronological confusion in *The Life of the Kings* insofar as its two Amazasps are concerned. Instead, he proposed a third Amazasp/Hamazasp (r. 260–265)—the Haßzā/Hamazasp of Manichaean and Sasanian sources—who was a pretender propped up by Seleucia-Ctesiphon in opposition to the legitimate, Roman-leaning King Mihrdat II (r. 249–265). This was, after all, a period of intense enmity between the Roman and Sasanian Empires.⁴⁷ Had there been an 'anti-king' Amazasp III, as Toumanoff theorizes, medieval Georgian historians could easily have passed over his illegitimate 'reign' in silence. Because of the paleography of the Baginet'i inscription and its likely reference to an Armenian king named Vałarš, if we adopt Toumanoff's point of view its Amazaspos must refer to his Amazasp I (r. 106–116) or Amazasp II (r. 185–189), at least a century before his alleged anti-king Amazasp III. Indeed, his dating of Amazasp II's reign corresponds perfectly with that of the Armenian monarch Vałarš II, both of whom might be mentioned in the Baginet'i inscription. But should this inscription actually refer to a pro-Sasanian anti-king of the late third century (and we believe it does not), then it would seem that the pretender was headquartered at Mc'xet'a, a circumstance we would not expect since the legitimate Mihrdat remained in power.⁴⁸

Although the precise identity of Haßzā/Hamazasp cannot be definitely settled with available sources, there can be no question that a K'art'velian (?anti-)king named Amazasp ruled in the second half of the

idem, 'K'art'lis (iberiis) samep'os istoriis k'ronologiis sakit'xisat'vis,' repr. in his *Dziebani sak'art'velos, kavkasiisa da axlo aghmosavlet'is dzveli istoriis dargshi* (T'bilisi, 1999) 347–349; and idem, 'K'art'lis (iberiis) mep'e't'a siebshi arsebuli xarvezis shesaxe'b,' repr. in his *Dziebani* 358–367. Thus, in the account of Amazasp II, we read: '... and [Amazasp] made friends with the Iranians' (*The Life of the Kings*, Qauxch'ishvili ed., 576). In Melik'ishvili's view, the received lists of Georgian kings are incomplete. See also Manana Sanadze, "'K'art'lis c'xovreba" da sak'art'velos istoriis udzvelesi periodi (k'art'losidan mirianamde)' (T'bilisi, 2001) 131–157, 178.

⁴⁷ Cyril Toumanoff, 'Chronology of the Early Kings of Iberia,' *Traditio* 25 (1969) 18–19; and idem, *Les dynasties de la Caucasic chrétienne* 426 and 523.

⁴⁸ *Sak'art'velos istoriis narkvevebi* 1 568 (Melik'ishvili ed.) contends that Amazasp II's reign was more or less independent.

third century, and this Amazasp is the same as M216b's Haßzā and ŠKZ's Hamazasp.

In so far as Virčān is concerned, ŠKZ is complemented by other material, including the late third-century inscription of Zoroastrian chief priest Kartīr which was also carved upon the Ka'ba-yi Zardušt (KKZ).⁴⁹ Kartīr was renowned for his effort to strengthen an orthodox Zoroastrianism at home and to disseminate it beyond the borders of the Sasanian Empire. In KKZ, the chief magus boasts about the expansion of Zoroastrianism into non-Ērān, including a realm called Vrvčān. Clearly a Caucasian land by its context, Vrvčān is undoubtedly yet another Middle Iranian rendering of K'art'li.⁵⁰ It should be noted that whereas ŠKZ counts eastern Georgia as an integral part of the Sasanian Empire, KKZ does not. The difference is to be explained by the fact that Kartīr was a religious zealot and to his mind K'art'li's Christian affiliation excluded it from full membership within Ērān.

Further validation is found in a Caucasian source composed in the seventh century. The long recension of the *Ašxarhač'oyc'* (*Geography*) written by the Armenian Anania Širakac'i (Ananias Shirakats'i) contains one of the richest geographical descriptions of Sasanian territories. According to Širakac'i, Iran consisted of four sectors, the last of which, K'usti Kapkoh, 'the region of the Caucasus Mountains,' included Varjan.⁵¹ Whereas Virk' is the customary Armenian designation for eastern Georgia, the related term Varjan is an Armenized rendering of the Middle Iranian Virčān/Vrvčān (or vice versa).⁵²

⁴⁹ KKZ in Sprengling, *Third Century Iran* 46–53. See also: Philippe Gignoux, *Les quatre inscriptions du mage Kirdīr: texts et concordances*, Collection des sources pour l'histoire de l'Asie Centrale pré-islamique, ser. 2, 1 = *Studia Iranica* 1 (Paris, 1991) 45–48; and idem, 'La liste des provinces de l'Ērān dans les inscriptions de Šābuhr et de Kirdīr,' *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 19 (1971): 83–93.

⁵⁰ The incomplete Pāikūli inscription, carved ca. 295 to commemorate the rebellion of Narseh, enumerates the king of K'art'li (MPers. 'byr'n MLKA, cf. 'Iberia') among the rulers who recognized Narseh as the Great King of Iran. The name of the K'art'velian monarch is not specified: *The Sassanian Inscription of Pāikūli*, P.O. Skjærvø ed. (Wiesbaden, 1983), § 92 (NPi III.16).

⁵¹ Anania Širakac'i, *Ašxarhač'oyc'* V.29.iv (long recension only), *The Geography of Ananias of Širak (Ašxarhač'oyc')*: *The Long and the Short Recensions*, Robert H. Hewsen trans., Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des vorderen Orients, Reihe B (Geisteswissenschaften) 77 (Wiesbaden, 1992) 72.

⁵² Numerous studies have been devoted to the designations for eastern Georgia in foreign languages. See esp. the essays in *Sak'art'velosa da k'art'velebis aghmishvneli uc'xouri da k'art'uli terminologia* and Roland Bielmeier, 'Zum Namen der kaukasischen Iberer,' in *Nubia et Oriens Christianus: Festschrift für C. Detlef G. Müller zum 60. Geburtstag*, Piotr O. Scholz and Reinhard Stempel eds., *Bibliotheca Nubica* 1 (Köln, 1988) 99–105. For the

Medieval Georgian texts say nothing explicitly about Mani and Manichaeism but they nevertheless contain important indirect and contextual evidence. One example pertains to an early- to mid-fifth-century 'bishop' named Mobidan, whom Ivane Javaxishvili and T'edo Zhordania identified as a Manichaean priest.⁵³ Our source for Mobidan is *The Life of Vaxtang Gorgasali*, an anonymous text composed around the year 800 (on the basis of older materials) and then re-edited during its incorporation into *K'art'lis c'xovreba*—the so-called Georgian Chronicles—in the eleventh century.⁵⁴ Mobidan enters the historical stage during the reign of Vaxtang's grandfather, Arch'il (r. 411–435):

And after Basil, Arch'il appointed a bishop named Mobidan. He was an Iranian by birth, and he [outwardly] professed orthodoxy. But [in fact] he was an impious magus and subverter of the church order. However, King Arch'il and his son were unaware of Mobidan's impiety and thought he was a believer. And he did not reveal the preaching of his religion out of fear of the king and the people, but secretly he wrote books of total deceit. After his time all his writings were burned by the true bishop Mik'ael ...⁵⁵

The only other early Georgian source to address this period is a component of another medieval corpus, *Mok'c'evay k'art'lisay*, which, as its title indicates, is concerned chiefly with the Christianization of K'art'li. Its brief *Royal List II*, which is closely related to *The Life of Vaxtang*, is unacquainted with Mobidan. Where we expect Mobidan, the anonymous

relationship of Virk' to Middle Iranian, see also J. Marquart, *A Catalogue of the Provincial Capitals of Ērānshahr*, G. Messina ed., *Analecta Orientalia: Commentationes scientificae de rebus orientis antiqui cura Pontificii instituti biblici editae* 3 (Roma, 1931) 101, 163.

⁵³ Javaxishvili, *K'art'veli eris istoria* 1 342–348 and T'edo Zhordania, *K'ronikebi da sxva masala sak'art'velos istoriisa* 1 (Tp'ilisi, 1892; repr. T'bilisi, 2004) 47–48 (fn. 98). See also Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 234. Cf. M.-F. Brosset's identification of Mobidan as a Nestorian Christian: *Histoire de la Géorgie depuis l'antiquité jusqu'au XIX^e siècle* 1 (St. Petersburg, 1849) 174.

⁵⁴ The aforementioned *The Life of the Kings* and a recension of *The Life of Nino* are also found in *K'art'lis c'xovreba*. For the ca. 800 date of *The Life of the Kings* and *The Life of Vaxtang* and for a review of the relevant literature, see Rapp, *Studies in Medieval Georgian Historiography* 197–242. Among specialists in the Georgian Republic, an eleventh-century date has been favored since the groundbreaking researches of Javaxishvili, Korneli Kekelidze, and others, although some have postulated an earlier date, e.g.: Giorgi Melik'ishvili, 'Sak'art'velos udzvelesi da dzveli istoriis cqaroebi,' *Sak'art'velos istoriis narkvevebi* 1, 51–52; Davit' Muskhelishvili, *C'ixe-k'alak'i ujarma* (T'bilisi, 1966) 62–63; idem, 'K'art'lis c'xovrebis shedgenilobisat'vis,' *Mac'ne—istoriisa* 4 (1987) 183–284; and idem, *Sak'art'velo IV–VIII saukuneebshi*. For an overview of the corpus, see Mariam Lort'kipanidze, *Ra aris 'k'art'lis c'xovreba'* (T'bilisi, 1989).

⁵⁵ *The Life of Vaxtang Gorgasali*, Qauxch'ishvili ed. 142_{15–21} = Thomson trans. 157.

compiler refers to Glonok'or, a prelate who is unattested in Vaxtang's royal biography:

And during [the reign of] Arch'il four archbishops passed away. And then Mirdat [Arch'il's son] reigned as king. And the archbishop was Glonok'or. And this archbishop also was [appointed] *erist'avi* by Borazbod the *piti-axshi* of K'art'li and Heret'i.⁵⁶

Chronology urges that Glonok'or and Mobidan may be the same person, but we cannot definitely answer this question with the later sources and manuscripts available to us. In any event, the dual appointment of any archbishop as *erist'avi*—the governor of a province, who also commanded the provincial army—is unknown in *The Life of Vaxtang*.

Was Mobidan a Manichaean priest or missionary who had successfully embedded himself within the syncretic Christian milieu of fifth-century K'art'li? Significantly, *The Life of Vaxtang* styles Mobidan as *mogwi*. One of the main themes of this text is the menace posed by Zoroastrianism and the vigorous attempts on behalf of the Sasanian government to tighten its grip over eastern Georgia. Consequently, it is tempting to see Mobidan as a Zoroastrian magus. After all, the customary Old Georgian term for this position is precisely *mogwi*. However, context urges another explanation. A Manichaean would have had a far easier time feigning Christian affiliation thanks to Mani's adaptation of abundant Christian precepts, symbolism, and vocabulary.⁵⁷ It is also striking that Mobidan 'secretly wrote books.' We would expect an apostle of Mani to place great emphasis upon the written word and even to compose his own texts. Manichaean fragments from Turkestan speak of missionaries doing just this; they were often accompanied by scribes and manuscript illuminators.⁵⁸ Such activity, however, would be relatively unusual for a

⁵⁶ *Royal List II*, paras. 9–10 = *Mok'c'evay k'art'lisay*, in *Dzveli k'art'uli agiograph'iuli literaturis dzeglebi* [hereafter: *DzK'ALDz*] 1, Ilia Abuladze ed. (T'bilisi, 1963/1964) 92_{32–39}; Rapp trans. (in *Studies*) 305. The form Glonok'or is encountered in the tenth-century Shatberdi Codex; Bolnok'oni is given in the thirteenth-century Chelishi recension. This may be a corruption of Bink'arani, whom *The Life of Vaxtang* (Qauxch'ishvili ed. 145) says was appointed magus over the Zoroastrians installed in K'art'li by Barazabod/Borazbod. Unfortunately, the defective N/Sin.-50 variant begins at para. 14: *Le nouveau manuscrit géorgien sinaïtique* N Sin 50: *édition en fac-similé*, Z. Aleksidze intro., *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 586, subsidia 108 (Louvain, 2001) 73.

⁵⁷ Mani appropriated numerous organizational concepts and vocabulary from Christianity. The basic hierarchy was the one leader, 12 apostles/teachers, 72 bishops, 360 presbyters/priests, followed by the Elect and finally the Hearers. The passage in *The Life of Vaxtang* describes Mobidan as 'bishop' (*episkoposi*), although this is within the context of the K'art'velian Church.

⁵⁸ Fragment M2 reports several missions. The missionary Adda, who reached

fifth-century Zoroastrian magus. Therefore, in our view Mobidan was likely a Manichaean and his description as a *mogwi*, 'magus', is likely a reference to his ethnic background.

In his unpublished *Iveria mesame saukunis iranul cqaroebshi*, Ceret'eli isolates several Iranian Manichaean liturgical terms which occur in Georgian texts and manuscripts written between the seventh and tenth centuries.⁵⁹ This terminology also attracted the attention of Mzia Andronikashvili, whose comprehensive research helped to establish the substantial linguistic exchanges between Iranians and eastern Georgians since antiquity. Among the Manichaean liturgical terms appropriated into Old Georgian are *anderdzi*, 'will',⁶⁰ and *iadgari*, 'tropologion', i.e., a collection of hymns.⁶¹ In Ceret'eli's opinion, the fact that these words appear in early Georgian manuscripts and that their original meanings were preserved is proof of a tangible Manichaean presence. This is certainly a possibility, yet transmission might (also) have followed other routes, including the exposure of diasporan Georgians to Manichaean ideas. And the relationship runs deeper than mere vocabulary. For instance, Pavle Ingoroqva argued that the content of Georgian *iadgaris* was influenced by Manichaean analogues.⁶²

Because Mani's followers were well acquainted with Tatian's second-century *Diatessaron* and other Gospel harmonies,⁶³ the existence of such

Alexandria, established many 'monasteries' and composed texts. Mani dispatched Mār Ammō into Inner Asia with a prince, several scribes, and a miniature painter. See Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature* 21–22.

⁵⁹ Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 227–229. Here should also be mentioned the work of philologist and philosopher Shalva Nuc'ubidze (Nutsubidze), who combed medieval Georgian literature and especially Shot'a Rust'aveli's epic *Vep'xistqaosani* (*The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, twelfth–thirteenth centuries) for traces of Manichaeism: Sh. Nuc'ubidze, 'Manik'elveloba sak'art'veloshi da rust'avelis shemok'medebashi,' *Mnat'obi* 10 (1962) 131–139.

⁶⁰ Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 227–229, and Mzia Andronikashvili, *Narkvevebi iranul-k'art'uli enobrivi urt'iert'obidan* 1 (T'bilisi, 1966) 282–283. This term was also incorporated into Armenian: *anderj*.

⁶¹ Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 227–229, and Andronikashvili, *Narkvevebi* 333.

⁶² Pavle Ingoroqva, 'K'art'uli mcerlobis istoriis mokle mimoxilva,' *Mnat'obi* (1939) 104–105. Georgian *iadgaris* are unique sources insofar as the Jerusalemite chant tradition is concerned, but their Manichaean links have often gone unnoticed by Western scholars, e.g.: Peter Jeffery, 'The Earliest Christian Chant Repertory Recovered: The Georgian Witness to Jerusalem Chant,' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 47/1 (Spr. 1994) 13 ff.

⁶³ E.g.: William L. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance & History in Scholarship*, Supplements to *Vigilae Christianae* 25 (Leiden 1994), 334 ff.; idem, 'The Diatessaron of Tatian,' in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis*, Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes

texts among late antique K'art'velians might be an indication of Manichaean influence. Already at the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth centuries, specialists scoured archives for medieval Georgian and Armenian translations of the *Diatessaron*.⁶⁴ Today we possess no clear-cut evidence for the direct, pre-modern translation of Tatian's *Diatessaron* into any Caucasian language, but this by no means entirely excludes the possibility that the *Diatessaron* and other ancient Gospel harmonies once existed in these tongues. In fact, texts and/or oral traditions related to the *Diatessaron* definitely influenced ecclesiastical writers in early Christian Caucasia. Korneli Danelia's examination of the oldest Georgian redactions of the New Testament from the fifth through the eleventh centuries reveals that early Georgian biblical translators were undoubtedly familiar with Gospel harmonies.⁶⁵

Medieval Georgian hagiographers were also acquainted with such harmonizations. Of particular importance for the subject of Manichaeism is the more-or-less complete harmony preserved in the anonymous *Martyrdom of Evstat'i Mc'xet'eli*.⁶⁶ St. Evstat'i of Mc'xet'a was martyred in K'art'li in the mid-sixth century. There is every reason to believe that *The*

eds., *Studies and Documents* 46 (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1995) 77–96, esp. 88–89; Van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon* 234; and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia* (San Francisco, 1993) 70–72. The Manichaean fragment M18, written sometime between the sixth and tenth centuries, directly establishes Manichaean familiarity with Gospel harmonies: Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron* 401–403.

⁶⁴ J. Neville Birdsall, 'Diatessaric Readings in the 'Martyrdom of St. Abo of Tiflis'', in *New Testament Textual Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis—Essays in Honour of Bruce M. Metzger*, Eldon Jay Epp, and Gordon D. Fee eds. (Oxford, 1981) 313–324 (esp. 313), repr. in his *Collected Papers in Greek and Georgian Textual Criticism*, Georgias Press Texts and Studies, 3rd ser., 3 (Piscataway, N.J., 2006) 173–184. Among the research cited by Birdsall is: F.C. Conybeare, 'An Armenian Diatessaron?', *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1924) 232–245; S. Lyonnet, *Les origines de la version arménienne et le Diatessaron*, *Biblica et Orientalia* 13 (Rome, 1950); Arthur Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac*, CSCO 128, subsidia 3 (Louvain, 1951) 150–151; idem, *Early Versions of the New Testament: Manuscript Studies*, Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile 6 (Stockholm, 1954) 152–154; Ivane Javakhishvili [I. Dschawachoff], 'Das Martyrium des heiligen Eustatius von Mzchetha', A. von Harnack ed., *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 38 (1901) 897–902; Kirsopp Lake, 'Tatian's Diatessaron and the Martyrdom of Abo', *The Expository Times* 17 (1905–1906) 286; and Karl Schultze, *Das Martyrium des heiligen Abo von Tiflis*, *Texte und Untersuchungen* 27/4 (Leipzig, 1905).

⁶⁵ Korneli Danelia, *Narkvevebi k'art'uli samcerlobo enis istoriidan* 1 (T'bilisi, 1998) 214–243.

⁶⁶ For the critical Georgian text, see *Martwlobay da mot'minebay cmidisa evstat'i mc'xet'elisy* in *DzK'ALDz* 1, Abuladze ed. 30–45.

Martyrdom was penned by a contemporary of the saint who may well have witnessed his passion and death.⁶⁷ Although the earliest surviving manuscript derives from the eleventh century, the text's language, syntax, structure, and content indicate that it has reached us in a form substantially the same as the lost autograph.⁶⁸

Gwrobandak, the future Evstat'i, was a native of Gandzak in northwestern Iran. This city, the hagiographer contends, was home to a thriving 'Christian' community, and it was here that Gwrobandak was first acquainted with Judaism and 'Christianity' (the use of quotation marks will be explained below). Gwrobandak's fascination with these religions is especially remarkable because, according to Iranian custom, the young man was expected to follow his father into the Zoroastrian priesthood. In due course Gwrobandak accepted 'Christianity' and then, for an unspecified reason, migrated to the capital of eastern Georgia, where he toiled as a cobbler. In Mc'xet'a he was baptized as a Christian, married a Christian wife, and, in a public sign of his new life, assumed the Christian name Evstat'i, Eustathius. The sizeable Iranian diaspora of Mc'xet'a, which tenaciously clung to Zoroastrian and other native traditions, lodged multiple complaints against the Christianized Gwrobandak to the Sasanian overlords of K'art'li. The grievances were eventually referred to the *marzbān* Vezhan Buzmir, who was based downriver in nearby Tp'ilisi (T'bilisi). Evstat'i brushed aside the *marzbān*'s appeal to renounce Christ and instead seized the opportunity to dictate a summary of his Christian creed to the Sasanian governor. Evstat'i concluded with a brief account of how he himself had come to accept Christ. Shortly thereafter, Evstat'i was executed by order of the *marzbān*.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Korneli Kekelidze, *Dzveli k'art'uli literaturis istoria* 1 (T'bilisi, 1980) 511. Recently, a fiery debate has erupted about the date of the *vita*. Marina Ch'xartishvili favors a later provenance, perhaps in the early seventh century, while Davit' Musxelishvili supports the traditional view: Mariam Ch'xartishvili, 'Cm. evstat'i mc'xet'elis martviloba' da VI-VII ss sak'art'elos politikuri istoriis sakit'xebi: polemikuri narkvevi (T'bilisi, 2005), with English summary, 'Martyrdom of St Eustathius of Mtskheta and Problems of [the] Political History of Georgia in [the] 6th–7th Centuries' 140–144; and Davit' Musxelishvili, 'Evstat'i mc'xet'elis martvilobis t'arighi da VI–VII saukuneebis k'art'lis samep'os politikuri istoriis zogiart'i sakit'xi,' *Analebi: istoriis, et'nologiis, religiis shescavlis da propagandis samec'niero c'entri* 1 (2007) 61–103, with English summary, 'The Date of the Martyrdom of Evstati of Mtskheta and Some Problems of the Political History of the Kingdom of Kartli in the 6th–7th Centuries' 101–102.

⁶⁸ National Centre of MSS (formerly the Kekelidze Institute of MSS), T'bilisi, H-341. See *DzK'ALDz* 1, Abuladze ed. 6.

⁶⁹ For the final episode of the saint's life, see *Vita Evstat'i*, caps. 4–8, 35–45.

The harmony preserved in *The Martyrdom of Evstat'i* has attracted considerable attention. It is expressed in paraphrases and perhaps actual extracts from non-canonical Bible books; the apology also incorporates episodes of the life and passion of Christ.⁷⁰ Adolf von Harnack maintained that the author must have had access to a complete Georgian Bible,⁷¹ and at the same time he also acknowledged the hagiographer's remarkable degree of freedom in narrating biblical episodes, a circumstance probably explained by his faulty memory or rhetorical style.⁷² In addition, von Harnack detected certain peculiarities suggesting a close kinship with Tatian's *Diatessaron*, but he could not establish a direct link. Finally, he conjectured that this section of the *vita* must have been predicated upon existing Gospel harmonies, though, again, he stressed that Evstat'i's hagiographer frequently incorporated his own details.⁷³ Because of its implications for biblical studies, including the origin of the Georgian Bible, von Harnack's theory created a stir in European academic circles. His work attracted the attention of Arthur Vööbus, who, in his investigation of the Georgian Gospels, concluded:

... all these features leave one with the impression that the author [of the *vita*] did not take [the Gospel harmony] from an Old Georgian tetraevangelium, but from a text which did not only retain much of Tatian's readings but also the structure. Therefore this document seems to indicate that the *Diatessaron* found its way into Georgian Christianity.⁷⁴

There were numerous other interpretations. For example, the eminent Georgian scholar Korneli Kekelidze, for whom the Institute of Manuscripts in T'bilisi was once named, asserted that 'we may be dealing with the so-called Targums, either in Syrian or in Persian.'⁷⁵ In this regard, we cannot dismiss the possibility of an influence by Georgian Targums, whose existence was hypothesized by Nikolai Marr back in 1925.⁷⁶

The harmony incorporated into Evstat'i's *vita* was specially analyzed by the biblical scholar J. Neville Birdsall, who concluded that it could not have been directly based upon the *Diatessaron*.⁷⁷ In his words: 'We are

⁷⁰ *Vita Evstat'i*, caps. 4–6, Abuladze ed. 36–42. See also Lang trans. 102–110.

⁷¹ Javakhishvili/von Harnack, 'Das Martyrium' 23.

⁷² Javakhishvili/von Harnack, 'Das Martyrium' 23–24.

⁷³ Javakhishvili/von Harnack, 'Das Martyrium' 26.

⁷⁴ Vööbus, *Early Versions of the New Testament* 181.

⁷⁵ Kekelidze, *Literaturis istoria* 1, 514.

⁷⁶ N. Marr, 'O kavkazskoi versii Biblii v gruzinskikh palimpsestnykh fragmentakh,' *Teksty i razyskaniia po kavkazskoi filologii* 1 (1925) 63–64.

⁷⁷ J. Neville Birdsall, 'The Martyrdom of St. Eustathius of Mzketha' and the Diates-

dealing then with a derivative of some form of gospel tradition closely linked with the Georgian gospel tradition as we know it: but we might argue that it was the case that a harmony, of which we have here an epitome, has imposed its vocabulary on the separated tradition when that came to be created.' Birdsall continues:

... [T]he harmony here represented is secondary to the creation of the gospels as we know them in Georgian ... in its collocation of incidents it may depend upon a harmony, but this was apparently not the *Diatessaron*, although there may be links with the traditions to be seen in the *Epistula Apostolorum*. It is an early stage of gospel tradition in the Georgian area, but gives no proof that a harmony independent of the separated gospels ever played a part in the life of the church there.⁷⁸

In Birdsall's view, the harmony embedded in *The Martyrdom of Evstat'i* is 'basically Markan with Johannine inserts, whereas Tatian's harmony followed John.' Its vocabulary, moreover, 'follows the two early recensions of continuous-text [biblical] MSS.'⁷⁹ Considering the competing scholarly opinions expressed about the harmony transmitted in Evstat'i's *vita* and especially about its relationship to the Georgian Gospels, further investigations are clearly necessary.⁸⁰ Here we should recall Danelia's research, which reminds us that other medieval Georgian texts were affected by Gospel harmonies.⁸¹ An important example is *The Martyrdom of Habo Tp'ilelisay*, written by Ioane Sabanis-dze in the eighth century.⁸²

Within the harmony put into St. Evstat'i's mouth, we should note the striking precedence afforded to Iran, and this despite the imminent threat posed by the Sasanians and Zoroastrianism to the Christians of sixth-century Caucasia. In the presence of the *marzbān*, Evstat'i himself acknowledges the Iranians' religion as the oldest upon the Earth:

saron: An Investigation,' *New Testament Studies* 18 (1971–1972) 452–456, repr. in his *Collected Papers in Greek and Georgian Textual Criticism* 253–260.

⁷⁸ Birdsall, 'Martyrdom of Eustathius' 456.

⁷⁹ J. Neville Birdsall, 'The Georgian Version of the New Testament,' in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis*, Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes eds., *Studies and Documents* 46 (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1995) 181.

⁸⁰ Thus, there may also be a connection to the second-century apology of Aristides: Marina Giorgadze [Guiogadzé], 'L'influence littéraire de l'apologie d'Aristide sur le Martyre et la Passion d'Eustathe de Mtskheta (VI^e siècle),' in *Les apologistes chrétiens et la culture grecque*, Bernard Pouderon and Joseph Doré eds., *Théologie historique* 105 (Paris, 1998) 413–422.

⁸¹ Danelia, *Narkvevebi* 239–243.

⁸² Birdsall, 'Diatessaric Readings in the 'Martyrdom of St. Abo of Tiflis.''

First there was the religion of the Iranians, as you yourself know, but God disliked the religion of the Iranians and He was not pleased [by it]. And then God favored the Jews and they were pleasing to Him and He gave them a religion and commandment[s] to follow. After this God favored the Christians more than the Jews.⁸³

The hagiographer does not refute this image. In addition, Evstat'i explicitly associates Abraham with Iran: 'There was a man, innocent and a lover of God, in the land of the Iranians and in the city of Babylon, and he was named Abraham.'⁸⁴ It is not impossible that these passages echo Manichaean values and attitudes. However, the earliest historiographical texts contained in *K'art'lis c'xovreba*, which were composed between ca. 790 and 813, not only are infused with Iranian and Iranian-like imagery but also establish a close cultural and political relationship between Iran and southern Caucasia stretching back to Achaemenid times. Abundant archaeological evidence confirms the bond. Therefore, while the *vita's* claims about Iranian religion—Zoroastrianism/Mazdaism, and not Manichaeism—being the first upon the Earth⁸⁵ and about Abraham's association with Iran reflect K'art'li's long-standing link with the Iranian Commonwealth, they need not be directly associated with Manichaeism. The precedence shown to Iran is a reminder of Evstat'i's cultural and ethnic background as well as the membership of late antique Caucasia in the Iranian world.

Another possible Manichaean link within the *vita's* harmony is found in its description of Jesus' baptism: 'And when He arose from the water, behold the Heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit, like a white dove, flew down and landed on Him and a voice was heard from Heaven ...'⁸⁶ It was not unusual for contemporary Christians to compare the Holy Spirit to a dove, yet the author's reference to a white, *spetaki*, dove is noteworthy. The unusual Georgian word *spetaki* is related to the Parthian *spēt/spētak* and Avestan *spaēta-*; it is rendered in Classical Armenian as *spitak*.⁸⁷ So far as we are aware, *spetaki* does not appear in canonical or apocryphal recensions of the Georgian Gospel. However, Manichaean

⁸³ *Vita Evstat'i*, cap. 4, Abuladze ed. 36_{13–17}. See also Lang trans. 102.

⁸⁴ *Vita Evstat'i*, cap. 5, Abuladze ed. 36_{24–25}. See also Lang trans. 103.

⁸⁵ Similarly, the ca. 800 *Life of the Kings* imagines the biblical Nimrod (Nebrot'i) as an Iranian who was 'the first king of the whole world': Qauxch'ishvili ed., 67–8.

⁸⁶ *Vita Evstat'i*, cap. 6, Abuladze ed. 38_{26–28}. Cf. Lang trans. 105.

⁸⁷ Andronikashvili, *Narkvevebi* 1 372–373. See also Ilia Abuladze, *Dzveli k'art'uli enis lek'sikoni* (T'bilisi, 1973) 401. 'White' is more commonly rendered in Georgian as *t'et'ri*. *Spetaki* appears in a few other medieval Georgian texts, including *The Life of Vaxtang Gorgasali*, Qauxch'ishvili ed. 167₇ ('white robe,' in the context of the king's dream).

texts sometimes referred to the Holy Spirit as a white dove,⁸⁸ and a Manichaean hymn likens the pure Elect to ‘radiant lambs [and] white-feathered doves.’⁸⁹ The prevalence of this imagery in Manichaean circles is difficult to gauge. It is not impossible, however, that in this instance our sixth-century hagiographer drew upon Manichaean symbolism, hence the peculiar word *spetaki*. Even if this proves to be true, there is no way to establish whether the hagiographer was *conscious* of the Manichaean provenance of this imagery or the path by which it had passed into the *vita*.

While there are many uncertainties, the Christian creed presented in *The Martyrdom of Evstat’i*—particularly within its harmony—transgresses established canons, and this demands our attention. At least part of the explanation is that early Christian K’art’li was influenced by and had absorbed some concepts, imagery, and vocabulary from Manichaeism.

Another point of physical contact between eastern Georgia and Manichaeism may be Evstat’i himself and especially his religious background before he migrated to Mc’xet’a and joined its Christian community. According to the hagiographer, as Gwrobandak’s father endeavored to prepare his son for the Zoroastrian priesthood, the young man became enamored with Judaism and Christianity through his excursions to Gandzak’s synagogues and churches. Just prior to his martyrdom, having summarized Jewish and Christian ideas to the Sasanian *marzbān*, Evstat’i described his attraction to ‘Christianity’ while he still resided in Gandzak:

After I had [come to] understand and [been] informed about everything from Archdeacon Samoel, everything from Creation until now, and I had considered every [aspect] of the religions of the Jews and the Christians, I believed in God [Who is] eternal and His Son Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit. And that is how I have been baptized and no one will separate me from Christ until my soul rises [to Heaven] ...⁹⁰

Taken in isolation, this passage seems to place Gwrobandak’s acceptance of ‘Christianity’ before his migration to K’art’li. But we must also consider the opening paragraphs of the *vita*:

In the tenth year of [the reign of] King Xuasro and [at the time] when Arvand Gushnasp was the *marzapan* of K’art’li, a certain man came from

⁸⁸ Van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon* 220 and fn. 107.

⁸⁹ Jason BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body: In Discipline and Ritual* (Baltimore, 2000) 312, n. 142.

⁹⁰ *Vita Evstat’i*, cap. 7, Abuladze ed. 42^{24–26}. See also Lang trans. 110.

Iran, from the district of Arshaket'i, the son of a magus. And he was a pagan, and his name was Gwrobandak, and he was a youth of about thirty [years].

And he came to the city of Mc'xet'a and [began] to study [to become] a cobbler. And he saw the Christians [holding] services and worshipping Christ and [witnessed] the manifestation of the power of the Holy Cross. He became enamored with the Christian religion and he believed in Christ. And once he had learned [how] to make shoes, he sought a Christian wife, he became a Christian, and he received baptism. And when he was baptized he was called by the name Evstat'i. And the holy Evstat'i lived in the Christian [religion] and in the virtue of Christ.⁹¹

One of the structural features of *The Martyrdom of Evstat'i* is its non-linear chronology. The text commences with Gwrobandak's relocation from Iran to eastern Georgia; it recounts Evstat'i's baptism and the complaints lodged by the Iranian/Zoroastrian community of Mc'xet'a; when Evstat'i appeared before the *marzbān*, the cobbler jumped back in time with his harmonization of a non-canonical redaction of scripture culminating in Christ's resurrection and then briefly described the circumstances by which he initially accepted 'Christianity' (e.g., the first passage above); and, finally, the *vita* moves forward and concludes with Evstat'i's martyrdom. The two passages touching on Evstat'i's baptism thus demand explanation. The *vita*'s initial paragraphs seem to contend that Evstat'i arrived in K'art'li as a 'pagan' (*carmart'i*) and was subsequently baptized as a Christian. However, the first-person account, occurring towards the end of the *vita*, has Evstat'i embrace 'Christianity' while he still lived in Iran. This passage concludes with an allusion to his baptism: 'And that is how I have been baptized ...'

How do we reconcile the two extracts? One possibility is that Evstat'i had been initially acquainted with Christianity in Gandzak and that his full incorporation into the faith occurred only after he had resettled in Mc'xet'a. Evstat'i thus would have been baptized once, as a Christian in K'art'li. Accordingly, the hagiographer was technically correct to describe him as a 'pagan' upon his arrival in eastern Georgia. In turn, Evstat'i's first-person allusion to baptism after relating his initial instruction in Christianity in Gandzak must be chronologically compressed. That is to say, the hagiographer makes a spectacular leap in time from events in Gandzak to Evstat'i's single baptism in Mc'xet'a. But there is another intriguing explanation. Evstat'i might have been 'baptized' *twice*,

⁹¹ *Vita Evstat'i*, cap. 1, Abuladze ed. 301–12.

first in Gandzak and subsequently in Mc'xet'a. Clearly, double baptisms contradict Christian canons; baptizing a neophyte twice was allowed only if he/she had lapsed into heresy.⁹² If Evstat'i was baptized twice, or, more precisely, had Evstat'i *twice* undergone formal religious initiation (Manichaeans abhorred baptism by water),⁹³ then it is extremely tempting to read 'Manichaean' for 'Christian' and to place the young Gwrobandak within a Manichaean congregation in Gandzak. Moreover, this would be an indication that sixth-century K'art'velians regarded Manichaeism as a Christian heresy and not as a discrete religion, and this is in line with contemporary Byzantine views.

During the initial interrogation of the future martyr by Ustam, the Sasanian military commander (*c'ixist'avi*, lit. 'head of the fortress') of Mc'xet'a, Evstat'i elucidated his background:

My father was a magus and he also taught me the religion of the magi [i.e., Zoroastrianism], but I did not adopt [it], for in the city of Gandzak Christians [are] the majority, and [they possess] a bishop and priests, and from them I learned above all that Christianity is the greatest religion, [and it stands] above godlessness.⁹⁴

If the hagiographer literally means that Christians outnumbered all others in Gandzak, then clearly he has greatly exaggerated the actual situation. There is another explanation. Gandzak was an Iranian city of immense religious importance: it was located near the renowned Zoroastrian sacred fire of Ādur Gušnasp and, as is attested in CMC, it played a special role in Manichaean missions. In the early days of the faith, Mani and his companions

... made their way northwest toward the mountains of Media, passing through Diyala. From there they reached the mining country of Ganazak (Ganzak), south of Lake Urmiya in Azerbaijan. There Mani healed the daughter of a wealthy man and conceived the institutional embryo of his church in the form of messengers [*presbeutai* and *apostoloi*], whom he succeeded in sending into the Caucasus (Armenia and Georgia).⁹⁵

⁹² E.g., M.E. Posnov, *Istoriia khristianskoi tserkvi* (Brussels, 1964) 138. Following its revision at the Second Ecumenical Council held at Constantinople in 381, the Nicene creed sanctioned 'one baptism' for the remission of sins.

⁹³ Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley, 'Tools and Tasks: Elchasaite and Manichaean Purification Rituals,' *The Journal of Religion* 66/4 (Oct. 1986) 399–411. Asmussen observes: '[b]aptism as a sacrament would be inconceivable in Manichaeism ... [When] Manichaeans mention baptism, it can only be for purposes of mission and then exclusively in a figurative sense' (*Manichaean Literature* 60).

⁹⁴ *Vita Evstat'i*, cap. 2, Abuladze ed. 3125–29.

⁹⁵ Michel Tardieu, *Manichaeism*, Malcolm DeBevoise trans. (Urbana, Ill., 2009) 20. See also Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* 54.

Whether or not Gwrobandak was baptized—i.e., underwent formal religious initiation—twice, Evstat'i's saintly biographer *must* have had Manichaeans in mind when he wrote about the 'Christians' residing in Gandzak. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Gwrobandak's description as a 'Christian' while he still lived in Gandzak indicates the young man's membership in a Manichaean congregation, and this is why the hagiographer depicts him as a 'pagan' when he first entered K'art'li. Thus, we consider it quite likely that Gwrobandak was formally initiated—'baptized'—into a Manichaean community in Gandzak and then, having migrated to eastern Georgia, was baptized as a Christian in Mc'xet'a. If we are correct, the sixth-century Sasanian administrators of K'art'li thus had three reasons to punish Evstat'i: first, he had renounced Zoroastrianism, his ancestral faith, and had turned his back on the Zoroastrian priesthood, his ancestral profession; second, he had embraced Manichaeism; and finally, he had adopted Christianity, which by this time the Sasanians and Zoroastrians associated with the Roman/Byzantine Empire.

Many questions have been raised in this essay, beginning with its title. We shall now attempt to coax some conclusions from our sources pertaining to Manichaean influences in eastern Georgia. Owing to the circumstantial and fragmentary nature of the evidence, however, we are often limited to assessing degrees of probability. Here we should recall the admonition of Richard Frye: 'The historian of pre-Islamic Iran . . . must not neglect any scraps of information of any kind relating to his subject. There is a danger, however, of assessing the importance of a word in an ancient inscription far beyond its historical significance, while the *argumentum e silentio* is a particularly obnoxious hobgoblin in this field.'⁹⁶

The cross-cultural, multiethnic, and cosmopolitan condition of Caucasia made it especially fertile ground for the expansion of Manichaeism. In late antiquity, the Iranian and emergent Byzantine Commonwealths vied for supremacy over the strategic region. The confrontational dimension of this rivalry is usually emphasized, yet in places like K'art'li the two cultural universes—and their religions and various confessions—overlapped, coexisted, and were often reconciled. Here, in one of Eurasia's premier crossroads, Iranian social patterns, political models, and even the written Aramaic language⁹⁷ were blended with Christian—and

⁹⁶ Richard N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia* (Cleveland – New York, 1963) 6.

⁹⁷ A regional variant of Aramaic, termed Armazic, was employed by the nobility of

later, Byzantine—concepts and institutions all of which, in turn, were joined to and mediated through a distinct and constantly evolving Georgian culture. The appropriation (especially adaptation) or imposition of foreign cultural elements was rarely remembered; rather pre-modern K'art'velians envisaged such imports as inherent and integral components of their self-identity.

Giorgi Ceret'eli observed that four religious traditions coexisted in third-century K'art'li: an indigenous polytheism,⁹⁸ Christianity (and Judaism), Zoroastrianism, and, as this essay confirms, Manichaeism.⁹⁹ At the same time, we must not draw definite, impermeable boundaries around these faiths and yet other religious traditions present in Caucasia but not investigated here.¹⁰⁰ Thus, as is the case in neighboring Armenia, a homegrown variety of Mazdaism was developed by the K'art'velians, probably within the framework of an inclusive polytheism. Caucasia's syncretic character and especially the simultaneous presence of Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Judaism made eastern Georgia an attractive target for Mani and his missionaries.

Evstat'i and Mobidan likely represent physical points of contact. The sixth-century *Martyrdom of Evstat'i* is a striking monument to the cross-cultural fabric of early Christian Caucasia. Like other Old Georgian texts it does not explicitly refer to Manichaeism, yet the pattern of its indirect evidence constitutes a *definite* indication of a Manichaean influence and physical presence in K'art'li. In our view, Evstat'i, when he was still

pre-Christian K'art'li and Armenia (Christians invented scripts for Georgian, Armenian, and Caucasian Albanian following the royal conversions of the early fourth century). The literature on Armazic is voluminous, but see (e.g.): G. Ceret'eli (Tsereteli), 'Epigraficheskie nakhodki v Mtskheta—drevnei stolitse Gruzii,' *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 2 (1948) 49–57; idem, *Armazskaia bilingva: dvuiazychnaia nadpis' naidennaia pri arkheologicheskikh raskopkakh v Mtskheta-Armazi* (T'bilisi, 1941); Konstantine Ceret'eli, *Shenishvnebi armazis bilingvis arameul tek'stze = Zamechaniia k arameiskomu tekstu armazskoi bilingvy* (T'bilisi, 1992); the essays repr. in idem, *Semitologiuri da k'art'velologiuri shtudiebi = Semitological and Kartvelological Studies* (T'bilisi, 2001); and Braund, *Georgia in Antiquity* 206–216. See also Dan Shapira, 'A Note on the Garni Inscription,' *Iran & the Caucasus* 3 (1999–2000) 193–196.

⁹⁸ Polytheism was by no means suddenly extinguished with King Mirian's conversion to Christianity in the following century. For example, the anonymous *vita* of the children of Kola, which was probably written in the fifth and no later than the sixth century, refers to K'art'velian 'pagans': *Camebay qmat'a cmidat'ay ric'xwt' c'xrat'ay* in DzK'ALDz 1, Abuladze ed. 1841–2.

⁹⁹ Ceret'eli, *Iveria* 240–241.

¹⁰⁰ E.g., M. Tsereteli, 'The Asianic (Asia Minor) Elements in National Georgian Paganism,' *Georgica* 1/1 (Oct. 1935) 28–66.

named Gwrobandak, was initiated into a Manichaean congregation when he lived in Gandzak, a northern Iranian city in which Mani himself had once preached. Although he says nothing about it, the contemporaneous hagiographer may have shared a similar background. At the same time, we cannot rule out completely the possibility that Evstat'ī had been familiarized with some form of Christianity in Gandzak. Insofar as Mobidan is concerned, the ca. 800 *Life of Vaxtang* also does not allow us to say anything definitive. However, context strongly implies that the 'bishop' Mobidan was a Manichaean priest of Iranian extraction who rose to the chief prelacy of the K'art'velian Church.

In light of Mani's emphasis upon mission and his base within the Sasanian Empire, we would expect Manichaean missions to have reached eastern Georgia. Remnants of Manichaean manuscripts found in eastern Turkestan provide the proof. M216b and related fragments report a mission to Waručān/Waruzān, a Middle Iranian designation for eastern Georgia. Similar toponyms encountered in third-century Sasanian inscriptions and the Armenian geography of Anania Širakac'ī confirm that Waručān/Waruzān and eastern Georgia are one and the same. Haßzā (Hßz'), the monarch of Waručān mentioned in the Manichaean fragments, is almost certainly the same figure as ŠKZ's Hamazasp, king of Virčān. Therefore, Manichaean missionaries first arrived southern Caucasia in the second half of the third century: one mission targeted the K'art'velian King Amazasp II/III while another (or perhaps even the same mission?), led by Mār Gabryab, was active in Armenia.

Alongside the hybrid Jewish-Christian communities in Mc'xet'a and Urbnisi, Manichaeans filtered Christian ideas to K'art'velian society prior to the adoption of the faith by King Mirian in the 320s or 330s. What role Manichaeans might have played in the royal conversions of southern Caucasia has yet to be determined, but the received conversion stories show signs of a Manichaean literary and symbolic influence. For as Michel Tardieu observes, '... the official historiography of these two regions' conversion to Christianity took over from local Manichaean propaganda its characteristic themes and accounts: royal conversions obtained during a hunting expedition, healings of members of the royal family, controversies with the pagans.'¹⁰¹ Manichaean influences and contributions endured well after Mirian's baptism: Manichaean ideas circulated in eastern Georgia as late as the sixth century, a time witnessing a

¹⁰¹ Tardieu, *Manichaeism* 20.

mild resurgence of Manichaeism in the eastern part of the Iranian Commonwealth as it declined in the Mediterranean world.¹⁰² The presence of Manichaean terminology such as *iadgari* and *anderdzi* in early medieval Georgian manuscripts also confirms the relationship.

Thus, there can be no question that the pluralistic and syncretic religious environment of late antique K'art'li incorporated some aspects of Manichaeism and that the origins of Georgian Christianity and its early development owe something to Mani's faith. Precisely how Manichaean concepts permeated eastern Georgia has been obscured by the mists of time, but the historical figures of King Amazasp, Gwrobandak/Evstat'i, and Mobidan exemplify the tangible routes of transmission which existed in third through the sixth centuries.

¹⁰² Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature* 18.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

SYRIAC SOURCES AND MANICHAEISM: A FOUR HUNDRED YEAR TRAJECTORY

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*In recognition of Johannes van Oort's contributions
on the Christian fathers and Manichaeism.*

Undeniably one of the most important Syriac sources on the Manichaeans is the section in *Memre XI* of the *Liber Scholiorum* which was written in 791–792 CE by Theodore bar Koni, bishop of Kashkar, near the Ummayyid garrison city of Al-Wasit, between Kufa and Basra in southern Iraq. In keeping with earlier Christian writers, Theodore adopted a stringent antithetical stance against Mani; his biographical descriptions are marked by exaggeration, and character assassination. In marked contrast is the account of the Manichaean cosmogony that appears to have been reproduced *verbatim* from a genuine source. This paper addresses the legacy behind the Manichaean portions of the *Liber Scholiorum* which reproduced the structure of Epiphanius' *Panarion* and, following the precedent set by Ephrem, recognised the significance of 'the Manichaean cosmogonic myth' that drove the entire system and supported its doctrinal and ritual structure.¹ But in the considerable period of time that had elapsed since the fourth century, significant changes in the situation of the Manichaeans meant that the *Liber Scholiorum*, whilst transmitting the heritage of the Christian fathers, had a radically different perspective.

Mani's connections with south-west Mesopotamia were well known and were explicitly pointed out by the tenth century Arab commentators, al-Birūnī and al-Nadīm.² Although Mani had died in 276 CE and

¹ John Reeves, 'Manichaean Citations from the *Prose Refutations* of Ephrem,' in: Paul Mirecki and Jason BeDuhn (eds.), *Emerging from Darkness. Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources* (Brill, Leiden: 1997) 222.

² Bayard Dodge, 'Mani and the Manichaeans,' in: S.A. Hanna (ed.), *Medieval and Middle Eastern Studies in Honour of Aziz Suryal Atiya* (Leiden: 1972) 87: 'he was born

the Manichaean faith had been severely persecuted by the Sassanids, his followers received an offer of protection at the beginning of the fourth century when king 'Amr (272–300 CE) of Hira wrote several letters on their behalf to the current monarch Bahram II (276–293 CE).³ This intervention resulted in a temporary abeyance in their persecution, although it resumed under Bahram's successor Hormizd II. Manichaean communities, albeit depleted in numbers and influence, still remained in Mesopotamia until the tenth century when they finally departed *en masse* for the more tolerant and safer environs of Central Asia. Like the early Christian Church, the Manichaean religion was characterized by a pronounced ascetic streak—such overt similarities had sometimes led to confusion. The *Chronicle of Se'ert* asserted that Bahram II had banned both religions that he perceived to be identical since the Manichaeans claimed to be Christian, dressed like Christians and likewise scorned marriage and the procreation of children.⁴ Perhaps most damagingly, Mani had styled himself as 'the Apostle of Jesus Christ'.

These purported similarities provided the potential for the Abbasids to associate the Christians, intentionally or otherwise, with the Manichaean communities dwelling within their realms. Moreover, the Diophysite theology i.e. 'the two natures' of Christ also lent itself to such suspicions especially since the explicit connection of the Church of the East with Manichaeism had already been asserted by Miaphysite writers who were always keen to denounce the 'Nestorians.' The Syrian Orthodox historian, John, bishop of Ephesus (507–586 CE) who was born near Amida (modern Diyarbakir) proclaimed, when writing about Simeon, bishop of Bēt Arshām, a militant polemicist working on behalf of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Sassanid Mesopotamia:

in a village near the river Kutha, probably in the neighborhood of Kutha near Babylon. Al-Nadīm stated that he was 'one of the people of Ḥūḥī in the domains Bādārāyā and Bākusāyā, which were towns between Baghdad and Wasit' and n. 1 referring to Al-Birūnī, *Al-Athar al-Baqiya*, Sachau ed. p. 208 or the geographical names, Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-Buldan* (Leipzig ed.) (1866) 4:317, 2:143, 1:459, 477.

³ See Erica C.D. Hunter, 'Theodore bar Koni and the Manichaeans,' in: Aloïs Van Tongerlo and Luigi Cirillo (eds.) *Atti, Quinto Congresso Internazionale di Studi sul Manicheismo. Il Manicheismo. Nuove Prospettive della Ricerca*, Napoli, 2–8 Settembre 2001 (Brepols: 2005) 169, n. 11.

⁴ Addaï Scher & J. Périer, 'Histoire Nestorienne Inédite (Chronique de Seert)', *Patrologia Orientalis* IV (1908) 237–239. In response to the royal actions, the Christians petitioned Bahram II and explained their position, specifically pointing out that the Manichaeans dressed like the Christians in order to hide themselves ('se cacher'). As a consequence, Bahram II desisted from persecuting the Christian communities.

because he [ie. Simeon] was also a Persian, and he lived in Persia, and it is in that country especially that the teaching of the school of Theodore and Nestorius is very wide-spread, so that believing bishops and their dioceses are few there, and further besides this teaching that of the school of Mani and Marcion and Bar Daisan also had from this cause been much disseminated there, and Mani traveled much there in the same country, and there also they flayed him alive and he died there.⁵

John of Ephesus' suggestion of the physical provenance that was shared by both the Church of the East and the Manichaeans, coupled with his veiled aspersions of a doctrinal proximity had a very grave potential. In the paranoid atmosphere of the Abbasid court, the Manichaeans were *zanadiqa* 'heretics' and persecution of the *zanadiqa* was particularly harsh between 783–787 CE.

Theodore bar Koni's section on the Manichaeans is divided into two parts. The first deals with the 'historical Mani' and is introduced by the lemma, 'The heresy of the Manichaeans' (ܡܢܝܚܝܬܐ ܡܢܝܚܝܬܐ).⁶ Reminiscent of the section on the Manichaeans in Epiphanius' *Panarion*, various stories cast doubt on Mani's name and disclose how he gained his esoteric knowledge, alleging a combination of spurious circumstances that involved deception, death and manumission. The acerbic claim that Mani had inherited the knowledge and writings of a certain BDWS who 'was in the acquaintance of the wise men who were in Egypt at that time. He was instructed in Egyptian and Greek learning⁷ and in the books of Pythagoras and Proclus' linked him with the hermetic fathers.⁸ Mani was not recognized as the author of his own writings, for upon his manumission it was claimed that he assumed the works of BDWS as his own after the latter's death in Babylon where he had been 'performing mysteries of sorcery'.⁹ The denial of Mani as a prolific author (that he was known to be) coupled with the assertion that he plagiarized as his own various works

⁵ Ernest Brookes (ed. & trans.), 'John of Ephesus, Lives of the Eastern Saints,' *Patrologia Orientalis* 17 (1923) 238–239.

⁶ Addai Scher (ed.), *Theodorus bar Koni: Liber Scholiorum*, (Paris, 1910–1912) [C.S.C.O. Scriptores Syri: Series Secunda, vols. 65/66] 311 l. 17. English translations of the Syriac text are by Erica C.D. Hunter.

⁷ Henri Pognon, *Inscriptions Mandaites des Coupes de Khouabir* (Imprimerie Nationale, Paris: 1898) 182 n. 4 opines that **𐤎𐤊𐤍** is a corruption from Greek. Scher (1910–1912) 311 n. 5 reads it as a mis-spelling of **𐤎𐤊𐤍**.

⁸ Scher (1910-1912) 311 ll. 24-25 חכמה וסודות ופסוקים ופסוקים ופסוקים
והפסוקים והפסוקים והפסוקים והפסוקים והפסוקים והפסוקים

⁹ Scher (1910–1912) 312 l. 10 **וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' בְּקוֹל הַבְּתוּלָה**

The second part, dealing with doctrinal matters, is entitled, ‘About his abominable doctrine’ (ܐܠܗܐ ܡܢܝܐ ܡܚܝܐ). The commencing justification has all the hallmarks of the previous diatribe: ‘It is necessary that we should set down in this book a little of the impious Mani’s fabrication of blasphemy to shame the faces of the Manichaeans.’¹⁷ Thereupon follows a straightforward, unadulterated account of the Manichaean cosmogony that is really a series of extracts each being introduced by the catch-phrase ‘he says’ (ܐܡܪ).¹⁸ Its disjointed nature led Franz Cumont to proclaim, ‘Il est impossible de vaincre du premier coup toutes les difficultés d’un texte syriaque souvent peu compréhensible.’¹⁹ Regrettably Theodore did not divulge his source nor the means by which he obtained the account, aspects of which echo Epiphanius’ *Panarion*. Much of the terminology occurs in Ephrem’s *Prose Refutations*, but it is clear that this was not the source.²⁰ Alternatively, Theodore could have obtained the account directly from Manichaeans who lived in or near his diocese, in the same way that Abu ‘Isa al-Warrāq provided information on the Manichaeans for al-Nadīm’s *Fihrist* that was published two centuries later in Baghdad, in 988 CE.²¹ Theodore may have written down passages that were dictated to him by informants (who could even have been converts); an oral transmission could explain why the section reads as a series of disjointed passages rather than a coherent summation.

Theodore's account still offers today the most complete and authentic description of the Manichaean cosmogony despite the many discoveries of texts written in a scintillating range of languages from Coptic to Chinese. Whatever the source, the choice of terminology and the detail make it clear that Theodore drew on a genuine Manichaean work, whether

¹⁷ Scher (1910–1912) 313 l. 10–12. **כאן נמצאנו מלך חכם ונביא מלך חכם**
והוא היה מלך חכם ונביא מלך חכם

¹⁸ Ephrem used (ܠܡ) to introduce explicit quotations from Mani's works.

¹⁹ Franz Cumont, *Recherches sur le Manichéisme, I: La Cosmogonie Manichéenne d'après Théodore bar Khôni*, (Bruxelles, 1908), 1 fn. 1.

²⁰ Reeves (1997) 217–288 supplies a comprehensive listing of the extracts in Ephrem's *Prose Refutations* and comparative commentary.

²¹ Sarah Stroumsa, *Freethinkers of Medieval Islam: Ibn al-Rawandi, Abu Bakr al-Razi, and their Impact on Islamic Thought* (Brill, Leiden: 1999) 40–44 advocates a Manichaean identity. Cf. David Thomas (ed. & trans.), *Early Muslim Polemic against Christianity. Abu 'Isa al-Warraḡ's 'Against the Incarnation'* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2002) 25–28 for the different opinions about al-Warraḡ's religious stance concluding (on p. 28) that he 'probably regarded himself as some sort of Muslim.' See the review article of this monograph by Gabriel Said Reynolds, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 124 (2004) pp. 27–28.

oral or written. He may have just written down a text as he received it or he may have extracted parts of a text or texts that came his way, using the most graphic and controversial episodes, such as the 'Seduction of the Archons', to demonstrate points. Discussing the choice of Manichaean quotations in Ephrem's *Prose Refutations*, John Reeves suggests that he favored 'the conscious selection of what he and presumably other orthodox Christians intellectuals of his milieu consider to be fanciful, even absurd, mythological imagery.'²² Theodore may have done likewise using particular extracts to disparage and debunk Manichaean ideology. Rather than the outright slander and character assassination that characterizes the biographical section, a more sophisticated level of argumentation was required that would appeal to the readers of the *Liber Scholiorum* which was written primarily to equip young clerics of the Church of the East in the pedagogical skills of biblical exegesis, as well as rhetoric and discussion.²³ Like Epiphanius and Ephrem, some four hundred years before him, Theodore recognised that the integral role assumed by cosmogony in the Manichaean religion had to be deconstructed.

Theodore included the long Manichaean extract in order to disparage Manichaean intellectual thinking, but his keen interest in cosmogony undoubtedly was also a factor that secured its inclusion. The first book of the *Liber Scholiorum* offered more than one hundred questions and answers on cosmology and theodicy, ostensibly as a comment on the biblical description of the first five days of creation in Genesis. As Sidney Griffith has pointed out:

[a]t least a third of the contents of the first nine chapters is concerned solely with presenting a sort of popularized cosmology, psychology, anthropology and metaphysics that scholars of earlier Greek Christianity, including Theodore of Mopsuestia, had constructed in dialogue with their Neoplatonic masters.²⁴

In sum, the *Liber Scholiorum* offered a systematic synthesis of Christian doctrine from a Diophysite perspective. The reproduction of extracts from the Manichaean cosmogonic system in *Memre XI* enabled young clerics to exercise their critical faculties to refute the arguments of other

²² Reeves (1997) 222.

²³ Reeves (1997) 222.

²⁴ S. Griffith, 'Theodore bar Koni's *Scholion*: A Nestorian *Summa Contra Gentiles* from the First Abbasid Century' in N. Garsoian (ed.), *East of Byzantium* (Dumbarton Oaks: 1982) 61.

religious or theological schools—and continued a long pedagogical legacy. As the Muslim theologians al-Maturidi (c. 942) and ‘Abd al-Jabbar (d. 1025) remarked, ‘the very exposition of Manichaean myth is its best refutation.’²⁵

Theodore's exposition of the Manichaean cosmogony is in this spirit. The selection of extracts suggests that he had a good understanding of the potential damage that it posed. From his diocese at the Ummayyid garrison city of Kashkar, Theodore would have been all too aware of various 'Christian' sects that peppered southern Mesopotamia and the challenges that they mounted in maintaining the orthodoxy of the Church of the East in the face of Islam. Adherents of the Phantasiast theology of Julian, bishop of Halicarnassus, who upheld the incorruptibility of Christ's body and in doing so denied the reality of the crucifixion had been until recently settled at Najrān in the oasis of 'Ain an-Namir which was located east of Hira.²⁶ Contemporary insight comes from the correspondence of Patriarch Timothy I (780–823 CE) who wrote during the first years of his incumbency:

at that time, he took the city of Najrān which was situated near Hira, which was drawn into the yoke of the impious Julian until now. Twenty-five men from them came to us: clerics, priests and deacons with the majority of the populace, seeking that we should consecrate a bishop for them and it pleased us to do this.²⁷

The Phantasiast denial of the actuality of Christ's crucifixion countered the traditional teaching of the Church of the East and was a feature that Theodore addressed vigorously in the *Liber Scholiorum* where he connected it explicitly with Mani's teachings, proclaiming: 'And regarding

²⁵ S. Stroumsa and G. Stroumsa, 'Aspects of Anti-Manichaean Polemics in Late Antiquity and under Early Islam,' *Harvard Theological Review* 81 (1988) 40.

²⁶ J. Spencer Trimmingham, *Christianity among the Arabs in pre-Islamic times* (Longman, London: 1979) 194–195. On p. 176 he notes that the vast date cultivation at the oasis led to it being called by Arab writers, almost without exception, as ‘Ain al-Tamar ‘spring of the date-palms’. This name is still used in modern Iraq. Oscar Braun (ed. & trans.), *Timothei patriarchae I Epistolae* [CSCO 74/Syr. 30] (Typographeo Reipublicae, Paris: 1914) 102 n. 2 notes that under the Caliph ‘Umar the Christians from Najrān migrated to the region of Kufa which became known as Najrān al Kūfa.

[illegible]

on Mani and his religion. This was a structure that had already been initiated in the late fourth century in Epiphanius' *Panarion* that aimed to discredit the Manichaeans and their founder who was exposed as a fraudulent imposter. Attacks on Mani's person undoubtedly held an emotional appeal whilst a *verbatim* description of the Manichaean cosmogony served to expose the fallacies of its doctrine and undermine the whole religion since it was understood that 'should the foundational myth be successfully discredited, the remainder of the system would collapse irretrievably into ruins.'³² Theodore's inclusion of an unexpurgated account of the Manichaean cosmogony followed the trajectory of Christian criticism, by arming his readers polemically and equipping young clergy against those who might lay accusations of Manichaean sympathies at the door of the Church of the East.

Yet the circumstances in which Theodore wrote his work were very different to those of his fourth century forebears. Ephrem's *Prose Refutations* had deliberately countered Manichaean adversaries who were a real presence in and around Edessa where they vigorously and successfully competed for souls with and amongst the orthodox Christians. In fact, the latter were a minority amidst a number of different 'Christian' sects at the city where, as Samuel Lieu has commented, 'the ecclesiastical scene was clearly one of great diversity.'³³ The inclusion by the *Liber Scholiorum* of one of the most significant pieces of Manichaean literature continued a tradition that had already been in existence for several hundred years. However, by the late eighth century, the circumstances of the Manichaeans had changed considerably. They were much reduced. The sizeable communities of the East Roman territories had shrunk to a sprinkling of adherents in southern Mesopotamia. By the time of Theodore, the Manichaean presence did not pose *per se* a proselytizing threat to orthodox Christianity as it had once done. Rather the danger came from Abbasid authorities who might associate Christianity with Manichaeism.

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³² Reeves (1997) 222.

³³ S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, 2nd ed. rev. and expanded (J.C.B. Mohr & Paul Siebeck, Tübingen: 1992) 134.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE 'FIVE ELEMENTS' IN MANICHAEAN ART

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A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE FRAGMENTS MIK III 6454

The Museum of Asian Art in Berlin possesses four silk fragments from the Turfan Oasis, which are especially important for the context of the so called 'Five Elements' in Manichaean art. The four silk fragments under the inventory number MIK III 6454 were discovered in the so called 'manuscript room' of Toyok (Fig. 1) with other Manichaean manuscripts by the Second German Turfan Expedition (November 1904 – August 1905) under Albert von Le Coq.¹ Especially the Chinese Manichaean texts of this site have made us aware of a small but very active Manichaean community in Toyok which obviously had close ties to Manichaean communities in Dunhuang since their Chinese Manichaean terminologies partly resemble each other.² As far as I am aware, nothing has been said about the Manichaean painting fragments from the same site.

Following Moriyasu's general dating of Manichaean activities in the Turfan Oasis,³ the time of the painting would be fixed somewhere between the second half of the 9th and the end of the 10th or at latest the very beginning of the 11th century AD, so that by Chinese reckoning we would be somewhere in the approximately 150 years between the end of the Tang (618 to 906), the Wudai (907 to 960), and the Song (960 to 1168) Dynasty. However, since the Chinese Manichaean manuscript fragments found at Toyok have recently and very convincingly been dated to the 8th century AD,⁴ Moriyasu's suggested general dates may be too late by

¹ The four fragments are all put together into one glass frame and are listed under the one inventory number MIK III 6454 (8 × 12,7 cm; 7,2 × 8,5 cm; 2,7 × 6 cm; 2,6 × 6,5 cm).

² Mikkelsen, p. 213.

³ Moriyasu, 2003, pp. 24–32.

⁴ Mikkelsen, p. 215 and note 46 on p. 218.

around 200 years, and the four painted fragments might thus also be from an earlier date.

I already reassembled three of the four fragments in 1985 when working on my four year project 'Turfan Small Finds', sponsored by the German Science Foundation (DFG), as stated in my terminal manuscript delivered in 1987 to the Museum für Indische Kunst, and also gave a short evaluation of this highly significant Manichaean painting fragment in my hitherto unpublished 'Habilschrift' (Vienna 2002).⁵

The three fragments (ca. 10 × 19,5 cm) depict three (of probably four) pairs of inflected knees clad in red *dhotīs* (Fig. 2) which obviously belong to figures kneeling on a blue ground above a carpet of a net-like structure also seen in other paintings of the Turfan Oasis. As can be seen in my reconstruction based on in situ tracings of the fragments on a transparent lumograph foil, a seam running through the left side of the three fragments (the arrow marks the direction of the threads in the silk textile) indicates clearly that the painting was originally executed on three pieces of silk sewn together vertically to form the canvas of the painting.

Since the central part can—by comparison to other silk paintings of the Turfan Oasis—generally be expected to have had double the breadth of the two side pieces, the total breadth of the painting must have at least been ca. 80 cm to 100 cm, and perhaps more. And because the height of most silk paintings is bigger than its breadth, it seems fair to assume that the whole silk painting would have measured at least about 150 × 100 cm. We have thus before us a painting of notable size and—following from this—probably also of considerable importance to the religious community it was commissioned by.

All four fragments painted on a relatively coarse silk, which in itself points to an early date, are executed in black ink and brilliant colours in a painting style which employs very refined graded shading techniques and highlights to produce three dimensional effects, i.e. in a 'Western' painting style not employed by Chinese artists during Tang-, Wudai-, or Song-times in the Turfan Oasis which rather concentrates on 'lines' than on 'shadings' (Fig. 3, 4). While the style of our four fragments has nothing Chinese, it does come close to the painting style of Manichaean

⁵ Ebert, *Fragmentary Evidence for Art Styles in Turfan*, Vienna 2002, p. 62, Pl. 26, Fig. 14.

miniatures and wall paintings of the Turfan Oasis as seen in MIK III 4959 recto (Fig. 5), or in MIK III 4979 recto (Fig. 6), or in Cave 38 of Bāzāklīk (Fig. 7).

THE TOPIC OF THE PAINTING

As stated before, all three of the kneeling figures shown in a row wear tightly pleated *dhotīs*, decorated by seams and frills along the borders. The tight *dhotīs* are kept in place by belts (*kamarband*), which end in expressively fluttering bows below the navel. Bared genuflected knees are shown prominently and exclude the possibility of a depiction of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas or even Buddhist laymen who are never depicted in this manner. However, a stunning similarity can be observed to Manichaean depictions of so called 'Hindu guardian deities' in illuminated manuscripts as well as in wall paintings where exactly the same naked genuflected knees in tight *dhotīs* seated in rows are shown (Fig. 5, Fig. 6, Fig. 7). It is significant that the naked knees in Manichaean art appear only in this very special context where the 'Manichaean Hindu guardian deities' are depicted, but never in paintings of other Manichaean saints, priests, *electi*, or even *auditores*. We can thus infer that this community of four Hindu guardian deities was a special group with a special meaning, had as such become iconographically canonised in Manichaean painting, and was always depicted in the same manner. There thus seems little reason to doubt that the four fragments from Toyok too must originally have depicted the same community of Manichaean Hindu guardian deities. We thus have two illuminated manuscripts, one large silk-, and one wall painting, together four Manichaean paintings, in which these Hindu guardian deities are shown: 1) MIK III 4959 recto (Fig. 5), 2) MIK III 4979 recto (Fig. 6), 3) Cave 38 of Bāzāklīk (Fig. 7) and 4) the silk fragments of MIK III 6454. This seems to indicate that the topic was frequently depicted in Manichaean art. Yet, no one has been able to give a conclusive interpretation for the depiction of these so called 'Hindu deities' in the Manichaean context yet.⁶

⁶ In his paper 'Peacocks under the Jewel Tree. New Hypotheses on the Manichaean Painting of Bezeklik (Cave 38)', unpublished manuscript, Kyoto 2008/9, Gabor Kosa has recently worked on the tree under which these deities are depicted in Cave 38 of Bezeklik, but he has not dwelt on the 'Hindu deities' depicted below it.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE THEORIES VOICED
CONCERNING 'MANICHAEAN HINDU DEITIES'

To Grünwedel,⁷ who was the first to describe the painting of Cave 38 in 1912 and to give a very detailed sketch of the wall painting (Fig. 7), which still proves useful today, it clearly showed 'praying gods' (betende Götter). Among this row of kneeling deities, some with bare knees, the boar-headed figure was redrawn as carefully in his sketch as were the heads of two birds (Fig. 7) which appear out of the water to the left and right of the central tree. As we shall see later, they are alluded to as 'peacocks' (*yuy quš*) in the cave's inscription. According to Sundermann⁸ and Junker⁹ the presence of peacocks evokes the paradisiacal Manichaean Realm of Light. Though Grünwedel was of course not aware of this, he immediately recognised the picture's strangeness (compared to the Buddhist art he knew well) calling it 'ein seltsames Bild'. His first description of the deities is as follows: 'A tree with grape-like, stylised fruits and large flowers, standing in the water, praying gods surround it.' Grünwedel also drew attention to the almost unreadable Uygur inscriptions beside the scene of the '*cintāmaṇi* and musicians' (Fig. 8) on the northern wall of Cave 38.

If Grünwedel was the first to describe and later to give a precise sketch of the wall painting in the lunette of Cave 38, Oldenburg¹⁰ was the first to actually describe the painting as Manichaean in 1914 (sketch by Jakovleff Fig. 9), though he advances no reasons for his interpretation and does not comment on the figures below the tree. It was Hackin¹¹ who first drew attention to the similarity between MIK III 6368 (Fig. 10), the famous Manichaean scribe scene, and the wall painting of Cave 38 in 1931, thus giving a reason for its Manichaean interpretation. He claimed to see 'three dignitaries of the Manichaean church on the right side' and drew attention to the inscriptions below the painting. Since, however, dignitaries of the Manichaean church are never women—as some of the figures in the painting obviously are—and since Manichaean dignitaries would always be clad in white, which they are not in the wall painting of Cave 38, this interpretation must be modified to 'three guardians of the Manichaean church,' for reasons that will be given presently.

⁷ Grünwedel, 1912, pp. 278–280, and 1920, Fig. 66.

⁸ Sundermann, apud Kosa, Kyoto 2008/9 no page given.

⁹ Junker, 1929, p. 132.

¹⁰ Oldenburg, 1914, p. 44.

¹¹ Hackin, 1936, Plate I (drawing by Jakovleff), Taf. XII (L. Morizet), XIII a, b (M.O. Williams), pp. 20–21.

Klimkeit¹² suggested, around 50 years later, in 1982, to identify the deities in MIK III 4959 recto and MIK III 4979 recto (Fig. 5 and 6) with the 'four-fold Father of Greatness', who, under Central Asian influence, was split up (from right to left) into the Hindu deities Shiva (with curly hair), Brahma (with a beard), Vishnu (with the head of a boar) and Ganesha (with the head of an elephant). In his article 'Hindu Deities in Manichaean Art',¹³ he later interprets them as the 'Four Celestial Kings' where they are likened to 'God, light, power and wisdom'. Both interpretations had the shortcoming of not being able to explain why the deities were depicted in a Hindu garb. Why were some of them, i.e. Klimkeit's Shiva not seated on a felt rug but on a lotus calyx—always a sure sign that some higher deity is depicted—and why are some depicted with a bare torso and naked knees while others are clad in armour and wear helmets or even a golden crown on their heads? In the end, Klimkeit withdrew both of these interpretations mentioning in passing that Zieme would like to interpret the Manichaean Hindu gods as guardian deities.¹⁴ This information, probably transmitted orally from Zieme to Klimkeit, turned out to be the correct one in the end of the 1980s when Yutaka Yoshida and Takao Moriyasu for the first time managed to gain access to Cave 38 of Bezeklik, where they took detailed photographs of its wall paintings and inscriptions (Fig. 11, 12), and read parts of it (Fig. 13, 14, 15).¹⁵ With Yutaka Yoshida's help,¹⁶ Moriyasu¹⁷ was able to publish the following translation of the inscription in 1992:

1. This is a *gathering of guardian deities*.¹⁸
2. With (?) the image of the peacock, I, Sävit, have written. May there be no sin! ... May ... be protected!
3. Ötükän Ngošakanč (and?) Qutluq Tapmīš Qy-a, may they be protected!

¹² Klimkeit, 1982, p. 35 ff.

¹³ Klimkeit, 1980, pp. 179–199.

¹⁴ Klimkeit, 1982, p. 36.

¹⁵ In the past 100 years the cave was renumbered several times: Grünwedel's number was 25; Oldenburg's 23; Stein's, Cave ix; Turfan Cultural Relics Office numbering from 1985–1986, Cave 52; after that it became Cave 38 and has remained so until today. I am thus using this recent numbering.

¹⁶ Yoshida 1993, p. 110 (105–115).

¹⁷ Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte ...*, pp. 17–21. Moriyasu dates the Cave either between 790–840, or more likely between 850–950.

¹⁸ Highlighted by me.

4. ... I have humbly done ... May ... be at peace! Please forgive my sins!
5. ... Tapmiš Qy-a

Led by what he thought he was reading in the inscription, Moriyasu embraced the possibility that the two persons kneeling right next to the tree are Manichaean auditors, probably a couple, he thought, the wife's name being Ötüka.¹⁹ Two auditors and ten guardian spirits were, according to him, thus depicted in the wall painting²⁰ of Cave 38. Such a presumption becomes, however, not only difficult after the extremely plausible textual amendments of Yoshida,²¹ but also when one considers the dress code of the Uygur Manichaeans of the Turfan Oasis. Both the armoured male to the left side as well as the female to the right side of the tree wear a phoenix headgear. Judging by other depictions from Turfan, for example MIK III 7243 (Fig. 16), this would more likely be an indication for a male or female deity, a god or a goddess. All the more so, if the female person is wearing a wide sleeved gown with frilled borders, as Grünwedel's drawing seems to indicate. Moreover, an armoured male figure in Turfan's art is always a deity and never an auditor or a layman. Taking all these points into account, it becomes very difficult to consider the figures kneeling immediately beside the tree to be auditors. Of course, princesses from the Turfan Oasis do have phoenix headgears too (Fig. 17, 18), but in that case the bird is always inserted into a lotus-bud like oval or lobed element never depicting the phoenix alone. The same is true for the figures following behind the female deity on the right and the armoured deity on the left side of the tree. There, two rows of kneeling or standing male and female figures, two of which display wing like elements in the area of the shoulders, are depicted. I am inclined to interpret these as open armours, which would again corroborate the valiant and vigilant aspect of some of the guardian deities and representatives of the Manichaean church depicted in the wall painting. None of these figures to the right side displays any of the headgears typical of Uygur Manichaean *electi* or *auditores* (Figures 19–23), which were strongly codified as were their titles.²² They are therefore

¹⁹ Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte* ..., pp. 17–21. Moriyasu dates the Cave either between 790–840, or more likely between 850–950, p. 20ff.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²¹ Yoshida 1993, p. 110 (105–115).

²² Colditz, Berlin 2000.

in all likelihood not auditors but Manichaean guardian deities as the inscription below the painting states. As for the two rows of figures on the left side of the painting, these too seem to be Manichaean guardian gods as can be gleaned from their similarity to the illuminated manuscripts MIK III 4959 recto (Fig. 5) and MIK III 4979 recto (Fig. 6). It thus becomes clear that the painting depicts a gathering of altogether twelve guardian deities of Manichaeism, eight of them kneeling and four standing. But who exactly are they?

TEXTUAL REFERENCES

MIK III 4959 recto (Fig. 5), the illuminated fragment that gives us most information concerning the inner link to paintings of Manichaean Hindu guardian deities, is connected to the Third Messenger as I have shown elsewhere.²³ On the very top of the picture the Third Messenger is depicted giving his right hand to the 'Four Heavenly Guardian Kings' to set them on their mission of saving the light particles from the dark. Taking this as our starting point, some more textual fragments from Toyok, Bezeklik and other sites of the Turfan Oasis are selected which seem pertinent to our search:

1. Fragment of a hymn to the Third Messenger (?) Ch 258 V/X, 1a-3d²⁴ published by Mikkelsen:

You constantly save all Light-natures,
so that they can leave all [...] of birth and death;
from all the mountains and valleys,
the plains and sand deserts,

the rivers and seas and the springs,
the plants and trees as well as the sprouts and fruits,
the four courtyards and three calamities,
the water and the dry land, from everywhere (you) extract them.

There are blessed and virtuous ones,
Who are able to know about the Great Majestic Holy Lord,
Who comprehend fully the Treasure of the Law,
Who everywhere recognize the souls of the body.

²³ Ebert, 1993, pp. 489-512.

²⁴ Mikkelsen, p. 216.

2. Even more telling is a Manichaean letter in Sogdian script from Cave 65 at Bezeklik published by Yoshida²⁵ referring to numerous angels and guardians of the Manichaean community:

... by the king of all gods, Äzrua, and by the Three Constancies,²⁶ (...) by *Jacob angel*, the *guardians of the whole community*, angels, *guardians*, let the [whole community] possess new glory and fortune!

3. The most interesting and stringent parallels can, however, be found in Werner Sundermann's *Der Sermon von der Seele*, without which this paper would not have been possible. Heavenly powers connected to the Manichaean church, i.e. the elements and the Manichaean community as well as their protective angels can be invoked,²⁷ as Sundermann²⁸ clearly states in *Der Sermon von der Seele*. In it he cites the following crucial passage:

[Preis ...] dem wachenden Weltbeschützer, dem Oberhaupt Kaftinus, dem liebevollen ... *Yakob Narimān, der Gemeinschaft der Elemente, die Vergeltung erlangt hat*,²⁹ der starken Erwähltschaft der Kühnen, der Kirche des Friedens. And he continues: Aber noch näher liegt es, in den vier Geschlechtern der fünf Elemente *jene vier Elemente Wind, Licht, Wasser und Feuer* zu sehen, die sich von der Luft dadurch unterscheiden, dass sie allein von der Finsternis befleckt wurden und der Reinigung bedürfen. Ihre Reinigung schildert das 94. Kephalaion und nennt in umgekehrter Reihenfolge Feuer, Wasser, Licht und—statt des Windes—den Baum (šēn), wofür ich keine Erklärung habe (Polotsky-Böhlig 1940, S. 239–240). Vgl. aber, dass in der Pentade der Elemente nach der Lehre der Jainas ākaśā (der Luftraum) ersetzt wird durch vanaspati 'Baum' usw. (W. Kirfel, *Die fünf Elemente insbesondere Wasser und Feuer*, Walldorf – Hessen 1950, S. 8). Von der Luft konnte auch gesagt werden, dass sie als einziges der Elemente nicht durch die Finsternis verwundet wurde und dass sie ihr Kleid und ihre Kraft den vier Brüdern übergab, um sie in ihrem Kampf zu stärken (Polotsky-Böhlig 1940, S. 127, 18–23).³⁰

The enumeration of guardian deities here corresponds quite closely to those mentioned in the letter from Cave 65 at Bezeklik while being more detailed. First, three individual guardian representatives of the

²⁵ Yoshida, 'Sute ...', 3–199.

²⁶ Lin, 'Minijiao "sanchang" kao' (A Study on "The Three Constancies" in Manichaeism), in: *Zhongguo san yijiao bianzheng (Discussion and Research Concerning three Medieval Persian Religions)*, Beijing 2005.

²⁷ Henning, BSOAS 11, 1945, p. 56.

²⁸ Sundermann, 1997, p. 149.

²⁹ This and the following passages are highlighted by me.

³⁰ Sundermann, 1997, p. 149.

Manichaean church are mentioned in the praise: 1. 'The guarding world protector;' 2. 'Chief *Kaftinus*;' 3. 'Merciful *Yakob Narimān*;' then, three communal groups follow: 1. 'The community of elements who have gained forgiveness;' 2. 'The mighty elected valiant;' 3. 'The church of peace.' Since our Hindu deities obviously form a group, they must be included in these latter three: 'The church of peace,' 'The mighty elected bold ones,' or 'The community of elements who have gained forgiveness.' If we consider the four Hindu deities as a community—as I think we can—it seems quite plausible to regard them more specifically with Sundermann as 'the community of elements who have gained forgiveness,' i.e. the 'Four Elements' (out of originally five). Should this be correct, the four elements could readily be equated to wind, light, water, and fire in an anthropomorphic Hindu garb, all the more so because—as Sundermann stresses—they have an Indian cultural background.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE 'FIVE ELEMENTS' FOR THE MANICHAEANS IN THE TURFAN OASIS

Sundermann has pointed out that according to the *Sermon of the Soul* the soul has its foundation and origin ('Grund und Ursprung') in the Five Elements of Light, being air, wind, light, water and fire, which the Sogdian text calls the gods of this world. As soul, sons, armour and garments they accompany Primeval Man in his battle against the powers of darkness. When Primeval Man is redeemed and returns to the Realm of Light, the Five Elements are retained by the powers of darkness. They thus become that part of the Realm of Light whose retrieval to light from the dark is the reason for this world's duration and existence. Air, wind, light, water and fire thus constitute living and conscious light elements of great fineness and purity imprisoned in darkness.³¹

But this is only part of the truth concerning the Five Elements. More relevant to our fragments of kneeling Hindu deities is the message of the *Sermon of the Soul* that the living soul is *also* a mighty, active pentad of divine light elements, who give structure and duration, who carry and uphold the body of all living beings, constantly giving life to all creatures, letting plants proliferate and prosper, even help during birth and the growing up of human beings, and are responsible for the beauty of all living beings, as for the fact that they are able to see, hear, move speak to

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

each other and live in peace with each other.³² They are also invoked for help.³³ Sundermann points out that Klimkeit had already remarked this trait when saying:

It strikes one, that in many Turkic texts the aim of many prayers and supplications is to gain not only spiritual welfare but also bodily well-being and blessing on earth.³⁴

Sundermann moreover ventures to say that since the *Sermon* intimates that the deities of the elements have at all times been known but called by other names by other peoples of other religious creeds, another very plausible explanation may also be possible. Namely, that the Manichaeon author voices his verdict concerning a number of polytheistic cults and creeds active in his own time. The pantheon of these creeds comprises the gods of this world but is oblivious of the Realm of the Father of Greatness. The gods of all these other existing creeds are nonetheless not phantoms insofar as they can be harmonised with the Manichaeon Five (or Seven) Deities of the Elements. What obviously links these Manichaeon Deities to other heathen gods are their functions in all matters of well being on earth, and their help which is forwarded to all distressed and endangered beings. This is not what Manichaeon gods are than aid humans in matters of illness, hunger, afflictions or sorrow. He states:

Die fünf Elementengötter, die sich in der Welt befinden ... und auch ihr Vater gelten gewissermaßen als die Gottheiten einer natürlichen Religiosität, die auch den Heiden nicht abzusprechen ist. Der Manichäer dürfte sie in den Naturgottheiten seiner Umgebung wiedergefunden haben. Daß die Namensvielfalt der Götter in den Sprachen der Welt eine charakteristische stoische, aber auch hermeneutische Beobachtung ist, hat Böhlig hervorgehoben.³⁵
(Zur religionsgeschichtlichen Einordnung des Manichäismus, in: *Manichaeon Studies*, ed. P. Bryder, Lund 1988, S. 44)

Sundermann also stresses that many topics from the *Sermon of the Soul* were borrowed by the Chinese Manichaeon literature,³⁶ especially in hymnal scrolls, the title being *Praise of the Five Lights. Composed by the Teachers*. Both extant works again do not regard the light elements as suffering in this world but as a pentad of mighty deities, who aid the

³² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³³ *Ibid.*, footnote 62 on p. 17.

³⁴ Klimkeit, 'Manichaeon Kingship ...', 1982, pp. 27–28 apud Sundermann, *Der Sermon von der Seele*, p. 28.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

³⁶ Schmidt-Glitzner 1987, pp. 41–42 apud Sundermann, *ibid.*, p. 26.

life of all creatures while holding the structure of the world upright.³⁷ The Chinese texts refer to the achievements of especially three of the five light elements: Air, wind and light, who are praised as the givers of growth and prosperity. The achievements of water and fire are not even mentioned. Also, the elements are not treated individually, but as a group. This corroborates our iconographical observations.

To sum up, it becomes evident that even the non-worldly Manichaeans are seen to have been in need of protective and helping deities for their daily life, as Sundermann states. This function was fulfilled, among others, by the Deities of the Five Elements which can closely be compared to other non-Manichaean deities of the times.³⁸ One of the main functions of the four kneeling Hindu deities, i.e. four of the Five Elements, was thus their protective character. It is for this reason that the inscription of Cave 38 speaks of 'a gathering of guardian deities.' But among the gathering of Manichaean guardian deities, the deities of the Five Elements was just one group. This is why the Five Elements were depicted in Hindu garb and with bare knees in the Manichaean pantheon thus creating an unequivocal iconography which permitted to identify them without doubt and keep them apart from all other protective deities shown in groups.

Since only four of the Five Elements are depicted in human form in Manichaean art, the tree in the centre of the wall painting in Cave 38 at Bezeklik must perhaps be counted among the pentad, being 'air', if it was not omitted altogether. This becomes plausible when we remember that the god of the air is likened to a tree. But further research is needed to clarify this matter. The group's sequence of deities was certainly subject to alterations as can be gleaned both from the texts as well as from the paintings still extant, which, however, seems to have had little bearing on the overall iconography. It thus becomes possible to clearly identify the gathering of the Four Elements (out of five, the fifth possibly being the tree) to the left side of the tree (from the onlooker). The two standing figures behind these may be guardian angels. To the right side of the tree we would, according to textual references, then expect to see kneeling members of 'The church of peace' and standing behind them perhaps 'The mighty elected valiant ones' (Fig. 24).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

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CHAPTER TWENTY

THE CENTRAL ASIAN ROOTS OF A CHINESE MANICHAEAN SILK PAINTING IN THE COLLECTION OF THE YAMATO BUNKAKAN, NARA, JAPAN¹

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A remarkably well-preserved Manichaean silk painting, most likely from the era of the Yuan dynasty, has been identified recently in the collection of a renowned Japanese art museum, the Yamato Bunkakan.² While earlier it had been considered to be a Buddhist work of art,³ today, the Manichaean origin of this Chinese image is unquestionable

¹ For a Japanese translation of this paper under the title 'Yamato Bunkakan zou Mani-kyou kaiga ni mirareru chu-ou ajia raigen no youso ni tsuite [= 大和文華 館蔵マニ教絵画にみられる 中央アジア 来源の要素について]', see *Yamato Bunka: Biannual Journal of Eastern Arts* [= 大和文華], 119 (2009): 17–34.

² The definite Manichaean attribution of the painting has been first offered by Yutaka Yoshida, 'A Manichaean Painting from Ningbo: On the Religious Affiliation of the so-called *Rokudōzu* of the Museum Yamato Bunkakan,' *Yamato Bunka* 119 [2009], 3–15 (in Japanese). His pioneering study formed the foundation of the thematic volume of the *Journal of the Yamato Bunkakan* dedicated to the Chinese Manichaean silk painting in its collection. Also see his 'A newly recognized Manichaean painting: Manichaean Daena from Japan,' M.A. Amir-Moezzi, J.-D. Dubois (éds.), *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient. Hommage à Michel Tardieu*, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Sciences Religieuses, BEHE 142 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 697–714. In his lecture given at the *7th International Congress of Manichaean Studies* (Sept. 8th–11th, 2009, Dublin, Ireland, proceedings are forthcoming), Yoshida reported about the identification of now a total of seven Chinese Manichaean silk paintings preserved in various Japanese collections. His Japanese language publication on these paintings, written in collaboration with K. Furukawa, is forthcoming in *Yamato Bunka: Biannual Journal of Eastern Arts* [= 大和文華], 121 (2010).

³ The initial Buddhist interpretations of the painting, including its overall theme as the 'Six Buddhist Realms' and its main scene as the 'Meeting of the Three Religions' (i.e., Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism), were reviewed by Takeo Izumi. Although Izumi raises the possibility that the main figure could be Mani, due to its similarity to the basic iconography of the Mani statue from 1339 near Quanzhou, he urges further study before a secure Manichaean identification could be affirmed. He writes: 'I should like to wait for the definitive answer to the question who is represented in the Yamato Bunkakan painting and to the problem of its religious affiliation' ('A Possible Nestorian Christian Image: Regarding the Figure Preserved as a *Kokuzō Bosatsu* Image at Seiun-ji,' *Kokka* 1330 [2006], 10–12).

for three principal reasons: (1) its dedicatory inscription that bestowed the object on a Chinese Manichaean temple, probably at Ningbo, in Zhejiang province;⁴ (2) the iconography of its main deity, Mani, as well as that of the elect, who are shown in Chinese versions of characteristically Manichaean attire;⁵ and (3) the significant amount of documentary evidence on the worship of Manichaean deities (Mani and Jesus), including actual devotional works of art, that survive from southern China, especially Fujien and Zhejian provinces from between the 10th and 17th centuries.⁶

The painting itself is a ca. 5-feet tall hanging scroll, consisting of five clearly demarcated registers of varying heights that together convey a subject that we may call *Sermon on Mani's Teaching of Salvation* (Fig. 1). At the very top, register 1 depicts heaven through a palace building that forms the focus of a narration of events with repeated figures of a few mythological beings.⁷ In a technique known as continuous narration, this composition shows how the Light Maiden and her entourage conduct their business: arriving on the left, while being greeted by an unidentified female host; visiting with the host, while seated inside the palace at the center; and then departing on the right, while being seen off by the host. This scene maybe titled: *The Light Maiden's Visit to Heaven*. Register 2 depicts a sermon performed around the statue of a Manichaean deity

⁴ As part of the Manichaean identification of the image, the inscription is discussed by Yoshida ('A Manichaean Painting from Ningbo,' 8), who provides a Japanese translation by T. Moriyasu, the English equivalent of which is as follows (Yoshida, personal communication): 'Zhang Siyi from a parish(?) called Dongzheng, who is a leader of the disciples, together with his wife Xinniang [from] the family of Zheng make a donation and present respectfully a sacred painting of Hades to a temple of vegetarians located on the Baoshan mountain. They wish to provide it as their eternal offering. Accordingly, peace may be kept. [In the year ... and in the ... -th month]. The characters for the date are illegible.'

⁵ Yoshida interprets the main figure as Mani, and the repeated image of the female figure as the Light Maiden (Sogdian *Daēnā*). Regarding the overall subject of the painting, he suggests that it is an illustration of Manichaean doctrine on the individual eschatology, and thus could be viewed as a scene inspired by a theme depicted in Mani's *Picture-Book* ('A Manichaean Painting from Ningbo' 5–10). The Manichaean iconography of the main figure and the elects in connection with other southern Chinese Manichaean presentations are also discussed by Gulácsi ('A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus: Identifying a Twelfth-Thirteenth-century Chinese Painting from the Collection of Seijunji Zen Temple,' *Artibus Asiae* 69/1 (2009): 91–145).

⁶ The textual evidence on southern Chinese Manichaean pictorial art is surveyed in Gulácsi, 'A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus,' 10–18.

⁷ For more on this scene and the discussion of the Light Maiden (Sogdian *Daēnā*), see Yoshida, 'A Manichaean Painting from Ningbo,' 9–10.

(most likely Mani) by two Manichaeans elects, shown on the right.⁸ The elect giving the sermon is seated, while his assistant is standing. A well-to-do layman and his attendant, seen on the left, listen to the sermon. Therefore, this scene may be titled: *Sermon around a Statue of Mani*.⁹ Register 3 is divided into four small squares, devoted to what is known as the 'four occupations' or 'four classes' of Chinese society, in order to capture the possible life experiences of the Chinese Manichaean laity. In succession from left to right, the first scene represents merchants, the second artisans, the third farmers, and the fourth scholar officials.¹⁰ This set of scenes may be titled: *States of Good Reincarnation*. Register 4 depicts the Manichaean view on judgment after death. It shows a judge seated behind a desk surrounded by his aids in a pavilion on an elevated platform, to the front of which two pairs of demons lead their captives to hear their fates, either positive or negative. The Light Maiden arrives along the upper left on her usual cloud formation with two attendants, to interfere on behalf of the man about to be judged. This scene may be titled: *The Light Maiden's Intervention with a Judgment*. Register 5 concludes the hanging scroll by portraying four fear-provoking images of hell that include from right to left: arrows being shot at a person suspended from a red frame, dismemberment, a fiery wheel rolled over a person, and finally group of demon torturers waiting for their victim. Therefore, this scene may be titled: *States of Bad Reincarnation*.

Beyond providing data for religious attribution, this painting constitutes a rich visual source for the study of ca. 13th-century southern Chinese Manichaean art.¹¹ In a previous publication, I explored the artistic language and the context of use of this painting, suggesting that it

⁸ For a study of the Manichaean iconographic ties of the Mani image in the Yamato Bunkakan painting, see Jorinde Ebert, 'Some Remarks Concerning a Recently Identified Manichaean Painting of the Museum Yamato Bunkakan,' *Yamato Bunka* 119 (2009), 35–47, in Japanese.

⁹ Gulácsi, 'A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus,' 13.

¹⁰ Yoshida, 'A Manichaean Painting from Ningbo,' 3–4.

¹¹ Due to the illegible state of the year and month in the dedicatory inscription, the dating of this painting requires a scholarly argument based on art historical and/or a scientific basis. Currently, the 14th century is considered as its most likely date (Yoshida, 'A Manichaean Painting from Ningbo,' 3). It seems, however, that an earlier, 12th- or 13th-century date is also worthy for exploration for two reasons. Firstly, because the 5 large *Kings of Hell* hanging-scrolls in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which exhibit stylistic and iconographic ties with the Yamato Bunkakan image, bear inscriptions assigning their images to the year 1195 and the city of Ningbo (see note 40 below). Secondly, since the Manichaean use of silk paintings in southern Chinese during the 12th and 13th centuries

functioned as a visual aid for religious instruction.¹² In that study, I argued that it was used in service of the practice that Victor Mair has called *picture recitation* (i.e., storytelling with images) in his 1988 monograph, which explores the origins of the Chinese version of the tradition (*chuan-pien*) and notes its survival throughout much of the Asian continent, including a closely related Japanese version (*etoki*) that is still practiced today in certain Pure Land Buddhist temples.¹³ My current goal is to show the Manichaean iconographic heritage of this painting by connecting specific subjects depicted in it (namely, the *Sermon Scene*, the *Image of a Deity*, and the *Judgment Scene*) to analogous representations in earlier Manichaean pictorial art from ca. 10th-century East Central Asia. Such iconographic correspondences prove that, despite their clear integration to the artistic norms of ca. 13th century southern China, the roots of certain pictorial topics in the Yamato Bunkakan painting go back to East Central Asian Manichaean prototypes. Besides anchoring this painting within the overall history of Manichaean art, its iconographic ties with earlier Manichaean art provide evidence for the otherwise elusive notion of artistic continuity between the East Central Asian and the southern Chinese phases of Manichaean history. But before discussing the artistic evidence on iconographic continuity, it is important to briefly state the foundations of this paper, regarding the two eras of Manichaean history linked in this study: the earlier phase in East Central Asia under Uygur sponsorship between the mid 8th and early 11th centuries and the later phase in southern China under local Chinese patronage between the mid 9th and early 17th centuries.

BACKGROUND

Much has happened in the field of Manichaean studies since the early 20th-century German discovery and subsequent publications of the East

is well documented (see note 23 below). Therefore, before a more secure dating argument is put forward, I consider the 13th century a reasonable approximate date of the Yamato Bunkakan painting.

¹² Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, 'A Visual Sermon on Mani's Teaching of Salvation: A Contextualized Reading of a Chinese Manichaean Silk Painting in the Collection of the Yamato Bunkakan in Nara, Japan' *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages*, 23 (2008): 1–16.

¹³ Victor H. Mair, *Painting and Performance: Chinese Picture Recitation and Its Indian Genesis* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 1988), 1–16; and Ikumi Kaminishi, *Explaining Pictures: Buddhist Propaganda and Etoki Storytelling in Japan* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 2006), 103–108.

Central Asian textual and visual remains of this now extinct, monotheistic missionary world religion. In addition to its regionally changing art and religious system, the overall ca. 1,400-year history of Manichaeism is better and better understood today in light of hundreds of articles and books published on its research.¹⁴

Important recent steps in the understanding of Manichaean art have focused on its East Central Asian phase (mid 8th – early 11th centuries) and have included the positive identification of its corpus, the classification and scientific dating of its painting styles, the analytical study of its book medium, and continued research on its iconography. Criteria for identifying a corpus that doubled the number of Manichaean remains were put forward in 1997, on the basis of which a catalogue appeared in 2001, supplemented with color facsimiles and critical editions of all associated texts.¹⁵ Painted codex fragments that were securely identified as Manichaean through their texts formed the core of this corpus. The iconography of the elects and certain formal characteristics established within this core allowed for additional identifications, resulting a total of ca. 50 fragmentary scenes preserved on remnants of illuminated manuscripts (mostly on double-sided codex folia), painted and embroidered textiles, and wall paintings, in addition to the ca. 70 fragments of decorative designs (mostly floral motifs along the margins) found on illuminated codex folia. These pictorial remains divide between two locally produced painting styles, each of which possess a fully painted and a line-drawn version. The one with western roots, dubbed ‘West Asian Style of Uygur Manichaean Art,’ is featured almost exclusively on remnants of illuminated books in codex and scroll formats. The other, with

¹⁴ The comprehensive bibliography of Manichaean studies published in European, West Asian, and East Asian languages by 1996 consists of 3606 entries: Gunner B. Mikelsen, *Bibliographia Manichaica: A Comprehensive Bibliography of Manichaeism Through 1996* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 1997).

¹⁵ Besides the two collections in Berlin that formed the focus of the studies on canon formation (Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, ‘Identifying the Corpus of Manichaean Art among the Turfan Remains,’ in: P. Mirecki and J. BeDuhn (eds.), *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 177–215; a few fragments of Manichaean illuminated books are known from collections in London, St. Petersburg, Kyoto, and China. They were considered together with the Berlin remains in a recent publication (Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, *Mediaeval Manichaean Book Art: A Codicological Study of Iranian and Turkic Illuminated Book Fragments from 8th–11th cc. East Central Asia* [Leiden: Brill, 2005], 15–38). New identifications of Manichaean textiles have been published by Chhaya Bhattacharya-Haesner, (*Central Asian Temple Banners in the Turfan Collection of the Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin* [Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2003], 372 and 377–379).

eastern roots, designated 'Chinese Style of Uyghur Manichaean Art,' is seen mostly on temple banners, textile displays, and wall paintings. Contrary to assumptions held previously, carbon dating, combined with a stylistic analysis and historical dating, revealed in 2003 that fragments on which the two styles appear both derive from the 10th century, confirming that artists working in distinct styles and media were employed simultaneously in Kocho.¹⁶ The most numerous component of this corpus, the fragments of illuminated manuscript, were subjected to a codicological analysis in 2005 that considered the formal aspects as well as the contextual cohesion of text and image.¹⁷ Although a monograph on Manichaean iconography is yet to be completed, a series of insightful art historical studies on various related subjects have been appearing since 1980.¹⁸

In contrast to the relatively large amount but rather fragmentary condition of the artistic remains from East Central Asia, the southern Chinese phase of Manichaeism is documented today by a significantly smaller artistic corpus of exceptionally well-preserved representational works of art, dating from between the 12th and 14th centuries. Three of them are discussed below: the *Yamato Bunkakan* painting is the focus of

¹⁶ In his entry in the *Encyclopedia on World Art*, Louis Hambis was the first to question the assumed chronology of the Manichaean painting styles (1964, 442–443), which led to dating the remains in light of scientific, artistic, and textual evidence (Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, 'Dating the 'Persian' and Chinese Style Remains of Uyghur Manichaean Art: A New Radiocarbon Date and Its Implications for Central Asian Art History,' *Ars Asiaticus* 58 [2003], 5–33; and *Mediaeval Manichaean Book Art*, 39–58 and 127–129).

¹⁷ Gulácsi, *Mediaeval Manichaean Book Art*.

¹⁸ These studies include the iconography of *Guardian Deities* (Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, 'Hindu Deities in Manichaean Art,' *Zentralasiatische Studien* 14 (1980): 8–11; and Jorinde Ebert, 'Die "Vier licht Götterkönige" als Schutzgottheiten in einen Manichäischen Seidenbildfragment,' in: T.W. Gaetgens (ed.), *Künstlerischer Austausch / Artistic Exchange. Akten des XXVIII. Internationalen Kongress für Kunstgeschichte, Berlin 15–20 Juli 1992* [Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992], 489–512.); the *Bema Festival* (Jorinde Ebert, 'Darstellungen der Passion Manis in bekannten und unbekannten Bildfragmenten des Bema-Fest aus der Turfansammlung,' in: Klaus Röhrborn and Wolfgang Veenker (eds.), *Memorias Munusculum: Gedenkband für Annemarie v. Gabain*, Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica 39 [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994], 1–28); the so-called *Work of the Religion*, (Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, 'Reconstructing Manichaean Book Paintings through the techniques of their Makers: The case of the *Work of the Religion Scene*, MIK III 4974,' in: P. Mirecki and J. BeDuhn (eds.), *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and its World*, [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001], 105–128); and most recently, the origin of the insignia seen on Manichaean ceremonial cloaks (Jorinde Ebert, '*Segmentum* and *Clavus* in Manichaean Garments of the Turfan Oasis,' in: M. Yaldiz and P. Zieme (eds.), *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road* [Berlin: Reimer Verlag, 2004], 72–83).

this study, while the other two (the *Seiun-ji* painting and the statue in Fujian) serve as comparative examples. The significant amount of documentary evince on the southern Chinese Manichaean context of these works of art has been collected and published during the 20th century.¹⁹

TIES WITH EAST CENTRAL ASIAN MANICHAEAN ART

Traditional Manichaean pictorial themes, known already from the East Central Asian (Uygur) phase of Manichaean history, are found in the two largest registers (registers 2 and 4) of the Yamato Bunkakan painting. Within these two registers, three familiar Manichaean subjects can be recognized, including the depictions of a *Sermon*, an *Image of a Deity*, and a *Judgment after Death*. Despite significant stylistic differences between the 13th-century Chinese and the 10th-century Uygur versions of these scenes, a considerable quantity of iconographic and compositional similarities are present, which constitute visual evidence worthy of art historical analysis and interpretation, allowing us to situate these pictorial subjects within the framework of Manichaean studies.

1. *The Sermon Scene*

From the earliest era of Manichaean history, the importance of sermons (i.e., religious teachings delivered by a leading member of the elect) is documented through their prominence among the written remains of the religion in every corner of its activity. The sermons given by Mani in mid 3rd century southern Mesopotamia survive today in Coptic translations from 4th century North Africa, as well as in various languages of Central and East Asia. Mani enjoined the elect to make preaching a primary part of their work on behalf of the faith. Therefore, it is not surprising to discover that depiction of sermons became a distinct pictorial subject in Manichaean art.

Occupying approximately one third of the Chinese silk painting, the largest of its five registers is devoted to the depiction of a sermon (Fig. 2a). This subject can be identified in light of two East Central Asian Manichaean paintings from 10th-century Kocho, housed in the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, that display numerous points of iconographic and compositional similarities with our focus

¹⁹ See Samuel Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, second edition (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992), 248–304.

piece. Both comparative examples are conveyed in the ‘West Asian styles of Uygur Manichaean art,’ and constitute fragmentary book paintings surviving on torn paper pages of illuminated manuscripts in codex format. The larger and better preserved of the two is an *intracolumnar* painting at the central area of a *bifolio* that survived from a now lost anthology of Manichaean literature (MIK III 8259 folio 1[?] recto, Fig. 2b).²⁰ It captures a group of three male and three female auditors in the lower half of the composition, seated on their heels, listening to a sermon performed by two elects, who are shown in the upper half of the painting. The two elects are seated on lotus supports that grow out from the middle, torn area. This section retains bits of green paint, indicating the grass that originally was painted around a now-lost pool of water, from where three lotus stems emerge. The middle stem grows upwards in between the two elects, supporting a small folding table, the covered surface of which is only partially visible along the upper torn portion of the painting, depriving us from knowing what it held on its surface. The second, smaller book painting derives from along the outer margins of a torn codex folio (MIK III 6265 & III 4966c recto, Fig. 2c).²¹ The painting preserves a pool of water, with its surrounding green grass, from where a lotus plant emerges. From the central stem, the red petals of a lotus support and the cloth-covered surface of a table survive. The elect seen to the right of the lotus is giving the sermon. The corner of a carpet and a knee in colorful lay garments, retained to the left of the lotus, suggest the presence of an auditor, who was most likely listening to the sermon.

The iconographic correlations between the Chinese and the two Uygur *Sermon Scenes* manifest through three key components, including the characteristic depiction of the elect(s) giving the sermon, the auditors listening to it, and what appears to be a devotional display at the center of the composition. (1) Regarding the elects, in all three cases, their figures are positioned along the right side. The one giving the sermon is shown always seated in a most prestigious pose of sitting. Due to distinct cultural norms, the Chinese painting seats the elect on an elegant chair, while the Uygur painting places him on a carpet cross-legged. In both cases, they gesture with their right hand. Their right arms are lifted away from the torsos in gentle curves, while the right hands assume communicative

²⁰ For a codicological study and a reconstruction diagram of the bifolio, see Gulácsi, *Mediaeval Manichaean Book Art*, 142–144 and Fig. 5/7.

²¹ For the discussion of the fragment, see Gulácsi, *Manichaean Art in Berlin Collections: A Comprehensive Catalogue*. Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum: Series Archaeolo-

gestures that involve the touching of the thumbs to the first fingers. The secondary elects, when visible, are found in subordinate pose to that of the sermon-giving elects. They are either standing with their palms pressed together in front of the chest, as in the Chinese painting; or shown seated on the heels, as in the Uygur painting. (2) Regarding the auditors, in both cases, when they are retained along the left sides, they are shown in passive poses that appear to represent the act of listening. Their ranks, from a spiritual point of view, are lesser than those of the elects. This is clearly conveyed in the Chinese painting just as in the larger Uygur image. The Chinese version shows an aristocrat, who although seated in a prestigious pose, holds his hands in the same subordinate pose as that of the secondary elect. In the Uygur version, although the auditors are identified as members of the Uygur ruling family through their headgears, they are placed in the lower, lesser ranking part of the picture plane. (3) Regarding the devotional displays in the center of the scenes, they represent culturally distinct versions of altars in the focal points of the scenes. In the Chinese case, the setup includes a small red lacquered table, on which a gold incense burner rests flanked by two small containers most likely of incense, behind which is a statue of a deity on an elaborate lotus pedestal. In the two Uygur scenes, the areas of the painting that originally showed the devotional displays are damaged, allowing us to see only a gilded folding table with what appears to be an elevated platform on its surface draped over by a red cloth. On top of this altar, an object of worship was undoubtedly displayed. This object must have been relatively small, since the edge of the painting is clearly defined by the size of the outer margin in each Uygur case, leaving us with a height for the mystery object that is not more than that of the headgear of the elects.

An additional set of correspondences between the Chinese and Uygur *Sermon Scenes* are found in the compositional tools, such as central positioning, implied lines, and hierarchical scale, through which the artists direct the viewer's attention and thus communicate the visual message with great clarity. (1) Centrality is employed within the overall framework of formal symmetry in each of the three scenes, in order to emphasize the most important element of the composition. The identical

gica et Iconographica 1 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2001), 62–65 and 253. The position of the fragment within its original folio was similar to that of M 559; for the latter, see Gulácsi, *Mediaeval Manichaean Book Art*, 167–169.

visual weights on the two sides are only varied slightly in the positioning of arms and legs of the figures. (2) A set of implied lines supplement all this, since the figures on both sides not only look towards the inner part of the painting, and thus, highlight the vertical axis of the composition, but are also arranged along implied diagonal lines that point towards the upper part of the vertical axis. This layout makes centrality work with great efficiency, declaring that the most important location is the area where the devotional display is shown. In the Chinese version, its mass occupies a significant space, ca. the upper middle third of the scene. Here, the frontal projection of the deity in contrast to the side figures places a further emphasis on the idea of centrality. Similarly in the two Uyghur scenes, the devotional displays are shown frontally and placed along the upper part of the vertical axis. (3) An additional compositional device, the hierarchy of scale, is employed to reiterate the relevance of the devotional display in both traditions. In the Chinese painting, the height and width of the deity is somewhat larger in scale than the side figures. The height of deity's face and upper body as well as the widths of its shoulders is about one-third larger than those of the two, seated figures. The very same size difference is observed between the seated figures and their standing attendants. In the less fragmentary of the two Uyghur paintings, the hierarchy of scale is seen among the lay figures, who get gradually larger in size based on their location, since the outermost figures on each side are smaller than the inner most ones. The same tendency is observed among the lotus pedestals here, since the width of the two side ones are less than that of the central flower that supports the folding table.

Due to the large number and systematic correlations, the above iconographic and compositional similarities between the Chinese Manichaean and the two Uyghur Manichaean *Sermon Scenes* cannot be coincidental. It is also unlikely that they are due to 10th-century Chinese influence on Uyghur Manichaean art, since the Uyghur examples are preserved in a painting style and with an iconography that are anchored to a traditional medium of Manichaean art (manuscript illumination) rooted in a West Asian artistic heritage. Therefore, the above correlations represent evidence indicating that Manichaean paintings of rituals (such as *Sermon Scenes*) were transmitted to China from East Central Asia together with the texts of the religion. It seems that East Central Asian Manichaean works of art analogous to the two Uyghur examples considered above functioned as pictorial prototypes and constituted sources for the Chinese 'visual translations' of characteristically Manichaean artistic

forms of religious expressions. These 'visual translations' preserved the Sinicized renderings of traditionally Manichaean subjects, iconographic details, and compositional tools in southern China.

2. *Image of a Deity*

Worship of 'deities,' that is personages who are venerated, such as mythological beings (e.g., *The Maiden of Light*, *The Third Messenger*, *The Four Heavenly Kings*, etc.) or prophets relevant for Manichaeism (e.g., Mani, Jesus, the historical Buddha, etc.), are documented through a significant body of hymns devoted to these beings, surviving throughout the Manichean world.²² Other textual sources record the existence of devotional Manichaean paintings and statues, specifically from southern China between the 12th and early 17th centuries. The earliest such record is found in the *Song huiyao*, a collection of Chinese historical documents from the time of the Song dynasty. It preserves a memorial written in 1120 about the Manichaean community in the town of Wenzhou. The text contains general remarks about Manichaean practices and names thirteen books and six paintings that were in the possession of a Chinese Manichaean church, used as objects of learning and veneration. It documents that the local Manichaeans owned a set of silk paintings (Ch. *zheng*) that were titled based on the subjects they portrayed, and that one of them depicted Jesus.²³ The second textual source is

²² Hymns to Mani and Jesus are the most numerous in the surviving records. The most extensive hymn is found in the Turkic Pothei-book, whose sole content is directed to Mani (Larry Clark, 'Manichaean Turkic Pothei-Book,' *Altorientalische Forschungen* 9 [1982]: 145–218). For further Iranian and Turkic hymns, see Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia* (San Francisco: Harper-Collins, 1993), 63–68. The translation of the *Chinese Hymnscroll's* section on the 'Praise of Jesus' is found in Tsui Chi, 'Mo Ni Chiao Hsia Pu Tsan: The Lower (Second?) Section of the Manichaean Hymns,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11 (1943–1944): 176–183.

²³ *Song huiyao jigao*, comp. Xu Song (1781–1844) et al. (Shanghai: [n.p.], 1936), fasc. 165, *xingfa* 2.78a–79b. This text was published in French by Antonino Forte, 'Deux études sur le manichéisme chinois,' *T'oung Pao* 59 (1973): 238, 244–251, and in English by Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 276–277. The translation presented here is based on consultations with Victor Mair. The passage reads:

The scriptures (*jingwen*) recited (*suo nian*) by the followers of the Religion of Light and the images of deities (*foxiang*) painted (*huihua*) by them: ... [inventory of thirteen book titles, followed by]

- a silk painting of the buddha Wonderful Water (Miaoshui fo zhen),
- a silk painting of the buddha First Thought (Xianyi fo zhen),
- a silk painting of the buddha Jesus (Yishu fo zhen),

found in Marco Polo's *The Description of the World*, one section of which reports about a group of Chinese Manichaeans.²⁴ Spending 17 years in China between 1271 and 1288, Marco Polo (1254–1324) encountered this group in the southern Chinese city of Fuzhou (Fujian province). He mentions 'three painted figures' in one of their temples and explains that these images portrayed 'apostles' and were worshiped.²⁵ Furthermore, the passage implies that these devotional images featured each a solitary personage, possibly prophets revered as deities in southern Chinese Manichaeism. The medium is unspecified.²⁶ It is possible, however, that silk paintings were meant, since that medium is documented in the Wenzhou memorial and by the two actual Manichaean silk paintings preserved in the collections of the Seiyun-ji and the Yamato Bunkakan in Japan. The most recent textual record is a reference in the *Minshu*, i.e.,

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- a silk painting of Good and Evil (Shan'e zhen),
 - a silk painting of the Royal Prince (Taizi zhen),
 - a silk painting of the Four Kings of Heaven (Sitianwang zhen).

This record documents that during the early 12th century the Manichaeans of Wenzhou owned a set of silk paintings, referred to here by the term *zhen*, which connotes a painting on a soft fabric surface, often silk, that could be rolled up or folded when not hung for display (Personal communication with Robert Campamy).

²⁴ Ronald Latham, *The Travels of Marco Polo* (London: Penguin Books, 1958), 235–236. This community was drawn to Marco Polo's attention due to its uniqueness since they were 'neither Buddhist nor Zoroastrian, neither Christian nor Muslim.' Their Manichaean identity, understandably unnoticed by him, was proven on the basis of Polo's data by Leonardo Olschki, who elaborated on the prolonged underground existence of native Chinese Manichaeans in southern Chinese as an explanation for their reluctance to register with the Yuan authorities at the Mongol-established religious office, the *Board of Rites* (Olschki, 'Manichaeism, Buddhism, and Christianity in Marco Polo's China,' *Zeitschrift der schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Asienkunde* 5 (1951): 8–9). Olschki's Manichaean reading is well accepted in Manichaean studies as seen, for example, in Samuel Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 186–188.

²⁵ Marco Polo, *Description of the World*, see 1938 edition: vol. 1, pp. 349–350 and its Latin original in vol. 2, liii–liv. The English translation below is after Latham, *Travels of Marco Polo*, 235–236. The text reads: '... Then they inquired from what source they had received their faith and their rule; and their informants replied: "From our forefathers." It came out that they had, in a certain temple of theirs, three painted figures (*depictas imagines tres*) representing three apostles of the seventy who went through the world preaching. And they declared that it was these three who had instructed their ancestors in this faith long ago, and that it [this faith] had been preserved among them for 700 years; but for a long time they had been without teaching, so that they were ignorant of the cardinal doctrines. "But to this we hold fast, which we have received from our forefathers; we worship in accordance with our books and do reverence to these apostles!" ...'

²⁶ Olschki interprets them as wall paintings and hypothesizes that one of them depicted Mani ('Manichaeism, Buddhism, and Christianity,' 17 and 18, respectively).

the *Book of Min* (i.e., Fujian), to a statue of Mani at a rustic shrine (Ch. *cao'an*) dedicated to Mani just 20 kilometers south of Quanzhou, that was still active in the early 17th century.²⁷

The interpretation of the image of the deity in the *Sermon Scene* of the Yamato Bunkakan painting (Fig. 3a) as a devotional representation of a Manichaean prophet (Mani) is unquestioned today in light of four analogous Manichaean images of prophets, two from southern China and two East Central Asia. Despite the fact that all but one incorporate motifs with Buddhist origin into a uniquely Manichaean visual language, these images as a group share compositional and iconographic features that are recognized today as continuously maintained characteristics of Manichaean art. The image closest to our focus piece in terms of medium, iconography, and context, is a monumental depiction of Jesus found on a large hanging scroll from 12th/13th-century southern China (Fig. 3b).²⁸ The painted stone statue of Mani at a shrine near Quanzhou (Fig. 3c) is especially relevant, not only because its dedicatory inscription securely dates the image to 1339 and identifies the deity as Mani,²⁹ but also because this statue allows us to see an actual devotional image in situ. Looking at the southern Chinese images side-by-side reveals an iconography that

²⁷ The *Minshu* was written in the early 17th century by the famous writer, He Qiaoyuan, who lived in Quanzhou. The book contains 154 chapters and a foreword by Ye Xianggao dated to 1619 (Peter Bryder, 'Where the Faint Traces of Manichaeism Disappear,' *Altorientalische Forschungen* 15 [1988]: 201). The section relevant for us reads: 'The Huabiao mountain, in the sub-prefecture of Jinjiang belonging to the prefecture of Quanzhou, is a part of the Lingyuan (mountain). Its two peaks stand besides each other like a *huabiao* (= twin pillars placed in front of tombs). On the reverse side of the foot of the mountain there is a rustic shrine (*cao'an*), which dates back to the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368). There they pray to the god (Buddha) Mani.' (*Minshu*, ch. 7; Paul Pelliot, 'Les Traditions Manichéennes au Fukien,' *T'oung Pao* 22 [1923]: 199, 205; English translation after Bryder, 'Where the Faint Traces of Manichaeism Disappear,' 201; also quoted in Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, 56).

²⁸ The similarities of the two were noted by Izumi ('A Possible Nestorian Christian Image,' 10–12); and discussed through a comparative analysis by Gulácsi ('A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus,' 18). On the identification of the Chinese Manichaean Jesus image in Seiu-jī, also see Takao Moriyasu's study in this volume.

²⁹ The inscription adjacent to the statue reads: 'Chen Zhenze, a believer from the town of Xiedian, presented this holy image, praying earnestly for his deceased mother hoping that she will soon attain Buddhahood. Inscribed in the ninth month of the fifth year of Zhiyuan (1339).' The inscription in the courtyard reads: 'Mani, the Buddha of Light, the most pure Light, the great and powerful Wisdom, the highest and unsurpassable Truth. Inscribed in the ninth month of the *yichou* year of the Zhengtong period (1445).' Both are cited and discussed by Lieu ('Nestorians and Manichaeans on the South China Coast,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 34 [1980]: 80–83; and *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, 189–192) and Bryder ('Where the Faint Traces of Manichaeism Disappear,' 204–206).

was standard during the 12th–14th centuries in Manichaeism southern China. The distinctly Manichaean elements of this iconography are seen in the representation of the body (long hair, beard, and mustache) and the garments (layers of white robes, ceremonial white cloak with insignia at the shoulders and knees, as well as the lack of headgear). Additional elements that may be incorrectly mistaken for motifs resulting from a Chinese Buddhist influence on this art, include the sitting (lotus support and cross-legged sitting), the communicative hand gestures, well as the halos and mandorlas. These motifs, however, were already present in Manichaean art during its East Central Asian phase, as suggested by two images of Manichaean prophets depicted as deities from ca. 10th century Kocho, in the collection of the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.³⁰ A Manichaean image of Jesus seated cross-legged on a lotus support, with a body dressed in white robes and enclosed in a halo and a mandorla is found on a fragmentary image that survives today only through a description and a linedrawing produced by the German Expeditions (Fig. 3d). This now-lost, high-quality gilded silk painting depicted the *Primary Manichaean Prophets*, including Jesus, who is shown here holding a staff with an originally gilded cross on its tip.³¹ Nevertheless, not all currently known images of Manichaean prophets include motifs with Buddhist origin. The white cloak with its four insignia, as a uniquely Manichaean motif, can be seen on another East Central Asian Manichaean image of Jesus, found on the fragmentary

³⁰ For a more detailed discussion of these points, see Gulácsi, 'A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus,' 18–27.

³¹ For the reconstruction and interpretation of the fragment as a Primary Prophets scene, see Gulácsi, 'A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus,' 24 and Figs. 12a–b. For the outline drawing and its discussion in the field records of the second expedition that explored Kocho, see Albert von Le Coq, *Chotscho: Facsimile-Wiedergabe der Wichtigeren Funde der ersten Königlich Preussischen Expedition nach Turfan in Ost-Turkistan* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1913; reprint, Graz: Akademie Druck, 1973), 8. Both Le Coq (*Die manichäischen Miniaturen. Die buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien 2* [Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1923; reprint, Graz: Akademie Druck, 1978], 25–26) and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit (*Manichaean Art and Calligraphy*, Iconography of Religions Section 20 [Leiden: Brill, 1982], 43) considered the textile fragment preserved through this line drawing to be a Manichaean depiction of Jesus. Nevertheless, because neither elects nor any 'token motifs' are contained in it, initially this fragment was considered to have an 'unconfirmed Manichaean origin' by Gulácsi ('Identifying the Corpus,' 186; and *Manichaean Art in Berlin Collections*, 266). The recognition of a Manichaean pictorial subject (*Primary Prophets*) based on the analogy to the scene preserved on the matched scroll fragment with the Buddha (MIK III 4947 & III 5d), however, confirms the previous Manichaean reading of this fragment by Le Coq and Klimkeit.

temple (MIK III 6286, side 2[?], Fig. 3e).³² The white cloak, just as the rest of the rest of the iconography, can be observed better on a digital reconstruction of the image (Fig. 3 f.).³³ The latter Jesus image preserves an archaic iconography that uses motifs with origin in an era prior to the Uyghur phase of Manichaean history. Not considering images of Mani on church seals, the above five paintings provide evidence for the continued use of images of prophets (Mani and Jesus) across the history of Manichaean art.

The iconographic correlations that connect the Mani image in the Yamato Bunkakan painting with the four comparative examples deserve a more detailed look. They manifest through a set of symbols associated with the body, the attire, the posture, and the setting of the deities. (1) Regarding the body, when visible, it is captured as that of a stout adult man, who has long straight black hair, a beard, and mustache. A slight variation is seen between the three Chinese and the one Uyghur examples. In the Chinese cases, the hair is pulled back from the forehead and behind the ears, falling in a few wavy locks across the shoulders hanging to chest level. In the Uyghur case, the hair has been pulled back similarly, but falls as a mass behind the shoulders. (2) The attire is characterized by the lack of headgear and the multiple layers of robes, on top of which a uniquely Manichaean ceremonial cloak is worn loosely hanging from the shoulders. This cloak is white, has a golden hem, and is adorned with square-shape insignia visible at the shoulders and the knees. In the case of the two Chinese paintings of Mani and Jesus, the insignia is supplemented with the head of the Light Maiden.³⁴ A simplified version of the insignia is seen on the repainted Chinese statue of Mani. In the damaged Uyghur painting of Jesus, the scale is too small for detailed insignia, which instead features blank squares. (3) Regarding the posture of the deities, they are all placed in culturally appropriate version of prestigious sitting positions, while both hands are in active poses. Cross-legged sitting on top of a lotus seat is seen on all the Chinese and one of

³² For the identification of the figure as Jesus, see Gulácsi, 'A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus,' 25–27.

³³ The digital reconstruction of this Jesus image is published in Gulácsi, 'A Manichaean Portrait of the Buddha Jesus,' 26 and Figs. 13a–b.

³⁴ Such insignia is also seen on the ceremonial cloaks worn by high-ranking elects depicted on wall paintings in the Chinese style of Uyghur Manichaean art. This important element of Manichaean iconography was first studied by Ebert ('*Segmentum* and *Clavus*,' 72–83).

the Uyghur examples. Sitting on a backless throne with the knees spread and the ankles placed close to one another is employed on the other Uyghur image. In all but one case, the right-hand gesture displays a version of the touching of the thumb to the first finger, while the left hand is engaged. In the Mani images, the left hand holds the edge of the cloak. In the Jesus images, the left hand holds a gold symbol of a cross with arms of equal length, in the form of a cross statuette in the Chinese case, and in that of a staff ending in a cross in the damaged Uyghur case. (4) Regarding the setting of the deities, all examples place them on a seat associated with religious prestige, which is a lotus flower in the three Chinese and one of the more damaged Uyghur cases, and a backless throne in the case of the less damaged and digitally restored Uyghur painting. In addition, in each case a large mandorla and halo completes the immediate surroundings of the deities.

Shared compositional characteristics also tie the Mani image in the Yamato Bunkakan painting to the additional Manichaean representations of Mani and Jesus. These manifest in the frontal projection, the associated symmetry, as well as the placement of the horizon. (1) The frontal projection of the body as well as the face is present on all examples, which is especially relevant in the Chinese-style images, which do not use the three-quarter view often seen in contemporaneous Chinese works of art. It is possible that already the first Manichaeans in 3rd-century southern Mesopotamia had adopted this convention of frontality, since the most archaic iconography, seen in the digitally reconstructed textile painting of Jesus (Fig. 3 f.), also features this very way of capturing the face and the body, just as the other images of Mani and Jesus that contain later adopted Buddhist iconographic elements. Even the statue maintains a strict frontality by aligning the head and the body in a direct angle in relation to the surface of the mandorla. (2) Due not only to the frontal projection of the natural shape of the human body, but also iconographic requirement, symmetry dominates the arrangement of the body. Correspondingly, the head, the shoulders, and the arms, as well as the knees are formally balanced, in a way that is broken by only the placement of the gesturing and engaged hands. The statue is the only exception to this, since there, Mani is shown in a meditative pose that requires the hands to be placed in a symmetrical fashion. (3) Finally, the placement of the horizon (the eye-level of the viewer) is one of the most important conventions in the composition of a pictorial work of art. In the case of all examples when the body is preserved, the horizon is placed approximately to the level of the eyes of the figures, showing the sitting surfaces

(both the lotus seats and the throne) and the knees from above, while the heads at the same level as that of the viewer.

A significant set of correlations, seen in the iconographic symbols and the compositional choices between the above-discussed Chinese Manichaeian and the Uygur Manichaeian devotional images of the prophets Mani and Jesus, suggest the existence of a consciously maintained subject in the Manichaeian artistic tradition. Devotion to both Mani and Jesus are documented throughout the Manichaeian world in the survival of the large body of hymns devoted to them. Today, this textual data can be supplemented with evidence from pictorial sources. The iconographic and compositional ties seen among these Manichaeian works of art indicate the continued existence of not only devotion through art, but also the continued existence of specific artistic trends. As Manichaeism spread across Asia, its art was adopted to different cultures in stylistic ways, while maintained a traditional visual core that may turn out to be inherited from the now-lost art of the earliest, late ancient, Mesopotamian episodes of Manichaeian history.

3. *The Judgment Scene*

Occupying ca. one-quarter of the overall height, the scene of register 4 is the second largest unit of the Yamato Bunkakan painting (Fig. 4a). It depicts a *Judgment Scene*, where a judge is about to proclaim his sentence over the sinners, as the Light Maiden arrives, possibly to intervene on the sinners' behalf. The composition is organized into two halves. Dominating the right half, the office of the judge fills out the entire picture plane. Here, a pavilion is shown on a raised platform with a large cloth-covered desk directly above its stairs. Behind it, the judge is seated, wearing scholarly garments and a headgear. His desk holds various objects related to his business—a brush-stand with one brush, a rolled-out scroll, and an ink stone. It seems that he is about to record the verdict, since his right hand is in mid-air, closing up to the paper surface. Behind the judge, there are two female assistants. One of them holds a mirror (frequent in Chinese Buddhist judgment scenes as a magical tool that reveals in its reflection the crimes committed by the sinners); the other holds a ceramic cup, maybe with water for the judge's ink. Flanking the two sides of the desk are high-ranking demon prosecutors dressed in boots and elegant foreign robes—a blue-skinned one with open notes in his hands, and a green-skinned one with notes rolled up. An implied line, formed by the direction of the judge's look towards the sinner, directs our attention

to the left half of the painting. Here, a vast undefined vista is shown, in the foreground of which there are two pairs of demons with their prisoners—two human beings, most likely a man and his wife, stripped to their loincloths.³⁵ The man being judged is held firmly by his demon-keeper. Next in line, the woman still has a cangue around her neck and is being escorted. Above the prisoners, a cloud formation is moving into the scene from the upper left. On top of the cloud is the haloed figure of the Light Maiden with her two attendants, who again carry a banner and a vase. They all look towards the judge. The direction of their gaze is echoed by the trail of their cloud. The area beneath the cloud, inconspicuously displays the dedicatory inscription of the painting—five lines of text written on the surface of a roofed stele.³⁶

The subject of this scene can be readily identified in light of its correspondence with popular Chinese Buddhist representations of *Judgment after Death* in connection with the theme known as the *Ten Kings of Hell*.³⁷ In such Chinese Buddhist scenes, a reoccurring set of iconographic elements include: (1) the motif of a 'king,' portrayed in Chinese fashion as a judge, seated behind a desk with a handscroll and writing instruments on it, surrounded by two standing attendants; (2) one or two sinners, the first stripped to their loincloth standing in front of the judge, the second often with a cangue around the neck and fetters on the hands; and (3) demons that escort the sinners. Textual documentary evidence on the existence of Chinese Buddhist paintings of hell is known already from the 6th century.³⁸ The earliest actual examples of such Chinese paintings in a variety of formats were discovered at Dunhuang, Cave 17, dating to ca. the 9th–10th centuries.³⁹ Later examples from the Chinese main-

³⁵ Jorinde Ebert, in her lecture given at the 7th International Congress of Manichaeism Studies (Sept. 8th–11th, 2009, Dublin, Ireland), suggested that the two human figures represent a man and his wife, whose genders are signaled through their distinct skin colors and hair styles. Her argument was based on convincing comparative examples of Chinese judgment scenes depicted in *Ten Kings of Hell* paintings (proceedings are forthcoming).

³⁶ See note 4 above.

³⁷ The Chinese history of this pictorial theme is documented from the 9th century, see Stephen F. Teiser, 'Having Once Died and Returned to Life: Representations of Hell in Medieval China,' *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 48/2 (1988): 433–464; and *The Scriptures on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

³⁸ Teiser, 'Having Once Died,' 437.

³⁹ This iconography is present on nine paintings discovered from Dunhuang, Cave 17. These include from the collection of the British Museum: (1) the painted silk hanging scroll, OA 1919.1–1.0.23, and (2) the painted paper scroll, OA 1919.1–1.080 (see Rod-

land include the famous 12th-century set of five (from the original ten) hanging scrolls in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. They are especially relevant since the dedicatory inscriptions connect the paintings to late 12th-century Ningbo.⁴⁰ This fascinating point of correspondence with the Manichaean hanging-scroll's dedicatory inscriptions, which have also been attributed to Ningbo, and can be dated to the 12th–13th centuries, foreshadows the potential of future comparative art historical studies.

While the style and the iconography of the Chinese Manichaean depiction of the judgment in the Yamato Bunkakan hanging-scroll is analogous to roughly contemporaneous Chinese Buddhist images, the theme of judgment itself cannot be considered a Chinese Buddhist influence on Chinese Manichaeism. The topic of judgment pronounced after death to set the path of reincarnation for the auditors forms an integral component of Manichaean eschatology and is documented from the earliest era of Manichaean history.⁴¹ The ninety-second chapter of the Coptic Manichaean *Kephalaia* (a collection of Mani's teachings from 4th-century Egypt) records the depiction of the theme of judgment in Mani's *Picture* [Copt. *Hikōn*]. This mid-3rd-century pictorial roll was a set of images about Mani's teachings for those who could not read.⁴² This

erick Whitfield & Anne Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: Chinese Art from the Silk Route* [New York: George Braziller, 1990], 48–49 and 83–85, respectively); and from the collection of the British Library: (3) the illuminated paper scroll, Or. 8210/S.3961 (see Wladimir Zwalf, *Buddhist Art and Faith* (London: British Museum, 1985), 103). From the Musée Guimet, examples of painted silk hanging scroll with analogous subjects include two additional scenes that show the 10 kings seated behind their desks surrounding the main figure of *Ksitigarbha*: (4) MG.17795, (5) MG.17662; and further three images with the 10 kings either seated or standing around the main figure of *Ksitigarbha*, such as: (6) EO. 3644, (7) EO. 1173 side 2, (8) EO. 3580, and (9) MG. 17794 (see Jacques Giès, *Les arts de l'Asie centrale: la collection Paul Pelliot du Musée national des arts asiatiques—Guimet* [Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1994], Figs. 62, 63, 64, 65–2, 66, and 67).

⁴⁰ The inscriptions read: 'The Great Sung [dynasty], at Ming-chou [Ning-po], the Carriage Bridge, West, Painted at the house of Chin Ch'u-sish' (Wen C. Fong, *Beyond Representation: Chinese Painting and Calligraphy 8th–14th century* [New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 1992], 342–343 and plates 74a–g).

⁴¹ This aspect of the Yamato Bunkakan painting was pointed out by Yoshida ('A Manichaean Painting from Ningbo,' 5–6) and Gulácsi ('A Visual Sermon on Mani's Teaching on Salvation,' 6–12).

⁴² One of the earliest textual sources on Mani's *Picture* is by Ephrem the Syrian (died in 373 CE), who cites Mani in order to note the function of the images. For a current translation, see John Reeves ('Manichaean Citations from the *Prose Refutations* of Ephrem,' in *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, edited by P. Mirecki and J. BeDuhn [Leiden: Brill, 1997], 262–263).

collection of paintings, frequently referred to in scholarly studies as Mani's *Picture-Book*, existed in later copies throughout the Manichaean world.⁴³ The passage in the *Kephalaia* about the depiction of a *Judgment Scene* in Mani's *Picture-Book* documents that a group of paintings in Mani's *Picture-Book* were devoted to this pictorial subject and showed death, judgment, and the ultimate fate of the righteous in heaven, as well as that of the sinner in hell.⁴⁴ Since a *Judgment Scene* was part of Mani's *Picture-Book*, a Manichaean iconography for its depiction most certainly had developed already during late ancient times in southern Mesopotamia, utilizing a West Asian visual language that followed local artistic norms in terms of media, style, and compositional rules, besides iconography.

Elements from a traditional Manichaean iconography (i.e., an iconography free of Buddhist influence) of the *Judgment Scene* are preserved on two fragments of illuminated manuscripts from ca. 10th-century Kocho, housed in the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.⁴⁵ The larger fragment is found on a relatively small section of

⁴³ Currently 20 textual references are known concerning Mani's *Picture-Book*. Although each of them is about just a paragraph in length, these texts convey important documentary data of this lost work of art, recording its name, format, content, and usage. The study of the texts allows us to look for possible remains of Mani's *Picture-Book* among Manichaean visual sources and explain it as a late ancient Mesopotamian religious version of the pan-Asiatic phenomenon of story telling with pictures. This methodology and conceptual framework is followed in a forthcoming monograph on the subject that takes on the task of searching out this lost work of art in textual and visual sources (Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, *Mani's Picture-Book: Searching for a Late Antique Mesopotamian Pictorial Roll & its Mediaeval Transformation in Central and East Asian Art*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies [Leiden: Brill, forthcoming]).

⁴⁴ The passage in the *Kephalaia* reads: 'You [Mani] have made clear in that great *hikōn*; you have depicted the righteous one, how he shall be released and brought before the Judge and attain the land of light. You have also drawn the sinner, how he shall die. He shall be set before the Judge and tried [...] the dispenser of justice. And he is thrown into Gehenna, where he shall wander for eternity. Now, both of these have been depicted by you in the great *hikōn*,' (*Kephalaion* 92: 234.24–235.6, see Iain Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher: The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary* [Leiden: Brill, 1995], 241).

⁴⁵ These two Manichaean codex folio fragments are examples of East Central Asian Manichaean manuscript illumination. Their scenes adorned text-books. Therefore, they do not represent remains from East Central Asian versions of Mani's *Picture-Book*. Nevertheless, there is art historical evidence to suggest that the prototypes of certain scenes of East Central Asian Manichaean manuscript illumination, including these two *Judgment Scenes*, were now-lost scenes of Mani's *Picture-Book*. For more on this subject, see Gulácsi, *Mani's Picture-Book* (forthcoming).

a full-page book painting (MIK III 4959 verso, **Fig. 4b**).⁴⁶ It retains parts of four standing figures, three of which are turned towards one another and thus, form a comprehensible pictorial unite. Here, the judge is shown with a stick in his right hand while the left hand gestures with the index finger raised. In front of him, two men stripped to their loincloths are lined up to be judged. The one closer to the judge has a goat-head suspended around his neck—possibly to indicate his sign of killing an animal (an act prohibited for the auditors). The next man in line is shown waiting his turn to be judged, along the right edge of the scene. Visible in between the two loin-clothed men in the background of the scene,⁴⁷ where a pair of footprints and a sheaf of green grain stalks are shown—possibly indicate a person, already having been judged and thus already departed from the scene of judgment, having left behind only his footprints and signs associated with his crime of engaging in harvesting (an act prohibited for the elect). The fourth figure, to the left of the judge, signals the start of a separate visual unit, since the shoulder remaining from him indicates that he is engaged with events shown on the now-missing portion of the painting. The second fragment that seem to be part of a *Judgment Scene* retains a figure from along the right side of an intracolumnar scene of a codex folio (MIK III 6258a verso, **Fig. 4c**).⁴⁸ This scene can be identified as a *Judgment Scene* based on overall similarity to the iconography of the people to be judged on the better-preserved mentioned above. The analogous iconographic components include a loin-clothed figure and a prominently placed object, the gold cup, held in front of the chest. It is possible that the gold cup symbolizes the crime of drinking wine (an act prohibited for the auditors), and the red-violet color of the loincloth and the gold material of the cup may suggest a well-to-do auditor, waiting to be judged as he is standing along the edge of the now-lost rest of the

⁴⁶ This full-page book painting was organized into three registers placed above one another. Approximately one third of the middle register (i.e., less than one-ninth of the original page) is preserved. For diagram with a detailed discussions of the codicological aspects of the folio fragment (including the sideways orientation of the scene), as well as the iconography of the painting on its verso and the text on the recto, see Gulácsi, *Mediaeval Manichaean Book Art*, 163–165; and *Manichaean Art in Berlin Collections*, 78–81 and 277–278, respectively.

⁴⁷ The idea of interpreting this part of the scenes as a location further back in space than the foreground is suggested by the higher positioning of the footprints in the picture plane than the level of the feet of the loin-clothed men.

⁴⁸ For a detailed discussion of the codex folio fragment, its sideways-oriented intracolumnar painting and the remnants of its text, see Gulácsi, *Manichaean Art in Berlin Collections*, 82 and 228.

scene It is also possible, however, that the cup in this book illumination indicates the judgment of a righteous elect and is the very 'drinking vessel' mentioned in connection with how the righteous elect transitions from this life to the future life by al-Nadim, in his discussion of Mani teaching on the Doctrine of Future Life.⁴⁹ Due to the fact that the fragment constitutes too small of a portion from the overall composition, we are in no position to contemplate whether the intact scene originally depicted what al-Nadim was discussing. The surviving pictorial content is analogous to key components of the judgment iconography.

While they reflect only minimal iconographic and no compositional correlations with the *Judgment Scene* in the Yamato Bunkakan painting, the two Uygur Manichaean examples do provide visual proof that the topic of judgment was relevant in Manichaean art prior to the southern Chinese phase. They suggest that an initial, West Asian Manichaean iconography of judgment remained part of Manichaean pictorial art in East Central Asian during the 8th and early 11th centuries, only to be influenced by Chinese Buddhist art during the southern Chinese phase of Manichaean history.

CONCLUSION

The Chinese silk painting in the collection of the Yamato Bunkakan is a remarkable Manichaean work of art. In terms of its media, style, and even much of its iconography, this image fully accords with the artistic norms of its ca. 13th-century East Asian artistic context. At the same time, a uniquely Manichaean visual language also manifests in it. Beyond the basic clues for its Manichaean identification (i.e., the inscription and the iconography of its main deity and the two elects), the scenes of the Ya-

⁴⁹ 'When death comes to one of the Elect (Zaddiqā), Primal Man sends him a light shining deity in the form of the Wise Guide. With him there are three deities, with whom there are the drinking vessel, clothing, headcloth, crown, and diadem of light. There accompanies them a virgin who resembles the soul of that member of the Elect. Then there appear to him the Devil of Craving and Lust and the [other] devils. When the member of the Elect see them, he seeks the aid of the deity, who is in the form of the Wise [Guide], and the three deities who came close to him. When the devil sees them, they turn back fleeing. Then they take the member of the Elect and grab him with the crown, the diadem, and garments. They place the drinking vessel in his hand and mount up with him in the Column of Praise to the sphere of the moon, to Primal Man and al-Bahījah, Mother of the Living, to where he at first was in the Garden of Lights.' Bayard Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim. A Tenth-Century Survey of the Muslim Culture, I-II. Records of Civilization; Sources and Studies*, 83 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 795.

mato Bunkakan painting include the depictions of three pictorial subjects known to us already from the East Central Asian phase of Manichaean art. The *Sermon Scene* shows a Manichaean elect and his assistant giving a sermon to a layman and his lesser-ranking companion. The event takes place around a statue of Mani. The iconography as well as the overall composition of the scene corresponds with East Central Asian depictions of Manichaean Sermon Scenes. The *Image of a Deity* in the Yamato Bunkakan painting also accords with East Central Asian Manichaean depiction of deities (that were already shown with Buddhist-influenced iconography), suggesting that this subject remained an integral part of Manichaean art preserved through stylistic and cultural adaptations. The *Judgment Scene* of the Yamato Bunkakan painting that features the intervention by the Light Maiden on behalf of the person being judged, reflects a strong influence of contemporaneous Chinese Buddhist depictions of a subject known from Buddhist art as the *Ten Kings of Hell*, where often, in individual scenes, each king is shown seated behind a desk ready to pronounce judgment over a loin-clothed prisoner held by demon-guards. Nevertheless, the theme of *Judgment after Death* is well known not only from the early Manichaean literature of 4th-century North Africa, but also from the remnants of Manichaean pictorial art from ca. 10th-century East Central Asia, where without any sign of Buddhist artistic influence, figures of loin-clothed men were already employed to represent the soul of a deceased person waiting to be judged. All in all, the above three subjects of the Yamato Bunkakan painting constitute Manichaean pictorial themes that were maintained throughout the Pan-Asiatic history of this religion, including its last, southern Chinese phase.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE DISCOVERY OF MANICHAEAN PAINTINGS IN JAPAN AND THEIR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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1. THE SURVIVAL OF MANICHAISM IN SOUTH-EASTERN CHINA

Manichaeism survived the longest in China. Buddhism, which had originally been a religion of non-Chinese “barbarians,” had by the Tang dynasty taken root and become Sinicized, but there subsequently arrived in China during the Tang dynasty “three barbarian religions,” namely, Manichaeism, Nestorianism (East-Syrian Christianity) and Zoroastrianism. It will be noticed that Islam was not yet included among these “three barbarian religions.” Sogdians were closely involved in the spread and popularity of these three religions. During the Tang, fierce disputes broke out repeatedly between Buddhists and Daoists, and powerful politicians also became embroiled in these conflicts. Then, in the middle of the ninth century, Buddhism was suppressed in what is known as the Huichang persecution, and the “three barbarian religions” ended up being persecuted together with Buddhism. The Japanese scholar-monk Ennin, who was residing in China at the time, was unfortunate enough to be caught up in this persecution of Buddhism, and his experiences are recorded in his famous account of his travels in China (*Nittō guhō junrei kōki*), which also includes a valuable description of the persecution of Manichaeism.

In China the emperor Xuanzong had banned Manichaeism in 732, but an exception was made for foreigners. Because Uighurs had rendered distinguished services in the suppression of the rebellion of An Lushan and Shi Siming, Manichaeans, who had the backing of the Uighurs, engaged in wide-ranging religious and economic activities centred on their temples that had been built in large cities throughout China. In particular, financial capital known as “Uighur money” (which was in fact “Sogdian money”) exerted an enormous influence along with “Persian money”

on the Chinese market.¹ But these activities in China by Manichaeans, centred on Sogdians and Uighurs, came to an end with the fall of the Uighur steppe empire in 840. In other words, that the Tang administration was able to suppress not only Buddhism but also Manichaeism in the Huichang persecution was entirely due to the fact that the Uighur steppe empire had fallen a short time earlier. Buddhism, the main target of the persecution, revived soon afterwards, but the “three barbarian religions,” which had always had only a weak base in China, suffered a devastating blow, and only Manichaeism managed by a stroke of luck to escape to Jiangnan, where it succeeded in living on for several centuries. Jiangnan means semantically the south of the Yangzi River, i.e., South China, but practically south-eastern China.

There is a considerable body of research concerning the survival of Manichaeism as a form of heterodox religion in Jiangnan during the Song, Yuan and Ming periods,² and there are not the slightest grounds to doubt this. Of course, there would have been not only sects adhering to a pure form of Manichaeism, but also sects that had amalgamated with Buddhism or Daoism. At any rate, many of these sects were similar to secret societies and engaged chiefly in underground activities.

With regard to this Manichaeism that survived in Jiangnan, particularly in Zhejiang and Fujian, it was generally accepted that it had been transmitted by Manichaeans from northern China who had taken refuge here during the Tang. But then two leading scholars put forward the view that Manichaeism had been brought to this region from the south via the maritime Silk Road, and so I reexamined this question. As a result, I not only reconfirmed that the prevailing view was correct, but also positively demonstrated that the Manichaeism of Fujian had inherited the tradi-

¹ Cf. T. Moriyasu, “Shirukurōdo no Uguru shōnin.” In: M. Sugiyama (ed.), *Iwanami kōza sekai rekishi (shinpan)* 11, *Chūō Yūrashia no tōgō (9–16 seiki)*, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997, pp. 108–112; Moriyasu, “Shirukurōdo tōbu ni okeru tsūka.” In: T. Moriyasu (ed.), *Chūō Ajia shutsudo bunbutsu ronsō*, Kyoto: Hōyū shoten, 2004, pp. 6–7; Moriyasu, “From Silk, Cotton and Copper Coin to Silver. Transition of the Currency Used by the Uighurs during the Period from the 8th to the 14th Centuries.” In: D. Durkin-Meisterernst et al. (eds.), *Turfan Revisited*, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004, p. 237, n. 92.

² Cf. P. Pelliot, “Les traditions manichéennes au Fou-kien.” *T’oung Pao* 22, 1923, pp. 193–208; A. Forte, “Deux études sur le manichéisme chinois.” *T’oung Pao* 59–1/5, 1973, pp. 220–253; S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985 = Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 2. edition, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992, chapter 9; Wu Wenliang, (revised and enlarged by) Wu Youxiong, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben*. Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2005, pp. 444–448.

tions of Uighur Manichaeism. Since I have already written about this in both Japanese and English,³ I shall not repeat details here, but I would like to add one very important point, which is that it has become clear from a photograph taken from a video which I recently acquired that the name of the month in the Chinese inscription of 1339 pertaining to the image of Mani as the Buddha of Light (*Moni Guangfo* 摩尼光佛), in the Cao'an 草庵 ("Grass-thatched Hermitage") temple in Quanzhou 泉州, Fujian, famous as the last surviving Manichaean temple,⁴ is not *xuyue*, *wuyue*, *shuyue* or *jiuyue*, but surely *jieyue* 戒月, as I had maintained. You can examine this point comparing a new ink rubbing taken at the beginning of this century with an old one published together in Wu/Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben*, pp. 443–444. In my opinion this unfamiliar word *jieyue* is a simple translation of Manichaean Uighur *čšapt ay*, which means "the month of discipline or commandment" corresponding to the twelfth month. For Manichaeans the twelfth month is the month of fasting.

It was because of this background that some Manichaean paintings connected with Central Asian Uighurs became mixed up with paintings generally known as Song and Yuan Buddhist paintings (which include Ningbo Buddhist paintings), produced chiefly in Jiangnan. We are now able to affirm that at least seven Manichaean paintings are preserved in Japan,⁵ but they have all been discovered only during the past three years. Next, I wish to explain the circumstances leading to their discovery.

2. THE DISCOVERY OF MANICHAEAN PAINTINGS IN JAPAN

It all began with an article entitled "Keikyō seizō no kanōsei—Seiunji zō den Kokūzō gazō ni tsuite—[A Possible Nestorian Christian Image: Regarding the Figure Preserved as a Kokūzō Bosatsu Image at Seiunji]." (*Kokka* 1330, 2006/8, pp. 7–17, +2 pls.) published in Japanese by

³ T. Moriyasu, "Uiguru monjo sakki (sono 2)." *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 5 (1989), 1990/3, section 7; *idem*, "On the Uighur *čšapt ay* and the Spreading of Manichaeism into South China." In: R.E. Emmerick et al. (eds.), *Studia Manichaica. IV. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000, pp. 430–440.

⁴ Cf. Wu Wenliang, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*. Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1957, pp. 44–45, pls. 105–107; P. Bryder, "Where the Faint Traces of Manichaeism Disappear." *Altorientalische Forschungen* 15–1, 1988, pp. 201–208.

⁵ In some of these paintings it is possible to discern connections with Uighur Manichaean paintings discovered in Central Asia.

Professor Izumi Takeo of Tōhoku University. I shall be arguing below that this image is not a Nestorian painting, but a Manichaean painting of Jesus, but even though our conclusions differ, the significance of Izumi's work deserves to be highly rated. This is because he not only made known to academic circles for the first time the existence of this silk painting held by the temple Seiunji, in Yamanashi prefecture, but also showed that paintings which are in fact not Buddhist paintings have found their way into the category of paintings known as Jiangnan Buddhist paintings of the Song and Yuan, and he further pointed out that the main figure in a silk painting held by Yamato Bunkakan Museum, in Nara city, belonging to the same category and taken up by Izumi as a secondary topic, has artistic characteristics closely resembling the image of Mani as the Buddha of Light, enshrined in the Cao'an temple in Quanzhou, as well as hinting strongly at the possibility that both may represent the same figure. Following on from this article by Izumi, Professor Yoshida Yutaka of Kyoto University visited Yamato Bunkakan in Nara to examine the original painting, and as a result he became convinced that the painting in question is a Manichaean painting.

The silk painting held by Yamato Bunkakan is 142 cm high and 59 cm wide, and the painting as a whole is divided into five registers. It had long been referred to as a *rokudōzu*, or painting of the six paths or realms of transmigration in Buddhism, and was considered to be a Buddhist painting of the Yuan period (or Ningbo Buddhist painting) produced in the fourteenth century. The six paths or realms of transmigration consist of the paths of gods (Skt. *deva-gati*), human beings (Skt. *mānuṣya-gati*), demigods (Skt. *asura-gati*), animals (Skt. *tiryagyoni-gati*), hungry ghosts (Skt. *preta-gati*) and hell (*naraka-gati*), and in some schools the demigods are omitted, resulting in five paths. In the past, the first register from the top in this painting had been considered to depict the realm of gods (or paradise), the second register (the main part of the painting) the unity of the three religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism as represented by Śākyamuni flanked by Daoists and Confucians, the third register the realm of human beings typified by the four social classes of officials, farmers, artisans and merchants, the fourth register the final judgement of the dead, and the fifth register at the bottom the realm of hell. But this would mean that this painting depicts only the three realms of gods, human beings and hell.

In order to corroborate Izumi's suggestion that the main figure in the second register might represent Mani as the Buddha of Light, Yoshida turned his attention to an article by Jorinde Ebert entitled "Segmen-

tum and *Clavus* in Manichaeen Garments of the Turfan Oasis.”⁶ According to Ebert, distinctive features of the garments worn by the highest Manichaeen dignitaries, redeemers or saints as depicted in paintings include the fact that they wear a white shawl (not a gown, since it has no sleeves), which not only has golden and/or red borders (*clavi*), but also has four small insignia (*segmenta*), red in colour and square in form, two beneath the shoulders and two at the knees, showing the contours of a female face (possibly the head of the “Light Maidens”). Having ascertained that the main figure in the painting held by Yamato Bunkakan was also endowed with all the other characteristics indicated by Ebert, Yoshida not only identified this figure as Mani as the Buddha of Light, but also focused on the fact that the painting as a whole depicts only three of the six paths. This was because in Manichaeism the soul takes one of three paths: to “Life” (New Paradise), to “Mixture” (back to this world), or to “Death” (hell). He further considered that the three female deities borne by clouds and watching the scene of the final judgement were headed by the goddess Daēnā and interpreted the fact that these same three goddesses also appear in the depiction of paradise as an indication that they have guided the soul of the dead (Light = good) to paradise. Yoshida thus concluded that the main scene in the second register depicts a sermon on Mani’s teaching of salvation, which was the principal duty of Manichaeen monks. In other words, Yoshida considered that the actual centre of movement in the painting is the seated Manichaeen monk or Elect in white robes who is preaching to the left (on the viewer’s right) of the central figure of Mani, that the person in white robes standing in front of him with his palms together in prayer is an assistant Manichaeen monk, that the person in crimson robes seated to the right of Mani (on the viewer’s left) with his palms together in prayer is an auditor (i.e., lay Manichaeen) of high rank, and that the person in Uighur attire standing in front of him is an attendant. The Chinese inscription on the left-hand edge of the fourth register is faded and difficult to read, but the main part, in the decipherment of which I assisted, reads: “[We] offer and respectfully present a sacred picture of the King (= Judge) of Hades to the vegetarian (probably Manichaeen) monastery located on Baoshan Hill.” In content, this inscription is not inconsistent with the identification of this painting as Manichaeen.

⁶ J. Ebert, “*Segmentum* and *Clavus* in Manichaeen Garments of the Turfan Oasis.” In: D. Durkin-Meisterernst et al. (eds.), *Turfan Revisited*, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004, pp. 72–83.

In this manner, the silk painting held by Yamato Bunkakan Museum became the first Manichaean painting to have been discovered in Japan, and Yoshida made his findings public for the first time in a paper read on 18 May 2007 at the international conference “A Hundred Years of Dunhuang Studies,” held in London. The English version of his paper is going to be published in a felicitation volume for Professor Tardieu [Mohammed-Ali Amir-Moezzi and Jean-Daniel Dubois, eds., *Pensée grecque et sagesse d’Orient: Hommage à Michel Tardieu*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2009], while a revised Japanese version is due to be published in a special issue of *Yamato Bunka* (published by Yamato Bunkakan Museum) on Manichaean painting. In addition, prior to this the two art historians Zsuzsanna Gulácsi and Jorinde Ebert, who were provided with a draft of Yoshida’s paper and detailed photographs of the silk painting held by Yamato Bunkakan, promptly produced studies that further corroborated Yoshida’s thesis. In particular, according to Gulácsi, a specialist in Manichaean painting, this Ningbo Buddhist painting ought to be regarded as a work of the thirteenth century, and although it was produced by a Chinese painter, in matters of detail there is evidence of the strong influence of Uighur Manichaean paintings from Central Asia. Further, the female deity whom Yoshida, attaching particular importance to the Zoroastrian background, called Daēnā, is transposed by Gulácsi to a Manichaean context and the goddess is referred to by her as Light Maiden, but there is no essential difference in the views of Yoshida and Gulácsi.⁷ Gulácsi has in fact written two articles on this subject, one of which has been translated into Japanese and will appear together with Yoshida’s Japanese article and a Japanese translation of Ebert’s article in the forthcoming issue of *Yamato Bunka*, while the other has been published in English in *Nairiku Ajia Gengo no Kenkyū* (*Studies on the Inner Asian Languages*) 23, a special issue commemorating my own sixtieth birthday. In the event, this latter article became the first academic study in either Japanese or English to report on the important news of the discovery of a Manichaean painting in Japan, and I am extremely honoured that it appeared in a publication of special significance to myself.

⁷ Cf. W. Sundermann, “Zoroastrian Motifs in Non-Zoroastrian Traditions.” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, ser. 3, 18–2, 2008, pp. 160–161.

3. THE AFFILIATION OF THE SILK PAINTING HELD BY SEIUNJI

In the rest of this article I shall concern myself with the silk painting held by Seiunji in Yamanashi prefecture, which was discussed by Izumi Takeo with reference to colour photographs of the painting [see **Addendum 1**]. It is a little over 150 cm high and just under 60 cm wide, and since, according to Izumi's detailed investigations from the vantage point of art history, the characteristics of Ningbo Buddhist paintings are quite pronounced in this painting, it belongs to the same category as the silk painting held by Yamato Bunkakan. This figure had long been regarded as the bodhisattva Kokūzō (Ākāśagarbha), but there can no longer be any doubt whatsoever that this identification was incorrect. Izumi, basing himself chiefly on an oral tradition that this painting originally belonged to Arima Harunobu (1567–1612), a Christian *daimyō* of Hizen province in Kyushu, and on the fact that the main figure is holding a cross, considers this painting to be of Christian affiliation and, taking into account the broadened ends of the bars, identifies it as a Nestorian Christian image, the Nestorians being a Christian sect that was widespread in Jiangnan during the Yuan dynasty, but regrettably one cannot accept these conclusions. In my view, this painting cannot be Christian and, based on circumstantial evidence, there is a strong probability that it is of Manichaean provenance. Let me now list my reasons for this supposition.

- (1) It is known that, after the Huichang persecution of Buddhism in the mid-ninth century during the Tang, Manichaeism went underground in Jiangnan and survived through to the Song, Yuan and Ming periods, but there is no evidence whatsoever that the same happened to Nestorianism.
- (2) Some Mongols of the ruling class in the Mongol empire (not only the Onggirat/Qonggirat tribe, which maintained a matrimonial relationship with the family of Genghis Khan, but also the Mongol Kereit and Merkit tribes) and also the Turkic Naiman and Öngüt tribes, who occupied a quasi-Mongol position, are well-known for having been Nestorians, and during the Yuan Christianity was an officially recognized religion.
- (3) From the second half of the thirteenth century there suddenly appear references to the existence of large numbers of Christians in Jiangnan. In the section on the “*yelikewen* religion” in the *Yuan dianzhang* 33, “Libu” 6, it is recorded that in Dade 8 (1304) Daoists

complained to the authorities that the *yelikewen* in Wenzhou 温州 were infringing on their rights, and they claimed that until then there had been only the two religions of Buddhism and Daoism in Jiangnan, with each being administered separately, and there had been no religion of the *yelikewen*.⁸

- (4) Christianity was officially sanctioned throughout the Yuan, and after the fall of the Southern Song the majority of Christians in Jiangnan, ranging from the imperial family to petty officials, army officers, ordinary soldiers and merchants, belonged to the ruling side. They had no need to disguise their sacred images as Buddhist images, as in the case of the clandestine Christians of Japan, who produced the Maria Kannon, a statue of the Buddhist Kannon (Avalokiteśvara) rendered as a mother with a child in her arms.
- (5) In contrast, Manichaeism, which continued to live on in Jiangnan during the Song and Yuan, was frowned upon as a heretical cult, and in many cases it lay low among the general populace and conducted underground activities in the manner of a secret society. Therefore, it had a need to produce and worship images that were disguised as Buddhist images.
- (6) It has been demonstrated with the silk painting held by Yamato Bunkakan that Manichaean paintings have got mixed up with Jiangnan Buddhist paintings of the Song and Yuan (including Ningbo Buddhist paintings). Furthermore, Yoshida and I have identified at least five more Manichaean paintings in Japan that belong to the same category (making a total of seven), although owing to various circumstances we have not been able to publish details [see **Addendum 2**]. However, not a single Christian painting belonging to this category has been found.

4. FOLLOWERS OF AN UNKNOWN RELIGION IN FUZHOU DESCRIBED BY MARCO POLO

When Marco Polo and his uncle Mateo Polo, who had been granted permission by the Mongol emperor Khubilai Khan to visit Jiangnan, were staying in Fuzhou 福州, a city on the coast midway between Ningbo and actual Hong Kong, an Islamic acquaintance told them about an unusual

⁸ Cf. Y. Saeki, *The Nestorian Documents and Relics in China*. New edition. Tokyo: Tōhō bunka gakuin / Maruzen, 1951, p. 506; Izumi, “Keikyō seizō no kanōsei,” pp. 9–10; Wu/Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben*, pp. 400–401.

community whose religion nobody knew, and so, their interest piqued, they visited the community. An account of their visit is included in *The Travels of Marco Polo* (also known as *The Description of the World*).⁹ During the Yuan, the location of the Branch Secretariat established in this region alternated between Fuzhou and Quanzhou in the south, and this means that Fuzhou was not a provincial town, but a large city.

When Marco Polo and his party first visited the followers of the unknown religion, they seemed to be afraid that they were being interrogated with a view to depriving them of their religion. But once these fears had been allayed and they had got to know the two Polos, they showed them their holy books. On reading through them, the Polos discovered that there were the words of the Psalter, and so they mistook this community for a Christian sect. They then advised them that, since they were Christians like the Polos themselves, they ought to send someone to the capital city Dadu (Beijing) and, through the head of the Christians at the court, ask Khubilai Khan for his recognition and protection of their religion.

Two delegates of that community accordingly went to Dadu and asked to be recognized as a Christian sect, but the leader of the idolators (i.e., Buddhists) opposed this, claiming that they were and always had been idolators. There then took place a great disputation in the presence of the Khan, but because the debate dragged on without end, at length the Khan grew angry and, having dismissed everyone, summoned the two delegates and asked them whether they wished to be Christians or idolators, whereupon they answered that they wished to be Christians.

Khubilai Khan then had the necessary writs (probably including a decree) issued, stating that they were to be called Christians and that all the rules for Christians and all the rites demanded by that doctrine were to be valid for them. It was subsequently found that, scattered throughout the province of Manji (i.e., South China), there were more than 700,000 households that followed this teaching.

Such is the account given in *The Travels of Marco Polo*. P. Pelliot realized already in 1929 that these followers of an unknown religion were in fact Manichaeans, but because he did not give adequate grounds to

⁹ Cf. A. Ricci, *The Travels of Marco Polo. Translated into English from the Text of L.F. Benedetto*. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1931, pp. 261–263; A.C. Moule / P. Pelliot, *Marco Polo. The Description of the World, I*. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1938, pp. 349–350; M. Otagi, *Japanese Annotated Translation of Marco Polo's Travels of the World*, Vol. 2, (Tōyō bunko series 183), Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1971, pp. 108–110; T. Waugh, *The Travels of Marco Polo*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1984, pp. 136–137.

support this claim, the reasons were subsequently carefully rehearsed by L. Olschki, and since then his views have been widely accepted.¹⁰

Marco Polo rejoiced on discovering the words of the Psalter and so deemed these people to be Christians, but there is in fact a strong possibility that the Psalter of the Old Testament was incorporated in the scriptures of the eclectic religion of Manichaeism. Olschki not only stresses this point,¹¹ but also suggests that the delegates of the Manichaean community in Jiangnan who travelled from Fuzhou to Dadu (probably Manichaean monks or Electi) decided to affiliate themselves with Christianity because they had decided that this would be better for their own interests than affiliating themselves with Buddhism.¹²

Olschki's article dispelled any lingering doubts about identifying this community as Manichaeans, and further decisive proof was provided with the discovery of a bilingual epitaph in Syro-Turkic and Chinese unearthed at Quanzhou, the existence of which was brought to the attention of academic circles by Wu Wenliang and Enoki Kazuo. I have, however, for a long time had doubts about the reading of the Chinese inscription of this epitaph, but with the discovery of at least seven Manichaean paintings among Jiangnan Buddhist paintings preserved in Japan I feel that my doubts have finally been resolved, and I wish to discuss this in the following sections.¹³

5. A NEW INTERPRETATION OF THE BILINGUAL EPITAPH IN SYRO-TURKIC AND CHINESE FROM QUANZHOU

In the twentieth century there have been discovered in Quanzhou, which was at the time of the Mongol empire one of the largest seaports in the world, an enormous number of Islamic, Christian, Manichaean and Hindu stone engravings (epitaphs, inscriptions, carved tombstones,

¹⁰ Cf. Ricci, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, pp. xii–xiii; A.C. Moule, *Christians in China before the Year 1550*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930, pp. 141–143; L. Olschki, “Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity in Marco Polo’s China.” *Asiatische Studien* 5–1/2, 1951, pp. 2–9, 13–15; Olschki, *Marco Polo’s Asia. An Introduction to His “Description of the World” called “il Milione.”* Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960, pp. 203 ff.; Otagi 1971, pp. 112–113; Lieu, *Manichaeism*, pp. 256–257 = Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 2. edition, pp. 295–297; Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*. Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 1998, pp. 186–188.

¹¹ Olschki, “Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity,” pp. 14–15.

¹² Olschki, “Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity,” p. 7.

¹³ That this epitaph, about which Olschki had no knowledge, has connections with Marco Polo’s above account was already pointed out by Otagi (1971, p. 113).

stone statues, and stone pillars and other building materials). The best-known catalogue of these engravings is Wu Wenliang's *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, published in 1957 (revised and enlarged in 2005), and one of the more unusual items included in this work is a bilingual epitaph in Syro-Turkic and Chinese dating from 1313 [*Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, pl. 108 = Wu/Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben*, pl. B37 in p. 396]. Coupled with the fact that the Cao'an temple, the remains of the last Manichaean shrine in the world, is located on Huabiao Hill near Quanzhou, this epitaph was included by Wu Wenliang under Manichaean items, but in actual fact it ought to be classified as Christian (it is all right in 2005 edition revised and enlarged by Wu Youxiong). There were, however, reasons for Wu Wenliang's misunderstanding, and since these are connected to the interpretation of the Chinese inscription, I shall next reexamine this inscription.

Chinese text:

- (1) 管領江南諸路明教秦教等也里可溫馬里失里門阿必思古八馬里哈昔牙
- (2) 皇慶二年歲在癸丑八月十五日帖迷答掃馬等泣血謹誌

Researchers agree that the term *Mingjiao* 明教 refers to Manichaeism, while *Qinjiao* 秦教 corresponds to the *Daqinjiao* 大秦教 of the Tang, that is, Nestorianism (East-Syrian Christianity), and there is no disagreement in this regard. But when it comes to the overall interpretation of the first line containing these two terms, many different views have been put forward. Since it would be rather tedious to retrace the relevant research history, I shall omit details. But initially it was suggested, for instance, that this was the epitaph of two or three people rather than a single person.¹⁴ In the end, the commonsensical and reasonable conclusion that it is the epitaph of a single person was arrived at, but in order to highlight the differences between these various interpretations, I wish to contrast the standard reading when it is regarded as the epitaph of two people with the standard reading when it is regarded as the epitaph of a single person.

Epitaph of two people:

- (1) [This is the grave of] the [two] Administrators of the Manichaeans (*Mingjiao*) and Nestorians (*Qinjiao*), etc., in the circuits of Jiangnan, the Christian priest (*Yelikewen*) [named] Mar Solomon (Mali Shilimen) and the Bishop (*abisiguba*) [named] Mali Haxiya.

¹⁴ Cf. S.N.C. Lieu, "Nestorians and Manichaeans on the South China Coast" *Vigiliae Christianae* 34, 1980, p. 84, n. 13 = Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*. Lei-

- (2) In the second year of Huangqing, *guichou* (= element *gui* + Ox year), on the fifteenth day of the eighth month (5 September 1313 AD), having wept with tears of blood, Timothy Sauma (*Tiemida Saoma*) and others have respectfully written [this epitaph].

Epitaph of one person:

- (1) [This is the grave of] the Administrator of the Manichaeans (*Mingjiao*) and Nestorians (*Qinjiao*), etc., in the circuits of Jiangnan, the Most Reverend (*mali haxiya*) Christian (*Yelikewen*) Bishop (*abisi-guba*) [named] Mar Solomon (Mali Shilimen).
 (2) (Same as above)

With regard to *mali haxiya* 馬里哈昔牙, my former teacher Enoki Kazuo initially interpreted it correctly as *mar hasia* “saint” and considered the epitaph to be that of a single person, but for some reason he subsequently came to regard it as the epitaph of two people called Mali Shilimen and Mali Haxiya.¹⁵ Later, Samuel N.C. Lieu deemed *mali haxiya* to be a transcription of Syriac *mry hsy*, a common title meaning “saint” or “bishop,” and determined that the epitaph was for a single person.¹⁶ But there was still no adequate explanation of why there was a single administrator for Christians and Manichaeans in Jiangnan during the Yuan. Next I wish to elucidate this point.

Now, for a correct understanding of the Chinese text of this bilingual epitaph in Syro-Turkic and Chinese dating from 1313, the corresponding Turkic text ought to be of considerable help. The first person to decipher the Turkic text was Murayama Shichirō, although he was not able to read all of it correctly.¹⁷ The first word in particular is problematic.

den / Boston / Köln: Brill, 1998, p. 180, n. 13; Wu/Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben*, pp. 396–397.

¹⁵ K. Enoki, “Tōzai kōtsū shijō no Senshū.” *Shisō* 5, 1962, p. 175 = Enoki, *Collected Papers of Enoki Kazuo*, vol. 5, Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1993, p. 177; Enoki, “The Nestorian Christianity in China in Mediaeval Time according to Recent Historical and Archaeological Researches.” In: *Problemi Attuali di Scienza e di Cultura. Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul Tema: L’Oriente Cristiano nella Storia della Civiltà*, Roma: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1964, p. 62.

¹⁶ Lieu, “Nestorians and Manichaeans on the South China Coast,” pp. 73, 84 = Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, p. 180; L. Eccles/M. Franzmann/S. Lieu, “Observations on Select Christian Inscriptions in the Syriac Script from Zayton.” In: I. Gardner et al. (eds.), *From Palmyra to Zayton*, (Silk Road Studies 10), Turnhout: Brepols, 2005, pp. 264–265. The identification with a Syriac term had, however, already been suggested by Pelliot; cf. A.C. Moule/L. Giles, “Christians at Chên-chiang Fu.” *T’oung Pao* 16, 1915, p. 639, n. 32.

¹⁷ Sh. Murayama, “Die syrisch-nestorianische Grabinschriften aus Pailing Miao und

Murayama read it as *Maḥi*, and it was also suggested on the basis of the word *Mingjiao* in the corresponding Chinese text that it should be read *Mani*. But Professor Lieu considered this to be inappropriate, and at a conference on Turfan studies held in Berlin in 2002 he asked me for my opinion. Unfortunately I am unable to read the Syriac script, but having noticed that the Turkic corresponding to the Chinese *Jiangnan zhulu* 江南諸路 “circuits of Jiangnan” is *M . . . i illār-ning* and that *zhulu* 諸路 and *illār* have the same meaning (being the plural form of the administrative unit “country, circuit, district”), I suggested that since the only possible place-name signifying “Jiangnan district” with an initial *M*- and a final *-i* was Manji (Ch. Manzi 蠻子), he might like to consider whether the said word could be read in this way. On checking the recent book *From Palmyra to Zayton*, published in 2005, I found that my idea would seem to have been adopted,¹⁸ and the Syro-Turkic text has been transcribed in the following manner.

Syro-Turkic text [*From Palmyra to Zayton*, p. 264]:

- (1) *M(a)nzi illār-ning m(a)ri ḥ(a)sya m(a)ri Š(i)limon episqopa-nīng q(a)bra-sī ol*
This is the tomb of the Most Reverend Bishop Mar Solomon of the Circuits (lit. realms) of Manzi (i.e. South China).
- (2) *ud yīl s(ä)kiz(inč) ay-nīng on biš-tā başlap qılguči Z(a)wma bitimiš*
Zauma (= Syr. Sauma), the administrator-in-chief, wrote this on the fifteenth day of the eighth month of the Ox year.

In Syriac *mār* means “teacher, excellency” and *ḥasya* generally means “saint,” but as a compound *mār ḥasya* (*mry ḥsy*) means “bishop.” This can be confirmed through a comparison with two sources to be quoted in the following section (an inscription on the seal of Mār Yahballāhā III and a passage from the *Yuanshi* 89).

The next question I wish to address is *yelikewen* 也里可溫 (sometimes also written *yelikewen* 也里克溫 or *yeliqiao* 也里喬), a term peculiar to the Yuan. While there can be no doubt that it derives from the Turkic or Mongolian *ärkäün* / *ärkägün* / *erke’ün*, there is still no generally accepted

Ch’üan-chou.” *Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan* 8, 1963, p. 25; Murayama, “Eine nestorianische Grabinschrift in türkischer Sprache aus Zaiton.” *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 35 (1963), 1964, p. 394; Wu/Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben*, pp. 397–398, 401–403.

¹⁸ Lieu, “Christian and Manichaean Remains from Zayton. An Introduction and Update.” In: I. Gardner et al. (eds.), *From Palmyra to Zayton*, (Silk Road Studies 10), Turnhout: Brepols, 2005, pp. 199–200.

view on its etymology, and its original meaning is also unclear,¹⁹ for it is used in the sense of (1) Christians in general (both clerics and lay believers), (2) Christian clerics,²⁰ (3) Christian lay believers, and (4) Christianity as a religion. Furthermore, although Christianity in this case frequently refers only to the Nestorians, historically speaking the possibility that it also includes Roman Catholics cannot be totally rejected. Unfortunately the Turkic equivalent of the Chinese *yelikewen* does not appear in the Turkic text of the above bilingual epitaph, and it is therefore of no help in determining the meaning of *yelikewen*. Accordingly, I next turned my attention to two sources in which *mār ḥasya* and *ärkä'ün* appear together.

6. A NEW INTERPRETATION OF *YELIKEWEN* AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO *MINGJIAO*

The inscription on the seal affixed to two letters sent to the Pope in 1302 and 1304 by Mār Yahballāhā III, the catholicos of the Nestorian Christians, was initially brought to the attention of academic circles by J. Hamilton. More recently I was extremely gratified to find that the article which my old student Nakamura Jun happened to contribute to my felicitation issue of *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages Vol. 23* delves into the historical background of these letters. Leaving all explanatory remarks to these two articles,²¹ here I shall present a translation of the inscription, based on the translations by Hamilton and Nakamura with minor modifications.

¹⁹ Cf. G. Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*, Vol. 1, Wiesbaden 1963, no. 15; J. Hamilton, "Le texte turc en caractères syriaques du grand sceau cruciforme de Mār Yahballāhā III," *Journal Asiatique* 260–1/2, 1972, pp. 163–164; L. Ligeti, "Les sept monastères nestoriens de Mar Sargis," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 26–2/3, 1972, pp. 170, 178; J. Hamilton/Niu Ruji, "Deux inscriptions funéraires turques nestorienne de la Chine orientale," *Journal Asiatique* 282–1, 1994, pp. 159–160; Eccles/Franzmann/Lieu, in *From Palmyra to Zayton*, p. 258; V. Rybatzki, *Die Personennamen und Titel der mittelmongolischen Dokumente. Eine lexikalische Untersuchung*, Helsinki, 2006, pp. 159–160.

²⁰ In almost all of the many decrees issued during the Yuan that have been inscribed on steles in Mongolian and Chinese, *yelikewen* signifies Christian clerics. Cf. Cai Meibiao, *Yuandai baihua bi jilu*. Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1955, Nos. 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 33, 36, and so on; N. Poppe, *The Mongolian Monuments in ú/P'ags-pa Script*, tr. and ed. by J.R. Krueger, (Göttinger Asiatische Forschungen 8), Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1957, pp. 82–83, note 9.

²¹ Hamilton, "Le texte turc en caractères syriaques ... de Mār Yahballāhā III"; J. Naka-

In (or by) the power of eternal heaven, the decree of us, Möngke Khan: Saying, “For our benefit celebrate the feast day (?), perform a blessing, and bestow merit on our family (i.e., the Golden Clan of Genghis Khan),” we have given the Mār Catholicos a cruciform seal. [He] is the manager (?) of this seal; do not let *mār ḥasya* (bishops), *rabbān* (priests) and *ärkä’ün* come [to the Mongol court] without word or recommendation from the Mār Catholicos! I shall regard (?) as wicked *rabbān* and *ärkä’ün* who come on their own initiative without a writ affixed with this seal. Thus have we decreed.

In this seal inscription, *rabbān* (priests) and *ärkä’ün* are ranked below *mār ḥasya* (bishops), and therefore the *ärkä’ün* appearing in this inscription ought to be regarded not as Christian clerics but as ordinary lay believers.

The ranking of Christians appearing in this seal inscription coincides perfectly with the following passage in the *Yuanshi* 89, “Baiguan zhi” 5 [Zhonghua Shuju edition, p. 2273].

崇福司，秩〔從〕二品。掌領馬兒哈昔·列班·也里可溫，十字寺祭享等事。

Chongfu si: An agency of the second class. It controls *ma’er haxi* (= *mār ḥasya*), *lieban* (= *rabbān*) and *yelikewen* (= *ärkä’ün*) as well as sacrifices and other matters in Monasteries of the Cross.²²

There are two points that become clear on the basis of the above. The first is that *mār ḥasya* (*ma’er haxi* or *mali haxiya*) is not a proper noun, but signifies “bishop,” a high-ranking Christian ecclesiastic. The second is that in sources in which both *mār ḥasya* and *ärkä’ün* appear, *ärkä’ün* signifies neither (1) Christians in general (both clerics and lay believers) nor (2) Christian clerics, and it ought to be considered to refer only to (3) Christian lay believers.

It would seem that none of the past studies about the interpretation of *yelikewen* appearing in the bilingual epitaph in Syro-Turkic and Chinese has really hit the mark. This is because all scholars since Wu Wenliang have inserted a break after 明教秦教等 and have connected the next word *yelikewen* 也里可溫 with what follows. Although this is probably a more natural way of reading the Chinese, I would like to propose that 明教秦教等也里可溫 be read together, with the break coming after

mura, “Nitsū no Monke seishi kara—Karakorumu ni okeru shūkyō no yōtai—.” *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 23, 2008, pp. 56–76.

²² There are English and Japanese translations in the following works, but their interpretations differ from mine: Moule, *Christians in China before the Year 1550*, pp. 225–226; Y. Saeki, *Shina Kitoku-kyō no kenkyū*. Vol. 1, Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1943, pp. 465–467; Saeki, *The Nestorian Documents and Relics in China*, p. 497.

也里可溫. This shift in my thinking was prompted by the existence of seven Manichaean paintings among Jiangnan Buddhist paintings of the Song and Yuan and by a reevaluation, supported by these paintings, of Marco Polo's account of followers of an unknown religion.

Looking back, we find that Wu Wenliang and Enoki Kazuo had already correctly pointed out that *mali shilimen abisiguba* 馬里失里門阿必思古八 appearing in the bilingual epitaph in Syro-Turkic and Chinese was the same person as *ma'èr shili hebisihuba* 麻兒失理河必思忽八 mentioned in the reference to a stele erected by Xuelijisi 薛里吉思 (Sergis), deputy *daluhuachi* (*darugači*) of the circuit, in 1281 which appears in the section on Daxingguosi in the *Zhishun Zhenjiang zhi* 9 [Jiangsu Guji chubanshe, 1990, pp. 367–368]. *Hebisihuba* is no doubt a scribal error for *abisihuba* 阿必思忽八.

公任鎮江五年，連興土木之役，秋毫無擾於民。家之人口受戒者，悉爲也里可溫。迎禮佛國馬里哈昔牙麻兒失理河必思忽八，闡揚妙義，安奉經文，而七寺道場，始爲大備。

His Excellency (i.e., Mar Sergis) held office in Zhenjiang 鎮江 for five years (1277–1281). While carrying out continuously civil engineering works, he did not oppress any of the common people in the slightest degree. Members of his household (i.e., families, employees, servants, etc.) who received the commandments all became *yelikewen*. He ceremoniously invited *mali haxiya ma'èr shili hebisihuba* from the land of the Buddha so that he might expound the wondrous meaning [of the religion] and reverently deposit the Scriptures; only then did the chapels of the seven monasteries (built in Zhenjiang by Mar Sergis) become complete.²³

Let us now compare the strings of characters referring to a single Christian bishop.

A. Chinese text of bilingual epitaph:

馬里失里門阿必思古八馬里哈昔牙 *mali shilimen abisiguba mali haxiya*

B. Syro-Turkic text of bilingual epitaph:

m(a)ri ḥ(a)sya m(a)ri Š(i)limon episqopa

C. *Zhishun Zhenjiang zhi*:

馬里哈昔牙麻兒失理河必思忽八 *mali haxiya ma'èr shili hebisihuba*

It is intriguing to find that whereas B and C tally with each other, B and A, which are taken from the same source and ought to refer to the same

²³ There are English and Japanese translations in the following works, but their interpretations differ slightly from mine: Moule/Giles, "Christians at Chên-chiang Fu,"

person, are different. This means that the Chinese rendering C should be considered to have been written either deliberately or accidentally in the same way as A, in which case it is to be surmised that although *abisiguba*, *hebisihuba* (which should be emended to *abisihuba*) and *episqopa* all retain the meaning of the original Greek *episkopos* “bishop,” they are here used as an element of a proper noun.

Taking all the above into account, I would like to propose my own definitive interpretation of the bilingual epitaph, which has been read in various ways by past scholars.

Chinese text (line 1):

[This is the grave of] the Administrator of the *Ārkä’ün* (*Yelikewen*) people believing in Manichaeism (*Mingjiao*), Nestorianism (*Qinjiao*) and other religions (probably Catholicism or Hinduism) in all (lit. various) circuits of Jiangnan (i.e., South China), the Bishop (*Mali Haxiya*) [named] Mar Solomon Episqopa (*Mali Shilimen Abisiguba*).²⁴

Syro-Turkic text (line 1):

This is the tomb of Mar Solomon Episqopa, the Bishop of all (lit. various) districts of Manzi (i.e., South China).

The chief distinguishing feature of my proposal is that by reading the first portion of the Chinese text as “Administrator of the *Ārkä’ün* (*Yelikewen*) people believing in Manichaeism (*Mingjiao*), Nestorianism (*Qinjiao*) and other religions in all circuits of Jiangnan,” I have included Manichaeans (Manichaeism) in the category of *yelikewen*, which has hitherto been considered only in terms of Christians (Christianity), be they Nestorians or Roman Catholics. Furthermore, by doing so it becomes possible

pp. 638–639; Moule, *Christians in China before the Year 1550*, p. 150; Saeki, *Shina Kitokukyō no kenkyū*, Vol. 2, p. 300; Saeki, *The Nestorian Documents and Relics in China*, p. 515.

²⁴ Aside from the interpretation in his 1980 article in which he proposed that the epitaph was for a single person, Lieu has also presented the following interpretation in his book on the history of Manichaeism: “Supervisor of the Christians (*Ye-li-ko-wen*): Manichaeans (*Ming-chiao*) and Nestorians (*Chin-chiao*) in the Circuit of Chiang-nan” [Lieu, *Manichaeism*, p. 257 = Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 2. edition, p. 297]. This may possibly represent an interpretation along the same lines as my own. But in an article also published in 1985 [Lieu, “New Light on Manichaeism in China.” In: *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce*, Leiden: Brill, p. 418] he gives the following, rather loose translation: “Supervisor of the Christians (*Ye-li-ko-wen*), Manichaeans (*Ming-chiao*) and Nestorians (*Chin-chiao*) in the Circuit of Chiang-nan.” Not only is there no comment on the use of the colon in the translation given in *Manichaeism*, but in his latest article published in 2005 the colon has been discarded and he has returned to the interpretation found in his 1980 article [Eccles/Franzmann/Lieu in *From Palmyra to Zayton*, p. 265; Lieu, “Nestorians and Manichaeans on the South China Coast,” 1980, p. 73].

to do away with the unnaturalness of having first Manichaeism and then Nestorianism as representatives of the *yelikewen* in the circuits of Jiangnan. This is because at the time Manichaeans would have been in the majority in Jiangnan, where they had settled since the Song, while Christians in the true sense of the term, having come south for the first time when they accompanied the Yuan forces that took over the former territory of the Southern Song, would have been in the minority.

The language of the inscriptions written in Syriac script that have been unearthed in Quanzhou and Yangzhou 揚州 and published in works such as *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben* (revised and enlarged edition) and *From Palmyra to Zayton*, is in fact the Turkic used by the Uighurs and Öngüt in the north. In addition, the earliest epitaph dates from 1277,²⁵ and the majority date from the first half of the fourteenth century.²⁶ It is evident from one epitaph that the deceased was an Uighur from Gaochang (= Qočo) in Turfan. Furthermore, the Office for Christian Clergy (*chongfu si*), an agency responsible for supervising Christian communities, was established in 1289. It may be assumed, in other words, that the rapid increase in the number of Nestorians in Jiangnan in the final quarter of the thirteenth century was due to the presence of large numbers of Nestorians among the Turks and Mongols who came south together with the Mongol army as it overthrew the Southern Song.²⁷

The section on population in the *Zhishun Zhenjiang zhi* 3 gives statistics not only for the large numbers of indigenous “common people” (*min*), or Han Chinese in the former territory of the Southern Song, but also for various categories of foreigners under the headings of Mongols (*Menggu*), Uighurs (*Weiwur*), Muslims (*Huihui*), *Yelikewen*, Tanguts (*Hexi*, corresponding to inhabitants of the former territory of the Xixia kingdom), Khitans (*Qidan*), Jurchens (*Nüzhen*), and Chinese (*Hanren*, corresponding to Han Chinese from the former territory of the Jin dynasty). Since Buddhist monks and Daoist priests, who are treated separately, were probably members of the indigenous population going back to the time of the Southern Song, *Yelikewen* and *Huihui* were not only the designations of religious communities, but were also perceived as ethnic groups of foreign provenance, and these designations would also have

²⁵ Cf. Lieu in *From Palmyra to Zayton*, p. 224.

²⁶ Cf. *From Palmyra to Zayton*, pp. 220–228, 255, 260–272.

²⁷ Cf. Olschki, “Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity,” p. 7; Niu Ruji et al., *Wenhua de luzhou*, Urumqi: Xinjiang Renmin chubanshe, 2006, pp. 295, 332; Lieu in *From Palmyra to Zayton*, p. 201; Eccles/Franzmann/Lieu in *From Palmyra to Zayton*, pp. 257, 258, 262; Wu/Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike zengdingben*, p. 400.

been used as categories or units at times of tax collection and civil service examinations. The communities of Manichaeans who had continued to live in Jiangnan since the Song period possessed idols or paintings, and since their inclusion among Muslims would have been inconceivable, the Yuan government would have had no choice but to include them among *Yelikewen* if they were not to be included in the category of Buddhists or Daoists. Olschki is probably correct in surmising that there is no mention whatsoever of Manichaeans in Yuan-period sources because prior to Marco Polo's arrival they had feigned the appearance of Buddhists (idolators) and thereafter, because they chose to become Christians, they came under the supervision of the Office for Christian Clergy.²⁸ Moreover, if one pays particular attention to the expression 江南諸路明教秦教等也里可溫 in the bilingual epitaph, *yelikewen* would have encompassed not only Manichaeans and Nestorian Christians, but probably also minorities such as Hindus, who had been in Quanzhou and elsewhere since the time of the Song, and followers of the Armenian Church and Roman Catholics, who arrived from Europe for the first time during the Mongol period.²⁹

Marco Polo reports that the "Christians" in Jiangnan numbered 700,000. But this is an unduly large figure and cannot be taken at face value. However, if one assumes that it includes not just Nestorian Christians, but also encompasses the large numbers of Manichaeans who had been residing in Jiangnan since the Song, it is probably not such an absurd figure without any foundation. This is because, despite the all-out efforts by Confucian officials of the Song to clamp down on Manichaeans, their efforts were to no avail, and it is most unlikely that the Manichaeans would have numbered only several tens of thousands. Though Marco Polo's figure may be exaggerated, one ought to assume that there actually were several hundred thousand "Christians."

7. MANICHAEAN IMAGES OF JESUS

On the basis of the above train of reasoning, I have been convinced since the publication of Izumi 2006 that the silk painting held by Seijunji is a Manichaean painting rather than a Nestorian painting. It is also comparatively easy to infer that a figure holding a cross in a Manichaean

²⁸ Olschki, "Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity," p. 9.

²⁹ Olschki, "Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity," p. 13.

painting must represent Jesus. Up until now, however, there had been no positive proof that Manichaeans used the cross, but this matter has now been resolved in the article kindly contributed by Dr. Gulácsi to my felicitation volume.³⁰ On perusing the bibliography appended to her article, I also learnt that, quite independently of myself, she had reached the same conclusion that the main figure in the Seiunji painting is the Manichaean Jesus and that an article by her on this subject is to appear in the art journal *Artibus Asiae*. This article of hers has yet to appear, but it will probably be published before the present article [see **Addendum 1**], and her chief grounds for identifying this figure as the Manichaean Jesus will presumably overlap with my own reasoning. Therefore, changing my initial aim in writing this article, I shall leave all details to Gulácsi's article and set out my own views quite briefly.

The main reason that Manichaeism was able to survive for so long from east to west right across the Eurasian continent, albeit unlawfully, was that it succeeded in incorporating the Buddha and Jesus into its pantheon,³¹ and the omnipresence of Jesus is a conspicuous feature of Manichaeism.³² There are several forms of Jesus in Manichaeism, including Jesus the Splendour, Jesus the Apostle of Light, and Jesus the Judge, which refer to a spiritual essence similar to the Dharma-body (*dharma-kāya*) of Buddhism, and, in the same way as a single actor plays several roles, they are in essence one person. In addition, there is also the historical Jesus, the Jewish-Christian prophet, who, along with Seth (the antediluvian Jewish prophet), Zarathustra (the Zoroastrian prophet), and Śākyamuni (the Buddhist prophet), is regarded as one of the prophets who preceded Mani. Mani's mother is called Maryam, and everything from his birth to his death, including the manner of his martyrdom, is made to imitate the life of the historical Jesus. We know that there is the formula "I, Mani, the apostle of Jesus Christ" both in Greek and

³⁰ Zs. Gulácsi, "A Visual Sermon on Mani's Teaching of Salvation. A Contextualized Reading of a Chinese Manichaean Silk Painting in the Collection of the Yamato Bunkakan in Nara, Japan." *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 23, 2008, pp. 11–12 & n. 27.

³¹ Cf. Olschki, "Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity," pp. 6, 11.

³² Cf. Olschki, "Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity," p. 11; J.P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature. Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings*. New York: Delmar, 1975, chapter 10; M. Tardieu, *Le manichéisme*. (Que sais-je? 1940), Paris, 1981, pp. 13–27, 46–48, 51–54; W. Sundermann, "Christ in Manicheism." In: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, V-5, 1992, pp. 535–539.; H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road. Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993, chapters 5, 6 and 27; M. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings*. London/New York: T&T Clark, 2003.

Middle Persian texts. Furthermore, on a small concave disc resembling a seal stone and made of rock crystal, held by the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, there is engraved on the convex surface a picture of Mani and two followers with an Aramaic (Syriac) inscription that reads “Mani, the apostle of Jesus Christ.”³³

Decisive proof that Manichaeans in Jiangnan were worshipping portraits of Jesus is provided by a passage pertaining to 1120 in the *Song huiyao jigao*,³⁴ according to which in Wenzhou 温州 (Zhejiang province) and other localities there were communities of the Religion of Light (*Mingjiao* = Manichaeism), a heretical cult. In Wenzhou alone there were some forty assembly halls disguised as Buddhist shrines, and on Sundays of the first month of each year monks and auditors (lay Manichaeans) would erect an altar thought to have been a Manichaean *bēma* platform, made to resemble a *bodhi*-site (Skt. *bodhimaṇḍa*; Ch. *daochang*), or the place where the Buddha attained enlightenment, and incite the ignorant masses, both male and female; they assembled at night and dispersed at dawn. In addition to various scriptures, they are also said to have had several “pictures and images of the Buddha or Buddhist deities” (*huihua foxiang*), among which we can find *Yishu fo zheng* 夷數佛幀 “Portrait of the Buddha (= Deity) Jesus.” It is thus evident that Manichaeans in Jiangnan were worshipping portraits of Jesus.

The main figure in the Seiunji painting has, moreover, the following characteristics: (1) a white shawl; (2) the shawl has golden and red borders (*clavi*); (3) the shawl has four small insignia (*segmenta*), red in colour and square in form, two beneath the shoulders and two at the knees; and (4) a small coronetted human face is depicted on each insignia inside a square formed with double lines. These characteristics are shared with the image of Mani in the silk painting held by Yamato Bunkakan Museum and with the image of Mani as the Buddha of Light, in the Cao'an temple in Quanzhou. In contrast, it is not even known whether it was customary for Nestorians to produce portraits of Jesus.

³³ Cf. Sundermann, “Christ in Manicheism,” pp. 536–537; F. Decret, *Mani et la tradition manichéenne*. (Maître Spirituels, 40), n.p. 1974, p. 70; Klimkeit, *Manichaean Art and Calligraphy*. (Iconography of Religions 20), Leiden, 1982, p. 50 and pl. 61. Needless to say, Jesus Christ in these phrases does not mean the historical Jesus of Nazareth, but the cosmic, mythological, or eschatological Jesus in Manichaean doctrine.

³⁴ Since this is a well-known passage which, though previously known to Japanese and Chinese researchers, has also become widely known among Western scholars through a detailed annotated translation in French by A. Forte [“Deux études sur le manichéisme chinois,” pp. 227–253], I shall not quote the entire passage here. There is also an English translation by Lieu [*Manichaeism*, pp. 234–235 = *Manichaeism*, 2. edition, pp. 276–277].



When considered in this light, there remains not the slightest shadow of doubt that the main figure holding a cross that is depicted in the silk painting held by Seijunji represents not the Christian ‘Nestorian’ Jesus, but the Manichaean Jesus.

[Addendum 1]

Zsuzsanna Gulácsi’s article entitled “A Manichaean “Portrait of the Buddha Jesus”: Identifying a Twelfth- or Thirteenth-century Chinese Painting from the Collection of Seijunji Zen Temple” has been published in *Artibus Asiae* 69–1, 2009, pp. 91–145. The article accompanies excellent colour plates and one can easily get access to the Seijunji painting which is the main subject of my paper.

[Addendum 2]

Yamato Bunka Vol. 121 appeared in March 2010 features another four Manichaean paintings recently discovered in Japan. Yoshida Yutaka and Furukawa Shoichi published their articles discussing the contents and the dating of the paintings illustrated by nine colour plates.

PART THREE

STUDIES IN MANICHAEISM AND AUGUSTINE:
DOCTRINES; POLEMICS & DEBATES WITH
MANICHAEAN CONTEMPORARIES

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

JESUS, MANI, AND AUGUSTINE

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THE ISSUE

The longstanding discussion over Manichaeism's connections with Christianity¹ was boosted by the discovery of documents emanating from Manichaeans themselves, including Chinese, Proto-Turkish, and Iranian texts from northwest China at the beginning of the 20th century,² a library in Coptic in 1930,³ and the Cologne Mani Codex (CMC)

¹ The history is reviewed by F. Bermejo Rubio in 'Factores cristianos en el maniqueísmo: *status quaestionis* (christiano-manichaica I)', *Rivista Catalana de Teologia* 32 (2007): 67–99, especially 91–93.

² Chinese texts and translations in E. Chavannes and P. Pelliot, 'Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine,' *Journal Asiatique*, 1. X^e série, t. XVIII (1911): 499–617; 2. XI^e série, t. I (1913): 99–199; and H. Schmidt – Glintzer, *Chinesische Manichaica* (Studies in Oriental Religions, 14), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1987. See, too, the Chinese ms. British Museum S2659, in G. Haloun and W.B. Henning, 'The Compendium of the Doctrine and Styles of Mani, the Buddha of Light,' *Asia Major* n.s. 3, Part a (1952): 184–212. About a quarter of this document seems to refer to 'Jesus.' On the materials see S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, 2nd ed. (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 63), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992 (1985), 241–248. Some of the fragmentary writings in Pehlavi, Middle Persian, and Parthian have been published in a wide variety of venues, e.g., F.W.K. Müller, 'Handschriften-Reste in Estrangelo-Schrift aus Turfan, Chinesisch-Turkestan,' *Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Philosophisch-historische Klasse*, Jhg. 1904, Abh. 3; W.B. Henning, 'Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan,' *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Philosophisch-historische Klasse*, Jhg. 1932: 175–222; 1933: 294–363; and 1934: 848–912.

³ See Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 9–14. Photographic edition of surviving materials by S. Giversen, *The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library, Facsimile Edition*, 4 vols. (Cahiers d'Orientalisme, 14–17): Geneva: Cramer, 1986–1988. The main editions of some of these materials are: C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book, Part II* (Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection, 2), Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938; H.J. Polotsky, *Manichäische Homilien* (Manichäische Handschriften der Sammlung Chester Beatty, 1), Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1934; A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia: 1. Hälfte* (Lieferung 1–10) (Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin, 1), Stuttgart:

that surfaced in 1969.⁴ These demonstrate that Jesus was included in the *Urform* of Mani's religion. Few now question⁵ that Manichaeans revered Jesus, or that they called him 'saviour'.⁶ Jesus was the last revealer before Mani himself, so of course he had a role (as did, to a diminished extent, Buddha and Zarâdusht, even in Christian regions). Many commentators have seen this as more than mere 'inclusion.' Even before the discovery of the CMC⁷—and more than ever since⁸—, the standard practice has been to emphasize the role of Jesus in the 'Religion of Light,' to the point of describing it as central.⁹ Nils Arne Pedersen wrote in 2004, 'The crucial

Kohlhammer, 1940; idem, *Kephalaia: 2. Hälfte (Lieferung 11–12, Seite 244–291)* (Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin, 1), Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978; and W.-P. Funk, *Kephalaia I, Zweite Hälfte, Lieferung 13–16* (Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin, 1), Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, n.d.

⁴ See Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 37–38. Critical edition: L. Koenen and C. Römer, eds., *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex. Über das Werden seines Lebens: Kritische Edition* (Abhandlungen der rheinisch-westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sonderreihe Papyrologica Colonienensis, 14), Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1988. English translation of the first part (1–99) by R. Cameron and A.J. Dewey, *The Cologne Mani Codex (P. Colon. inv. nr. 4780) 'Concerning the origin of his body'* (Texts and Translations, 15; Early Christian Literature, 3), Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979.

⁵ Not in agreement: G. Widengren, 'Der Manichäismus: Kurzgefaßte Geschichte der Problemforschung,' in B. Aland, ed., *Gnosis: Festschrift für Hans Jonas*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978, 300: 'Christliche Wurzeln gibt es im Manichäismus nicht. Die christlichen Elemente sind eben nur "Stilelemente".'

⁶ As in the Coptic psalm book: see Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, p. 116.24.

⁷ E.g., E. Waldschmidt, and W. Lentz, 'Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus,' *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Philosophisch-historische Klasse*, Jhg. 1926, Abh. 4: 20: 'Jesus als Erlösergott ist nicht eine Konzession abendländischer Gemeinden an die christliche Kirche, sondern für Mani ein wesentlicher Bestandteil seiner Lehre.' See also 77–78; and H.H. Schaeder, 'Urform und Fortbildungen des manichäischen Systems,' *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* 4 (1924/5): 150–157.

⁸ Johannes van Oort has assembled the literature generated by the CMC in the first 25 years following its discovery, in 'The Study of the Cologne Mani Codex 1970–1994: A Bibliographical Overview,' *Manichaean Studies Newsletter* 13 (1996): 22–30. See also idem, 'Augustine's Critique of Manichaeism: The Case of *Confessiones* III,6,10 and Its Implications,' in P.W. van der Horst, ed., *Aspects of Contact and Conflict in the Ancient World* (Utrechtse Theologische Reeks, 21), Utrecht: Faculteit der Godgeleerheid van de Universiteit Utrecht, 1995, 59, n. 15; L. Cirillo, 'From the Elchasaite Christology to the Manichaean Apostle of Light,' in A. Van Tongerloo, ed., *Il manicheismo: Nuove prospettive della ricerca. Quinto congresso internazionale di studi sul manicheismo, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Oriente", Napoli 2–8 Settembre 2001* (Manichaean Studies, 5), Turnhout: Brepols, 2005, 47–54.

⁹ Representative in this respect is this statement by Iain Gardner, 'The Manichaean Account of Jesus and the Passion of the Living Soul,' in A. Van Tongerloo and S. Giversen, eds., *Manichaica Selecta: Studies presented to Julien Ries on the occasion of his seventieth*

point is not that Jesus was included from the start, but rather that Jesus was not merely one among many Manichaean saviours. Jesus was at the centre of Manichaeism, the saviour par excellence.¹⁰ In 1956 Pierre-Jean de Menasce had made this Augustine of Hippo's view as well: 'Sa sympathie, sa compassion iront plutôt à ceux de ses amis qu'il avait entraînés avec lui dans l'erreur, mais plus jamais il ne concédera au manichéisme d'être autre chose qu'un christianisme aberrant. Christianisme cependant: avec, au centre du système sotériologique, la personne, la mission du Sauveur Jésus.'¹¹ But when Rebecca Lyman wrote in 1989 that 'Early Manichaean teaching included a central and complex role of Christ as redeemer,' she went on the speak of this role (at least in the Coptic materials she referenced) as one of 'a messenger who woke the elect to the revelation of God.'¹² Whether or not this might also be said in the case of Manichaeism in Roman Africa, Lyman's caution should be ours.¹³ Possibly Majella Franzmann, in her study of Manichaean christology, has got it more right than most: 'Perhaps, in the end, the Manichaean Jesus is not

birthday (Manichaean Studies, 1), Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991, 71: 'There is no longer any doubt that the figure of Jesus held a central role in the religion of Manichaeism, and indeed in the thinking of Mani himself.' Pierre-Jean de Menasce, 'Augustin manichéen,' in *Freundesgabe für Ernst Curtius zum 14. April 1956*, Bern: Francke, 1956, 88, speaks of 'la spiritualité christocentrique de la religion de Mani.'

¹⁰ N.A. Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God: A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichaeos—The Work's Sources, Aims and Relation to its Contemporary Theology* (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies, 56), Leiden: Brill, 2004, 9.

¹¹ De Menasce, 'Augustin manichéen,' 87.

¹² R. Lyman, 'Arians and Manichaeans on Christ,' *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 40 (1989): 498.

¹³ Michel Tardieu has tempered his assertion that 'Tous les livres et fragments retrouvés attestent [...] que le personnage de Jésus a été le noyau vivant de la prière des Manichéens' with the observation that this Jesus is a 'Figure multiforme et à bien des égards déconcertante pour nous': M. Tardieu, 'Le procès de Jésus vu par les Manichéens,' *Apocrypha* 8 (1997): 11. (We note that no footnotes accompany this article.) On the diversity of Jesus in Eastern Manichaean sources see also A. Van Tongerloo, 'Le salut et les sauveurs dans les documents manichéens orientaux,' *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 55/2 (1998): 74–75; and, on Manichaean soteriology, *art. cit.*, 76–77, and H.-Ch. Puech, 'La conception manichéenne du salut,' in *idem*, *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais*, Paris: Flammarion, 1979, 5–101. This revises 'The Conception of Redemption in Manichaeism,' in J. Campbell, ed., *The Mystic Vision* (Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks, 6; Bollinger series, 30/6), 247–314, which in turn translates 'Der Begriff der Erlösung im Manichäismus,' *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 4 (1936): 183–286, repr. in G. Widengren, *Der Manichäismus* (Wege der Forschung, 168), Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977, 145–213.

essential to the function and coherence of the entire Manichaean myth as such, but rather provides an indispensable lens through which to view it and appreciate its working.¹⁴

This is what we will explore in the case of Augustine. Certainly, he experienced no difficulty in discerning the presence of Jesus in Manichaean teaching. Writing some ten years after his return to Catholicism, he recollected: 'This explains why I fell in with men proud of their slick talk, very earthly-minded and loquacious. In their mouths were the devil's traps and a birdlime compounded of a mixture of the syllables of your name, and that of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that of the Paraclete, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. These names were never absent from their lips.'¹⁵ Still, even though Augustine termed Manichaeism a heresy, he did not think that the Manichaean Jesus bore much resemblance to a Catholic view. In a letter written to a fellow bishop in 395, the newly minted bishop Augustine sums up the view of the Manichaean 'earthly' Jesus: '[They deny] that Christ was born of a virgin, claiming that his body was not real but apparent, and for this reason insisting that his passion was apparent, too, and that there was no resurrection.'¹⁶

¹⁴ M. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings*, London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003, 144.

¹⁵ Aug., *Conf.* 3.6.19 (CSEL 27, p. 31): 'Itaque incidi in homines superbe delirantes, carnales nimis et loquaces, in quorum ore laquei diaboli et uiscum confectum commixtione syllabarum nominis tui et domini Iesu Christi et paracleti consolatoris nostri spiritus sancti. Haec nomina non recedebant de ore eorum.' Translation by H. Chadwick, *Saint Augustine, Confessions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, 40. See also 5.10.20 (p. 69): 'Ipsumque saluatorem nostrum, unigenitum tuum, tamquam de massa lucidissimae molis tuae porrectum ad nostrum salutem ita putabam, ut aliud de illo non crederem nisi quod possem uanitate imaginari. Talem itaque naturam eius nasci non posse de Maria uirgine arbitrabar, nisi carni concerneretur'; and *De haeresibus* 46.16 (CCL 46, p. 318.164–168): 'Promissionem domini Iesu Christi de paraclete spiritu sancto in suo haeresiarche Manichaeo dicunt esse completam. Vnde seipse in suis litteris Iesu Christi apostolum dicit, eo quod Iesus Christus se missurum esse promiserit, atque in illo miserit spiritum sanctum.'

¹⁶ Aug., *Epist.* 236 *ad Deuterium* 2 (CSEL 57, p. 524.20–23): 'Christum natum esse de uirgine nec eius carnem ueram confitentes fuisse sed falsam ac per hoc et falsam eius passionem et nullam resurrectionem fuisse contendunt.' Translation by Sr. Wilfrid Parsons in *Saint Augustine, Letters*, vol. 5 (204–270) (Fathers of the Church, 32), New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1956, 80. See *Serm.* 92 3 (PL 38, col. 573): 'qui negat hominem Christum manichaeus est'; and *De haeresibus* 46.15 (CCL 46, p. 318): 'Christum nouissimis temporibus ad animas, non ad corpora liberanda; nec fuisse in carne uera, sed simulatum speciem carnis ludificandis humanis sensibus prae buisse, ubi non solum mortem, uerum etiam resurrectionem similiter mentiretur.'

But is Augustine as dependable a witness for Manichaean christocentrism as has been claimed? To help address this we should carefully distinguish between two key concepts—a distinction too often overlooked—between *christology* as ‘the theological interpretation of the person and work of Christ, often expressed doctrinally,’¹⁷ that is, it takes in redemption, if the christology in question sees the ‘work of Christ’ as salvific; and *soteriology* as a more focused ‘branch of theology that deals with salvation as the effect of divine agency.’¹⁸ But to really avoid confusion between the two, we can be more precise and say that soteriology is ‘the theological interpretation of Christ that focuses on his work as redemptive.’

In a paper just published I have argued that Augustine’s primary concern with Manichaean christology was not its docetism but its soteriology.¹⁹ There I focused on his disputes with the Manichaeans Fortunatus, Faustus, and Felix. With the help of additional sources I will attempt to reinforce the thesis, an exercise that provides the opportunity to focus again on three subjects dear to the heart of Johannes van Oort—Manichaeism, Augustine of Hippo, and Augustine’s links to Manichaeism. The purpose of this paper is not, then, to determine exactly how ‘central’ Jesus was to the system, but to discern Augustine’s understanding of Jesus within the Manichaeism that he knew.²⁰

¹⁷ *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* 1, Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 1981, 400.

¹⁸ *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* 3, Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 1981, 2175.

¹⁹ J.K. Coyle, ‘Jesus in Augustine’s Anti-Manichaean Writings,’ in E. Leonard and K. Merriman, eds., *From Logos to Christos: Essays on Christology in Honour of Joanne McWilliam*, Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier Press 2010.

²⁰ See M. Tardieu, ‘Une définition du manichéisme comme *secta christianorum*,’ in A. Caquot and P. Canivet, eds., *Ritualisme et vie intérieure: Religion et Culture. Colloques 1985 et 1987, Société Ernest Renan, Histoire des Religions* (Le point théologique, 52), Paris: Beauchesne, 1989, 167–177. Also J. van Oort, ‘Augustin und der Manichäismus,’ in A. Van Tongerloo, ed., *The Manichaean NOYΣ: Proceedings of the International Symposium organized in Louvain from 31 July to 3 August 1991* (Manichaean Studies, 2), Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1995, 296: ‘In einer buddhistischen Umwelt trifft man einen Manichäismus an, der sich anders darstellt als der Manichäismus im christlichen Ägypten oder in der römischen Provinz Africa. Solche Unterschiede löschen aber nicht das Faktum aus, daß überall ein christliches Element seinen Platz hatte im Manichäismus.’ Repr. from *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 46 (1994): 132, which in turn translates ‘Augustinus en het manicheïsme,’ *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 47 (1993): 281.

AUGUSTINE'S PERSPECTIVE

Augustine does not dwell on christological matters in his first anti-Manichaean treatise, completed in 388 or 389; but he does refer to Jesus there from time to time, and he makes a passing reference to the Jesus Christ who saves, 'the mystery of mankind taken on [...] that the Son of God took on in a mystery so as to free us.'²¹ There is as well a clear link to 'fallen humanity' (*homo lapsus*) for whose sake (reversal of the fall) Christ took on human nature. A few years later, the link resurfaces in an anti-Manichaean context. On the first day of his public debate in 392²² with Augustine, now a Catholic presbyter, the Manichaean presbyter Fortunatus seems to affirm Jesus' death when, after quoting Philippians 2:5–8, he refers to his resurrection:

We have this same mind about ourselves, then, as about Christ who, though he was established in the form of God, became subject even to death in order to show his likeness to our souls. And just as he showed the likeness of death in himself and that, having been raised up from among [the dead], he is in the Father and the Father is in him, so we think that it will also be the same way with our souls. For we shall be able to be set free from this death through him.²³

Clearly, Fortunatus has in mind a Jesus who suffers, even 'dies,' but not in the Catholic sense: the telling word here is 'likeness' (*similitudo*). Our *souls* are of the same substance as the 'suffering Jesus,' because they share the same divine Light-substance. So the *resurrection* he speaks of is not the Catholic one, either: in no way does it include whatever is not

²¹ Aug., *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* 7.12 (CSEL 90, p. 14.25): 'suscepti hominis sacramentum'; 19.36 (p. 40.17–18): 'hominem [...] quem suscepit in sacramento dei filius ad nos liberandos.' My translation. J.K. Coyle, *Augustine's 'De moribus ecclesiae catholicae,' A Study of the Work, its Composition and its Sources* (Paradosis, 25), Fribourg: The University Press, 1978, 66–76.

²² On the date see 'Fortunatum Manicheum, Acta contra,' in A.D. Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1999, 371.

²³ Aug., *Contra Fortunatum* 7 (CSEL 25/1, p. 88.1–8): 'Hoc ergo sentimus de nobis, quod et de Christo: qui cum in forma dei esset constitutus, factus est subditus usque ad mortem, ut similitudinem animarum nostrarum ostenderet, et quemadmodum in se mortis similitudinem ostendit et patrem in se et in patre se esse de medio mortuorum resuscitatum, eo modo sentiamus et de animabus nostris futurum, quod per ipsum poterimus de hac morte liberari.' Translation in R. Teske, *The Manichean Debate* (The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century, I/19), Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2006, 147–148; but Teske omits the words between square brackets.

considered 'soul'.²⁴ In a familiar Manichaean polemical tactic, Fortunatus goes on to query the Catholic insistence on Jesus' incarnation:

You claim that he was born according to the flesh as a descendant of David, though it is proclaimed that he was born of a virgin and was glorified as the Son of God. It is necessary, after all, that what comes from spirit be regarded as spirit and that what comes from flesh be understood to be flesh. Against this there is the authority of the gospel in which it is said, *Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God, nor shall corruption possess incorruption.*²⁵ (1 Cor 15:50)

In other words, the human Jesus was incompatible with Jesus as Son of God, because flesh and spirit are irreconcilable. The resurrection therefore cannot refer to something physical in the Catholic sense, but does fit the Manichaean notion of the Light that suffers through imprisonment in matter.²⁶ This declaration by Fortunatus ended the first day's debate, and Augustine did not pursue it on the next day, despite Fortunatus' attempt to raise the christological issue again.²⁷

While still a presbyter, Augustine answers (probably in 394) a work by Mani's close disciple Adimantus, 'which came into my hands'.²⁸ Adimantus' theme was evidently the incompatibility between the Old and New Testaments, so christology was not his major topic. But Augustine's reply does bring up the incarnation in order to underscore its necessity: 'In taking on our death our Lord destroyed it.'²⁹ Augustine the bishop

²⁴ See Aug., *Epist.* 236 *ad Deuterium* 2 (cited above, note 16).

²⁵ Aug., *C. Fort.* 19 (CSEL 25/1, p. 97.1–7): 'Secundum carnem adseritis ex semine David, cum praedicetur ex uirgine esse natus, et filius dei magnificetur. fieri enim non potest, nisi ut quod de spiritu est, spiritus habeatur, et quod de carne est, caro intellegatur. contra quod est ipsa auctoritas euangelii, qua dicitur, quod *caro et sanguis regnum dei possidere non possunt, nec corruptio incorruptelam possidebit*.' Trans. Teske, *The Manichean Debate*, 153. The limited use Augustine makes of the pericope 1 Cor 15:3–22 whenever he repudiates docetism is a puzzle: primarily, it appears at the beginning and the end of the *docetic* portion of *C. Fort.* 22 (CSEL 25/1, pp. 105.21–106.1 = verses 11 and 21); and of *Contra Faustum* II,2 (CSEL 25/2, p. 255.9 = verse 11) and XI,3 (p. 317.4–11 = verses 9–12). The key verse (14: 'If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless, and so is your believing') never appears.

²⁶ Hence I do not see the contradiction here that Franzmann, *Jesus*, 81, suggests.

²⁷ *C. Fort.* 30 (CSEL 25/1, p. 110.21–22): 'Constat apud conscientiam nostram a deo uenisse Christum?'

²⁸ Aug., *Retractationes* 1.22 (CCL 57, p. 63): 'Eodem tempore uenerunt in manus meas quaedam disputationes Adimanti, qui fuerat discipulus Manichaei.' For a discussion of the date and of Adimantus see 'Adimantum, Contra,' in Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages*, 7–8.

²⁹ Aug., *Contra Adimantum* 21 (CSEL 25/1, p. 180.21–22): 'mors ipsa meruit maledictum quam dominus noster suscipiendo euacuauit.' Trans. Teske, *The Manichean Debate*, 216.

includes the Manichaeans among the targets of *De agone christiano*, composed in 396 or 397 (see 4.4),³⁰ as he deals at length with the incarnation, which in God's design occurred as the means of *salvation*: 'He showed us to what weakness humankind had come through its own fault and from what weakness the divine aid frees it.'³¹ Further, Christ can achieve no real redemption if his flesh was not real.³²

Then Augustine's long reply, composed sometime between 397 and 400,³³ to the *Capitula* of the Manichaean bishop Faustus of Milevis shows that christology is an important part of both Faustus' work and Augustine's refutation. Both have a great deal to say about Jesus' relation to the Old Testament. In terms of the New Testament, Faustus professes:

We worship one and the same deity under a tripartite name of Father, even God omnipotent, Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit. Yet we believe that the Father indeed inhabits the highest and first light which Paul otherwise calls inaccessible (see 1 Tim 6:16); that the Son in truth dwells in this second and visible light. Seeing that he is himself also two, as the apostle recognised saying that Christ is the virtue and wisdom of God (see 1 Cor 1:24), we believe his virtue dwells in the sun, but his wisdom in the moon. And also we confess this whole circle of atmosphere to be the seat and lodging of the Holy Spirit which is the third power. From its strength and spiritual libation the earth conceives and begets the suffering Jesus, who is the life and salvation of men, hung from the tree for everyone.³⁴

³⁰ On the date see N.J. Torchia, 'Agone Christiano, De,' in Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages*, 15. The *Retractiones* (2.3) lists it immediately after *Contra epistulam fundamenti*.

³¹ Aug., *De agone christiano* 11.12 (CSEL 41, p. 115.5–7): 'Ostendebatur enim nobis ad quam fragilitatem homo sua culpa peruenerit et ex qua fragilitate diuino auxilio liberetur.' My translation. See also 23.25–28.30.

³² Aug., *De ag. chr.* 18.20 (CSEL 41, pp. 120.16–121.10): 'Nec eos audiamus, qui non uerum hominem suscepisse dicunt filium dei neque natum esse de femina, sed falsam carnem et imaginem simulatam corporis humani ostendisse uidentibus. Nesciunt enim, quomodo substantia dei administrans uniuersam creaturam inquinari omnino non possit, et tamen praedicant istum uisibilem solem radios suos per omnes feces et sordes corporum spargere et eos mundos et sinceros ubique seruare. Si ergo uisibilia munda uisibilibus immundis contingi possunt et non inquinari, quanto magis inuisibilis et incommutabilis ueritas per spiritum animam et per animam corpus suscipiens toto homine adsumpto ab omnibus eum infirmitatibus nulla sua contaminatione liberauit! [...] Isti totum corpus eius falsam carnem fuisse contendunt, ut non sibi uideantur imitari Christum, si non suis auditoribus mentiantur.'

³³ On the date see 'Faustum manicheum, Contra,' in Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages*, 355–356.

³⁴ Aug., *Contra Faustum* XX,2 (CSEL 25/1, p. 536.9–21): 'Igitur nos patris quidem dei omnipotentis et Christi filii eius et spiritus sancti unum idemque sub triplici appellatione colimus numen; sed patrem quidem ipsum lucem incolere credimus summam ac principalem, quam Paulus alias inaccessibilem uocat, filium uero in hac secunda ac uisibili

How the suffering Jesus is ‘the life and salvation’ of humankind, Faustus does not explain; but Augustine has already alluded to this matter at the beginning of his treatise: ‘These sacrilegious fantasies oblige you to say that Christ is not only in heaven and all the stars, but is also set, bound, and fastened in the earth and in everything that takes life in it, so that he is not your saviour but needs saving by you when you eat and belch.’³⁵ Moving to Faustus’ profession, Augustine says that there must, then, be three ‘Christs’: ‘one whom you call the suffering one whom the earth conceives and brings forth by the power of the Holy Spirit, he who is not only suspended from every tree, but also reclining on the grass; and another crucified by the Jews under Pontius Pilate; and a third who is divided between sun and moon.’³⁶ Before this, Augustine has already challenged the Manichaean denial of the ‘saving’ Jesus’ materiality: ‘Can the earth conceive the suffering Jesus through the Holy Spirit, but not the Virgin Mary?’³⁷ But the real issue is how Jesus is supposedly ‘suspended from every tree’:

But I will desist speaking about [Jesus’] conception [...] The suffering Jesus [...], whom you maintain is suspended from every tree in its fruits, is already contaminated, more so by the flesh of the innumerable animals who eat [them], except for that portion that is to be purified by your hunger. We, however, believe in our hearts and confess with our voices that Christ the Son of God, the Word of God, was endowed with flesh without contamination, because that substance, which cannot be contaminated by anything, cannot be contaminated by flesh. But you say according to your

luce consistere. qui quoniam sit et ipse geminus, ut eum apostolus nouit Christum dicens esse uirtutem et dei sapientiam, uirtutem quidem eius in sole habitare credimus, sapientiam uero in luna. necnon et spiritus sancti, qui est maiestas tertia, aeris hunc omnem ambitum sedem fatemur ac diuersorium; cuius ex uiribus ac spiritali profusione terram quoque concipientem gignere patibilem Iesum, qui est uita ac salus hominum, omni suspensus ex ligno.’ Translation in I. Gardner and S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 219.

³⁵ Aug., *C. Faust.* II,5 (CSEL 25/1, p. 258.11–16): ‘ista sacrilega deliramenta uos cogunt non solum in caelo atque in omnibus stellis, sed etiam in terra atque in omnibus, quae nascuntur in ea, confixum et conligatum atque concretum Christum dicere, non iam saluatorem uestrum sed a uobis saluandum, cum ea manducatis et ructatis.’ My translation. See also Aug., *De haeresibus* 46.5,11.

³⁶ Aug., *C. Faust.* XX,11 (CSEL 25/1, p. 550.15–19): ‘Aliusne est, quem de spiritu sancto concipiens terra patibilem gignit, omni non solum suspensus ex ligno, sed etiam iacens in herba, et alius ille, quem Iudaei crucifixerunt sub Pontio Pilato, et tertius ille per solem lunamque distentus?’ Trans. in Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaean Texts*, 219.

³⁷ Aug., *C. Faust.* XX,11 (CSEL 25/1, pp. 548.27–549.2): ‘O demens, ut interim non discutiam de hac re uestra uaniloquia, potestne terra de spiritu sancto concipere patibilem Iesum et Maria uirgo non potuit?’ My translation.

fable that Jesus, still suspended from a tree, was already contaminated before entering the flesh of whatever eats him; or, if he is not contaminated, how do you purify him by eating?³⁸

Here the target is the notion that salvation comes by the consumption of plant species deemed capable of releasing divine light through the digestive tracts of the Elect.³⁹ Faustus may have staked out the docetic perimeters of the discussion with his consistent attacks on the incarnation; but Augustine regularly brings in redemption—the *purpose* of the incarnation, which is soteriology: in Book III, where he insists on the *effect* of the incarnation: adoption as children of God; XI, where the point of rebuttal is that Jesus is risen in his body so that humanity, too, may rise; XXIII, where it is said that Jesus was born of Mary to free us from corruption; and in XXIX, where he says that Christ appeared in a real body in order to redeem us by a real death.⁴⁰

Preaching at the beginning of the fifth century—shortly after *Contra Faustum*—, Augustine evokes language that resonates with a term from the reply to Faustus: ‘Christ, after all, is our welfare and salvation. He indeed is our salvation, the very one that was wounded for our sakes, and

³⁸ Aug., *C. Faust.* XX,11 (CSEL 25/1, pp. 549.20–550.4): ‘Sed ut de conceptu iam taceam, partum ipsum deinde respicite. concipientem de spiritu sancto dicitis terram gignere patibilem Iesum, quem tamen ita contaminatum omni ex ligno pendere perhibetis in frugibus et pomis, ut innumerabilibus animalibus animalium uescentium carnibus amplius contaminetur, ex ea sola parte purgandus, cui fames uestra subuenerit. itaque nos Christum filium dei, uerbum dei, incontaminabiliter carne indutum corde credimus, ore confitemur, quia illa substantia contaminari nec carne potest, quae nulla re potest; uos autem secundum uestram fabulam adhuc in arbore pendentem Iesum iam contaminatum dicitis, antequam carnem ingrediatur cuiusque uescentis, aut si non est contami natus, quomodo uos eum manducando purgatis?’ My translation.

³⁹ See Aug., *Enarratio in ps.* 140 12 (CCL 40, pp. 2034–2035): ‘Membra, inquit, illa dei quae capta sunt in illo praelio, mixta sunt uniuerso mundo, et sunt in arboribus, in herbis, in pomis, in fructibus. De membra uexat, qui terram sulco discindit; dei membra uexat, qui herbam de terra uellit; dei membra uexat, qui pomum carpit de arbore [...] Sed nos, inquit, quia fide Manichaei illuminati sumus, orationibus et psalmis nostris, qui electi sumus, purgamus inde uitam quae est in illo pane, et mittimus illam ad thesauros caelorum.’ On the date (414 or 415) see S. Zarb, ‘Chronologia Enarrationum s. Augustini in Psalmos,’ *Angelicum* 24 (1947): 275–284. See also *De moribus Manichaeorum* 13.29–30 and 15:36–16:53, and *C. Faust.* II,5 and V,10. On this process of salvation through digestion see J. BeDuhn, ‘A Regimen for Salvation: Medical Models in Manichaean Asceticism,’ *Semeia* 58 (1992): 113–114 and 111–127; idem, *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, 76–82.

⁴⁰ Aug., *C. Faust.* XXIX,2 (CSEL 25/1, p. 744.14–15): ‘sed tamen in uera carne adparens nos uera morte redimeret.’

fastened with nails to the cross, and taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb.⁴¹ The resonance is not surprising, given that he names the Manichaeans in the same homily: 'Are you a Manichee by any chance? Then you don't believe that he was crucified because you don't believe he was ever born.'⁴² In another homily from the same period, Augustine again links Manichaean christology to Christ's saving work: 'This whole scheme of our salvation, by which the one who as God had made man, himself became man for the sake of finding lost man; the whole matter of Christ shedding for the forgiveness of our sins true, not false, blood, and with his blood *obliterating the load of our sins* (Col 2:14); all this these damnable heretics strive to drain of all meaning. All this, so the Manichees believe, as it appeared to human eyes, was spirit, wasn't flesh.'⁴³

Finally, a homily preached about a decade later⁴⁴ enjoins the listeners to 'turn the Manichees away from your houses, your ears, your hearts. The Manichees, you see, deny quite openly that Christ has come in the flesh.'⁴⁵ And because of this coming in the flesh, 'the nature which had

⁴¹ Aug., *Serm.* 116 1 (PL 38, col. 657–658): 'Salus enim nostra Christus est. Ipse est enim salus nostra, qui uulneratus est pro nobis, et confixus est clauis in ligno; et depositus de ligno, positus in sepulcro.' Trans. E. Hill, *Sermons (94A–147A) on the New Testament* (The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century, III/4), Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1992, 203. Preached between 400 and 405, according to A. Kunzelmann, 'Die Chronologie der Sermones des hl. Augustinus,' in *Miscellanea Agostiniana* 2, Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1931, 435.

⁴² *Serm.* 116 4 (PL 38, col. 659): 'Si Manichaeus es? qui nec crucifixum credis, quia nec natum credis.' Trans. Hill, *Sermons (94A–147A)*, 205.

⁴³ Aug., *Serm.* 237 1.1 (PL 38, col. 1122): 'Totam istam dispensationem salutis nostrae, quod factus est homo pro inueniendo homine, qui deus fecerat hominem; totum hoc, quod Christus in remissionem peccatorum nostrorum uerum, non falsum sanguinem fudit, et de uero suo sanguine chirographum peccatorum nostrorum deleuit; hoc totum haeretici damnabiles euacuare consantur. Totum hoc, ut Manichaei credunt, quod apparuit oculis hominum, spiritus fuit, caro non fuit.' Trans. E. Hill, *Sermons (230–272B) on the Liturgical Seasons* (The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century, III/7), New Rochelle, NY: New City Press, 1993, 51. Preached between 402 and 404 (Kunzelmann, 'Die Chronologie,' 434).

⁴⁴ Two pertinent citations from *Enarratio in ps. 140* are supplied in 'Jesus in Augustine's Anti-Manichaean Writings' (see above, note 19). A third citation can be found above, n. 39.

⁴⁵ Aug., *Serm.* 182 2.2 (PL 38, col. 985): 'Ergo repellite Manichaeos a domibus, ab auribus, a cordibus uestris. Manichaei enim Christum in carne uenisse apertissime negant.' Trans. E. Hill, *Sermons (148–183) on the New Testament* (The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century, III/5), New Rochelle, NY: New City Press, 1992, 332. Preached after 416 (Kunzelmann, 'Die Chronologie,' 479).

been spoiled is being restored; the nature which had fallen is being lifted up; the nature which was lying there deformed, is reformed by grace.⁴⁶

CONCLUSIONS

There is a consistency in the way in which the Manichaeism known to Augustine makes the reality of Christ's flesh a key polemical point in debates with Christians.⁴⁷ Once he becomes aware of its implications, Augustine begins to engage that point on similar grounds, but with an eye to the *consequences* that render a docetic, i.e., Manichaean christology unacceptable.

In every version of Manichaeism, there is a Jesus—like Buddha and Zarâdusht—who is consistently seen as a forerunner to Mani himself, who brings the fullness of revelation.⁴⁸ As Julien Ries suggests, 'Augustine's polemic confirms the presence of a Jesus-Light christology in the sect's dogma and shows us that the terminology in use seemed designed to divert Christians of the Great Church.'⁴⁹ But Eugen Rose is wrong to say that this was 'merely some diabolical strategy to win over members from Christianity, as the Church Father Augustine [...] thought.'⁵⁰ Jesus meant more than that in Manichaeism, but not what he meant to Catholic Christians. Still, Rose, who agrees that Jesus belonged to the

⁴⁶ Aug., *Serm.* 182 3.3 (PL 38, col. 986): by Christ's coming 'Natura quae corrupta fuerat, reparatur; natura quae lapsa fuerat, erigitur; natura quae deformis iacebat, gratia reformatur.' Trans. Hill, *Sermons* (148–183), 333.

⁴⁷ See the references in I. Gardner, 'The Docetic Jesus.' Appendix to idem, *Coptic Theological Papyri 2: Edition, Commentary, Translation. Textband* [= Part I], Vienna: Brüder Hollinek, 1988, 64–65 and 74–78; and N.A. Pedersen, 'Early Manichaean Christology, primarily in Western Sources,' in P. Bryder, ed., *Manichaean Studies: Proceedings of the First International Conference on Manichaeism, August 5–9, 1987, Department of History of Religions, Lund University, Sweden* (Lund Studies in African and Asian Religions, 1), Lund: Plus Ultra, 1988, 161–170.

⁴⁸ See, for example, F. Decret, 'Giustificazione e salvezza dell' "uomo nuovo" secondo Fausto manicheo,' *Augustinianum* 30 (1990): 21 and 26; repr. in idem, *Essais sur l'Église manichéenne en Afrique du Nord et à Rome au temps de saint Augustin: Recueil d'études* (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum, 47), Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1995, 107 and 111.

⁴⁹ Ries, 'Jésus Christ dans la religion,' 452: 'La polémique augustinienne confirme la présence d'une christologie de Jésus-Lumière dans la dogmatique de la secte et nous montre que la terminologie en usage semblait faite pour dérouter les chrétiens de la Grande Église.'

⁵⁰ E. Rose, 'Die manichäische Christologie' *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 32 (1980) 229: 'Dies war tatsächlich manichäischer Glaube und nicht bloß teuflische Taktik, um Anhänger aus dem Christentum zu gewinnen, wie der Kirchenvater Augustin [...] meinte.'

Urform of Manichaeism, makes a distinction worth considering: Jesus as a component of pristine Manichaeism, but a *secondary* one.⁵¹ This distinction, in my view, best explains the information gleaned from Augustine. If 'Jesus' (under any aspect) belongs to Manichaeism's *Urform*, the Christian *Christus saluator* does not. If salvation there is, it is not Jesus who accomplishes the saving.

'Le dernier sauveur historique est donc Mani,' as Alois Van Tongerloo has put it.⁵² Faustus claimed that the only true followers of Jesus were Manichaeans;⁵³ but Augustine affirmed that they did not observe the Christian feast of the resurrection⁵⁴ (or Sundays, for that matter).⁵⁵ So, if we take christocentrism to be 'the placing of Christ at the center of one's thought, actions, or theological system,'⁵⁶ there is a problem, at least where Augustine is concerned. For Manichaeans 'la sotériologie est vraiment centrale,' as Ries and others have said,⁵⁷ and for that affirmation Augustine's support can legitimately be invoked; but it would be something else to have him witness that 'Jesus both in his non-historical and in his historical elaboration is the central redeemer of man,' in Pedersen's words.⁵⁸ How could Jesus be a greater saviour than Mani, when it was *Mani* who came to correct and complete Jesus' revelation, deemed distorted or at least incomplete? A Manichaean Jesus might be the bearer

⁵¹ E. Rose, *Die manichäische Christologie* (Studies in Oriental Religions, 5), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979 16: 'Wir hoffen, im folgenden zu zeigen, daß die Christologie auf keinen Fall ein spätes Zugeständnis der Manichäer an die Christenheit darstellt [...] Damit soll freilich nicht gesagt sein, daß die eine oder andere der Formen, welche die Christusgestalt in der manichäischen Lehre angenommen hat, nicht sekundär sein könnte. Im Gegenteil sehen wir die Möglichkeit gegeben, daß die Vorstellung vom makrokosmischen Christus sekundär ist.'

⁵² Van Tongerloo, 'Le salut': 75. On Augustine's assertion (*De natura boni* 42) that Manichaeans honour Mani more than Christ, E. Feldmann, 'Christus-Frommigkeit der Mani-Jünger: Der suchende Student Augustinus in ihrem "Netz"?', in E. Dassmann and K.S. Frank, eds., *Pietas: Festschrift für Bernhard Kötting* (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 8), Münster/W: Aschendorff, 1980, 204, comments: 'Diese Aussage ist doppelsinnig. Mani könnte als Verkünder höher geschätzt werden als der historische Jesus. Er könnte aber auch kultisch höher gestellt worden sein als der Christus.'

⁵³ Aug., *C. Faust.* V,1 and XV,1.

⁵⁴ Or at least displaced it with the Bema observance of Mani's death: see *C. Faust.* XVIII,5; *C. ep. fund.* 8; *Epist.* 55 *ad Ianuarium* 7.12.

⁵⁵ Augustine says that Sunday was a fast day for Manichaean Hearers: *Epist.* 36 *ad Casulanum* 12.27; 236 *ad Deuterium* 2. Mani's death occurred on a Monday (on the 4th of Adar): see A. Böhlig, 'Synkretismus in der Überlieferung von Manis Passion,' *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 46 (1994): 235–246, especially 237–239.

⁵⁶ *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* 1, Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 1981, 400.

⁵⁷ Ries, 'Les titres,' 327.

⁵⁸ Pedersen, 'Early,' 186.

of a saving *gnosis*,⁵⁹ which is to say, of information on how salvation is achieved; but Manichaeans had no truly *saving* Christ, and that was sufficient in Augustine's view to render ineffective whatever Christ they might espouse.

Was Manichaeism Christian for Augustine? It depends on how one chooses to define the term. If one means a religion wherein Jesus is seen as the unique saviour sent by God, then no. In that sense neither was it christocentric—or at least not christo-soteriological. Jesus in Manichaeism was not a saviour in any sense reconcilable with Augustine's Catholic Christianity. Augustine obviously had to defend the incarnation, heart stone of Catholic belief. But that defense did not go far enough: he had to insist on the *why* of the incarnation—ultimately, the salvation of humanity, and he saw the soteriology of Manichaeism as its christological Achilles' heel. In the words of Gedaliahu Stroumsa, 'When Augustine rejected Manichaeism, he was not only objecting to a baroque mythology; he implicitly repudiated a whole understanding of religion, that is to say both a whole epistemology and soteriology.'⁶⁰

⁵⁹ See Puech, 'La conception,' 8–10.

⁶⁰ G. Stroumsa, 'The Words and the Works: Religious Knowledge and Salvation in Augustine and Faustus of Milevis,' in S.N. Eisenstadt and J.F. Silber, eds., *Knowledge and Society* (Studies in the Sociology of Culture Past and Present, 7), Greenwich, Conn. and London: JAI Press, 1988, 74.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SOUL IN MANICHAISM AND AUGUSTINE

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A te petatur, in te quaeratur, ad te fulsetur: sic, sic accipietur, sic invenietur,
sic aperietur.¹

The closing words of Augustine's *Confessions* seem to strikingly define how this work may have been perceived by a great number of his contemporaries.² It could have been seen as the story of a spiritual journey along winding and dangerous roads, at the end of which Augustine, driven by intellectual and religious anxiety, arrives at what he feels to be his final

¹ *Conf.* XIII, 38. Ed. and Trans. by Vitali, *Sant'Agostino, Le Confessioni* (Intr. by C. Mohrmann) (Milano 1996), 730.

² A still vivid demonstration of the variety of reactions that the work aroused is reflected in the *Retractationes* (II, VI = XXXII,1, rec. P. Knöll, CSEL XXXVI, S.I, Pars 2, 1902, 138): '... *quid de illis alii sentiant, ipsi viderint; multis tamen fratribus eos multum placuisse et placere scio*'. On the reception of Augustine's *Confessiones* by his contemporaries, cf. P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris 1968), 235 ff.; P. Courcelle, *Les Confessions de saint Augustin dans la tradition littéraire. Antécédents et Postérité* (Paris 1963), 201. On the value of the evidence provided by the *Confessions* and in general on Augustine's spiritual itinerary to and from Manichaeism see J. Ries, 'Saint Augustin et le Manichéisme à la lumière du livre III des Confessions,' in: *Le Confessioni di Agostino d'Ippona, Libri III-IV* (Palermo 1984) 7-26; J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden - New York - København - Köln 1991), 191-234; J. van Oort, 'Augustinus und der Manichäismus,' in: A. Van Tongerloo and J. van Oort (eds.), *The Manichaean NOYΣ* (Lovanii 1995), 289-307; J. van Oort, 'Manichaeism and Anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's Confessiones,' in: L. Cirillo & A. Van Tongerloo (eds.), *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico*, Manichaean Studies III (Lovanii - Neapoli 1997), 235-247; G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Natura e origine del male: alle radici dell'incontro e del confronto di Agostino con la gnosi manichea', *Il mistero del male e la libertà possibile: lettura dei Dialoghi di Agostino, Atti del V Seminario del Centro di Studi Agostiniani di Perugia*, a cura di L. Alici, R. Piccolomini, A. Pieretti, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 45 (1994) 7-55; E. Feldmann, 'Der Übertritt Augustins zu den Manichäern,' in: *The Manichaean NOYΣ* (Lovanii 1995) 103-128.

destination and safe haven. From this position he starts to consider his mistakes, with greater calm and equilibrium perhaps, than is found in his other works.

Divine reality is the *arché* and *telos* of this eventful and difficult 'journey', and is ever present in the background; the Soul is the protagonist, so modern in its problems, but also so typical of the complex cultural and religious reality of the time.

These two closely connected entities, God and Soul, highlight the contrapositions of substances and relationships, whereas Augustine, from his viewpoint as a Catholic Christian, considers the many heresies tormenting the Church in that period. Above all, however, he is concerned with confuting Manichaean doctrine, displaying the same commitment with which he had previously adhered to it.

We can see in the *Confessions* how Augustine persists in denouncing the Manichaean doctrine of the two Souls, which he here expresses using different words than in the *De duabus animabus*, where he always uses the expression '*duo genera animarum*'. Even if he traces this doctrine back to the roots of Manichaean dualism, he stresses that at its origin there is a movement of the consciousness, which perceives within itself two clashing intentions and identifies them with 'two natures of two *mentes*':

... qui cum duas voluntates in deliberando animo animadverterint, duas naturas duarum mentium esse asseverant, unam bonam alteram malam, ... illi enim dum volunt esse lux non in Domino, sed in se ipsis, putando animae naturam hoc esse ... quod deus est, ita facti sunt densiores tenebrae ...³

Augustine's return to this doctrine on various occasions in his works, in the absence of other clear references in direct Manichaean sources, has posed the problem as to whether Augustine's mention of it indicates that the concept was actually present in Manichaean anthropology, or whether this is his personal interpretation, in which he applies doctrines deduced from other ideological contexts to Manichaeism and its dualistic ontological system. This is an issue still open to debate in the Manichaean historiographical tradition, and has been examined by var-

³ Conf. VIII, 10, 2-5; 9-11, Vitali 1996, 374.

ious scholars. I. de Beausobre,⁴ Mosheim⁵ and Alfarcic⁶ maintain that the doctrine of the two souls in man is in fact present in Manichaeism, while for others—starting with Baur⁷ and ending with Puech⁸—Augustine wrongly attributed to the Manichaean system of the opposition of the substances the opposition of two souls in man, which he had deduced from similar but not identical concepts in other religious contexts. The whole problem is undoubtedly best defined in the articulated and perceptive exegesis of the relative Augustinian texts performed by F. Decret⁹ and in the well-structured historical analysis provided by Ugo Bianchi.¹⁰ Lastly, in a closely-argued essay from 1998, G. Stroumsa¹¹ re-examines the problem, in the light of a previous work by R. Ferwerda¹² on the topic. The two authors in a sense approach the issue from different perspectives: Ferwerda, who is a scholar of Greek philosophy, finds the more ancient formulation of a doctrine which is similar but not identical to that reported by Augustine as being Manichaean, in a passage from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, in which the Persian sage Araspas relates man's good or evil behaviour to the dominance respectively of the good or evil soul which he possesses.¹³ This is then followed by its reappearance in Platonic¹⁴ and Neoplatonic philosophy.¹⁵ But there is no doubt, as Stroumsa perceptively notes,¹⁶ that a significant element in Mani's redefinition of the anthropological and above all psychological conception of

⁴ I. de Beausobre, *Histoire de Manichée et du Manichéisme* II (Amsterdam 1739), 420.

⁵ Cf. F.C. Baur, *Das manichäische Religionssystem nach den Quellen neu untersucht und entwickelt* (Tübingen 1831), 163.

⁶ P. Alfarcic, *L'évolution intellectuelle de saint Augustin*, vol. 1 (Paris 1918), 117 and notes 6,7.

⁷ Baur, *idem*, 164–165.

⁸ H.-Ch. Puech, *Les sources de Plotin*, *Entretiens Hardt sur l'antiquité* 5 (Vandoeuvres, Genève 1957), 39.

⁹ *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*, (Paris 1978), I, 82–91; 323–346; II, 61–67; 259–274.

¹⁰ *Sur la question des deux âmes dans le manichéisme*, in: J. Duchesne-Guillemin et alii (eds.), *A Green Leaf. Papers in honour of Prof. Jes P. Asmussen*, *Acta Iranica. Hommages et Opera Minora* XII (Leiden 1988), 311–316.

¹¹ *Barbarian Philosophy. The Religious Revolution of Early Christianity* (Tübingen 1999), 282–291.

¹² 'Two Souls: Origen's and Augustine's Attitude towards the Two Souls Doctrine: Its Place in Greek and Christian Philosophy,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 37 (1983), 360–378.

¹³ Xen., *Cyropaedia* 6. 1. 41.

¹⁴ Plat. *Laws* 10, 896 d–e.

¹⁵ Numenius, *fr.* 44 (91 Des Places).

¹⁶ *op. cit.*, 284.

his religious system is to be sought in the complex 'animology' which, starting with the multiple elements of the soul, typical of Zoroastrianism,¹⁷ passing through the various schools of thought of the Sassanian age, arrived at concepts such as that appearing in Dk VI,¹⁸ in which the human soul is divided into two parts guided by opposing impulses. Such a psychological system could moreover be a reflection of the cosmological dualism widespread in Hellenistic Zoroastrianism. Ferwerda further suggests that Augustine wrongly considered as Manichaean the doctrine of the two souls, while it was instead widespread among the Gnostics, as he deduces from Plotinus' polemic,¹⁹ from a passage of Clement of Alexandria,²⁰ who reports such a concept in Isidorus, and from the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*.²¹ Stroumsa, meanwhile, rightly rejects the hypothesis of a mistake on the part of Augustine, whom he considers to have had more extensive and precise knowledge of Manichaean doctrines than of 2nd century Gnostic concepts. Recommencing then with the Iranian tradition reported by Xenophon and hypothesising that Iranian anthropology had a significant influence on Jewish concepts,²² he examines a whole series of Jewish and early Christian texts,²³ from the Community Rule,²⁴ the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs²⁵ and the Shepherd of Herma²⁶ to the Epistle of Barnabas,²⁷ in which he however admits²⁸ that he did not find any clear reference to the concept of the two souls in man. It is thus evident that if the dualistic system of Iranian origin produced similar formulas, by influencing Jewish and Christian concepts, the two opposing entities are never opposed as 'different substances', but are rather spirits, angels, forces or instincts competing

¹⁷ Cf. Sh. Shaked, *Dualism in Transformation: Varieties of Religion in Sasanian Iran* (Jordan Lectures, 1991; London 1994), 58.

¹⁸ Cf. Sh. Shaked, 'Some Terms relating to Man in Pahlavi: I. axw (ox)', in: Gignoux, Ph. and A. Tafazzoli (eds.), *Mémoires Jean De Ménasce* (Louvain 1974), 319–326.

¹⁹ Plot. *Enneads* 2.9.5.16.

²⁰ Clement. *Stromata* 2. 20. 113. 3.

²¹ *Exc. Theod.* 50. 1; cf. 51. 3.

²² G.G. Stroumsa, *op.cit.*, 285. Cf. Sh. Shaked, 'Qumran and Iran: Further Considerations', *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972), 432–446.

²³ G.G. Stroumsa, *op.cit.*, 286–289.

²⁴ *Community Rule* III, 18 ff.

²⁵ *Testament of Judah* 20, 1–3; *Testament of Asher*, 1, 3–9.

²⁶ *Shepherd of Herma*, 5. 2; 5. 4; 6. 2. 1; 6. 5–6.

²⁷ *Ep. Barnabas* 18, 1–2. On the influence of dualistic, early Christian trends on Augustine cf. J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden 1991).

²⁸ G.G. Stroumsa, *op. cit.*, 289.

with each other for dominion over a single soul. Nor does the 'vertical' perspective, which pits a divine soul against a baser one, as we find in some Christian authors such as Tatian,²⁹ who talks of men possessing at the same time a soul, but also 'the image and resemblance of God', correspond exactly to the Manichaean concept of Mani's 'twin', the *Syzygos* who shows Mani his divine reality, which coexists with him in the world of light, and with which he will unite at the end of time. This image clearly embodies Jewish-Christian concepts,³⁰ and also its metaphysical and eschatological essence recalls the Iranian *fravahr* and *daena*,³¹ but what is peculiar about the *Syzygos* are the bonds of substance that link Mani's soul confined in the body and its heavenly twin, and this is surely a Gnostic concept.³²

In conclusion, we believe that the Manichaean concept of the two souls, as reported by Augustine, which was perhaps expressed in various ways in the areas in which Manichaeism spread, and the complex construction of the system as a whole, was certainly the result of a long process of ideological standardisation, influenced by elements of the Iranian, Jewish, Pagan and Christian cultural contexts. But only the Gnostic opposition of the substances defined its specific identity. We will try to reconstruct this identity, in the light of the important and at times congruent results of the scholars coming before us, above all on the basis of Augustine's texts, in relation to the main Manichaean texts regarding the issue, and by comparing this identity to similar Gnostic concepts. We hope that a new organisation of the data, within a chronological and thematic framework, may serve to shed light on the implications of the issue and open up new lines of research.

The problem of the Manichaean doctrine of the two souls involves of course many other fundamental issues related to the whole Manichaean conception of the Soul.

²⁹ Tat. *Oratio ad Graecos*, 12. 1.

³⁰ Cf. G. Quispel, 'Genius and Spirit', in: M. Krause (ed.), *Essays on the Nag Hammadi Texts in honour of Pahor Labib* (Leiden 1975), 168 ff.

³¹ C. Giuffrè Scibona, 'Gnosi e salvezza nel Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis', in: L. Cirillo (ed.), *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis. Atti del Simposio Internazionale* (Cosenza 1986), 360.

³² See G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Tradizione e nuova creazione religiosa nel manicheismo: il *syzygos* e la missione profetica di Mani', in: L. Cirillo (ed.), *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis* (Cosenza 1986), 249–283.

In considering Augustine's texts on the Manichaean Soul it is important to establish some preliminary methodological points:

- 1) Analysing the data, it is necessary to distinguish the assertions of the Manichaean doctors from the polemic discussion of Manichaean concepts by Augustine.
- 2) Information from Augustine must be placed within the overall perspective of the Manichaean system, as well as within the historico-cultural situation from which it derives.

In Manichaeism, more than in other Gnostic doctrines, the problem of the consistency, nature, origin, and destiny of the Soul must be placed and discussed as a contextual problem both of theology, or theodicy, and anthropology.

The structural relationship existing between the substance of God and the substance of the Soul in Manichaeism, starting with its initial mythological hypostatisation in the divine pentad of the sons of Primordial Man, defines the Soul's functional ambiguity, whereby it represents both the subject and object of salvation. As such, performing various functions of divine reality, it experiences—as saviour, object and aim of salvation (*salvatrix-salvanda-salvata*)—the whole story of the Three Times. But it is always defined in terms of its constant relationship of opposition to the adverse substance, in a series of decisive actions and counter-actions.

On an historical and existential level the Manichaean Soul is characterised by the cosmic dimension of its fragmentation. The ambiguity³³ of its function in this cosmic imprisonment is comparable to that of the *Anthropos* of the Naassenes of Hippolytus³⁴ and of the *Nous* in the *Paraphrase of Shem*:³⁵ as a prisoner and animator of a mechanism which is

³³ This double role of the cosmic Soul in Manichaeism is vividly expressed in an important text of the Manichaean oriental tradition, the *gyan wifras* ('The Sermon of the Soul') edited with a commentary by W. Sundermann, *Der Sermon von der Seele*, Berliner Turfantexte XIX (Turnhout 1997a).

³⁴ Ref. V, 7,2–10,2 ed. Wendland 1916, 79,6–104,3; cf. Völker 1932, 11–27. On the Naassenes cf. R.P. Casey, 'Naassenes and Ophites,' *JTS* XXVII (1925–1926), 374–387; W. Foerster, 'Die Naassener,' *Studi di storia religiosa della tarda antichità* (Messina 1968), 21–33.; J. Bergman, 'Kleine Beiträge zum Naassenertraktat,' in: G. Widengren (ed.), *Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Gnosticism* (Stockholm 1977), 74–100. Cf. also J. Montserrat-Torrents, 'La notice d'Hippolyte sur les Naassènes,' *Studia Patristica* XVII 1 (1982), 231–243; G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Chaos e dualismo: esempi della dialettica chaos-kosmos nello gnosticismo,' *Cassiodorus. Rivista di Studi sulla tarda antichità* 2 (1996), 29–32.

³⁵ CG VII, 1; on the role of the *Nous* in the *Paraphrase of Shem*, cf. F. Wisse, 'The Redeemer Figure in the Paraphrase of Shem,' in: George W. MacRae, 'Essays on Coptic

ontologically negative, but at the same time focussed on salvation, the Soul is manifested through an action-function, the *Nous*, which is consubstantial to it.

To this existential situation Augustine is an effective but problematic witness.

The concept of the consubstantiality between God and the Soul is taken up at various points in Augustine's *disputationes*. He uses it to show the contradiction between God's absolute immunity (*C. Fort.* 3,16) and the imprisonment and corruption of the Soul (*C. Fort.* 11,20). With a subtle distinction, Fortunatus points out that the Soul is not "similar to God", i.e. it does not have the same nature (*C. Fort.* 12,15). But, in the dialogue which Augustine skilfully engages in with Felix, in response to the rhetor's pressing question: 'Pars illa que tenebrarum genti mixta est, de Dei natura est, an de aliqua alia natura?', he finds himself forced to answer: 'de Dei'.³⁶

The question, in my opinion, is fundamentally misplaced, since the same words used by the interlocutors have different meanings. The Manichaean conception of the substance and nature of God and Soul is completely different from the one behind Augustine's questions. In effect, the divine luminous substance of the Manichaeans, although opposed to the *Hyle*, actually assumes material aspects, both on a mythical level and in existential reality. On the other hand, Darkness, conceived as a material substance, has aggressive energy and a negative intelligence which acts effectively to determine cosmic history and individual existence.

As is well known, these conceptions evade the parameters of metaphysics codified or conditioned by classical philosophy: they express Iranian themes, without simply reproducing them, and combine them with

Gnostic Library,' *Novum Testamentum* 12, 2 (1970), 130–140. B. Ehlers Aland, 'Die Paraphrase als Form gnostischer Verkündigung,' *Nag Hammadi and Gnosis* (1978), 76–85; M. Roberge, 'Le rôle du Nous dans la Paraphrase de Sem,' in: B. Barc (ed.), *Colloque int. sur les Textes de Nag Hammadi* (Québec-Louvain 1981), 328–339; M. Roberge, 'Anthropogonie et anthropologie dans la Paraphrase de Sem (NH VII, 1),' *Le Muséon* (1986), 229–248; M. Roberge, 'Chute et remontée du Pneuma dans la Paraphrase de Sem,' in: W. Godlewski (ed.), *Coptic Studies* (Warszawa 1990), 355–363. Cf. also G. Casadio, 'Antropologia gnostica e antropologia orfica nella notizia di Ippolito sui Sethiani,' in: F. Vattioni (a cura di), *Sangue e antropologia nella teologia* (Roma 1989), 1295–1350; G. Casadio, 'Avventure del Dualismo sulla via della seta,' *La Persia e l'Asia centrale da Alessandro al X secolo* (Roma 1996), 663–684; G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Chaos e dualismo: esempi della dialettica chaos-kosmos nello gnosticismo,' *Cassiodorus. Rivista di Studi sulla tarda antichità* 2 (1996), 32 f.

³⁶ C. Felicem II, 15, 7–9; BA 17, 736. Cf. F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale, I–II* (Paris 1978), I, 294–322.

elements from Stoic and Christian doctrines of the cosmos and God. It is a dialectic opposition of two metaphysical substances,³⁷ compact, homogeneous and immutable '*in se*', as is clearly expressed by Felix:

Quomodo deus immutabilis est, similiter quem genuit immutabilis est, et quod fecit si de ipsius natura est, non mutatur. (C. Felicem II, 19)

In each of them, physical aspects and spiritual attitudes are a unicum, without ontological degree. These notions incommensurably oppose the reasoning of the Manichaeans to the polemics of Augustine.

The fact that Augustine focuses his polemics on the metaphysics of substances and opposed natures, to a certain extent circumscribes the problem to the opposition of the two substances. We will see, however, that it is more interesting (in terms of clarifying the problem of the theory of the two Souls) to consider the individual perspective and situate it in the wider picture of the Soul's destiny in Manichaeism and in comparable Gnostic conceptions. Looking at the problem in this light allows us to shift our perspective from theological themes to those of anthropology and ontology. In this way it can be seen that the gnosiological attention of the followers was concentrated on their state of mixture, on the origins of this mixture, on the means of purification and separation of the substances, and on final salvation. These are problems which the Manichaeans discussed at length, with 'scientific' pretensions, presenting them as "truths"—truths which dashed so many expectations of the young Augustine.³⁸

He bears lively witness to how far in daily life the fundamental requirement for salvation was to acquire ever deeper knowledge of the original methods of the fragmentation and incarnation of the divine Soul, and to how such knowledge was reflected in the teaching of the *electi*, by the reading of texts, and by the liturgy.

The rooting of that incarnation in darkness, with repellent methods, through lust and impurity, justified the Encratite praxis of the *electi*. Only such a way of life, placing an end to the cycle of rebirths, could lead the Soul to salvation. But the '*scientia rerum*', the '*veritas enodata*' to which

³⁷ On these themes cf. C. Colpe, 'Die griechische, die synkretistische und die iranische Lehre von der kosmischen Mischung,' *Orientalia Suecana* (1978–1979), 27–28; C. Colpe, 'Heidnischer und christlicher Hellenismus in ihren Beziehungen zum Buddhismus,' *Vivarium* (Münster 1984), 76; U. Bianchi 'Sur la question des deux âmes dans le manichéisme,' in: J. Duchesne-Guillemin *et alii* (eds.): 'A Green Leaf,' *Acta Iranica. Hommages et Opera Minora XII* (Leiden 1988), 15–16; W. Sundermann, *Der Sermon von der Seele, Berliner Turfantexte XIX* (Turnhout 1997), 21–22.

³⁸ *De util. cred.* 1,2, CSEL XXV,1,4,14. Cf. *Conf. V* 3,6 (Vitali, 206–208).

Augustine often alludes, manifesting his disillusion regarding contents not unveiled or not clarified, probably included other themes, inherent in the mechanisms of the individual Soul's mixture with the body and its destiny.

It was important to know that the composition of the human body was the decisive event in the process of imprisonment of the Soul of light, that *metagismos* represented the means of purification and the necessary path to salvation, and that man was the only being who was self-conscious of the mixture within him, unlike other cosmic entities. The individual, this microcosmic reproduction of the salvific mechanism, its inherent limbs and strength, and the alchemy of the substances that mixed and fought within it, were certainly at the heart of Manichaean religious thought and teaching. This can be seen, for example, in many chapters of the *Kephalaia*, this important work of religious teaching which, starting probably from the first generation of the disciples of Mani, 'could become a means for argument and demonstration between believing communities'.³⁹

That particular attention then was reserved for that part of the individual composition in which perdition was rooted, but where the fight for salvation took place, i.e. the body, can be deduced in a prototypical way from the centrality of the body of Mani⁴⁰ in the history of his generation in the world (*Peri tes gennes tou somatos autou*) in the *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis*. But, as is well known, many *Kephalaia* and some Chinese and Middle-Persian sources described in meticulous detail the various points in the forced tragic relationship with the *membra* of the individual Soul. We will discuss this point further below.

But, to go back to Augustinian texts, I would like to demonstrate that the doctrine of the two Souls to which Augustine returns throughout his anti-Manichaean debate—from the *De vera religione* to the *Retractiones* and the *De Haeresibus ad Quodvultdeus*—, in the form in which Augustine formulates it, especially in the confutation of the *De duabus animabus*, cannot be thought of as a constant dogma in the Manichaean

³⁹ I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII (Leiden 1995), xxiii.

⁴⁰ Cf. U. Bianchi, 'Osservazioni storico-religiose sul Codice Manicheo di Colonia', in: L. Cirillo (ed.), *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis* (Cosenza 1986), 28–33; C. Giuffrè Scibona, 'Gnosi e salvezza nel Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis', in: *idem*, 357–359; C. Giuffrè Scibona, 'Alle radici iraniche del Manicheismo. Corpo, creazione e tempo come strumenti di salvezza', in: L. Cirillo & A. Van Tongerloo (eds.), *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 101–102.

system. As Baur⁴¹ has already stressed, the other sources prior or contemporary to Augustine do not speak of two Souls, but only of two natures, in man or in a single Soul, nor did Augustine quote original texts of Mani to explain this theory. Not even one of Augustine's Manichaean interlocutors mentions this doctrine.⁴² We may come to the conclusion that it was a particular '*vulgata*', or an *interpretatio* in African Manichaeism, within a fully christianised environment, of a functional concept of Manichaean anthropology in which themes of the Gnostic *koiné* of the Syro-Aramaic milieu were compounded with theories and images of Iranian religious tradition to formulate a dualistic anthropology.

In the first anti-Manichaean tractate of Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus manichaeorum*, in accordance with the ethical aim of the polemic, which immediately shows its metaphysical roots, there is no clear allusion to the doctrine of two Souls in man. What does, however, begin to emerge, is a concept, which will be theoretically expressed by the Manichaean doctors: the perception of another opposing power and nature in our consciousness, is the first step towards *chorismos* and salvation, beginning with the protological situation of Adam. On the subject of the '*signaculum sinus*', Augustine, to denounce the loose morals of the Manichaean *electi*, tells the story of a *perfectus*, who, beaten by the brother of a woman that he had violated:

clamabat, ut sibi ex auctoritate Manichaei parceretur, Adam primum heroem peccasse et post peccatum fuisse sanctiorem.⁴³

The subsequent words, relating to the Manichaean original myth of the protoplasts, explain the behaviour of Adam as a result of the two natures united in his Soul:

Talis est namque apud vos opinio de Adam et Eva; longa fabula est, sed ex ea id attingam quod in praesentia satis. Adam dicitis sic a parentibus suis genitum abortivis illis principibus tenebrarum, ut maximam partem lucis haberet in animam et perexiguam gentis adversae. Qui cum sancte

⁴¹ F.C. Baur, *Das Manichäische Religionssystem nach den Quellen neu untersucht und entwickelt* (Tübingen 1831), 164–165.

⁴² The opposition of the soul and the body, in Fortunatus' profession of dualistic faith (*Contra Fortunatum* 14, BA 17, 148), or the fact that he mentions the *anima bona*, does not seem to demonstrate that the Manichaean presbyter knew of the doctrine of the two souls. For a different opinion, cf. F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale, I–II* (Paris 1978), I, 328, II, 262, 270–271.

⁴³ *De moribus manichaeorum* 2, 19, 72 (NBA XIII/1, 194).

viveret propter exsuperantem copiam boni, commotam partem in eo fuisse adversam illam partem, ut ad concubitum declinaretur; ita eum lapsum esse atque peccasse, sed vixisse postea sanctiorem.⁴⁴

The ethical and Gnostic route, implied in the vicissitude of Adam, is expressed in a theoretical form by Fortunatus from its starting-point to the salvific gnosis:

Nam quia inviti peccamus et cogimur a contraria et inimica nobis substantia, idcirco sequimur scientia rerum.⁴⁵

We must stress that in this first statement, the protological and prototypical fall of Adam into a sinful act, the most sinful for the Manichaeans, is to be attributed not to two opposed Souls, but to two opposed '*partes*' in one only Soul.

The doctrine of the two Souls has its first formulation in the *De vera religione*, dedicated to Augustine's friend and ancient co-religionist Romanianus, and in a context which aims at expressing concisely the fundamental parameters of the radical Manichaean dualism, in the parallelism of the two natures and substances and of the two Souls. But a closer reading of the text induces particular observations:

Credo autem affuturum Deum, ut ista scriptura, praecedente pietate, legentibus bonis, non adversus unam aliqua, sed adversus omnes pravos et falsas opiniones possit valere. Contra eos tamen potissimum est instituta, qui duas naturas vel substantias singulis principiis adversus invicem rebelles esse arbitrantur. Offensi enim quibusdam rebus, et rursus quibusdam delectati, non earum quibus offenduntur, sed earum quibus delectantur, volunt esse auctorem Deum. Et cum consuetudinem suam vincere nequeunt, iam carnalibus laqueis irretitam, duas animas esse in uno corpore existimant: unam de Deo, quae naturaliter hoc sit quod ipse; alteram de gente tenebrarum, quam Deus nec genuerit, nec fecerit, nec protulerit, nec abiecerit; sed quae suam vitam, suam terram suos fetus et animalia, suum postremo regnum habuerit, ingentumque principium; sed quodam tempore adversus Deum rebellasse, Deum autem qui aliud quod faceret non haberet, et quomodo aliter posset hosti resistere non inveniret, necessitate oppressum misisse huc animam bonam et quamdam particulam suae substantiae, cuius commixtio atque miscela hostem temperatum esse somniant, et mundum fabricatum.⁴⁶

The concise, but clear enunciation of Manichaean radical dualism, whose original motivations Augustine traces back to a simplistic response to

⁴⁴ *De moribus manichaeorum* 2, 19, 73 (NBA XIII/1, *ibidem*).

⁴⁵ *C. Fortunatum* 20, 122, BA 17, 166.

⁴⁶ *De vera religione* 9, 16 (NBA VI/1, 40).

'*unde malum*', is followed by the presentation of the doctrine of the two Souls, which are derived from the respective opposed substances and principles. Augustine particularly concentrates on the description of the *anima mala*, seen in the general framework of the world of darkness from which it derives. It is identified immediately with the *Hyle*, and is caught in the act of aggression which gives the start to the process of mixing with the substance of light, to the creation of the world, and to the story of mankind. In reality, then, if we look at the subjects of the context, we realize that the crucial issue is the two substances, the start and state of their mixing, the passage from the metaphysical struggle to present reality, rather than man and the individual Soul or the two Souls, which the doctrine also enounced upon.

The *De duabus animabus* was written in Hippo, probably in 391 when Augustine had already taken his priest's vows, but had not yet become a bishop; he would soon after (28–29th August 392) take part in the public debate with the Manichaean presbyter Fortunatus.

In this work, for the first time, the theory of the two Souls is introduced into a precise systematic confutation and founded on some mechanisms of logical argumentation so essential to Augustine's new and different conceptual position, that they immediately and clearly highlight the substantial differences between two anthropological and theological conceptions and their internal implications. Behind the rhetorical apparatus, coloured by the disappointment of being wrong for so long, there appear three fundamental lines of polemical critique in Augustine's argument on this doctrine; they are founded on three different perspectives: 1) ontological; 2) gnosiological; 3) ethical; and are based on three *petitiones principii*: 1) monotheism; 2) the neo-Platonic⁴⁷ conception of the

⁴⁷ On the much-debated question of the Platonic, or rather neo-Platonic character of the Christianity to which Augustine was converted, see especially P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris 1968), 93–138. See also G. Mathon, 'Quand faut-il placer le retour d'Augustin à la foi catholique?', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 1, (1955), 107–128; M.G. Mara, 'La "Conversione", le "Conversioni", "l'invito alla conversione" nell'VIII libro delle Confessioni', in: *Le "Confessioni" di Agostino d'Ippona, Lectio Augustini. Settimana Agostiniana Pavese* 3, (Palermo 1985), 71–87; and P. Siniscalco, 'Le tappe di un itinerario interiore ed esterno nel IX libro delle Confessiones di Agostino', in: *Le "Confessioni" di Agostino d'Ippona. Libri VI–IX* (Palermo 1985), 89–110. Cf. the last study by J. Oroz Reta, 'Tres lecturas y una conversion. Del Hortensius a la Epistola a los Romanos', *Augustinus* 37 (147–148) (1992), 245–272 and the perceptive observations of G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Natura e origine del male: alle radici dell'incontro e del confronto di Agostino con la gnosi manichea', in: *Il mistero del male e la libertà possibile: lettura dei Dialoghi di Agostino*. Atti del V Seminario del centro di studi agostiniani di Perugia, a cura di L. Alici, R. Piccolomini, A. Pieretti, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 45 (1994),

superiority of the intelligible over the perceptible and the correlated reality of a Soul created and ontologically graduated; 3) free and univocal will as a determining subject in sin and repentance. It is easy to understand how the monotheistic option, denying the substantiality of evil, includes as a consequence the other two. That Augustine concentrated fundamentally on the confutation of Manichaean ontological dualism is revealed by various clues: right at the beginning of the work he establishes, as he had previously in the '*De vera religione*', an immediate correlation between the '*duo genera*' of Souls and the two opposed substances in the Manichaean conception:

Nam primo animarum illa duo genera, quibus ita singulas naturas propriasque tribuerunt, ut alterum de ipsa Dei substantia, alterius vero Deum nec conditorem quidem velint accipi ⁴⁸

Also the denomination attributed to the two Souls included in '*duo genera*' refers immediately, almost automatically to the opposition of the two principles from which they come and it is significant that in this work alone, aimed at confuting this doctrine, the formula is used invariably, as has been noted,⁴⁹ a full seven times.

After having established that the life with which the Souls considered evil are evidently equipped leads to the inescapable conclusion that they too are creatures of the one God, Augustine highlights a crucial point of the question, through which it is easier to read the differences between the conception of '*anima*' used by Augustine in his confutation and that of the Manichaean Soul.

The discourse concentrates on the distinction between the cognitive faculties: the higher dignity of *intelligentia* compared to the senses, demonstrates, according to Augustine, that even the Souls which the Manichaeans consider evil, insofar as they can only be perceived with this,

22–26; G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Fra astrologi, teurgi e manichei: itinerario agostiniano in un mondo che si interroga su destino, male, salvezza' in: *Il mistero del male e la libertà possibile* (IV): *ripensare Agostino, Atti dell'VIII Seminario del Centro Studi Agostiniani di Perugia* a cura di L. Alici, R. Piccolomini, A. Pieretti, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 59, (1997), 93–100. All of these include wide-ranging bibliographical references. On the neo-Platonic perspective of Augustine's polemic on the two souls, cf. H. Oshima, 'Augustine's Understanding of Manichaeism—In Connection with *De duabus animabus*', *Studies in Medieval Thought* XII, 47–70 (in Japanese) (1970), cf. résumé 199–200.

⁴⁸ *De duabus animabus* 1,1, BA 17, 52.

⁴⁹ F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*, I–II (Paris 1978), I, 325, II, 260.

which is the highest faculty of the Soul (*ipsa sublimitate animi*⁵⁰), not only have an ontological quality superior to the light that they venerate as a divine substance, but, being living entities, come from God. The concise and coherent progression of the reasoning does not succeed in hiding the fundamental petition of the principle of monotheism which lies at its base. Augustine knows full well that for the Manichaeans the light of the sun and moon which they venerate is made of the same divine substance as the human Soul, whereas what he defines as an '*anima mala*' has a different and distinct origin and substance that is not, as he supposes, merely a '*vacatio boni*'. The ontological oneness of substance and ethics in the Manichaean system places an unbridgeable gap between the reality of the Manichaean conception of the Soul and Augustine's arguments based on the third perspective: that relating to moral responsibility, sin and repentance. And around this point revolve all the substantial implications which define the specific identities of the Manichaean doctrine of the Soul, seen in that existential situation of which Augustine, in his polemic is an able witness. But, these identities can be fully understood only if they are located contextually in that ontological perspective, in that lived metaphysics, of which the Manichaean faithful always had to be conscious. On one hand the insistence of Augustine on the excellence and superiority of the intellectual faculties with which the Soul perceives itself, recalls, albeit with different terms (*intelligentia, intellectus, sublimitas animi, mente scilicet atque intelligentia, vis intellegendi, intelligentia mentis, excellentia animi*) the Manichaean concept of the *Nous*,⁵¹ divine hypostasis and member-function of the individual Soul. On the other hand, the negation that evil possesses an ontological quality of substance induces Augustine to oppose the '*duo genera animarum*'—derived, in his opinion, by the Manichaeans from the different attitude of will ('*quod in deliberando nunc in malam partem, nunc in bonam nutat assensio*'⁵²), i.e. to oppose the expression of two natures which are distinct and *in se* compact, homogenous and unchangeable—with the Platonic concept of a single, ontologically graduated Soul whose parts are attracted and influenced by two equally good realities derived from the one God:

⁵⁰ *De duabus animabus* 2, 2, BA 17, 54.

⁵¹ On this subject, cf. C. Giuffrè Scibona, 'Funzione, denominazioni, carattere del *Nous* nelle opere antimanichee di Agostino', in: *The Manichaean NOYΣ* (Lovanii 1995) 139–144.

⁵² *De duabus animabus* 13, 19, BA 17, 104.

Possumus enim melius et multo expeditius intellegere duo genera bonarum rerum, quorum tamen neutrum ab auctore Deo sit alienum, unam animam ex diversis afficere partibus, inferiore ac superiore, vel quod recte ita dici potest, exteriore atque interiore. Ista sunt duo genera, quae sensibilibium et intellegibilium nomine paulo ante tractavimus, quae carnalia et spiritalia libentius et familiarius nos vocamus.⁵³

Such an approach, tending to trace back to the will of a single subject the origin of sin and after the necessity for repentance and penitence, as Baur⁵⁴ observed, relates, in a way which is too immediate and, we could say, almost automatic, the distinction of the two Souls to the two genera in which Augustine identifies in the existential level the conflict between Light and Matter. *De facto*, the whole polemic conducted here by Augustine on the identification of the subject of sin, aimed at denying the existence of evil Souls, seems to ignore some fundamental and functionally interconnected points of Manichaean ontology, anthropology and ethics. The first, fundamental of these points concerns the nature and properties of the two original substances: the luminous nature of the Manichaean divine substance, of which the Soul is a part, does not coincide with the Neoplatonic concept of *intelligibilia*, nor with the Christian concept of *spiritalia*. Its particular characteristics which induce Augustine himself to criticise a presumed materialism⁵⁵ of the Manichaean god emerge already from the profession of faith of Fortunatus,⁵⁶ but even better in some places of the *Epistula Fundamenti*⁵⁷ or from Faustus' *interpretatio* of the Christian trinity.⁵⁸ The oneness and the immutability of such a substance, of which the Soul is part, are even more stressed in Felix's answers⁵⁹ to Augustine's precise questions. As far as regards the opposed substance, *Hyle*, as it was also called by Augustine's Manichaean counterparts, it does not correspond at all with the significant content of the homonymous Platonic concept, as Augustine himself explains in the *De*

⁵³ *De duabus animabus*, ibidem.

⁵⁴ F.C. Baur, *Das manichäische Religionssystem nach den Quellen neu untersucht und entwickelt* (Tübingen 1831), 163.

⁵⁵ The subject is comprehensively dealt with by F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV-Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale, I-II* (Paris 1978), I, 305–322.

⁵⁶ *Contra Fortunatum* 3, 114, BA 17,136–138; cfr. 14, 117, BA, 17, 148; 18, 120, BA, 17, 158.

⁵⁷ *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* 13, 16, BA 17, 422–424; 15, 19, BA 17, 430.

⁵⁸ *Contra Faustum*, XX, 2, CSEL XXV, VI,1, 536.

⁵⁹ *Contra Felicem* I, 18, BA 17, 690.

*natura Boni*⁶⁰ and in his objections to Faustus.⁶¹ Whereas the Platonic *Hyle* has a merely passive and unconscious attitude, the dark substance of Manichaeism possesses not only an unfocussed aggressiveness which invades the light, but also a precise noetic capacity to organize itself and to organize the imprisonment of the divine substance in the form of bodies in which to continue operating. The second point, and as we shall see, the most important, is represented by the function of the self-consciousness of the Soul of man, who, unique among living things, is able to perceive both his divine nucleus and the opposed substance. The former represents the immovable and unchangeable reality of divinity; the latter operates in him fundamentally through sensual excitement, to induce darkness and oblivion, bringing about therefore on an ontological level the definitive loss of the individual Soul. On this point which represents the heart of the Gnostic essence of Manichaeism, on which is based the whole logic of the system, is founded also that mechanism of sin, repentance and salvation which is so typical of Manichaeism compared to the other Gnostic systems. Even though Manichaeism is structurally founded on the ontological privilege of a divine nature of the Soul that perceives itself as such, it foresees nevertheless the temporary, partial or definitive fall, penitence and recovery with respect to the effective action of an opposite substance with which the same Soul finds itself forcibly and wrongfully united. In *De duabus animabus* Augustine opposes the Manichaean conception of actual sin committed by the Soul—which, although warned and illuminated by the *Nous*-Light, opens up and receives the solicitations of the adverse substance—with the Christian doctrine of a guilt of an essentially ethical nature, product of a will which freely chooses to act outside itself. He thus demonstrates how this concept naturally cannot be applied to subjects which are expressions of substances already ontologically oriented towards their relative choices:

Quamobrem illae animae quidquid faciunt, si natura, non voluntate faciunt, id est si libero et ad faciendum et ad non faciendum motu animi carent; si denique his abstinendi ab opere suo potestas nulla conceditur, peccatum earum tenere non possumus.⁶²

Consequent considerations regard the need for repentance, from which transpire, with extreme clarity, the profound divergences between a spir-

⁶⁰ *De Natura Boni*, XVIII, 6–28, CSEL XXV, VI, 2, 862.

⁶¹ *Contra Faustum* XX, 14, CSEL XXV, VI, 1, 553–555.

⁶² *De Duabus Animabus* XII, 17, BA 17, 100.

itualist ethics based on the personal relationship of the creature with respect to the Creator in a monotheist conception, and a Gnostic ethics founded on the repetition in everybody's experience of an original dialectic relationship of opposed substances. Only through the complete assimilation of effective *gnosis* and the consequent continued 'separation' of these different ontological realities, could man aspire to salvation.

Quae cum ita sint, quaero ex duobus illis generibus animarum, cuius sit poenitere peccati? Scio quidem neque illius esse posse, qui male facere, neque illius qui bene facere non potest: quare, ut eorum verbis utar, si animam tenebrarum peccati poenitet, non est de substantia summi mali; si animam lucis, non est de substantia summi boni. Poenitendi enim affectus ille qui prodest, et male fecisse poenitentem, et bene facere potuisse testatur. Quomodo igitur ex me nihil mali, si ego perperam feci? Aut quomodo me recte poenitet, si ego non feci? Aut partem alteram: Quomodo ex me nihil boni est, cui bona voluntas inest? Aut quomodo me recte poenitet, si non inest?⁶³

The rhetorical effectiveness of the reasoning, which Augustine intends to strengthen by quoting the very words of the Manichaeans, to expose the contradiction in the concept of the repentance of each of the two souls, significantly emphasises their ontological diversity. He distinguishes between two subjects in the action of sin, which derives precisely from their close mixture. This state of mixture encourages, although it does not effectively determine, the opening of the divine individual Soul to the entry of the impulses of the *Hyle*, which tends to perpetuate itself and to perpetuate the imprisonment of the Soul. Augustine's discourse is built on the premise of conceptual foundations,⁶⁴ which are different from the Manichaean ones of guilt, repentance, remission and therefore offsets the subject and content of actions. As he moreover also suggests in *ex absurdo* hypotheses proposed in the same treatise, Augustine well knows that the subject of Manichaean sin is the *anima bona*, and that sin derives from

⁶³ *De Duabus Animabus* XIV, 22, BA 17, 110.

⁶⁴ His reasoning, which is certainly founded on an intentional misunderstanding of the relative Manichaean concepts, would surely not have convinced well-informed followers, but perhaps young people or adults of the undoubtedly large group of Christians lacking education and religious fervour. The problem is perceived and discussed by F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV-Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale, I-II* (Paris 1978), I, 338–339. Relevant considerations have been made on the subject by I.P. Lamelas, 'Il problema del peccato nel sistema manicheo "delle due anime". Giudizio critico sull'argomentazione di Agostino nel *De duabus animabus*, XII, 17–18,' *Antoni-anum* LXXIII, 4 (1998), 741.

the *conquinatio* involved in the soul being bound to the body. This bond does not in itself represent sin, but the existential condition within which sin can occur.

Nunc bonum illud genus videamus, quod rursus ita laudant, ut ipsam Dei substantiam dicant esse ... Ecce enim cum manifestum sit non peccare animas in eo quod non sunt tales, quales esse non possunt; unde constat iam nescio quas illas inductitias nullo modo peccare, et propterea illas omnino non esse: relinquitur, ut quoniam concedunt esse peccata, non inveniant quibus ea tribuant, nisi bono generi animarum et substantiae Dei ... Ego autem nihil pugno ne solae peccent; peccant tamen. At enim mali commixtione coguntur? Si ita cogantur, ut resistendi potestas nulla sit, non peccant: si est in potestate sua resistere, et propria voluntate consentiunt, cur tanta bona in summo malo, cur hoc malum in summo bono per doctrina illorum cogimur invenire; nisi quia neque illud malum est quod suspitione inducunt, neque hoc summum bonum quod superstitione pervertunt?⁶⁵

Augustine talks here of *commixtio* which forces the Soul to sin, thus making freewill meaningless, and we will see that beginning with Fortunatus, and continuing with Felix and even more clearly with Secundinus, his Manichaean interlocutors insist vivaciously on this crucial point of Manichaean ethics and anthropology. They clarify lines of reasoning which are fundamental for the determination of the basic parameters which set in motion ethical and anthropological mechanisms, using words at times deduced textually from the works of the Prophet and also confirmed by non-Augustinian sources. All the arguments with which they reply to the questions on the freewill or subjection of the Soul which Augustine poses to them, to induce them first into contradiction and then to affirm the cruelty of their god and to deny his inviolability are based: 1) on the dualistic assumption of action, and therefore of the existence in man of two substances which are manifested in mutual opposition; 2) on the particular functionality, at the same time ethical and ontological, of the Soul's self-consciousness. To Augustine, who insists on the ethical, personal and voluntary nature of sin, Fortunatus opposes three times the doctrines of the two substances and finally explains:

De substantiis dixi, non de peccato quod in nobis versatur. Si enim originem non haberet quod cogitamus delicta facere, non cogeremur ad peccatum venire, vel ad delictum.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ *De Duabus Animabus* XII, 18, BA 17, 102–104.

⁶⁶ *Contra Fortunatum* XX, 122, BA 17, 166.

The ontological root and the natural character of sin is therefore stressed, but at the same time it is stressed how important the emergence in the consciousness of the *other* is, because it is the perception of the presence and action of the adverse substance which sets in motion the process of the acquisition of gnosis (*scientia rerum*). This process, at the same time noetic and ontological, is aimed at redelivering the Soul through critical passages of the various metaphysical levels, to its origins:

Nam quia inviti peccamus, et cogimur a contraria et inimica nobis substantia, idcirco sequimur scientia rerum. Qua scientia admonita anima et memoriae pristinae reddita, recognoscit ex quo originem trahat, in quo malo versetur, quibus bonis iterum emendans quod nolens peccavit, possit per emendationem delictorum suorum, bonorum operum gratia, meritum sibi reconciliationis apud Deum collocare, auctore Salvatore nostro, qui nos docet et bona exercere, et mala fugere.⁶⁷

Sin committed before this fundamental acquisition is almost inevitable and therefore is surely reparable and forgivable, although only through a total adherence to the Manichaean ethics of the solidarity of the substances and paying continuous and vigilant attention to the action of the adverse substance. The latter is categorically conceived as a determining factor in the ever present danger of the Soul's fall into sin:

cum nulla existente contraria gente, si sola versatur anima in corpore constituta, cui Deus, ut dicis, liberum arbitrium dedit, sine peccato esset, nec peccatis se obnoxium faceret.⁶⁸

There exists then in Manichaeism the ethical commitment of the individual, which makes the individual divine Soul responsible for its salvation or perdition. Evodius,⁶⁹ bishop of Uzala, underlines this forcibly, discussing three examples taken from Manichaean scriptures: the *Acts of Leucius*, the *Epistula Fundamenti* and the *Thesaurus*. Evodius takes the third text from *Contra Felicem*, in which Augustine cites it to demonstrate that Mani himself affirmed the freedom of the Soul before sin:

... in Thesauro vestro, cui tale nomen ad decipiendos homines indidistis, certe sic loquitur, quod et tu ipse cognoscis. 'Hi vero qui negligentia sua a labe praedictorum spirituum purgari se minime permiserint, mandatisque divinis ex integro parum obtemperaverint, legemque sibi a suo liberatore datam plenius servare noluerint, neque ut decebat sese gubernaverint, etc.'⁷⁰

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, BA 17, 166–168.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁹ *De Fide Contra Manichaeos* 5–10, CSEL XXV, VI, 2, 952–954.

⁷⁰ *Contra Felicem* II, V, 538, BA 17, 710.

But in these highly significant implications of the Soul's role as protagonist, these Manichaean texts show no signs—despite discussing it in detail—of belief in a negative counterpart of the Soul, an '*anima mala*'. The opposite dualistic position professed by Fortunatus contraposes light and darkness, truth and lies, body and Soul, and stresses that there is no similarity between the contents of the two concepts, as there is not between other pairs of opposites that differ in name and type. One wonders if this last concept may contain a polemic allusion to the custom, surely imprecise if not blasphemous for a Manichaean, of defining the dark substance seen in its action of opposition and destruction of the Soul of light as 'soul'. With an identical motivation and with similar arguments, Faustus⁷¹ replied contemptuously to Augustine who accused the Manichaeans of ditheism in their profession of dualistic faith. In any case, for the purposes of the determination of the Manichaean concept of sin, it is fundamental that the Soul acquire self-consciousness of its divine nature, that is the communication of gnosis.⁷² This does not consist in Manichaeism of an immediate and mystic apperception that inevitably delivers the Soul to salvation, but of a progressive, difficult and laboured form of intellectual and ethical learning and adhesion, that performs a transformation of a frankly ontological nature. It is this that Fortunatus underlines so forcibly after having universalised the presence of that substance of evil (locating it in a cosmic perspective—in *toto mundo*), that Augustine had located in the *cupiditas* residing in the body of man:

et id esse peccatum animae, si post commonitionem Salvatoris nostri et sanam doctrinam eius a contraria et inimica sui stirpe se segregaverit anima, et prioribus se adornans anima; aliter non posse substantiae suae reddi . . . Unde patet recte esse poenitentiam datam post adventum Salvatoris, et post hanc scientiam rerum, qua possit anima, ac si divino fonte lota, de sordibus et vitiis tam mundi totius, quam corporum in quibus eadem anima versatur, regno Dei, unde progressa est, repraesentari.⁷³

⁷¹ *Contra Faustum* XXI, 1, CSEL XXV, VI, 1, 568.

⁷² On the particular mechanism of communication of gnosis in Manichaeism, see H. Ch. Puech, *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais* (Paris 1979), 5–101; J. Ries, 'La gnose dans les textes liturgiques manichéens coptes,' in: U. Bianchi (ed.), *Le origini dello gnosticismo* (Leiden 1967) 614–624.; J. Ries, 'La révélation dans la gnose de Mani,' in: *Forma Futuri. Studi in onore del Cardinale Michele Pellegrino* (Torino 1975), 1085–1096; C. Giuffrè Scibona, 'Gnosi e salvezza manichee nella polemica di Agostino,' *Gnosticisme et monde hellénistique* Actes du Colloque de Louvain-la Neuve (11–14 mars 1980) publiés sous la direction de J. Ries avec la collaboration de Y. Janssens et de J.M. Sevrin (Louvain-la Neuve 1982) 164–188.

⁷³ *Contra Fortunatum* XXI, 124, BA 17, 174.

As often happens with the Manichaean *auctores*, Fortunatus then appeals to Paul to express the contrast that man feels in his conscience between the law of his '*mens*' and the law of sin and death:

Video aliam legem in membris meis, repugnantem legi mentis meae, et captivum me ducentem in lege peccati et mortis. Ego miser ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius, nisi gratia Dei per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo?⁷⁴

In the Manichaean *interpretatio* of the Pauline text there is clear reference to the imprisonment of the Soul of light led to sin by a force different and contrary to that of its *Nous*, panpsychism and the conception of the *Iesus Patibilis*. It throws into relief, in the existential 'adventure' of man, the lucid self-awareness (*video*) of the individual Soul which perceives and experiences an action ('*aliam legem peccati et mortis*') specularly opposed to the salvific action of the *Nous* which is consubstantial to it ('*repugnantem legi mentis meae*'), an action rooted in the body ('*in membris meis*') and which draws it into its rules. The contrast, experienced daily by man in his interiority, in the conception expressed by Augustine's Manichaean interlocutors, at least in the presence of a minimum level of Gnostic acquisition, is not expressed with the identification of an *anima mala* and also transcends the Soul-body opposition which however so often translates with Christian language Manichaean anthropological dualism. The struggle, as Secundinus would explain even more clearly,⁷⁵ in which the single Soul of man is at the centre in his awareness of his divine nature, is carried on between the two Spirits: the Spirit of the virtues (indubitably the *Nous*, which in the *Kephalaia*⁷⁶ and in significant places of the middle-Persian⁷⁷ and ancient Chinese⁷⁸ Manichaean

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁵ *Secundini Manichei Epistola* 2, 573, BA 17, 512: 'Non ergo armorum pugna est, sed spirituum ... horum in medio posita est anima, cui a principio natura sua dedit victoriam.'

⁷⁶ *Keph.* 38, 96, 28–34; 97, 1–5; 19–25. (I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII [Leiden 1995], 101).

⁷⁷ St. Petersburg fragment (probably from Mani's *Book of the Giants*) edited by W. Sundermann, 'Ein weiteres Fragment aus Manis Gigantenbuch,' *Acta Iranica*, 23 (1984), 503–504; *Der Sermon von Licht-Nous* §§ 34 ff. (ed. and trans. W. Sundermann, *Der Sermon von Licht-Nous*, Berliner Turfantexte XVII (Berlin 1992), 66–69); Cf. W. Sundermann, 'Who is the Light-Nous and what does he do?', in: *The Manichaean NOYΣ* (Lovanii 1995), 258 ff.

⁷⁸ E. Chavannes – P. Pelliot, 'Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine traduit et annoté,' *JA* (1911), 544.

tradition implants the five cardinal virtues in the five *membra* of the Soul and the Spirit of the vices (with every probability identical to the 'spirit of the body', *menogih i tan*, of middle-Persian texts).⁷⁹ In them the 'spirit or mentality of the body' that is defined as 'anger, lust and desire', is of a different substance (*judigohr*) from that of the Soul (*gyan*), and is instead of the same nature and substance (*hamgohr*) as the body. However, as happens for the *Nous* with respect to the individual Soul, it represents an active function of the body, basically a sort of evil anti-*Nous* of which, as we shall see in *Keph.* 69,⁸⁰ there exists a cosmic counterpart. The framework outlined by Secundinus⁸¹ clarifies, in addition to the subjects of this struggle, the prize (the Soul), the weapons (the rules of salvation on the one hand, the bodies of men on the other), the possible and tragically uncertain outcomes between the definitive fall and salvation. The logic of the Manichaean system, whereby man contains a perfect microcosmic replication of a contextual macrocosmic reality, refers to the counterparts of the two spirits: the *Nous*-Light, emanation of Jesus the Splendour and therefore of the Father of Greatness, and the *Atrox Spiritus*, the Prince of Darkness that is at the root of every presence hostile to the divine Soul in the world. In fact, he is seen as the *origo* and *mens*⁸² of the protological and prototypical act of the creation of the body of Adam through lust. This opposition, which Secundinus more than Augustine's other Manichaean interlocutors shows in its dynamic

⁷⁹ Mir. Man. II 300= text ae, 1 ff. (ed. Boyce 1975, 89–90); cf. text y 41–42, 45 and 47, (ed. Boyce 1975, 72–73). The relationship between this concept and Augustine's polemic on the two souls has been hypothesised by W. Sundermann, *Der Sermon vom Licht-Nous*, Berliner Turfantexte XVII (Berlin 1992), 23 and P.O. Skjaervo, 'Counter-Manichean elements in Kerdir's inscriptions. Irano-Manichaica II', in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 336, who notes (335) the presence in late *pahlavi* texts (*Zadspram*, ed. Gignoux-Tafazzoli 1993, chaps. 30–38) of a 'soul of the body' (*ruwan i tanig*) which is the 'spirit of the body' (*menogih i tan*), rightly maintaining however that it will never be possible to know which of the two conceptions—Iranian or Manichaean—preceded and influenced the other. Cf. P.O. Skjaervo, 'Review to *A Green Leaf*', *JAOS* 114 (1994), 270–273.

⁸⁰ 167, 25–26; 168, 3–4. (Ed. I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII [Leiden 1995], 177).

⁸¹ *Secundini Manichei Epistola*, 1–2, 573, BA 17, 510–512. Cf. Decret 1978, I, 334 ff.

⁸² *Epistula Fundamenti in Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* XV, 19, 184, BA 17, 430 = frg. 6b, 14 E. Feldmann, *Die 'Epistula Fundamenti' der nordafrikanischen Manichäer* (Altenberge 1987): '.... pari more introrsum gens caliginis ac fumi plena, in qua morabatur inmanis princeps omnium et dux habens circa se innumerabiles principes, quorum omnium ipse erat mens atque origo ...'

reality, as has been clearly demonstrated by F. Decret,⁸³ is presented more or less uniformly in Augustinian passages and the *Kephalaia*, right up to the Chavannes-Pelliot treatise, passing, as we have seen, also through the middle-Persian tradition. It delineates a framework, which is specified in various implications, expressing itself in various forms as the specular scheme of the two pentads, or the Pauline image of the old man and the new man or the gospel narrative of the two trees. *De facto*, it is experienced as a self-consciousness of a dialectic conflict between the opposing functions of two substances, in individual existence in which the action of the imprisonment of the *pars dei* is objectivized. One of the functions, through the practice of the *segregatio*, induces the Soul to an ever clearer knowledge of itself as part of the single divine substance; the other, through the various sensual stimuli, wraps it in material reality, engulfing it and destroying its self-consciousness. I think there can be no doubt, on the basis of the analysis performed so far, that it is to this type of psychological and ontological mechanism that Augustine refers in his polemic on the two presumed Souls, which with greater awareness and linguistic precision he calls *mentes* in the Confessions. In this context he is more concerned with the opposed movement of the wills, which he wants to demonstrate as not caused by a conflict of opposed substances:

‘... qui cum duas voluntates in deliberando animadverterint, duas naturas duarum mentium esse asseverant, unam bonam, alteram malam ...’;⁸⁴

‘Ideo mecum contendebam et dissipabar a me ipso, et ipsa dissipatio me invito quidem fiebat, nec tamen ostendebat naturam mentis alienae, sed poenam meae ...’;⁸⁵

‘Iam ergo non dicant, cum duas voluntates in homine uno adversari sibi sentiunt, duas contrarias mentes de duabus contrariis substantiis et de duobus contrariis principiis contendere, unam bonam, alteram malam.’⁸⁶

The conflict of the two ‘*mentes*’ (therefore a ‘*Nous*’ and a sort of ‘anti-*Nous*’, specularly opposed to it), immediately evokes the substances and principles from which they come, to which they are connatural and within which, so to speak, they live. The acute sense of the substantiality of evil naturally creates in the conscience of the Manichaean faithful an

⁸³ F. Decret, *L’Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*, I–II (Paris 1978), 328–336.

⁸⁴ *Conf.* VIII, X, 2–5 (Vitali 1996, 374).

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*, 20–23 (Vitali 1996, 376).

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, 46–49 (Vitali 1996, 378).

immediate relationship of ontological contiguity between instinctual and psychological mechanisms and their relative substances. It almost gives an appearance of materiality to the conflict between the forces and to the mixing of the two natures concentrated in man. These concepts emerge fairly clearly in the last explanation made by the now old Augustine on the subject in a paragraph of the chapter on the Manichaeans of the *De Haeresibus*, written at the request of the deacon of Carthage, Quodvultdeus:

... Carnalem aiunt concupiscentiam, qua caro concupiscit adversus spiritum, non ex vitata in primo homine natura nobis esse infirmitatem, sed substantiam volunt esse contrariam sic nobis adhaerentem⁸⁷ ut quando liberamur atque purgamur, separetur a nobis, et in sua natura etiam ipsa immortaliter vivat; easque duas animas, vel duas mentes, unam bonam, alteram malam, in uno homine inter se habere conflictum, quando caro concupiscit adversus spiritum, et spiritus adversus carnem ...⁸⁸

But if man, in his existential components, is tormented and continually transformed by the endless struggle that pits them against each other, the cosmos situated around this conscious microcosm, possesses the very same ambiguity: a mechanism created to offer salvation, it shows together with the painful, but unconscious and universal imprisonment of the divine Soul, the dense dangerous universal diffusion of negative forces in material reality. This is a concept expressed both by Secundinus and Fortunatus with two slightly different interpretations of a famous Pauline pericope. The former, careful to highlight the uncontrollable forces of an

⁸⁷ The image of lust clinging, as if it were a material substance, to the soul of man, is taken up in the *Epistula Fundamenti*, where it is used to represent the 'clinging' of unrepentant souls to Evil: '... unde adhaerebunt his rebus animae eadem, quas dilexerunt, relictæ in eodem tenebrarum globo suis meritis id sibi conquiritæ;' Augustine, *De natura boni*, 46, ed. Zycha, CSEL XXV, s.VI, Pars 2, 878, 23–25; cf. Evodius, *De fide* 5, Ibi 953,12–14 = frg. 11 E. Feldmann, *Die 'Epistula Fundamenti' der nordafrikanischen Manichäer* (Altenberge 1987), 20–22. I would like to add to Decret's observations in his, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale, I–II* (Paris 1978) II, 269 (with bibliography), that such an image strongly recalls the gnostic conception of the *prosartémata* of Basilides, negative 'appendices' of the soul, received from the planets. These conceptions, in which dualistic anthropological doctrines are situated and stressed in anti-astrological cosmic perspectives, are related, as we shall see (cf. infra pp. 412 ff), to that of the *antimimon pneuma*. On this subject, see A. Böhlig, *Mysterion und Wahrheit. Gesammelte Beiträge zur Spätantiken Religionsgeschichte* (Leiden 1968), 167–174; I.P. Culianu, *Psychanodia I* (EPRO 99) (Leiden 1983), 48–49; I.P. Coulano, *Les gnosés dualistes d'Occident* (Paris 1987, Italian trans. 1989), 127 ff.

⁸⁸ *De Haeresibus* XLVI, 19, CC ser. lat. XLVI, XIII, 2, 319.

evil that, supplied with an independent substance, acts throughout the universe and does not consist in the pure materiality of the body of man, writes:

... cuius omnis impetus per illos principes funditur, contra quos se Apostolus in Ephesiorum Epistola certamen subiisse fatetur. Dicit enim se *non contra carnem et sanguinem, habere certamen, sed adversus principes et potestates, adversus spiritualia nequitiae, quae sunt in coelestibus*.⁸⁹

With strongly allusive language and again making use of the same pericope, Fortunatus replies to Augustine who once again wants to expose the contradiction between the nature and the function of the Soul and the characters of the divine substance. In his words, the explanation of the present and history is founded in ancient times, much more ancient than the present: where the roots of the creation of the world lie and of the bodies. It is an extremely wide-ranging and articulated picture in time and space in which, around the divine substance that is objectivized as Soul, move and act various evil forces and functions that settle not only in the bodies in which the souls become incarnate, but in all the universe disseminated with divine life:

Hinc ergo apparet antiquitas temporum nostrorum quam repetimus, et annorum nostrorum, ante mundi constitutionem hoc more missas esse animas contra contrariam naturam, ut eandem sua passione subiicientes, victoria Deo redderetur. Nam dixit idem apostolus, quod *non solum esset luctatio contra carnem et sanguinem, sed et contra principes et potestates, et spiritualia nequitiae, et dominationem tenebrarum*. Si ergo utrobique mala versantur et nequitiae habentur; iam non solum est malum in nostris corporibus, sed in toto mundo, ubi videntur versari animae, quae sub caelo isto versantur et implicatae sunt.⁹⁰

The projection in metaphysical time, the evocation of the “*constitutio mundi*” and of the mission of the Souls found the radical sense of the universal diffusion of evil and of an inevitable struggle between powerful forces and mechanisms inside and outside man, wherever the divine Souls are, who ‘*sub caelo isto versantur et implicatae sunt*’. This expression, despite the essential nature of its terms, evokes, in its reference to the celestial spheres beneath which the individual Souls are ‘*implicatae*’, the grandiose cosmological framework in which Mani, and his disciples,

⁸⁹ *Epistula Secundini* 1, 573, BA 17, 511.

⁹⁰ *Contra Fortunatum* 22,126, BA 17, 182.

recovered, in an absolutely original and coherent synthesis, forms, images and mechanisms of an ancient tradition. This had penetrated much earlier, with various functions and characters, various environments fundamental to the cultural and religious forming of the Prophet, in particular, the Christian Gnostic syncretism of the area of Syria and Mesopotamia in which indubitably flowed together—with the circulation of texts and men—also fundamental concepts of so-called Sethian gnosis. Astrological doctrine⁹¹ and the divinatory practices related to it, were seen as contemporary replies to anthropological problems—the origin of evil, the nature of God (or of the gods), destiny and the salvation of man and his relations with the divine world—which had been acutely felt from Hellenism up to late antiquity. By the early centuries of the Christian era, this doctrine had penetrated various Gnostic schools, where it had defined in a strongly deterministic and negative way the influence of the celestial bodies and astrological powers on the ontological components of man. This influence subjected man, from the moment of his conception and throughout his life, to the strict dominion of the *heimarmene*. This is naturally not the place to consider in detail the impact that such an issue—until recently rather left in the shade, and which still today awaits a systematic study as far as regards Manichaeism⁹²—had, with all its implications, at the various levels of Manichaean Gnosis. Augustine,

⁹¹ On the theme of astrology, which, as is wellknown is the subject of much study, see apart from the essential works of A. Bouché – Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination dans l'antiquité*, I–IV (Paris 1879–1882; reprint New York 1975) and F. Cumont, *Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and the Romans* (New York-London 1912), the works of F. Boll – C. Bezold – W. Gundel, *Sternglaube und Sterndeutung. Die Geschichte und das Wesen der Astrologie* (Leipzig-Berlin 1966) and W. Hübner, 'L'astrologie dans l'Antiquité', *Pallas* 30 (1983), 1–24. On astrological literature cf. W. Gundel – H.-G. Gundel, *Astrologumena. Die astrologische Literatur in der Antike und ihre Geschichte* (Wiesbaden 1966); R. Turcan, 'Littérature astrologique et astrologie littéraire dans l'antiquité classique', *Latomus* 27 (1968), 392–405.

⁹² This kind of study, which requires previous specialist astrological knowledge, presents a number of difficulties, considering the wealth and variety of sources on Manichaeism from a wide range of cultural and linguistic areas where astrological doctrines had an ancient and well-consolidated tradition. Cf. H.-Ch. Puech, *Le manichéisme. Son fondateur. Sa doctrine* (Paris 1949), 171 f.; G. Widengren, *Mani und der Manichäismus* (Stuttgart 1961, Italian trans. Milano 1964), 85–90; K.-M. Woschitz, 'Der Mythos des Lichtes und der Finsterniss. Zum Drama der Kosmogonie und die Geschichte in der koptischen Kephalaia: Grundmotive, Ideengeschichte und Theologie', in: K.-M. Woschitz – M. Hutter – K. Prenner (eds.), *Das manichäische Urdrama des Lichtes. Studien zu koptischen, mitteliranischen und arabischen Texten* (Wien 1989), 74 f. A perspective focussed on

who, already⁹³ before becoming involved in the Manichaean faith, had adhered to these doctrines and practices already consolidated in the society of his time, had been attracted,⁹⁴ in his anxiety for 'scientific'

Keph. 69 is that of Stegemann's excellent essay of 1939: V. Stegemann, 'Zum Kapitel 69 der Kephalaia des Mani,' *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 37, 214–223; cf. R. Beck, 'The Anabibazontes in the Manichaean Kephalaia,' *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 69 (1987), 193–196.

More recent studies, conducted from two different angles—Iranian and Christian-gnostic respectively—are those of A. Panaino, 'Volta celeste e astrologia nel Manicheismo,' *Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico, Manichaean Studies III* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997) 249–295 (wide-ranging and well-documented) and F.S. Jones, 'The Astrological Trajectory in Ancient Syriac-Speaking Christianity (Elchasai, Bardaisan, and Mani),' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico, Manichaean Studies III* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 183–200.

⁹³ In *De beata vita* I, 4, *Stromata* II 1955, 76–77 Augustine recalls, albeit allusively ('... labentia in Oceanum astra suspexi') an early phase of his astrological experience, situated between the reading of Cicero's *Hortensius* (which stimulated his intellectual and spiritual thirst for knowledge) and his fall '... in homines, quibus lux ista, quae oculis cernitur, inter summa divina colenda videretur.' The sequential relationship which Augustine places between the three events has on one hand led some scholars (cf. for example L. Alfonsi, 'Sant'Agostino De beata vita c.4,' in *RIFC* 36, 249–254) to maintain that this work by Cicero, who was in his time an effective witness of widespread forms of astral mysticism, (cf. the *Somnium Scipionis*), had awakened the young man's interest in the observation and study of the stars. On the other hand it seems to suggest that the adhesion to such doctrines and practices prepared, and in some way encouraged, due to their mutual congruity, his fall into the trap of Manichaeism. On these issues, see the wide-ranging and well-documented study by G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Fra astrologi, teurgi e manichei: itinerario agostiniano in un mondo che si interroga su destino, male e salvezza,' in: *Il mistero del male e la libertà possibile (IV): ripensare Agostino, Atti dell'VIII Seminario del Centro Studi Agostiniani di Perugia*, a cura di L. Alici, R. Piccolomini, A. Pieretti, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 59 (1997), 49–131.

⁹⁴ Manichaeism appeared to Augustine on the one hand as a system that explained, in rational terms and without impositions of faith, the whole of reality, resolving in gnostic-dualistic ontology the problem of evil, acutely perceived and debated by him throughout his life. On the other, in the fervent *interpretatio* of the figure of Christ and of Pauline texts, in its ethics of abstinence, and in its passionate soteriological tension, it seemed to respond not only to intellectual, but also to the deep spiritual needs that his vivid intelligence and religious education had instilled in him and which the reading of *Hortensius* had further stimulated. Augustine's Manichaean experience with the determining action it exercised, during and after his adherence to the Manichaean church, on his intellectual and spiritual formation, has been the subject of great number of studies and often divergent opinions. See the recent studies by J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden – New York – København – Köln 1991), 191–234; J. van Oort, 'Augustinus und der Manichäismus,' in: *The Manichaean NOYΣ* (Lovanii 1995) 289–307; G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Natura ed origine del male: alle radici dell'incontro e del confronto di Agostino con la gnosi manichea,' in: *Il mistero del male e la libertà possibile: Lettura dei Dialoghi di Agostino. Atti del V Seminario del Centro di Studi Agostiniani di Perugia*, a cura di

answers to his search for the truth, also by the majestic intellectual dimensions that the doctrine promised, interweaving them with divine figures of light and grand celestial mechanisms.⁹⁵ On these same concepts and images he would subsequently exercise his polemic in tones which are sometimes sarcastic,⁹⁶ when he made a deeper study⁹⁷ of the scientific laws which regulated the movement of the stars and its consequences. He had previously perceived contiguity and coherence between astrological science and the Manichaean faith,⁹⁸ but then realised the serious inaccuracies resulting from Mani's desire to harness in his mythical and

L. Alici, R. Piccolomini, A. Pieretti, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 45 (1994), 7–55; E. Feldmann, 'Der Übertritt Augustins zu den Manichäern,' in: *The Manichaean NOYΣ* (Lovanii 1995), 103–128.

⁹⁵ Augustine perceived, and then characterised in his polemical works, Manichaeism as a form of theological and ontological materialism, which saw in perceptible light the divine substance (*De beata vita* 1,4, *Stromata* II 1955, 76–77; cf. *Conf.* III, 6, 10, Vitali 1996, 138; IV, 2, 3, Vitali 1996, 164; *Contra Faustum*, XX, 7, CSEL XXV, VI,1, 541–542) and which places at the centre of the ritual level the veneration of the sun and the moon. Cf. *De fide et symb.* IV 10, BA 9, 38–41; *De Gen. c. Manich.* I, 2, 6 NBA IX, 1, 66f.; *De duabus animabus* II,2 BA 17, 54f. Cf. F. Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine. Les controverses de Fortunatus, Faustus et Felix avec saint Augustin* (Paris 1970), 220–237; F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*, I (Paris 1978), 309–322.

⁹⁶ *Conf.* V, 5, 8; Vitali 1996, 212; V, 7, 12–13, Vitali 1996, 218. The definition *phantasmata* found in *Conf.* III, 6, 10 (Vitali 1996, 138) but already present since *De vera religione* 10, 18 and subsequently in various other texts, is used by Augustine to designate the Manichaean mythical images which lack, in his opinion, sufficient theological or cosmological substance. Cf. F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*, I (Paris 1978), 314 ff. For a different meaning of the term cf. J. van Oort, 'Manichaeism and Anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's Confessions,' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico*, 242 f.

⁹⁷ *Conf.* V, 3, 3, Vitali 1996, 206; Cf. *Ep. 55 ad Januarium*, 4, 6–7, NBA XXI, 454 ff.

⁹⁸ In the *Confessions* Augustine himself alludes clearly to the continuity and congruity between his adherence to Manichaean faith and his passion for astrological practices, which was uninfluenced even by the criticisms of his closest friends. His faith induced him to refuse the help of the *aruspex* in a poetry contest because this would have involved brutal sacrifices and invocations of demons; both his faith and his interest in astrology led him to consult *illos planos, quos mathematicos vocant* precisely because their practices were not in conflict with the precepts of Manichaeism. Reductive, and somewhat unlikely, is the hypothesis of L.C. Ferrari, 'Astronomy and Augustine's Break with the Manichees,' *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 19 (1973), 263–276, who attributes to astrology Augustine's conversion to Manichaeism, and to the occurrence of particular astronomical phenomena his abandonment of it. On these themes, G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Fra astrologi, teurgi e manichei: itinerario agostiniano in un mondo che si interroga su destino, male e salvezza,' in: *Il mistero del male e la libertà possibile (IV): ripensare Agostino, Atti dell'VIII Seminario del Centro Studi Agostiniani di Perugia* a cura di L. Alici, R. Piccolomini, A. Pieretti, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 59 (1997), 49–131.

cosmic frameworks the data of a discipline which he did not fully master, with results which lacked reason and were useless, if not dangerous for faith.⁹⁹ There is no doubt that various details—both functional and linguistic—of the astrological conceptions that revolve around the *pars dei* composed of the Soul enclosed in a body, are comparable and probably linked to the various religious environments in which Mani and his disciples lived and worked: from Judaism,¹⁰⁰ Sassanian Zoroastrianism and Zurvanism,¹⁰¹ to popular cultural religiousness or philosophy of

⁹⁹ *Conf.* V, 3, 6; V, 5. Vitali 1996, 210, 212–214. Criticism of the more mythological than scientific bases of the astrological doctrine taught by Mani can also be found in Alexander of Lycopolis (*Alex. Lyc. contra Manichaei opiniones disputatio* XXXII–XXXIII, ed. Brinkmann 1895, 30–32 = trans. Mansfeld 1974, 86–88). Epiphanius (*Panar. Haer.* LXVI, 13, ed. C. Riggi 1967, 54–57) mentions a treatise *Peri Astrologias* among the works of Mani, as well as the astrological practices widespread among his followers (LXVI, 88; ed. Riggi 1967, 390f.).

¹⁰⁰ In the Jewish sectarian environment is situated the composition of the Book of Enoch, which, as is known, contains a section on astronomy, considered by Milik (1976, 8) to be the oldest part. Cf. Neugebauer 1981. On the probable influences of this text on Manichaean cosmological concepts, see W.B. Henning, 'Ein manichäisches Henochbuch,' *SPAW* (1934) (*non vidi*), 32–35; J. Tubach, 'Spuren des astronomischen Henochbuches bei den Manichäern Mittelasiens, Nubia et Oriens Christianus,' *Festschrift C. Detlef G. Müller* (Tübingen 1987), 73–95. Cf. A. Panaino, 'Volta celeste e astrologia nel Manicheismo,' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico, Manichaean Studies III* (Lovanii – Neapoli 1997), 252 and 289.

¹⁰¹ On the fundamental themes of the relationship between the Iranian and Manichaean contexts, see M. Hutter, 'Mani und die Sasaniden. Der iranisch-gnostische Synkretismus einer Weltreligion,' *Scientia* 12 (Innsbruck 1988); K. Rudolph, 'Mani und der Iran,' in: A. Van Tongerloo & S. Giversen (eds.), *Manichaica Selecta. Studies presented to Professor Julien Ries on the occasion of his seventieth Birthday*, Lovanii 1991, 307–321; C. Giuffrè Scibona, 'Alle radici iraniche del Manicheismo. Corpo, creazione e tempo come strumenti di salvezza,' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 95–103; P.O. Skjaervo, 'Iranian Elements in Manicheism,' in: R. Gyselen (ed.), *Au carrefour des grandes religions, Hommage à Philippe Gignoux* (Paris 1995), 263–284; P.O. Skjaervo, 'Counter-Manichean elements in Kerdir's inscriptions. Irano-Manichaica II,' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 313–342; W. Sundermann, 'How Zoroastrian is Mani's Dualism?,' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico, Manichaean Studies III* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 343–360. The fact that the Middle-Persian texts are contemporary or later than the Manichaean ones, the wide diffusion and homogenisation in the Iranian territory of astrological doctrines from eastern and western areas, and the marked manipulation that Mani made of them for gnostic-dualistic purposes, make it extremely difficult to find a relationship of historical dependence between the Iranian astronomical-astrological concepts of the Sassanian Age and those of the Manichaeans, although the latter clearly have elements in common with the former. See, for example, A. Panaino, 'Volta celeste e astrologia nel Manicheismo,' in: *idem*, the question of the planets (273–278) and the doctrine of the ropes and bonds (280–290).

late antiquity,¹⁰² Buddhism,¹⁰³ and Syriac Gnostic Christianity.¹⁰⁴ Since in these environments, there were various and recurrent examples of cultural unification, these details, considered singly, cannot be useful for historical reconstruction. But the cosmological frameworks that they delineate and above all the anthropological mechanisms that they produce, show them as we shall see clearly linked to Gnostic texts and environments originating in Sethian gnosis.¹⁰⁵ The creation of the body of man, in the Gnostic perspective, represents a crucial event, from which all the logical, ontological and ethical co-ordinates of the system derive and acquire sense and effect. It is the most effective act of contraposition of the antagonistic principle because it sanctions the imprisonment of the divine Soul, but also initiates the decisive phase of the struggle. On the existential level that protological event is repeated in the conception of each man, whose constituent parts bear the mark and ontological quality of the respective different creators. The definitive enslavement of the divine substance in the body of man places him also in the mechanism of the cosmos that, substantially akin to the body, is densely

¹⁰² From the Hellenistic Age and for the whole of the Imperial Age astrology was extremely popular, finding success at various levels of Hellenised and Romanised societies and was discussed in scientific works, such as the *Tetrabiblos* and the *Syntaxis mathematica* (Almagest) of Claudius Ptolemy (2nd century AD), the *Anthologiae* of Vettius Valens (2nd century, AD), the *Carmen Astrologicum* of Doroteus Sidonius (2nd century AD), in part translated into *pahlavi* in the reign of Shapur. It had also penetrated into the major philosophical schools of the time. Cf. n. 91 and 92.

¹⁰³ The report that in 148 AD an Arsacid prince, named as An Shih-kao in Chinese sources, arrived in China, and became a respected Buddhist monk, as well as a skilled translator of Indian astrological treatises, demonstrates the Buddhist interest in astrology on a scientific level long before the time of Mani. Cf. Jes P. Asmussen, *X^uastvanift. Studies in Manichaeism* (Copenhagen 1965), 136; A. Forte, 'An Shih-kao: biografia e note critiche,' *AION N.S.* 28 (1968), 151–194; A. Panaino, *Parva Iranica* (Napoli 1990), 50–53; A. Panaino, 'Volta celeste e astrologia nel Manicheismo,' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico, Manichaeae Studies III* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 251.

¹⁰⁴ On the presence of astrological themes in this context, see the study by F.S. Jones, 'The Astrological Trajectory in Ancient Syriac-Speaking Christianity (Elchasai, Bardaisan, and Mani),' in: *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico, Manichaeae Studies III* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997) 183–200, with bibliography.

¹⁰⁵ On the identification and nature of Sethian gnosticism, wellknown as the subject of varying and at times extreme positions, I agree with G. Casadio, 'Antropologia gnostica e antropologia orfica nella notizia di Ippolito sui Sethiani,' in: F. Vattioni (ed.), *Sangue e antropologia nella teologia, Atti della VI settimana di studi*, III (Roma 1989), 1295–1350 (with *status quaestionis* and bibliography). For the evident relationships between the documentation of 'Barbelo-Sethian' gnosis and the Manichaeae dualistic concept, cf. G. Casadio, 'Avventure del Dualismo sulla via della seta,' in: *La Persia e l'Asia centrale da Alessandro al X secolo, Atti dei Convegni Lincei 127* (Roma 1996), 663–684 (with an extensive bibliography).

pervaded, in parts, by negative powers which have a determining influence on the same human components of the act of conception and up to the eschatological destiny. It is the doctrine of astral fatalism¹⁰⁶ that in Manichaeism hinges on the extremely complex forms of cosmology and theology, joining in anthropology with the two essential parameters of ontological dualism and *enkrateia*. The knowledge of the astrological component in Manichaean doctrine, differently however to what happens in other Gnostic environments, functions not only as a realisation of a painful reality that only some will be allowed to overcome after death, but as a means of parenesis for everyone and aimed at salvation already in this life. In this perspective are placed the speculations on the dominion exercised by the planets and the constellations of the zodiac in the creation of the body of man, starting with that of Adam, and, through its various parts, on the *membra* of the divine Soul, to hinder its salvation. These are unfolded, in the form of explanation or teaching to the disciples by Mani himself above all in the *Kephalaia*, but are attested, again in a parenetic function, also in one of the Psalms of Thomas and in other texts of the oriental tradition. The pentad, one of the functional parameters of Manichaean Gnosis, is deduced from the canonical astrological scheme of the Seven Planets, from which have been removed the Sun and the Moon. These are in fact divine stars by origin in the Manichaean system, in which the luminous substance that is collected and purified, and freed from the bonds of matter, prepares to reascend towards its original position. For the macrocosm-microcosm connection explicitly recalled also in the *Kephalaia*, such a module identifies in the individual the dynamic opposition expressed in the Pauline formula of the old man-new man, with the figure of the five *membra* of the Soul of light 'bound', i.e. imprisoned by the *Hyle* in five *membra* of the body and clothed, through the acquisition of gnosis with the five virtues created by the Light-*Nous*. To sustain its dependence on the scheme of the Seven, which, reconstituted

¹⁰⁶ On this theme cf. F. Cumont, 'Fatalisme astral et religions antiques,' *RHLR N.S.* 3 (1912), 513–543; W. Gundel, 'Heimarmene,' *Real-Encyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft VII* (1912), 513–543; H.O. Schroeder, 'Fatum (Heimarmene),' *RAC VII* (Stuttgart 1969), 524–636; E. Valgiglio, 'Il fato nel pensiero classico,' *Rivista di Studi Classici* 15 (1967) 305–330; 16 (1968) 56–84; G.J.D. Aalders, 'The Hellenistic Concept of Enviousness of Fate,' *Studies in Hellenistic Religions, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain* (= *EPRO*) 78 (Leiden 1979), 1–8; A. Dihle, 'Liberté et destin dans l'Antiquité tardive,' *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* 121 (1989), 129–147. A wide-ranging historical perspective is provided in A. Magris, *L'idea di destino nel pensiero antico, I. Dalle origini al V secolo a.c.; II. Da Platone a S. Agostino* (Udine 1984–1985).

by the Manichaeans with the addition of the nodes of astral conjunction, the so-called 'anabibazontes',¹⁰⁷ is alternated with that of the Five, in *Keph.* 42, 107, 27–33,¹⁰⁸ seven bodily substances in the form of seven 'garments' enclose the Soul of the baby when it is still in its mother's womb, and that of the mother: marrow, bone, sinew, flesh, veins, blood, skin. In the fifth of the Psalms of Thomas from Medinet Madi, using allusive but fairly perspicuous language, the situation of the Soul of Light, after the decisive protological event of the first voluntary mixing, is collocated within this same framework: 'He cast him (i.e. the Soul) beneath the dark mountain, the dwelling of them of the ebdomas (the Seven Planets) ...'¹⁰⁹ In *Kephalaion* 57, 144, 13–147, 20¹¹⁰ Mani, introduced to explain to a Babylonian catechumen the reasons for the inferiority of present human beings with respect to Adam and to his generation much stronger and long-living, attributes the causes to the progressive passage of the births of the various generations under the dominion of five successive powers of time, respectively the year, the month, the day, the hour and the minute. These powers, linked to the signs of the zodiac, determine a gradual, fatal decadence in the strength, fecundity, longevity of the body, and also, naturally in the quantity of the substance of light enclosed in it. But the texts in which it is possible to perceive the more complex and systematic elaboration of ancient astrological parameters which support the original and radical Manichaean anthropological dualism are without doubt *Keph.* 69 and 70.¹¹¹ With structural contiguity, Mani performs in the former a wide-ranging 'lesson' of astral cosmology, that is concentrated in the latter and connected, on the basis of the cosmos-body parallelism, here explicitly mentioned, to a precise astrological *melotesia*. First the twelve signs of the zodiac and then the five planets that the Divine Demiurge has bound and fixed to the sphere, are systematically connected by nature and origin to the five worlds of Matter. Each of the five regions is linked to one of the planets and to a group of zodiacal signs (the 'twelve rulers of depravity'), which are divided into in three couples and two triads. All

¹⁰⁷ Cf. R. Beck, 'The Anabibazontes in the Manichaean Kephalaia,' *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 69 (1987), 193–196.

¹⁰⁸ I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*. Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII (Leiden 1995), 113.

¹⁰⁹ Ed. and trans. C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Part II, *Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection* 2 (Stuttgart 1938), 210, 21–22.

¹¹⁰ I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII (Leiden 1995), 151–154.

¹¹¹ *ibidem*, 176–184.

are animated by aggressiveness and violence, and exercise their totally negative influence on all living beings, animals, vegetables, humans. But it is significant that the first two signs of the zodiac Gemini and Sagittarius and the first planet Jupiter originate, according to Mani, in 'the world of smoke, which / is the mind (*Nous*)'¹¹² There is thus confirmation of the presence of an anti-*Nous*, connected to the most significant region of the world of the *Hyle*, populated by the bipeds from which man originated and governed by an *immanis Princeps*,¹¹³ figure of the negative principle in the *Epistula Fundamenti*. This mind of the world of smoke can be considered a negative charge of Matter¹¹⁴—in specular opposition to the *Nous* of Light—functionally connected in Manichaean anthropology to the demoniac influence exercised by the planets on the man. The decree, fundamental in the construction of the Manichaean parenthesis, that 'This whole universe, above and below, (re)flects the pattern of the hum(an) body', logically connects the first argumentative structure (*Keph.* 69) with the second (*Keph.* 70). To signify in an immediate and strongly suggestive way the radical ontological negativity of the somatic substance through the unavoidable influence of the Seven and the Twelve, a symmetrical relationship between the planetary and zodiacal powers and different fundamental parts of the human body is established. The *melotesia*, constructed on the continuous relationship of cosmos-body analogy, is articulated in various correspondences: the body is distinguished in four worlds, in each of which exist seven dominators; the twelve signs of the Zodiac, from the first to the last, are intimately connected to an equal number of parts of the body, starting with the head and going right down to the soles of the feet. The progression of the various parts, like the names of the parts themselves turn out to be, apart from the smallest details, absolutely corresponding to those of the anatomical chapter of the *ApJo*,

¹¹² *Keph.* 69, 25–26; 168, 3–4; *ibidem*, 177.

¹¹³ Cf. n. 82. On the region of smoke as the home of the bipeds, the progenitors of man cf. Augustine *De haeres.* XLVI, 7, C. Ch. 314; *Ibidem*, 14, C. Ch., 317. *Contra Faustum* XXI, 14, CSEL, XXV, 1, 586. On the *Princeps tenebrarum* cf. H.Ch. Puech, 'Le Prince des Ténèbres en son Royaume', *Études carmélitaines* (Satan), (Paris 1948), 136–174 = H.Ch. Puech, *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais* (Paris 1979), 103–151.

¹¹⁴ A similar noetic charge of the Darkness can be found in the *Paraphrase of Shem* (CG VII, 1, 2, 2–3); cf. *Ref.* V, 19, 6. See M. Roberge, *Anthropogonie et anthropologie dans la Paraphrase de Sem* (NH VII, 1) (1986), 240, 248; M. Roberge, 'Chute et remontée du Pneuma dans la Paraphrase de Sem', *Coptic Studies* (Warszawa 1990), 357; G. Casadio, 'Avventura del Dualismo sulla via della seta', in: *La Persia e l'Asia centrale da Alessandro al X secolo*, Atti dei Convegni Lincei 127 (Roma 1996), 677.

conserved for us, as is known, in the *recensio longior* of this Gnostic text handed down to us in four traditions.¹¹⁵ The belonging of the two anthropogenic conceptions to a common Gnostic tradition, on an astrological basis, then variously reworked, emerges clearly also from a comparison extended to the ontological presuppositions of the division of the body into twelve zones linked to the Zodiac: on one hand the psychogenesis in the *ApJo*,¹¹⁶ common patrimony of all the versions handed down; on the other, the imprisonment of the luminous *membra* of the divine Soul above all in *Keph.* 38 and 42. A detailed analysis of the two contexts, conducted with intelligence and precision by P. Nagel,¹¹⁷ shows how, in the Gnostic text, the supreme archon orders seven powers (*dynameis*) to each form a Soul for seven specific and fundamental bodily substances. They are: 1) the Soul of the bone, 2) of the sinew, 3) of the flesh, 4) of the marrow, 5) of the blood, 6) of the skin, 7) of the hair. The powerful ontological negative charge linked to the action of the Seven, is traced back in the Manichaean context to the action of opposition of the principle negative to the mechanisms of salvation of the divine light created by the

¹¹⁵ NHC II 15, 29–19, 12 = NHC IV 24, 21–29, 27. Cf. *Keph.* 70, 173, 21–174, 10; I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII (Leiden 1995), 183–184. Various internal elements place this treatise, which is fundamental for the knowledge of gnostic anthropogeny and has astrological implications, in the environment of the Sethians (the ‘Gnostics’ of Irenaeus I, 29). Four versions have survived in Coptic: one is found in *Pap. Ber.* 8502 (BG 8502, 2) and the others in three codices from Nag Hammadi NHC II, 1; III, 1 and IV, 1. The testimony of Irenaeus places its doctrine before 185 AD; see F. Wisse, *The Apocryphon of John* (intr. and trans.), in: J.M. Robinson (ed.), *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (Leiden-New York-Köbenhavn-Köln 1988), 104; and up until the 8th century AD it must have been respected and widespread, if the *Apocalypse of John*, quoted by Theodorus bar Khoni (*Liber Scholiorum* XI, ed. Scher, CSCO 69, 319, 29–320, 26) which reports its presence in the sect of the Audians in Mesopotamia, can be identified as the *Apocryphon of John*. See the excellent critical edition and translation of the text by M. Waldstein – F. Wisse (eds.), ‘The Apocryphon of John,’ *Synopsis of Nag Hammadi codices II, 1; and IV, 1 with BG 8502, 2*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXIII (Leiden 1995). For the astrological *melotesia* see R. van den Broek, ‘The Creation of Adam’s Psychic Body in the Apocryphon of John,’ in: R. van den Broek and M.J. Vermaseren (eds.), *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions*, EPRO 91 (Leiden 1981), 38–57 and M. Tardieu, *Écrits gnostiques. Codex de Berlin* (Paris 1984), 300–316.

¹¹⁶ NHC II, 15, 14–23 = NHC IV 24, 3–14; BG 49, 11–50, 4 = NHC III 22, 19–23, 6. Cf. M. Waldstein – F. Wisse (eds.), ‘The Apocryphon of John,’ *Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices II, 1; and IV, 1 with BG 8502, 2*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXIII (Leiden 1995), 88–93; cf. also *ibidem*, Appendix 5, 194.

¹¹⁷ P. Nagel, ‘Anatomie des Menschen in gnostischer und manichäischer Sicht,’ in: Idem (Hrsg.), *Studien zum Menschenbild in Gnosis und Manichäismus* (Halle Saale 1979), 67–94.

positive powers and situated in the substance of the individual Soul. In *Keph.* 42,¹¹⁸ as we have seen, the seven substances bodily appear as 'garments' which imprison the Soul of the baby whilst still in the mother's womb and coincide in six cases with the Gnostic heptad of *ApJo.* *Keph.* 38 further develops once more the theme of the correlation between cosmos and the human body, in a complex series of arguments aimed at demonstrating the salvific operation of the *Nous* of Light in the crucial node of the struggle between the old and new man. Mani explains how the negative principle constitutes the body to imprison the Soul of light:

(Sin) constructed the body. Yet, its/(sou)l i(t) took from the five shining gods./ ((Sin) bou)nd (the Soul) in the five members of the body. It bound the mind/in bone; the thought in sinew; the insight in vein; the cou/ nsel in flesh; the consideration in ski(n). (Sin) set f(ast) its five powers: its mind upon the mind of the Soul;/ (its) thought upon the thought of the Soul; its insight upon the insight / (of) the (s)oul; its counsel upon the counsel of the Soul; its consider/(atio)n upon the consideration of the Soul. It placed its five/(an)gels and authorities upon the five members (of the) Soul, which it had brought in and bound in the flesh.¹¹⁹

The Manichaean pentad, formed by removing the Moon and the Sun from the Seven, reuses four of the seven bodily substances of the *ApJo*, placed in the same order. The radical dualism of Manichaean ontology which—with the opposition of two homogeneous and compact substances—structurally commands and determines the anthropological conception of the system, places in evidence the active role of the second principle, to which is attributed directly the constitution of the five powers (also called angels). This principle uses five negative *membra* to dominate the equal number of the *membra* of the Soul of light which he had bound in the material body. These negative *membra* constitute a sort of negative specular parallel (of the Soul), whose counterpart is found in the anti-*Nous* of the world of Smoke mentioned in *Keph.* 69.¹²⁰ But without doubt, both the Heptad of the Soul of the psychic Adam of *ApJo*, and the Manichaean pentad, negative counterpart of the five luminous *membra* of the individual divine mind, are included in the Gnostic concept whose most explicit and systematic formulation is to be found in the

¹¹⁸ Cf. n. 108.

¹¹⁹ *Keph.* 38, 95, 17–19; 96, 13–21; I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII (Leiden 1995), 100.

¹²⁰ Cf. n. 111.

Apocriphon Johannis and the *Pistis Sophia*, although it was widespread in various other contexts. I am referring to the *αντιμιμον* or *αντικειμενον πνευμα*.¹²¹ Placed in the material body of man, which was created as an extreme reprisal by the astral demoniac powers to prevent the liberation of the divine light that showed itself in Adam, it represents the essence of these archons and the inevitable force of the *Heimarmene* to which the whole of creation is subjected. In *Pistis Sophia* the *αντιμιμον πνευμα* appears more clearly as a deceptive and closely related counterpart of the Soul,¹²² a sort of genetic code taken along with the body from the planetary powers by the ontological contradiction that is man, and which subjects him inevitably to time and determines his destiny. A comparison between the anthropogenic scenarios, mechanisms, and characters of the *ApJo* and those of Manichaeism, where the biblical theme of the creation 'according to the image' is alternated with that of demoniac procreation *per concupiscentiam*, highlights their analogies in terms of mythical and conceptual sequences. In the Manichaean system, a fundamental role is undoubtedly played by a concept which is absolutely parallel to that of the *antimimon pneuma*, even if not thus identified and named. In the *ApJo* the Metropator, Barbelo reveals himself first to the archons of the seven powers in the form of a man; his image, reflected in the water, excites in them the desire to create a man conforming to that image, in which, however, their Souls are inherent (psychic Adam). After the divine Spirit has given life to this inert being, sending it an *epinoia* of the light, the vision of the Spirit in him and of his superiority provokes as an extreme reprisal on the part of the same archons the moulding of the body made of matter, darkness, lust and *αντιμιμον πνευμα*:

¹²¹ With the meaning respectively of 'Counterfeit Spirit' (insofar as it is the imitation of a divine model) and of 'Opposed Spirit', the two terms appear in *ApJo*, the former in cod. II, the latter in cod. III (except for in 26, 19) and in BG. On this concept see W. Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (Göttingen 1907), 365 ff.; J.D.C. Lieblein, 'Pistis Sophia. L'antimimon gnostique est-il le ka égyptien?', *Christiania Videnskabs Selskabs Forhandlinger* no 2 (1908); A. Böhlig, *Mysterion und Wahrheit. Gesammelte Beiträge zur Spätantiken Religionsgeschichte* (Leiden 1968), 167–174; I.P. Culianu, *Psychanodia I*, EPRO 99 (Leiden 1983), 49; I.P. Culianu, *Les gnoses dualistes d'Occident* (Paris 1987), Italian trans. Milano 1989, 127–130. For this concept in Manichaeism, see I.P. Culianu, 'The Counterfeit Spirit in Manichaeism', *Manichaica Selecta* (Lovanii 1991), 53–58.

¹²² 131–132, trans. M. Erbetta, *Gli Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento* (Torino 1965), 497–501; cf. C. Schmidt (ed.) & V. MacDermott (trans.), *Pistis Sophia*, Nag Hammadi Studies 9 (Leiden 1978), 218–219. On the relationships between the *Pistis Sophia* and Manichaean gnosis, which deserve further study, cf. Bousset quoted above.

They brought him (Adam)] into [the shadow of death. They made] a form [once more (Gen. 2,7 LXX), from] earth and water and [fire] and spirit, that is, [from] the matter of darkness and (from) [desire], and their counterfeit (*αντιμιμον*) [spirit (*πνευμα*).]¹²³

Through the adultery of Ialdabaoth and of her archons with Sophia, the whole of creation was subjected to the harsh law of procreation and destiny:

He (Ialdabaoth) made a plan with his authorities, which are his powers, and they together committed adultery with Wisdom (*Sophia*), and bitter fate was begotten through them, which is the last of the changeable fetters ... And thus the whole creation was made blind in order they may not know God who is above all of them. And because of the chain of forgetfulness their sins were hidden. For they are bound with measures and times and moments.¹²⁴

They excite, through the *antimimon pneuma* (miserable imitation of Barbelo-Holy Spirit from which the 'immovable race' is derived), procreation in men. This was inaugurated first by Ialdabaoth and then by the union of his angels with the daughters of men:

And in Adam he planted sexual desire so that through this essence they gave birth to their copy, by means of their counterfeit spirit (*antimimon pneuma*)¹²⁵ '... [they made a plan together] to create [the counterfeit spirit (*antimimon pneuma*)], in imitation (*mimesis*) [of the spirit] who had descended. Their [angels] changed their appearance [in] the likeness of their (the daughters of men) husbands, [in order to fill] them with the spirit that was in [themselves], full of the darkness that stems from evil.'¹²⁶ ... And thus the whole creation became enslaved forever, from the foundation of the world until now.¹²⁷

In the so-called myth of the 'seduction of the archons' we find the same celestial scenario along with divine functions, which appear to envious and lustful powers to save the divine substance from their grasp. This myth is an essential foundation which precedes and prepares for Adam's coming into existence. Although justly recognised, in the specificity of its narrative details, as an original creation of Mani—the result of the arrogant surfacing in his imagination of a function of nature, which he

¹²³ NHC III, 26, 13–19 = NHC II 20, 4–9 = BG 55, 2–9. Cf. M. Waldstein & F. Wisse (eds.), *The Aphocryphon of John, Synopsis of Nag Hammadi codices II, 1; and IV,1 with BG 8502,2*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXIII (Leiden 1995), 120–123.

¹²⁴ NHC II, 28, 12–15; 27–31. *Ibidem*, 159, 161.

¹²⁵ NHC III, 31, 24, 32, 1–3 = BG 63, 5–9 = NHC II, 24, 28–31. *Ibidem*, 140 f.

¹²⁶ NHC III, 38, 17–24 = BG 74, 7–16 = NHC II, 29, 23–30. *Ibidem*, 164–167.

¹²⁷ NHC II, 30, 5–7. *Ibidem*, 167.

suppressed on a rational and ethical level,¹²⁸—it also represents an initial contest, played out between two adverse forces. In it begin to be founded the harbingers of the substantial components of that mechanism, the human body, designed to function, in the intentions of the evil Principle, in opposition to the salvific action of the cosmic machine. The myth is documented in the precious testimony of Theodore bar Khoni,¹²⁹ but is missing in the Middle-Persian text. It is narrated with a fair amount of detail by Augustine, who states it as written:

in libro septimo Thesauri: ‘... eodem modo etiam illa altissima Virtus, quae in navi vitalium aquarum habitat, in similitudine puerorum ac virginum sanctarum per suos angelos adparet his potestatibus, quarum natura frigida atque humida, quaeque in caelis ordinatae sunt. Et quidem his, quae feminae sunt, in ipsis forma puerorum adparet, masculis vero virginum. Hac vero mutatione et diversitate divinarum personarum ac pulcherrimarum humidae frigidaeque stirpis principes masculi sive feminae soluuntur atque id, quod in ipsis est vitale, fugit; quod vero resederit, laxatum deducitur in terram per frigora et cunctis terrae generibus admiscetur.’¹³⁰

The same myth, quoted word for word by Evodius,¹³¹ is found again, in a substantially analogous form in all Christian documents.¹³² The most significant points of the tale root the origins of vegetable and animal life on earth—premise and foundation of human life—in the fall to earth of the most dense and intimate substance of the evil powers ‘quae in singulis caelorum tractibus ordinatae sunt.’¹³³ These points are perhaps more vividly expressed in the more concise and effective form of the text of the Nestorian bishop, where M. Tardieu sees passages from the *Pragmateia*, Mani’s mythological work:

¹²⁸ G. Casadio, ‘Gender and Sexuality in Manichaean Mythmaking,’ in: A. Van Tongerloo and Søren Giversen (eds.), *Manichaica Selecta. Studies presented to Professor Julien Ries on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, Manichaean Studies I (Lovanii 1991), 43–47.

¹²⁹ *Liber Scholiorum* XI, 59, A. Scher 1910–1912, *Theodore bar Khoni. Liber Scholiorum*, vols. I–II (CSCO 55 & 69), Louvain, 316; transl. by A. Yohannan in: A.V.W. Jackson, ‘Theodore Bar Khoni (c. 800 AD). On Mani’s Teachings Concerning the Beginning of the World,’ in: Idem, *Researches in Manichaeism* (New York 1932), 244–246.

¹³⁰ *De natura boni* 44, ed. Zycha, CSEL XXV, S.VI Pars 2, 881–884. Cf. *De haeresibus* XLVI,8, CC XLVI, Pars XIII, 2, 314. *Commonitorium* 5, CC, *ibid.*, 980–981.

¹³¹ *De fide contra Manichaeos* 14–16, ed. Zycha, *ibid.*, 956–957.

¹³² Cf. C. Riggi, *Epifanio contro Mani, Haer. LXVI* (Roma 1967), 127–131; F. Cumont, *Recherches sur le manichéisme I. La cosmogonie manichéenne d’après Théodore bar Khoni*, (Bruxelles 1908) 54–60.

¹³³ The expression certainly indicates planetary powers.

And when the Ships (i.e. the Sun and Moon), went up and reached the middle of the heaven, the Messenger then revealed his forms, male and female, and was seen by all the Archons, the Sons of Darkness, males and females. And at the sight of the Messenger, who was beautiful in his forms, all the Archons became filled with lust for him, the males for the form of the female, and the females for the form of the male, and in their lust they began to emit that Light which they had swallowed from the Five Luminous Gods. And then that Sin which was shut up in them mixed itself like the hair in the dough, with the Light which came out from the Archons, and they desired to go inside. But then the Messenger concealed his forms and severed the Light of the Five Luminous Gods from the Sin that was with them. And it fell back upon the Archons from whom it had fallen; but they received it not, just as a man who is disgusted at his own vomit. It then fell upon the earth, half of it upon the moist part, half of it upon the dry. And that (which fell upon the moist) became a horrible monster in the likeness of the King of Darkness; ... And that (Sin) which fell on the dry (earth) sprang up into Five Trees.¹³⁴

Quintessence of the substance and evil power of the celestial archons that becomes the earthly hypostasis of the negative principle and its first materialisation, in a pentadic form, this 'distillate' of evil, fallen to earth, initiates the dimensions of existence, made of space, time and generation. Within these, man, branded and, so to speak, programmed by the mechanism of lust, vital instinct and innate in the *Hyle*, will be imprisoned and induced to oblivion of his essence and divine origin. The concept of the 'Five Trees', result of the original demoniac essence and in its turn origin of all sexual reality, is restated in *Keph. VI*:

... Five s(to)/rehouses have arisen since the beginning in the land of darkne(ss)! The fiv(e)/ elements poured out of them. Also, from the five e(le)ments were fashioned the five trees! Again, from the five tre(es)/ were fashioned the five genera of creatures in each wor/ld, male and female ...¹³⁵

The descent of the Soul of light towards bodily imprisonment passes, in the Manichaean system, as Augustine tells us, also through the procreation of animals, always involving violent and monstrous lust, which is the fundamental and integral essence of the celestial archons:

¹³⁴ Theodore Bar Koni, *Liber Scholiorum* XI, 59, trans. by A. Yohannan in: A.V.W. Jackson, 'Theodore Bar Khoni (c. 800 AD). On Mani's Teachings concerning the Beginning of the World' in: Idem, *Researches in Manichaeism* (New York 1932), 244–246.

¹³⁵ *Kephalaia* VI, 30, 18–22, I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXVII (Leiden 1995), 34.

Dicunt enim isti vaniloqui et mentis seductores in illa pugna, quando primus homo eorum tenebrarum gentem elementis fallacibus inretivit, utriusque sexus principibus indidem captis, cum ex eis mundus construeretur, plerosque eorum in caelestibus fabriciis conligatos, in quibus erant etiam feminae aliquae praegnantēs: quae cum caelum rotari coepisset, eandem vertiginem ferre non valentes conceptus suos abortu excussisse; eosdemque abortivos fetus et masculos et feminas de caelo in terram cecidisse, vixisse, crevisse, concubuisse, genuisse. Hinc esse dicunt originem carnis omnium, quae moventur in terra, in aqua, in aere.¹³⁶

The theme of the vision of the divine image, as a stimulus and model of archontic creation, is widely used in various Gnostic anthropogenic contexts.¹³⁷ In the *ApJo*, as in the Manichaean myth, it represents the premise for the definitive reprisal of the evil principle, which is aimed at imprisoning the divine substance, and thus realising its future dominion. In both contexts it is used dialectically: the image of the superior world, which is sent to recover the divine substance, achieves its effect only in part, provoking instead the creation of a 'copy'. This copy contains all the divine substance left in the cosmos, tragically interwoven with all the negative ontological qualities of the archontic substance, as is vividly expressed in the *Epistula Fundamenti*:

In eadem [i.e. in the female archon who will give birth to the protoplasts] enim construebantur et contexebantur omnium imagines, coelestium ac terrenarum virtutum, ut pleni videlicet orbis, id quod formabatur, similitudinem obtineret.¹³⁸

The theme is present, implicitly or explicitly, in almost all the versions of the anthropogenic myth, such as that reconstructed from the fragments of the Middle-Persian texts,¹³⁹ the tradition transmitted by Theodore bar Khoni,¹⁴⁰ and the passage in Augustine's *De Natura Boni* quoted from the

¹³⁶ *Contra Faustum* VI, 8, ed. Zycha, CSEL XXV, 1, 296.

¹³⁷ Cf. V.J. Jervell, *Imago Dei* (Göttingen 1960); H.M. Schenke, *Der Gott 'Mensch' in der Gnosis* (Göttingen 1962); G. Filoramo, 'Aspetti del mito della creazione dell'uomo nello gnosticismo del II secolo', *Memorie dell'Accademia delle scienze di Torino*. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche. Ser. 4a, n. 35. 1977, 2-57.

¹³⁸ *De natura boni* 46, ed. Zycha, CSEL XXV, S.VI Pars 2, 886= frg. 9; E. Feldmann, *Die 'Epistula Fundamenti' der nordafrikanischen Manichäer* (Altenberge 1987), 18-20.

¹³⁹ *Mir. Man.* i = M 7984 e M 7982, Text y, in: M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*, Acta Iranica 9, Ser. III, Textes et Mémoires (Leiden 1975), 71-73.

¹⁴⁰ Liber Scholiorum XI; cf. A. Yohannan in: A.V.W. Jackson, 'Theodore Bar Khoni. (c. 800 AD) On Mani's Teachings Concerning the Beginning of the World,' in: Idem, *Researches in Manichaeism* (New York 1932), 248-249.

*Epistula Fundamenti*¹⁴¹ (where the learning of the modalities of origin of the two protoplasts is presented as an essential and irremissible nucleus of the salvific gnosis¹⁴²). It is also present in the various anthropogenic 'teachings' in the *Kephalaia*,¹⁴³ the text of Epiphanius,¹⁴⁴ and the 'philosophical' version of Alexander of Lycopolis.¹⁴⁵ The motif of the divine image in the Manichaean anthropogenic myth, functionally correlated with that of the seduction of the archons, alludes, as did the Gnostic myth of the *Aplo*, to the contraposition in the created being between this image and a sort of counterfeit of it. This false copy is the quintessence of the archontic substance that is inherent in the body, and that is manifested in a brutally lustful nature. This concept is translated coherently into the absolute condemnation of the mechanism of procreation, which belongs to the archontic world and which, together with the body, is transmitted to Adam. In the middle-Persian version¹⁴⁶ of the myth, all the negativity of the dark world is condensed in Az, the hypostasis of lust. Present in the demoniac abortions falling to earth, but also in the plants that they eat, Az 'closes' herself inside a couple of lion-like monstrous beings, to generate Adam and Eve, according to the divine image that she had seen before. The couple of demons transmit to the two protoplasts the light that they had acquired by devouring the abortions, but also all the ontologically negative realities (lust, avarice, envy, hate) which constitute their substance and which will form the *Menogih i tan* ('Spirit of the bod').¹⁴⁷ This is peculiarly opposed to the individual divine Soul, but closely bound to it by the evil nature of the *Hyle*. To strengthen and perpetuate the evil influence of the astral powers, Az binds the Soul of man to the celestial archons so that, through these 'bonds',¹⁴⁸ they continue to exercise their

¹⁴¹ *De natura boni* 46, ed. Zycha, CSEL XXV, S. VI Pars 2, 884–886 = frg. 9; E. Feldmann, *Die 'Epistula Fundamenti' der nordafrikanischen Manichäer* (Altenberge 1987), 16–20.

¹⁴² *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* XII, 14, 182, BA 17, 420: '... Si enim illis super Adae et Evae generatione provenisset manifesto cognoscere, nunquam corruptioni et morte subiacerent.' = frg. 4a E. Feldmann, *Die 'Epistula Fundamenti' der nordafrikanischen Manichäer* (Altenberge 1987), 10–12.

¹⁴³ *Keph.* LV, 133, 4–137, 11, I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, 141–144. Cf. *Keph.* LXIV, 157, 1–158, 23, *Ibidem*, 165–167; LVI, 137, 14–144, 12, *Ibidem*, 144–151.

¹⁴⁴ *Panarion* LXVI, 26 and 30, ed. and trans. by C. Riggi, *Epifanio contro Mani, Haer. LXVI* (Roma 1967), 120–123; 148–151.

¹⁴⁵ *Contra Manichaei opinioniones disputatio*, chap. IV, 7 ed. Brinkmann 1895, trans. Mansfeld 1974, 56; cf. chap. XXIII, 32–34, *ibi*; 88–91 *ibi*.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. n. 139.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *supra* p. 398 and n. 79.

¹⁴⁸ On the Aramaic origin of the word *lihme* which in the *Kephalaia* designates the ropes which bind the planets to the souls of men cf. E.B. Smagina, 'Some Words with

dominion over humanity. There is no doubt that one of the most plastically vivid and effective myths regarding the opposed polarities present in man, is this contraposition binding the individual divine Soul to the 'Spirit of the Body'. The latter was a concept, parallel to that of the '*antimon pneuma*', which undoubtedly acquired its final form in a Gnostic cultural environment, probably connected to the 'Gnostics' of Ireneus and strongly dominated by astrological speculations. Such a concept is identifiable with that, present in *Keph.* XXVIII, of the five dark *membra* and the bodily substances superimposed on the five *membra* of the individual divine Soul. It returns coherently in the Chavannes and Pelliot treatise, where it is expressed in the image of the Five Trees of death, which are connected to the five substances of the body and, in turn, are the origin of all the negative realities present in man.¹⁴⁹ Bodily substances and negative qualities reproduce the double physical and psychic chain, that in *Keph.* 38 we saw imprison the individual divine soul and create a sort of negative counterpart of it. These, together, form the body defined as 'old man': the old man, with dark and poisoned thought is shown in the same treatise in a struggle with the new man and his thought.¹⁵⁰ This contraposition is reflected at a cosmic level, in the negative *Nous* of the world of smoke of *Keph.* 69 and the Light-*Nous* of the divine world. It finds its equivalent in the struggle of the two 'spirits' described by Secundinus and is probably at the base of the entire Augustinian polemic on the two '*mentes*' or '*animae*' of man.

The grandiose conception of a divine Soul that, although enclosed in a body of darkness and submitted to evil bonds and astral forces, manages to oppose the dominion of the *Heimarmene* is seen to be ineffective in placating the religious and intellectual arguments of Augustine. Reason and, perhaps, above all grace led him to entrust the tumult of his passions and the inextinguishable breath of his intellect and Soul into the hands of that God who had always loved him.¹⁵¹

Unknown Meaning in Coptic Manichaean Texts', *Enchoria* 17 (1990), 121–122. On the ambiguity of the function of the *lihme* cf. A. Panaino, 'Volta celeste e astrologia nel Manicheismo', *Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico, Manichaean Studies III* (Lovanii-Neapoli 1997), 285–288.

¹⁴⁹ Traité E. Chavannes – P. Pelliot, 'Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine traduit et annoté', *JA* (1911, 1913) 10e S., 17, 529.

¹⁵⁰ Ibidem, 546–548. Cf. F. Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale, I–II* (Paris 1978), 333–334.

¹⁵¹ *Conf.* I, 6; II, 3; V, 7–8–9; VI, 5: '... cogitabam haec et aderas mihi, suspirabam et audiebas me, fluctuabam et gubernabas me, ibam per viam saeculi latam nec deserebas.' Vitali 1996, 60; 105; 219–229; 259.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

AUGUSTINE AND HIS SOURCES: THE 'DEVIL'S SNARES AND BIRDLIME' IN THE MOUTHS OF MANICHAEANS IN EAST AND WEST

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In the often-cited first sentence of *Conf.* 3.6.10, Augustine describes the Manichaeans as 'arrogant fools, very carnal and garrulous in whose mouths were the devil's snares and birdlime concocted with the addition of syllables of Your name and of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Paraclete, our Comforter, the Holy Spirit.'¹ The words 'devil's snares' (*laquei diaboli*) and 'birdlime' (*uisum*) refer specifically, it seems, to the allurements of Manichaean teachings and their well-known strategy of persuasion and 'seduction' (cf. *Conf.* 4.1.1) by means of words and names that they knew were religiously familiar and alluring to their various audiences. What I find particularly interesting is that Augustine himself in this sentence appears to employ a communicative technique very similar to that so effectively used by the Manichaeans. As has been convincingly argued by Annemaré Kotzé in recent work, most passages in Augustine's *Confessions* concerning Augustine's time as a Manichaean, and not least the lengthy passage in the third book (3.6.10–3.10.18), are protreptics directed at the Manichaeans and not exclusively or primarily polemics against them.² Augustine repeatedly attempts to connect with his former brethren in faith, penetrate their defenses and enlighten them, by speaking their language or, more precisely, by skilfully and frequently using words, phrases and imagery which he knew would readily attract their

¹ J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden – New York – København – Köln 1991) 34; cf. idem, 'Augustine and Manichaeism: New Discoveries, New Perspectives,' *Verbum et Ecclesia* 27 (2006), 714; original text, *ibid.*, note 14 (= CCL 27,31).

² A. Kotzé, 'The 'Anti-Manichaean' Passage in *Confessions* 3 and its 'Manichaean Audience,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 62 (2008), 187–200; idem, *Augustine's Confessions: Communicative Purpose and Audience* (Leiden, Boston, 2004); idem, 'Reading Psalm 4 to the Manichaeans,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 55 (2001), 119–136.

attention and make them reflect. Augustine had, of course, been exposed to and rehearsed the Manichaean techniques of persuasion and argumentation. He knew the words of their 'numerous and huge tomes' (*libris multis et ingentibus*), which he—with (in my opinion) deliberate reference to the Manichaean daily meal *ritus*—describes as 'dishes' (*fercula*) on which were 'served the sun and the moon' and other 'splendid hallucinations' (*phantasmata splendida*) (*Conf.* 3.6.10).³ And as a Manichaean Hearer he 'sang (their) songs' (*et cantabam carmina*) (*Conf.* 3.7.14).

Johannes van Oort has cited and discussed the passage on many occasions,⁴ and his overall contribution to the research of possible and probable Manichaean elements in the *Confessions* and other writings of Augustine is, of course, both major and significant. In a paper delivered at the Third International Congress of Manichaean Studies in 1993, Van Oort discussed *Conf.* 3.6.10 at length. He identified some instances of the snare motif in the Coptic Manichaean *Psalm-Book* and made the point that Augustine in his *Confessions* was engaged in a controversy with the Manichaeans and, at the same time, deliberately 'played on words by making use of their own vocabulary'.⁵ As I shall very briefly attempt to demonstrate in this small footnote to Van Oort's work, the bird-catching imagery in the first sentence of the passage may well derive from or allude to Manichaean imagery. Other sources of inspiration are, however, also possible.

³ The food-metaphor is used repeatedly in *Conf.* 3 and 4; see D. Shanzer, 'Latent Narrative Patterns, Allegorical Choices, and Literary Unity in Augustine's *Confessions*,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992), 44; J. van Oort, 'The Young Augustine's Knowledge of Manichaeism: An Analysis of the *Confessiones* and Some Other Relevant Texts,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 62 (2008), 448 ff.; J.D. BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma*, I. *Conversion and Apostasy*, 373–388 C.E. (Philadelphia 2010) 58 ff.

⁴ J. van Oort, 'Augustin und der Manichäismus,' *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 46 (1994) 131; idem, *Mani, Manichaeism & Augustine. The Rediscovery of Manichaeism & its Influence on Western Christianity* (Tbilisi 1996) 43–44; idem, '... Quam intime medullae animi mei suspirabant tibi': de spiritualiteit van Augustinus' 'verborgen jaren' tot aan de bekering in 386,' *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae. Journal of the Church History Society in Southern Africa* 33 (2007), 231–232; and the works cited in notes 1 and 5.

⁵ J. van Oort, 'Manichaeism and Anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's *Confessiones*,' in: *Atti del Terzo Congresso Internazionale di Studi 'Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico', Arcavacata di Rende – Amantea, 31 agosto – 5 settembre 1993* (Lovanii, Neapoli 1997), 240–243, esp. 241; cf. 243: '... Augustine sometimes made a deliberate and conscious use of Manichaean words and terminology' (= J. van Oort, 'Augustine's Critique of Manichaeism: the Case of *Confessiones* III,6,10 and its Implications,' in: P.W. van der Horst [ed.], *Aspects of Religious Contact and Conflict in the Ancient World* [Utrecht 1995] 62–64).

Augustine links the methods of bird-catching to the Manichaeans several times in his writings. In the first book of *On the Advantage of Believing* he likens the Manichaeans to 'tricky fowlers': 'They dealt with us as tricky fowlers are wont to do, who fix their limed twigs (*uiscatos surculos*) near water to deceive thirsty birds. Other water they cover and conceal, or set up terrifying devices to scare the birds from them so that they may fall into their trap, not by their own choice but by lack of any other supply.'⁶ The 'birdlime of death' mentioned in *Conf.* 6.6.9 refers to the Manichaeans: 'May my soul cling to you now for you have pulled it away from the birdlime of death in which it was stuck fast.'⁷ The 'birdlime of greed' in *On the Trinity*—'And what weight is it, I ask, that drags you back but the birdlime of greed for the filth you have picked up on your wayward wanderings?' (*De Trinitate* 8.3)—may in part refer to the Manichaeans.⁸ The birdlime metaphor is not applied solely to the Manichaeans. Augustine occasionally uses it to describe the entrapments of the soul, hindrances to spiritual ascent, especially sexual desires which he calls 'birdlime of concupiscence' (*Conf.* 10.30.42).⁹

The snare metaphor is used repeatedly in the *Confessions*. In the tenth book, for instance, Augustine recalls how he often 'entangled' himself 'in the snares on all sides' and how God rescued his feet from the snare (*Conf.* 10.34.52). He also refers to the 'snare of concupiscence' or 'trap of uncontrolled desire' (*laqueus concupiscentiae*) (*Conf.* 10.31.44).¹⁰ The metaphor is related directly to Faustus who is called a 'deadly snare' (*laqueus mortis*) (*Conf.* 5.7.13) and a 'great snare of the devil' (*magnus laqueus diaboli*) (*Conf.* 5.3.3) since 'many were captured by him through that lure of his smooth talk.'

There may be a degree of empirical inspiration behind Augustine's use of the bird-catching imagery. We know from *On the Greatness of the Soul* that Augustine went bird-hunting when he was a boy.¹¹ In *On the Teacher*, he refers to a bird-catcher who walks along carrying his instruments and

⁶ *De utilitate credendi* 1,2; CSEL 25, 5; J.H.S. Burleigh (ed.), *Augustine: Earlier Writings* (Philadelphia 1953), 292–293.

⁷ See *Conf.* 5.7.

⁸ R.J. Romb, *Saint Augustine & the Fall of the Soul*, 87–88.

⁹ See also *Contra academicos* 2.3.7; cf. J.J. O'Meara, *St. Augustine, Against the Academics* (Westminster, Md. 1950), 71.

¹⁰ For other *laquei* in the *Confessions*, see J.J. O'Donnell, *Augustine, Confessions*, II. *Commentary on Books 1–7* (Oxford 1992), 177.

¹¹ *De animae quantitate* 21,36: 'Why, then, if an increase in strength is due to advancing age and a simultaneous growth of soul, why is it that as a boy engaged in walking for the purpose of catching birds I could cover far greater distances without experiencing

how he deceives birds 'by twigs and birdlime' and catches them with a hawk.¹² The practice of catching birds by birdlime was well established in the Roman empire. The preparation and use of birdlime is described briefly by Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History*. Birdlime is a viscid and adhesive substance made from dried mistletoe (*uiscum*) berries kneaded with oil which is 'used for entangling birds' wings by contact with it when one wants to snare them.¹³ The method of catching birds by causing them to fly into a net was more common. Augustine mentions this method in a couple of his writings.¹⁴

Augustine had engaged in bird watching. Throughout his works there are descriptions of many different birds, and details concerning nest-building and other behaviour of various species are provided.¹⁵ Some details of his descriptions of bird species may also derive from texts available to him.

The bird-snare motif may certainly also have been inspired by biblical imagery. The *Confessions* contains numerous examples of Augustine's careful efforts to make his language Christian and thus communicate directly and indirectly with both his present and former brethren in faith.¹⁶ Augustine equates the Manichaeans with the foolish harlot, who 'in Solomon's allegory' in *Proverbs* 9.13–17, 'sits on a chair outside her door and says 'Enjoy a meal of secret bread and drink sweet stolen water'' (*Conf.* 3.6.11). In *Prov.* 7.21–23, the harlot persuades men with 'much seductive speech and smooth talk' to follow her 'like a bird rushing into a snare' ('velut ... avis festinet ad laqueum;' *Vulg.*).¹⁷ The term 'deadly snare' occurs in *Prov.* 21.6. The term 'snare of the devil' occurs in the epistles of Paul to Timothy (1 Tim. 3.7 and 2 Tim 2.26; cf. 1 Tim

fatigue than when as a young man I devoted myself to other pursuits requiring more sedentary habits?'; J.M. Collieran, *St. Augustine, The Greatness of the Soul and the Teacher* (Mahwah, N.J. 1949), 56.

¹² *De magistro* 10,32; J.H.S. Burleigh (ed.), *Augustine: Earlier Writings* (Philadelphia 1953), 92. For comments on this passage, see G.B. Matthews, 'Augustine on the Teacher Within', in W.E. Mann (ed.), *Augustine's Confessions: Critical Essays* (Lanham, Md. 2006), 33 ff.

¹³ Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* (published circa 77–79 CE), Book XVI: *The Natural History of the Forest Trees*, chapter 94: *The Method of Making Birdlime*; H. Rackham, *Loeb Classical Library*, 1963, 548–549.

¹⁴ Cf. M.E. Keenan, 'St. Augustine and Biological Science', *Osiris* 7 (1939), 601.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 598–601.

¹⁶ On Augustine's use of biblical idioms in the *Confessions*, see the detailed study in Ph. Burton, *Language in the Confessions of Augustine* (Oxford 2007), 112 ff.

¹⁷ See also C. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion. A Guide to the Argument of Confessions I–IX* (Waterloo, Ont. 1990), 81, note 66.

6.9). To these often-mentioned biblical references we may add that the *Ecclesiastes* contains related allegorical language: 'as fishes are taken with the hook, and as birds are caught with the snare, so men are taken in the evil time ...' (*Ecc.* 9.12: 'sicut pisces capiuntur hamo et sicut aves comprehenduntur laqueo sic capiuntur homines tempore malo;' *Vulg.*). Snare imagery is prevalent in the Old Testament, especially the *Psalms* in which are mentioned the deliverance and escape from the snares of fowlers (*Ps.* 91.3 and 124.7).

The Manichaean Coptic *Psalm-Book* contains several instances of similar imagery. In the *Psalms to Jesus*, 'snares of the body' and bird-catching are mentioned together twice: 'The trappers that set traps for me brought me beneath their nets, they excluded me from the air of the freedom of the beautiful birds. Behold then, thou camest after me, Jesus, my Light, the releaser of them that are bound: I broke their snares, I burst their nets by the faith of thy Truth', and 'Like a bird in a snare, so also am I [while I am in the] body of death.'¹⁸ In the *Psalms of Thomas*, the evil forces seeking to ensnare the soul are again described as bird-hunters: 'I saw snares set and nets cast and spread, that the bird that should [come] might [be] caught ... that (?) it might not escape from them.'¹⁹ One psalm warns the believer against the evil soul-hunters who hinder the ascension of the soul: 'O soul, do not forget thyself. (*Be mindful*), for they are all hunting for thee, (*Be mindful*) even the hunters of death. (*Be mindful*). They catch the birds ... They break (?) their wings (*Be mindful*) that they may not fly to their dovecotes.'²⁰ It seems likely that Augustine was familiar with at least some of these psalms.

The fifth of the Coptic *Kephalaia* warns against the four hunters of darkness. The fourth of these hunters is described as 'the law of sin and death, that rules in every sect. It hunts after the so[ul]s of people and entangles them with this erroneo[us] teaching. Then it drives them to eternal punishment. It[s] net, whereby it hunts souls to death, is its erroneous teaching full of guile and villainy and wicked turns. It imprisons foolish people wi[th] its teaching, subduing them under its net and co[m]pelling them to] eternal punishment.'²¹

¹⁸ *PsBk* 89.24–29 and 95.20–21; C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book, Part II* (Stuttgart 1938).

¹⁹ *PsBk* 204.19–20; cf. *PsBk* 205.3–7; Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*.

²⁰ *PsBk* 182.3–10; Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*.

²¹ *Keph.* 29.34–30.8; I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary* (Leiden-New York-Köln 1995), 33.

Themes of baiting and ensnarement are prominent in the Manichaean cosmogonic drama. It is possible that Augustine in his references to the 'devil's snares' and 'birdlime' in the mouths of Manichaeans wants to bring the Manichaean reader of his confessions to think of these themes in this fundamental 'story'. The war of the First Man against the 'King of the realms of Darkness and all the rulers that have come forth from the five worlds ...' and his employment of his armour of sons, the Living Soul, as bait is described in a fragmentarily preserved passage of the eighteenth *kephalaion*: 'He hunte[d them] with his net, which is [the] living soul ...'²²

The birdlime metaphor is rare in the extant Manichaean texts. It does, however, occur in the *Treatise of the Light-Nous*, which was one the most important and widespread texts of the Manichaean church as it was translated into several languages. Versions in Coptic, Parthian, Sogdian, Old Uighur and Chinese have survived in different states of preservation in East and West. The use of the five sons of First Man as a bait is described in the Chinese version of the *Treatise of the Light-Nous* from Dunhuang as follows: 'You should all know that, before this world was established, the two Envoys of Light, Pure [Wind (i.e. Living Spirit) and Good] Mother (i.e. Mother of the Living), entered into the lightless region of the dark chasms; they raised up with their hand the strong, ever-[victorious First Thought (i.e. First Man) (bedecked) with] the Armour of [Great] Knowledge, the five divided Light-bodies, whom the two of them urged to rise and come forth and made them leave the five chasms. The five kinds of demons adhered to the five Light-bodies like flies clustering on honey, like a bird caught in lime, like a fish that has swallowed the hook.'²³ A Parthian version of this important sermon of Mani relates that the Living Spirit and the Mother of the Righteous (Mother of the Living) together with the God Ohrmezd (First Man) and his five sons seized the five diabolical armies 'by the Light like a fly in honey.'²⁴ Birdlime is not mentioned in this fragment, but the same allegories and one more

²² *Keph.* 58.7–15; Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, 62.

²³ *Tr.* cols. 8–11; S.N.C. Lieu & G.B. Mikkelsen in collaboration with L. Eccles, N. Sims-Williams et al., *The Chinese Manichaean Treatise on the Light-Nous from Dunhuang and its parallels in Parthian, Sogdian, and Old Turkish*, forthcoming in the *Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum*, Series Sinica; see also S.N.C. Lieu, 'From Turfan to Dunhuang: Manichaean Cosmogony in Chinese Texts,' in D. Durkin-Meisterernst, S.-Chr. Raschmann et al. (eds.), *Turfan Revisited—The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road* (Berlin 2004), 170.

²⁴ *SLN* § 2; W. Sundermann, *Der Sermon vom Licht-Nous. Eine Lehrschrift des östlichen Manichäismus. Edition der parthischen und soghdischen Version* (Berlin 1992), 62–63.

occur in a Parthian cosmogonical text concerning the same event: 'the Living Soul [...] bound they were [like] fish by [the angler's hook, birds by] birdlime, wild beasts [by ..., flies on] honey ...'²⁵ As noted by D.N. MacKenzie, the Parthian term *dbwg'h* (*daβūγāh*) means 'birdlime', and it is derived from Syriac *daβūqā* 'viscous' and related to Arabic *dibq* 'birdlime'.²⁶ Werner Sundermann finds it probable that the text belongs to one of Mani's own works.²⁷ These allegories may have been canonical material and in that capacity deeply rooted in Manichaean literature and, in all likelihood, widely disseminated.

Whether Manichaean texts, the Bible, other texts or personal experiences were the primary sources of inspiration for Augustine's choice of the bird-catching imagery is impossible to determine with any degree of certainty. No unequivocal conclusion can be drawn on the basis of the available textual evidence, but the possibility of a deliberate connection to Manichaean texts and parlance definitely exists.

²⁵ W. Sundermann, *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer* (Berlin 1973), 52–53.

²⁶ D.N. MacKenzie, 'Review of W. Sundermann, *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer*,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38 (1975), 455. See also D. Durkin-Meisterernst, *Dictionary of Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*. *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts* III, 1 (Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum, Subidia) (Turnhout 2004), 136.

²⁷ Cf. *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer*, 43 and *Der Sermon vom Licht-Nous*, 79.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

GLOBUS HORRIBILIS: THE ROLE OF THE BOLOS IN MANICHAEAN ESCHATOLOGY AND ITS POLEMICAL TRANSFORMATION IN AUGUSTINE'S ANTI-MANICHAEAN WRITINGS

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One of the basic features of Manichaean eschatology was a belief that all evil would eventually be imprisoned within a globular mass (Gr. βῶλος; Lat. *globus*) and that the souls of those who had refused to accept the Religion of Light would be affixed to this globular mass forever. Criticism of this curious belief became one of the foundations of Augustine's anti-Manichaean polemic.¹ This paper will examine Augustine's reception and polemical transformation of this Manichaean doctrine. The doctrine will first be reconstructed from the extant sources and its functions and significance will be discussed.² It will be seen that there are certain

¹ Cf. F. Decret, 'Le "globus horribilis" dans l'eschatologie manichéenne d'après les traités de saint Augustin,' in: *Mélanges d'histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), 488: 'La fixation au *globus horribilis* des âmes qui ont sombrées dans la léthargie du péché constitue l'argument majeur de la polémique anti-manichéenne menée par Augustin.' Compare Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1970), 317 ('Augustin donne une importance considérable à ce globus dans la plupart des traités consacrés à réfuter la doctrine de la secte') and F.C. Baur, *Das manichäische Religionssystem nach den Quellen neu untersucht und entwickelt* (Tübingen: C.F. Olander, 1831), 329 ('Es ist dies ein Punkt, welchen nicht leicht ein Gegner des Manichäischen Systems unberührt läßt').

² The anti-Manichaean works of Augustine and Evodius will be cited according to the edition of J. Zycha (CSEL 25.6.1–2, Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1891–1892), Augustine's *Confessions* according to the edition of P. Knöll (CSEL 33.1.1, Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1896), and Augustine's *De haeresibus* according to the edition of L.G. Müller, *The De haeresibus of Saint Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1956). Citations from the Coptic Manichaean *Kephalaia* refer to the edition of H.J. Polotsky and A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia. Band I. 1 Hälfte: Lieferung 1–10* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1940);

ambiguities and tensions in the doctrine.³ The ways in which these ambiguities and tensions were exploited by Augustine and used to support his broader anti-Manichaean polemic will then be examined and discussed.

According to Manichaean teaching, the existence of evil in the world was the result of a primordial invasion of the realm of Light by the forces of Darkness. In this invasion a portion of the Light was seized and swallowed up by the Darkness. This seizure necessitated the formation of the present world as an arena in which the forces of Darkness were to be subdued and the good Light particles liberated from the evil Matter in which they had become entrapped. This liberation was effected at the microcosmic level by the prayers and devotional practices of the elect and at the macrocosmic level by a cosmic purifying apparatus.⁴

This process of purification and liberation was nonetheless limited both in time and scope. When all the Light that could be liberated by the cosmic purifying apparatus had been freed, the cosmos would be consumed by a fire that would burn for 1468 years, releasing a small portion of additional Light.⁵

A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia. Band I. 2. Hälfte: Lieferung 11–12* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1966); W.-P. Funk, *Kephalaia. Band I. 2. Hälfte: Lieferung 13–16* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1999–2000).

³ On the ambiguities and tensions in Manichaean eschatology, see also C. Colpe, *Der Manichäismus in der arabischen Überlieferung* (Dr. Phil. diss., Göttingen, 1954), 35–36 and T. Sala, 'Narrative Options in Manichaean Eschatology,' in: *Frontiers of Faith: The Christian Encounter with Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus*, ed. J. BeDuhn and P. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 49–66.

⁴ See J. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2000).

⁵ The more detailed accounts of the eschatological conflagration describe it as lasting for 1468 years; see *Kephalaia* 24 (75,20–23); D.N. MacKenzie, 'Mani's Šābuhragān,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 42:3 (1979): 517; Muḥammad ibn Ishāq Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist* 9.1 (B. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, [New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1970], 782–783; cf. also 800); Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Milāl wa al-Niḥāl* * 628 (D. Gimaret and G. Monnot, *Shahrastani: Livre des religions et des sectes*, vol. 1, [Leuven: Peeters, 1986], 660); Aḥmad ibn Yahyā Ibn al-Murtaḍā al-Baḥr az-zahḥār (cited in K. Kessler, *Mani: Forschungen über die manichäische Religion* [Berlin: G. Reimer, 1889], 353); with the discussions of G. Flügel, *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1862), 237–239; C.J. Ogden, 'The 1468 Years of the World-Conflagration in Manichaeism,' in: *Dr. Modi Memorial Volume. Papers on Indo-Iranian and Other Subjects*, ed. D.P. Sanjana (Bombay: Fort Printing Press, 1930), 102–105; A.V.W. Jackson, 'A Sketch of the Manichaean Doctrine concerning the Future Life,' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 50:3 (1930): 195–196; and J. van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*, vol. 6 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995), 106. It has been noted that one of the Nag Hammadi treatises, *The Concept of Our Great Power* (NHC VI,4, 46,27–28),

The final subjugation of evil would then take place. The forces of Darkness, having been separated from the Light they had seized, would be punished.⁶ The female demons would be imprisoned in a tomb.⁷ The male demons would be confined in a globular mass and remain imprisoned there forever.⁸ The purpose of this separate confinement of the sexes was apparently to prevent the forces of Darkness from

similarly describes a purifying eschatological fire that burns for 1468 years. There are also briefer, less detailed descriptions of the Manichaean eschatological conflagration in Alexander of Lycopolis *Tractatus de placitis Manichaeorum* 5 (8,1–3 Brinkmann); *Acta Archelai* 11.2; 13.1 (18,25–26; 21,22–23 Beeson) = Epiphanius *Panarion* 66.29.2; 66.31.4 (67,2–3; 70,1–2 Holl); Titus of Bostra *C. Manichaeos* 1.40 (24,30–31 Lagarde); Augustine *C. Faustum* 2.5 (258,24–26); *De haeresibus* 46 (96,194); Ephraim Syrus *Third Discourse to Hypatius* (C.W. Mitchell, *S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan*, vol. 1 [London: Williams and Norgate, 1912], lxxii); and Severus of Antioch *Hom.* 123 (M.A. Kugener and F. Cumont, *Recherches sur le Manichéisme II: Extrait de la CXXIIIe Homélie de Sévère d'Antioche* [Brussels: H. Lamertin, 1912], 148). Brief references to the final conflagration also appear in fragmentary passages in the Coptic Manichaean *Homilies* (H.J. Polotsky, *Manichäische Homilien* [Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1934]); see *Hom.* 2 (39,35; 41,5) with the discussion of N.A. Pedersen, *Studies in the Sermon on the Great War* (Aarhus: Aarhus Univ. Press, 1996), 148, 379.

⁶ Cf. *Keph.* 17 (57,17–18); 66 (165,11–12).

⁷ *Keph.* 41 (105,32–33). The incarceration of the elements of Darkness in the prison made by the Great Builder is also mentioned in *Keph.* 28 (80,1–2); 24 (75,24–28); the latter passage is fragmentary, but the sense can be restored by comparison with Augustine *C. Faustum* 13.6 (384,8–9). Ephraim Syrus also refers repeatedly to this doctrine in his anti-Manichaean polemic; see his *Second Discourse to Hypatius* (Mitchell, vol. 1, xxix–xxx, xxxv, xlvii); *Third Discourse to Hypatius* (idem, lxxii–lxxiii); and *Fourth Discourse to Hypatius* (idem, lxxiv–lxxv). Cf. Jackson, 'Sketch,' 198: 'We know from the Manichaean texts that Ahriman, Āz (Greed) and the other demons are smitten, but we learn also from the Arabic authors that one last offensive is undertaken by them, headed by Hummāma, the female spirit of Darkness personified, in an attempt to combat the forces of light, but all is futile. An-Nadim in his *Fihrist*, quoting Mani recounts . . . : "This conflagration, Mānī says, lasts for 1468 years; and when this occurrence comes to an end and Hummāma, Spirit of Darkness, observes the liberation of the Light and the ascent of the Angels, Hosts and Guardians, she becomes humbled. And when she watches the battle and sees how the Hosts beset her round about, she flees to the Grave that is prepared for her. Thereupon, he (i.e., its Builder) closes the Grave with a stone as big as the world, and imprisons her therein. Thus the Light becomes safe at last from the Darkness and from being harmed by it."

⁸ *Keph.* 41 (105,31–32); compare *Keph.* 2 (21,35; 22,15–16); 24 (76,4–8); 40 (105,6–7.10); 41 (106,1–20); 106 (260,23); MacKenzie, 521 (ll. 385–387: 'And he will not be bound in the eternal prison with Ahramen [and] the demons'); Augustine *C. Faustum* 20.17 (558,3–4); *De haeresibus* 46 (96,193–195). Compare *Paraphrase of Shem* (NHC VII,1 45,14–20): 'And in the last day the forms (μορφή) of Nature (φύσις) will be destroyed with the winds and all their demons (δαίμων); they will become a dark lump (βῶλος), just as they were from the beginning' (tr. *The Coptic Gnostic Library*, vol. 4 [Leiden: Brill, 2000], 119).

reproducing and thereby mustering the forces necessary to launch a new offensive against the realm of Light.⁹

The souls of those who had refused to embrace the teachings of Mani and purify themselves would then be affixed (*affigi*) to the globular mass in which the male demons were imprisoned.¹⁰ It was explained that these souls were not bound *within* the globular mass (which would have perpetuated the mixing of Light and Darkness and the oppression of the former by the latter). Instead, having been separated from the Darkness, these souls were affixed to the outside (*forinsecus*) of the globular mass as a kind of covering (*tectorium*).¹¹ These souls were apparently intended

⁹ *Keph.* 40 (105,10–14); 41 (105,30–35). This idea also appears to be mentioned in the Coptic Manichaean *Homilies*; see *Hom.* 2 (41,6–8: ‘he will confine Darkness in the [grave; its masculinity] and its femininity’) with the discussion of Pedersen, *Studies*, 148, 379–380.

¹⁰ Augustine *De natura boni* 42 (876,29: affigi in aeternum globo horribili tenebrarum); (878,16: affigat naturam lucis); 47 (888,4: in horribili globo in aeternum confixa); *C. Faustum* 21.16 (589,22–23: horrendo globo in aeternum ... adfigeret); *C. Felicem* 2.16 (845,15: figitur in globo); *De haeresibus* 46 (96,196: globo ... accessurum ... et adhaesurum); compare Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 5 (953,10–11, quoting the second book of the Manichaean *Treasure*: configentur in praedicto horribili globo); Titus of Bostra 1.41 (25,18 Lagarde: ἐν τῷ βῶλῳ ... ἐμπαγήσονται ἅμα τῇ κακίᾳ); Simplicius *Comm. in Epicteti enchiridion* (71,3–4 Dübner: τῷ κακῷ συγκεκολλημέναι); *Acta Archelai* 11.3 (19,17 Beeson) = Epiphanius *Panarion* 66.30.2 (67,8 Holl: δεδεμένος εἰς τὴν βῶλον). Compare also *Keph.* 40 (105,4–8): ‘They will be crucified on the enemy ... They will seal up this final lump when all the likenesses and images of every shape will be nailed in it. Also, those will be b[ound] by this last fetter for all eternity’ (tr. I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher* [Leiden: Brill, 1995], 109). Cf. also MacKenzie, 521 (ll. 392–399): ‘And how should we save you from this torment, when this (is) a judgement from within the justice [of the gods?]. And [then] every soul which shall be born in a body with Az and Lust, and bear Az and Lust and not cast them off, and become self-indulgent and greedy, and keep [the creatures of] Ahramen, he shall be bound with Ahramen [and] the demons in the eternal prison.’

¹¹ Augustine *C. Felicem* 2.7 (835,10–11: uelut tectorium genti tenebrarum); *De haeresibus* 46 (96,196–197: quasi coopertorium atque tectorium); cf. *C. Faustum* 20.9 (546,6–7: ad illius ultimi globi catastolium); *C. Faustum* 21.16 (589, 1–2: unde tegetur globus); compare Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 49 (975,22: lucidum illud tectorium damnatarum animarum). This conception is also discussed in an obscure passage in *Keph.* 40; 105,5–6.9–10: ‘They will seal up [= make the cover of?] this final lump ... and be [plac]ed as a footstool [or: foundation?] and a mat [or: base?] and a rag [or: cover?] for this coffin’; on the interpretation of this difficult text, see Gardner, 109 with nn. 1–2; E.B. Smagina, ‘Some Words with Unknown Meaning in Coptic Manichaean Texts’, *Enchoria* 17 (1990): 116–118; and Pedersen, *Studies*, 388–389. On the attachment of the unreclaimed light of alienated souls to the outside of the globular mass, while the forces of darkness are imprisoned inside the latter, see *De natura boni* 42 (878,14–16: includat in globo tamquam in carcere gentem tenebrarum et forinsecus affigat naturam lucis); *C. Faustum* 22.22 (617,15–16); *C. Secundinum* 20 (936,1); and compare Ephraim Syrus *Third Discourse to Hypatius* (Mitchell, vol. 1, lxxii).

to function as sentries, being placed on the globular mass to guard and keep watch over the forces of Darkness imprisoned within it.¹²

The cosmic conflict between good and evil therefore did admit of a certain resolution. At the end Light and Darkness are again separated from one another. The Light has once again gained the upper hand and the Darkness has been prevented from further disturbing the serenity that exists in the realm of Light. Even those errant souls who have opposed the Religion of Light have been in some sense reclaimed and reformed, since they are no longer mixed with the Darkness and now work to protect the interests of the realm of Light.

Although the Manichaean account does have a clear underlying logic, there are certain ambiguities and tensions within the account that are never satisfactorily resolved. The most important of these has to do with the way in which persons and substances are related.

In discussing this point, it is helpful to think of the Manichaean doctrine of the globular mass as depending upon two more basic claims. The first was a *prophetic* claim about one's obligations toward certain divine and human persons. In propagating their religion, Manichaeans were quite willing to recognize that other religious teachers such as Jesus and Buddha had been vehicles of divine revelation. At the same time, they insisted that Mani had brought the definitive and final revelation for this present age, showing that one's true origin and destiny lay with the Father of Greatness in the realm of Light. One's salvation therefore depended upon acceptance of Mani's teachings, entry into the Manichaean community and active support of that community's ascetic practices.¹³

The importance of this prophetic announcement was reinforced by a corresponding warning. Rejection of the claims of Mani and the Manichaean community could only result in a failure to achieve salvation. Those indifferent or hostile to the Religion of Light would be denied

¹² See the clarification made by Felix in *C. Felicem* 2.16 (845,11–13: sed Manichaeus hoc dicit, quia non damnati sunt, sed ad custodiam positi sunt illius gentis tenebrarum) and the quotation from the Manichaean *Treasure* given in Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 5 (953,9–16; compare also 43 [971,31–972,1]).

¹³ In *C. Faustum* 13.18 (400,5–6), Augustine refers to certain pious acts of the Manichaean elect 'for which you are rewarded by not being condemned to the mass of darkness forever [in globo aeterno damnemini], along with that part of the light which cannot be extricated' (tr. R. Stothert, *Writings in Connection with the Manichaean Heresy* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1872], 255).

access to the abode of the Father of Greatness and forced to endure an ongoing association with the evil forces of Darkness.¹⁴

This prophetic announcement and warning performed two important functions. First, it highlighted the uniqueness and exclusive claims of the Manichaean religion and helped to reinforce the conceptual and social boundaries that separated adherents from non-adherents. Second, it served to emphasize individual moral responsibility and to encourage those who were not living in accordance with the community ideal to repent and actively support the community's mission.¹⁵

The Manichaeans also made a *cosmological* claim about substances, asserting that the constitution and fundamental dynamics of the present world must be understood in terms of the properties of two underlying substances, namely Light and Darkness. Part of Manichaeism's appeal lay in its claim to be able to explain the ongoing existence of evils in the world by reference to a detailed narrative about these two underlying substances and to offer a corresponding set of redemptive ascetic practices.

It is initially difficult to see how Manichaeism would be able to reconcile the claim about personal agents with the claim about the two underlying substances of which the world is composed. It has normally been assumed that persons and substances have opposing characteristics. Persons are animate, can move and act on themselves and others, and can be appropriate subjects of moral evaluation and reward and punishment. Substances are inanimate, passive substrates that can neither be praised nor blamed.

Manichaean mythology attempted to overcome the dichotomy between personal beings and underlying substances by conflating the two categories and ascribing to each of the primordial substances various

¹⁴ *Keph.* 66 (165,11–15); *Acta Archelai* 11.3 (18,26–19,18 Beeson) = Epiphanius *Panarion* 66.30.1–2 (67,4–9 Holl): 'Concerning the prophets that you have, he [sc. Mani] says this: There is a spirit of impiety or of lawlessness which belongs to the darkness that came up in the beginning and for this reason, having been deceived by it, they did not speak truly. For that ruler blinded their understanding, and if anyone follows their words he will die for all ages, bound to the globular mass, seeing that he did not learn the knowledge of the Paraclete' (tr. mine).

¹⁵ Cf. *Keph.* 66 (165,18–24); 58 (148,14–20); 59 (149,29–151,4); compare Simplicius *Comm. in Epicteti enchiridion* (70,52–71,4 Dübner). 'For those who turn away from the redeeming knowledge and who reject the direction of Life which is bound with it . . . their soul is imprisoned for all eternity with the elements of darkness. This frightening prospect caused the Manichaeans to live in accordance with the teaching and to do penance if they broke the ethical norms and commandments' (M. Heuser, 'The Manichaean Myth,' in: *Studies in Manichaean Literature and Art*, ed. M. Heuser and H.J. Klimkeit [Leiden: Brill, 1998], 89). For a similar judgment, see Pedersen, *Studies*, 379–381.

capacities characteristic of personal agents. This was done in two ways. First, each of the primordial substances was held to have a corresponding principle of animation, motion and self-organization (ἐνθ' ὕμῃσις), all of these functions being normally characteristic of animal life. Each of the primordial substances was then anthropomorphized by being identified with a primordial divinity from whom one of the primordial realms and the various beings inhabiting it were derived (by way of emanation). As a result, Light and Darkness were held to possess the characteristics normally ascribed to personal agents (such as being appropriate objects of moral evaluation and reward or punishment) and not the characteristics traditionally ascribed to an inorganic substance or substrate.

This conflation of personal and impersonal categories is precisely the point at which Augustine chose to launch and systematically develop his first major criticism of Manichaeism, focusing on the consequences of this conflation for the doctrine of God. He argued that when the supreme principle was made to do double duty—being at once the supreme personal being and an underlying substrate of the world—all the limitations which characterize the matter underlying created things would have to be ascribed to God. Augustine makes this point very bluntly in *Conf.* 5.10.19, where he compares the Manichaeans' God to a block of matter.¹⁶ The same criticism is also made repeatedly throughout Augustine's anti-Manichaean works, most notably in the *Contra Faustum*, where Augustine criticizes his Manichaean opponent, saying: 'You cannot think of the divine substance except as being material.'¹⁷

To prove that God could not be both an agent and a substrate without being subject to the limitations of created matter, Augustine uses the Manichaean concept of the globular mass as an illustration. Because the doctrine makes God both a person and a substrate, two fundamental problems arise. First, he argues, this doctrine would seem to require that God be spatially confined and subject to division.¹⁸ Augustine notes that the doctrine depended upon another Manichaean belief, namely that all Light-beings had derived their existence from the Father of Greatness and shared in his substance. If this were true, Augustine reasons, then every soul that had been separated from Darkness—even those eternally affixed to the globular mass and alienated from the realm of Light—

¹⁶ *Conf.* 5.10.19 (106,21: moles corporum, 'a corporeal mass').

¹⁷ *C. Faustum* 20.11 (551,4–5: substantiam diuinam cogitare nisi corpoream numquam ualueritis); cf. *Conf.* 5.10.20 (107,9–10.15–18).

¹⁸ *C. Secundinum* 20 (938,7–10).

must be regarded as 'a part of God'.¹⁹ If the Manichaeans' stories about a portion of the light being seized, corrupted and punished by eternal exile are to be taken seriously, then one must assume that God was a substrate that could be divided into parts that were confined in space and separated from one another. This would reduce God to the level of matter, a most unhappy fate for a supreme deity.

Furthermore, Augustine argues, if God is made into a substrate, he will not only be divisible but also passible and corruptible. And this, Augustine claims, is precisely what one finds asserted in the Manichaeans' stories about the original war and its final outcome. In the original war, the divine substance is said to suffer at the hands of the race of Darkness and to be seduced and corrupted by the latter;²⁰ in the end, the unredeemed yet light-bearing souls must endure eternal exile on the globular mass.²¹ Since it is the nature of the weaker to suffer at the hands of the stronger, Augustine argues, one can only conclude that the Manichaeans imagine God to be weaker than the race of Darkness.²² Such weakness, he notes, would explain why God was afraid when he saw the race of Darkness invading. It also would explain how God could be compelled to hand over a part of himself to be so completely corrupted that it was unrecoverable and finally had to be affixed to the globular mass.²³

The doctrines of the original war and the globular mass, Augustine argues, create a dilemma for the Manichaeans. If they accept these doctrines, then they must also admit that the divine substance can be corrupted and is no better than the matter underlying created things. If, however, they admit that God is superior to the matter, they will have to confess that God is incorruptible and reject the doctrines contained in their mythology.

This dilemma regarding the corruptibility of the divine substance was hardly an invention of Augustine's own. It was a recurrent theme in Neoplatonic anti-Manichaean polemic and Augustine tells us in *Conf.*

¹⁹ *C. Felicem* 2.7 (835,14–15); 2.15 (845,4–5); *C. Secundinum* 20 (936,20–22); compare Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 12 (955,23–26: *dicit enim in fine ipsius epistolae ... ipsam dei partem, quae commixta est, non totam posse reuocari ad pristinam libertatem*).

²⁰ *C. Secundinum* 10 (919,15–18); 20 (936,6; 937,16–17); 23 (941,20–21); 26 (946,15); *De moribus Manichaeorum* 21.

²¹ *C. Felicem* 2.15 (844,19–21.24–25; 845,4–7).

²² *C. Secundinum* 10; 20.

²³ *C. Secundinum* 20 (937,23–25); 26 (946,14–17); *C. Felicem* 2.21–22 (851,29; 852,21–22.24–26); *C. Faustum* 13.6 (384,5–9).

7.2.3 that his friend Nebridius had challenged him with it while they were both in Carthage in the 370's and early 380's. The dilemma subsequently played an important role in two of Augustine's anti-Manichaean works, the *Contra Secundinum* and *Contra Felicem*, where it serves not only to refute Manichaean doctrines but also to defend Augustine's own Platonic distinction between the supreme, uncreated, incorruptible Good and all created, corruptible goods.²⁴

Augustine's second major criticism of Manichaean mythology focuses on the tension created in the account by the incomplete redemption of the Light. As long as the world was viewed purely in terms of underlying substances, there was no a priori reason to expect that there would be any limit to the amount of the Light that could be redeemed and returned to its original condition. It was only when the prophetic claim about persons was introduced, asserting obligations and warning of penalties for non-compliance, that there was a reason to anticipate a limit to the scope of redemption.²⁵

In criticizing the incomplete redemption of the light in the Manichaean myth, Augustine again uses the doctrine of the globular mass as an illustration and argues that its presuppositions would make God subject to the limitations experienced by created beings. Augustine's criticism again includes the presentation of a dilemma in which neither of the two possible outcomes presents a favorable picture of Manichaean mythology or the Manichaeans' God.

If the Manichaeans deny that their God shares in the passivity and powerlessness of matter, Augustine argues, they will be forced to make an even more damning admission. If God's surrender to the Darkness and his failure to recover all that belonged to him was not due to a lack of power, then one must conclude that it was due to a lack of either foreknowledge or justice.²⁶

²⁴ See especially *C. Secundinum* 10; 19–20 and *C. Felicem* 2.7–9, 14; compare *C. Faustum* 13.6 (384, 2–5).

²⁵ Insofar as every human being was a composite of good Light particles and evil matter and it was within the power of human agents to refuse to participate in the process of purification, there was always a possibility that some Light might not be recovered when the process of purification was concluded.

Cf. the Manichaean admission of free will and moral responsibility found in the excerpt from the *Treasure* which is quoted in *C. Felicem* 2.5 and Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 5.

²⁶ For a similar argument, see Titus of Bostra *C. Manichaeos* 1.31; 1.40 and Ephraim Syrus *Second Discourse to Hypatius* (Mitchell, vol. 1, xlv–xlvii).

Augustine considers and criticizes the first of these two alternatives in the *Contra Secundinum*. There he asks why God was unable to foresee that the part of himself that he had surrendered would be corrupted and turn out to be ultimately unrecoverable.²⁷

But the nature of God was taken captive; it became unjust; it cannot be purified wholly; it is forced to be condemned in the end. If from eternity he knew that this evil would befall him, no divine honor was due to him because of what he was.²⁸

Indeed, Augustine argues, the Manichaean deity's lack of foresight has disastrous consequences, making the cosmological narrative end with what can only be described as a colossal failure. Having handed over a part of himself to be corrupted and being finally unable to secure its purification and liberation despite all his plans and efforts, the Manichaean God must remain forever incomplete and imperfect.²⁹

Augustine then shows that the other possible solution to the dilemma—namely, recognizing God's power and foreknowledge but not his justice—is no better. If, Augustine continues, the Manichaeans wish to maintain both God's power and foreknowledge, then they must admit that their God surrendered a part of himself, knowing in advance that it would be corrupted and lost but being indifferent to its fate. Such a God, Augustine argues, would have to be regarded as unjust and cruel. Not only does he fail to take care of his own, he even makes the pure and blameless suffer untold evils and punishes them with eternal exile, though they had committed no fault of their own.³⁰

For part of your god was sent to suffer hopeless contamination that there might be a covering for the mass in which the enemy is to be buried forever alive ... Your god, it appears, is guilty of the crime with which you charge the race of darkness—of injuring both friends and enemies. The charge is proved in the case of your god, by that final mass in which his enemies are confined, while his own subjects are involved in it ... your god ... dooms his enemies to eternal destruction, and his friends to eternal punishment ... it was God himself that sent them to lose themselves in the realm

²⁷ A similar argument is advanced in Simplicius *Comm. in Epicteti enchiridion* (70,46–49 Dübner).

²⁸ *C. Secundinum* 20 (937,23–26; tr. R. Teske, *The Manichaean Debate* [Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2006], 384); compare Epiphanius *Panarion* 66.58.

²⁹ Compare Simplicius *Comm. in Epicteti enchiridion* (71,4–5 Dübner).

³⁰ Simplicius advances a similar argument against the Manichaeans (*Comm. in Epicteti enchiridion* 70,39–42 Dübner).

of darkness ... which was unjust, if he forced them against their will; while if they went willingly, he is ungrateful in punishing them ...³¹

Augustine argues that a deity who was so manifestly unjust and cruel could hardly be a worthy object of trust, adoration or petitionary prayer:

But when your soul offers praise to God, crying out that it is itself a particle of God held captive in the nation of darkness, what else does it do but insult God? For it testifies that God could not take care of himself against his enemies in any other way than by such a great corruption and so shameful a captivity of his own parts. For this reason even your prayers to your God cannot be acts of religion but only of hatred.³²

For what sin did you commit, when you belonged to him, that you should be thus punished by the god you cry to, not because you left him sinfully of your own choice; for he himself gave you to his enemies, to obtain peace for his kingdom ...

Nor can you use the words ... 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors' ... how can God forgive your debts, when he rather sinned against you by sending you into such a state ... So either he requires that you should forgive him his debt; or if he is not in debt to you, still less are you to him.³³

Augustine therefore concludes:

In that way it turns out that your God—not the true God but a false one, not located somewhere in reality but pictured in your heart—unhappily mingles, shamefully purifies, and cruelly condemns a part of himself ... Far be it from the faithful to believe that God afterward condemned his own substance, which he himself plunged into demons.³⁴

In his anti-Manichaean writings, Augustine developed this argument about the cruelty of the Manichaean God in some detail. Augustine was able to create a certain pathos by projecting features of the Catholic doctrine of Hell onto the Manichaean doctrine of the globular mass to make the latter seem even more inhumane and abhorrent. This was done in three ways.

³¹ *C. Faustum* 21.16 (588,28–589,3; 589,6–9.15–17.28–30; tr. Stothert, 398–399); for a similar line of argument, see *C. Felicem* 2.7–8; *C. Secundinum* 20; 23; *C. Faustum* 13.6; *C. Adimantum* 7.1.

³² *C. Faustum* 20.17 (557,4–11; tr. R. Teske, *Answer to Faustus a Manichaean* [Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2007], 275–276).

³³ *ibid.* (557,11–14; 557,27–558,2; 558,4–6.12–13; tr. Stothert, 373–374).

³⁴ *C. Felicem* 2.7 (835, 12–15); 2.13 (842,27–28) (tr. Teske, *Manichaean Debate*, 303; 308).

First, Augustine referred to the errant souls as being bound *in* the globular mass together with the forces of evil, just as lost souls are confined in Hell with the demons in Catholic doctrine.³⁵ This polemical addition to the Manichaean account, which is also found in the anti-Manichaean works of Ephraim Syrus and Titus of Bostra, stands in clear contradiction with the Manichaean writings known to Augustine and his opponents. As Augustine's own testimony shows, these writings asserted that lost souls were separated from evil and positioned on the surface of the globular mass as sentries, upholding the interests of the Realm of Light from which they had originated.

Second, Augustine refers to the errant souls as being damned, a description appropriate in the case of the Catholic doctrine of Hell but not the Manichaean doctrine of the globular mass.³⁶ Augustine's Manichaean opponent Felix criticizes Augustine's misleading treatment of this point, remarking,

And Mani says this: They are not sent into the Kingdom of God—but you assert that they are damned. But Mani asserts that they are not damned but placed on guard over that race of Darkness.³⁷

³⁵ *C. Faustum* 21.16 (587,27–588,1: illae ipsae animae in globo ligandae); *C. Felicem* 2.8 (835,30–836,1: pars Dei ... in globo ligata est); *C. Felicem* 2.15 (845,5: ligetur in aeternum globo tenebrarum); compare Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 31 (965,4–5: in globo semper tenebitur). This polemical interpretation may have been suggested by some of the language used in Manichaean texts, e.g. the phrase animae eadem ... relictæ in eodem tenebrarum globo, which occurs in a quotation from the *Treasure* given in Augustine *De natura boni* 42 (878, 24–25) and Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 5 (953,12–14). A similar ambiguity appears in the quotation ascribed to a Manichaean source in Ephraim Syrus *Third Discourse to Hypatius* (Mitchell, vol. 1, lxxii). It is also sometimes unclear in the Manichaean texts whether the term 'prison' is intended to be coextensive with the globular mass or is instead intended to indicate a broader enclosed area that includes the globular mass and the tomb; assuming the latter to be the case, souls could be represented as confined in prison without being confined within the globular mass itself.

³⁶ See *C. Faustum* 2.5 (258,29: damnari in aeternum); 5.7 (279,22: damnatis in globo); 13.18 (400,5–6: cum illa, quae liberari non potuerit, in globo aeterno damnemini); compare Evodius *De fide c. Manichaeos* 19 (958,32–33: et in globo tenebrarum in aeternum damnabitur); 49 (975,7; 975,21–23) and the discussion of Decret, *Aspects*, 317–318 (with 318 n. 1). This polemical theme is also developed in the exchange between Augustine and the Manichaean Felix in *C. Felicem* 2.8 (835,19–836,8).

³⁷ *C. Felicem* 2.16 (845,8–13: FEL. dixit: ... Et sic dicit Manichaeus, quia non sunt missi in regnum dei. Hoc enim adseris tu, quia damnati sunt; sed Manichaeus hoc dicit, quia non damnati sunt, sed ad custodiam positi sunt illius gentis tenebrarum).

Third, Augustine refers to the souls affixed to the globular mass suffering eternal punishments.³⁸ As far as I am aware, however, there is no evidence in any of the extant Manichaean sources to show that the souls affixed to the globular mass are made to suffer.³⁹ The final stages of the Manichaean eschatology focus not on ongoing retributive punishment but on the confinement of the forces of evil. Manichaean eschatology is principally concerned to show that this confinement of the forces of evil is of such a character as to prevent any future invasion of the realm of Light. There is also even some evidence in Augustine's anti-Manichaean works to show that his Manichaean opponents actually rejected the eternal torment of errant souls. For example, in *Contra Felicem* 2.8, Felix argues that the Manichaean doctrine of the globular mass is preferable to the Catholic doctrine of Hell precisely because the Catholic doctrine holds that errant souls will be eternally tormented and therefore is far more cruel than anything found in the Manichaean doctrine. Here Augustine's polemical zeal risks compromising the success of his broader argument. By assimilating the Manichaean doctrine of the globular mass to the Catholic doctrine of Hell, he gives his Manichaean opponents an opportunity not only to claim misrepresentation but also to turn the polemical focus back on Augustine's own conceptions of Hell and eternal torment.

³⁸ C. *Secundinum* 20 (936,21–22; 937,1–2: unde illi merito retribuere creditis horrendi illius globi aeterna subplicia ... et ad poenam ex aliqua etiam parte damnamdam traderet suam); C. *Faustum* 22.22 (614,24–25: pro grauibus criminibus illo globi subplicio plecterentur); 21,16 (587,26–27: inpendebant aeterna subplicia); compare Ephraim Syrus *Second Discourse to Hypatius* (Mitchell, vol. 1, xxix–xxx); *Third Discourse to Hypatius* (idem, lxxii); *Fifth Discourse to Hypatius* (idem, cx). Later Zoroastrian anti-Manichaean polemic can be seen to have taken a similar approach, interpreting Manichaean eschatology as condemning the vast majority of people to an eternal hell in which they were continually punished with terrible sufferings; see P.J. de Menasce, *Une apologétique mazdéenne du IXe siècle: Škand-gumānik vičār. La solution décisive des doutes* (Fribourg: Librairie de l'Université, 1945), 241–242.

³⁹ Decret (*Aspects*, 317–319; 318n. 1) arrives at a similar conclusion: 'Ces âmes perdues pour toujours souffrent-elles dans cette géhenne? Nous ne relevons dans le document manichéen aucun terme qui puisse dénoter les idées de souffrance ou de condamnation, idées connexes de la notion d'enfer dans l'enseignement de l'Église catholique ... L'évêque d'Hippone, tout occupé à noircir encore plus le "globe horrible" annoncé par Mani, ajoute essentiellement deux notions nouvelles qui sont étrangères à la description donnée par la *Lettre du Fondement* sur laquelle il prétend s'appuyer. Il s'agit des idées de damnation et de châtement; peine du dam et peine des sens, qui caractérisent les souffrances de l'enfer dans l'enseignement catholique ... Ces deux dernières caractéristiques (souffrance et damnation) ne sont relevées que dans la seule polémique d'Augustin. Elles ne peuvent donc être reçues sans réserves.'

In conclusion, Augustine's reception and polemical transformation of the doctrine of the globular mass plays an important role in his anti-Manichaean polemic. Augustine is able to use the doctrine of the globular mass to show that there is a fundamental tension in the Manichaean account. The account depends upon certain claims about persons and certain claims about fundamental underlying substances which are never integrated in a systematic and critical manner. Augustine focuses on the implications of this conflation of persons and substances for the doctrine of God. He argues that it risks identifying God and matter in such a way that one would have to ascribe to God the limitations proper to either matter (divisibility, passibility and corruptibility) or created beings (lack of foreknowledge or lack of justice). These arguments are intended not only to refute the Manichaean conception of God, but also to help prepare the way for Augustine's own Neoplatonic doctrine of God. In advancing his argument about the Manichaean God's lack of justice, Augustine attempts to gain a further polemical advantage by projecting certain features of the Catholic doctrine of Hell onto the Manichaean doctrine of the globular mass. This assimilation is rejected by Augustine's Manichaean opponents, who are able to turn Augustine's polemical excesses to their advantage, raising embarrassing questions about Augustine's own conceptions of Hell and final punishment.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

OPTIMI VIRI SANCTISSIMIQUE: AUGUSTINS KONZEPT EINER SYNTHESE VON ASKESE UND PASTORAL IN *DE MORIBUS* 1,65–80. EINE REPLIK AUF MANICHÄISCHE POLEMIK

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1. EINLEITUNG

Mit der Schrift *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* in zwei Büchern wendet sich Augustinus erstmals gegen die Manichäer.¹ Nach seiner Taufe begann das neue Mitglied der katholischen Kirche 387 diese Abhandlung in Rom und schloß sie wohl kurz nach seiner Rückkehr nach Afrika etwa 388/389 ab.² In ihr will er arglose Katholiken vor vermeintlich herausragenden asketischen Leistungen der Manichäer warnen, die aufgrund solcher angeblicher Großtaten ihre Ethik als eine der Ethik der katholischen Kirchen überlegene propagieren.³ Augustinus weist die manichäische Kritik an der katholischen

¹ Cf. Possid. *indic.* 4,1 (MA 2, p. 165).

² Zur Datierung cf. J.K. Coyle, *Augustine's 'De moribus ecclesiae catholicae'. A Study of the Work, its Composition and its Sources* (Paradosis 25), Freiburg i.Ü. 1978, 66–76 und E. Rutzenhöfer, *Augustinus. De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum—Die Lebensführung der katholischen Kirche und die Lebensführung der Manichäer. Zweisprachige Ausgabe eingeleitet, kommentiert und herausgegeben von E.R. (Augustinus. Opera—Werke 25), Paderborn et al. 2004, 7–9.*

³ Aug. *retr.* 1,7,1: ‚Manicheorum iactantiam de falsa et fallaci continentia vel abstinentia, qua se ad imperitos decipiendos veris christianis, quibus comparandi non sunt, insuper praeferunt.‘ Zur Frage der Tiefe der augustinischen Kenntnisse des Manichäismus cf. jüngst die überzeugende Studie des Jubilars: J. van Oort, *The Young Augustine's Knowledge of Manichaeism: An Analysis of the Confessiones and Some Other Relevant Texts: Vigiliae Christianae* 62 (2008) 441–466, zu *mor.* besonders 457–459, und Id., *Augustin und der Manichäismus: Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 46 (1994) 126–142, mit umfangreichen Literaturhinweisen 126 sq., n. 1.

Sittenlehre dergestalt zurück, daß er zunächst diese apologetisch darstellt und dann im zweiten Buch zum Angriff auf die manichäischen Auffassungen übergeht.

Neben der manichäischen Ablehnung des Alten Testaments war für ihn der arrogante wie unbegründete „asketische Nimbus“,⁴ mit dem sich die Manichäer umgaben, ein großes Ärgernis.⁵ Entsprechend konzipierte er das erste Buch von *De moribus* mit drei einleitenden Paragraphen, zwei Hauptteilen und einem umfangreichen Schlußabschnitt.⁶ Im ersten Hauptteil (*mor.* 1,4–24) legt Augustinus dar, daß bei der Suche nach einer Antwort auf die Frage, wie der Mensch leben müsse, um wirklich glücklich zu werden, sich sein Leben an der *virtus* zu orientieren habe, die in der Nachfolge Christi bestehe. Im zweiten Teil (*mor.* 1,25–61) beschäftigt er sich mit den vier Kardinaltugenden und ihrem Verhältnis zur Gottes-, Selbst- und Nächstenliebe. Der Schlußteil (*mor.* 1,62–80) preist die katholische Kirche und ihre Weise, ein sittlich gutes Leben zu führen, die trotz aller manichäischen Polemik der Lebensweise der Manichäer überlegen ist.

Der vorliegende Beitrag wird sich mit diesen letzten Paragraphen des ersten Buches von *De moribus* näher beschäftigen. Dabei soll gezeigt werden, wie sich bereits hier deutlich die Elemente abzeichnen, die später für die Konzeption des augustininischen Mönchtums charakteristisch werden: Die Synthese von Askese und Pastoral.

2. DIE BEISPIELREIHE DER ECHTEN CHRISTLICHEN ASKESE

In *mor.* 1,65–80 stellt Augustinus der seiner Ansicht nach falschen manichäischen Askese fünf herausragende Beispiele für wahre christliche, d. h. katholische Askese gegenüber:⁷

⁴ P. Keseling, *Das Ethos der Christen. Des Aurelius Augustinus Buch „Von den Sitten der katholischen Kirche“, übertragen und erläutert von P.K., Regensburg/Münster 1948*, 16.

⁵ Aug. *retr.* 1,7,1; cf. n. 3.

⁶ Cf. R. Teske, Introduction: *The Manichean Debate* (The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century 1,19), Hyde Park, N.Y. 2006, 17–27 und Rutzenhöfer, *Augustinus. De moribus* (wie n. 2); siehe auch Coyle, *Augustine's „De moribus“* (wie n. 2), 79–83 und A. Pieretti, Introduzione: *Sant'Agostino. Polemica con i Manichei* (Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana 1,13,1), Roma 1997, 3–10.

⁷ *Mor.* 1,66: ‚vita ad exemplum;‘ cf. Coyle, *Augustine's „De moribus“* (wie n. 2) 205–207.

2.1. Anachoreten im Osten

Augustinus eröffnet seine Beispielreihe (*mor.* 1,65 sq.) mit der Darstellung von Christen, die durch ihren Lebenswandel und ihre einzigartige Enthaltensamkeit bereits vollkommen geworden⁸ und so zur Schau überirdischer Dinge gelangt seien.⁹ Er behauptet, daß es sich hier um eine überall anzutreffende und große, ja ständig wachsende Schar solcher Asketen handele, was auch jedermann bekannt sei;¹⁰ vor allen Dingen jedoch begegne man diesen *perfecti Christiani* im Orient und in Ägypten.¹¹ Augustinus spricht hier also ganz offensichtlich von Anachoreten. Rhetorisch sehr geschickt präsentiert er diese asketische Lebensform und ihre Vertreter in der Form einer Praeteritio: Obwohl gerade diese radikale Art von Askese wie kaum eine andere geeignet erscheinen würde, die manichäischen Ansprüche auf sittliche Überlegenheit zurückzuweisen, betont Augustinus mehrfach, sie nicht weiter darlegen zu wollen,¹² denn deren Heiligkeit spreche für sich selbst.¹³

Wie zu erwarten tut er es dennoch und beschreibt das Leben der Anachoreten sogar recht ausführlich: Sie würden völlig abgeschieden und nur von Wasser und Brot leben, das ihnen ab und zu gebracht werde, in ständiger Zwiesprache mit Gott und in Betrachtung seiner Herrlichkeit, weshalb Augustinus sie nicht nur als „Heilige“ (*sancti*), sondern gar als „Gipfel der Heiligkeit“ (*fastigium sanctitatis*) ansieht.¹⁴

Trotz dieser Hochschätzung der Anachoreten verschweigt Augustinus nicht die gegen sie vorgebrachte Kritik. Offensichtlich wurde ihnen nämlich teilweise der Vorwurf gemacht, einen zu radikalen Bruch mit der Welt vollzogen zu haben und daher keinen Beitrag mehr für die Gemeinschaft der Menschen zu leisten,¹⁵ denn Augustinus sieht sich

⁸ *Mor.* 1,65: ‚perfectorum Christianorum ... mores et continentiam singularem.‘

⁹ *Mor.* 1,65: ‚praestantius est rebus humanis.‘

¹⁰ *Mor.* 1,65: ‚quis enim nescit summae continentiae hominum Christianorum multitudinem per totum orbem in dies magis magisque diffundi.‘

¹¹ *Mor.* 1,65: ‚in oriente maxime atque Aegypto.‘

¹² *Mor.* 1,65: ‚nec ea dicam;‘ *ib.* 1,66: ‚nihil de his dicam;‘ *ib.*: ‚nihil, inquam, de his loquar.‘

¹³ *Mor.* 1,66: ‚sua sponte mirandum et honorandum videtur.‘

¹⁴ *Mor.* 1,66: ‚qui secretissimi penitus ab omni hominum conspectu, pane solo, qui eis per digesta intervalla temporum affertur, et aqua contenti, desertissimas terras incolunt perfruentes colloquio dei, cui puris mentibus inhaeserunt et eius pulchritudinis contemplatione beatissimi, quae nisi sanctorum intellectu percipi non potest. ... hoc tam excelens fastigium sanctitatis. ... sanctissimorum catholicae fidei Christianorum.‘

¹⁵ *Mor.* 1,66: ‚videntur enim nonnullis res humanas plus quam oporteret deseruisse.‘

genötigt, den Wert und geistigen Nutzen dieses kontemplativen Lebens aufgrund des Gebetes und vorbildlichen Lebenswandels herauszustellen.¹⁶ Ein zweiter von Augustinus referierter Kritikpunkt zielte auf den Rigorismus der anachoretischen Askese hinsichtlich des Maßhaltens (*temperantia*) und der Enthaltbarkeit (*continentia*), welche als ‚Hyperaskese‘ auf menschliche Verhältnisse reduziert und in die Schranken gewiesen werden müsse.¹⁷ Dennoch würden selbst die Kritiker anerkennen, daß hier Übermenschliches geleistet werde.¹⁸ Freilich bekennt Augustinus, daß eine solche Praxis, wie sie die Anachoreten übten, über seine Kräfte gehe.¹⁹

2.2. Zönobiten im Osten

Als zweites sittlich herausragendes Exempel innerhalb der katholischen Kirche beschreibt Augustinus das Leben der östlichen Zönobiten: zunächst Männerklöster (*mor.* 1,67), dann Frauenklöster (*mor.* 1,68). Das wesentliche Merkmal dieser Form der Askese, die gleichfalls weltverachtend und -fliehend sei, bestehe darin, ein keusches und heiligmäßiges Leben innerhalb einer Gemeinschaft zu führen.²⁰ Dies vollziehe sich in gemeinsamen Gebeten, Lesungen und Gesprächen einerseits sowie dem Fehlen von Stolz, Eigensinn und Mißgunst andererseits, an deren Stelle Bescheidenheit, Anspruchslosigkeit und Friedfertigkeit für ein einträchtiges und auf Gott ausgerichtetes Leben getreten seien.²¹ Ihnen sei bewußt, daß die Fähigkeit dazu allein von Gott stamme.²² Privat-

¹⁶ *Mor.* 1,66: ‚quantum nobis eorum animus in orationibus prosit et vita ad exemplum.‘

¹⁷ *Mor.* 1,66: ‚in tantum processisse temperantiam et continentiam . . . , ut restringenda nonnullis et quasi ad humanos fines revocanda videatur.‘

¹⁸ *Mor.* 1,66: ‚... supra homines illorum animos evasisse ab his etiam quibus id displicet iudicatur.‘

¹⁹ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚hoc excedit nostram tolerantiam;‘ cf. *conf.* 10,70, die einzige Stelle, in der Augustinus mit dem Gedanken spielt, selbst anachoretisch zu leben (‚conterritus peccatis meis et mole miseriae meae agitaveram corde meditatusque fueram fugam in solitudinem, sed prohibuisti me et confirmasti me dicens: ideo Christus pro omnibus mortuus est, ut qui vivunt iam non sibi vivant, sed ei qui pro ipsis mortuus est‘).

²⁰ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚qui contemptis atque desertis mundi huius illecebris, in communem vitam sanctissimam et castissimam congregati, simul aetatem agunt.‘

²¹ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚videntes in orationibus, in lectionibus, in disputationibus, nulla superbia tumidi, nulla pervicacia turbulenti, nulla invidentia lividi, sed modesti, verecundi, placati concordissimam vitam et intentissimam in deum.‘

²² *Mor.* 1,67: ‚... gratissimum munus . . . , a quo ista posse meruerunt.‘

besitz existiere nicht, und der Lebensunterhalt werde nicht durch Almosenempfang, sondern mittels körperlicher Arbeit verdient, jedoch ohne dabei den Geist von Gott abzulenken.²³

Zu diesem Zweck seien die Gemeinschaften in Zehnergruppen, sogenannten Dekanien,²⁴ gegliedert, deren Vorsteher, der Dekan, die Arbeitserträge verwalte, so daß die übrigen sich nicht mehr um die Dinge des täglichen Lebens wie Nahrung, Kleidung oder ähnliches kümmern müßten; auch bei Krankheit sei der Dekan für sie verantwortlich.²⁵ Bei diesem Amt handelt es sich offenbar um eine mittlere hierarchische Ebene, denn den Dekanen steht ein *pater* als Oberhaupt der gesamten Gemeinschaft vor, dem sie rechenschaftspflichtig sind.²⁶ Eine solche Gemeinschaft umfaßt nach dem Bericht Augustins wenigstens 3000 Mönche,²⁷ die „Söhne“ genannt würden²⁸—entsprechend zum *pater*-Titel des Vorstehers. Nach diesem Vater-Sohn-Schema seien die *patres* für alles verantwortlich, wobei sie selbst ein vorbildliches Leben führten.²⁹ Wie schon bei den ‚einfachen‘ Mönchen hebt Augustinus auch bei den *patres* das Fehlen jeglichen Stolzes hervor (*nulla superbia*). Überdies zeichneten sie sich durch hohe theologische Gelehrsamkeit aus,³⁰ die sie zur allabendlichen Belehrung ihrer Gemeinschaft mittels eines Vortrages

²³ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚nemo quicquam possidet proprium, nemo cuiquam onerosus est. operantur manibus ea quibus et corpus pasci possit et a deo mens impediri non possit.‘ Bereits hier zeigt sich, daß Augustinus großen Wert auf die wirtschaftliche Selbständigkeit der Mönche legt, die sich ihr Auskommen durch Arbeit anstelle von Spenden sichern sollen; cf. seine spätere, an Bischof Aurelius von Karthago gerichtete Schrift (400/401) *De opere monachorum*; dazu jüngst cf. A.E.J. Grote, No *scriptorium* in the Monastery of Carthage? Observations on Writing and Manual Labour in Augustine’s *De opere monachorum*: *Studia Patristica* 45 (2010) 55–60.

²⁴ Dies entspricht der für die Pachomius-Klöster in Ägypten überlieferten Organisationsstruktur; cf. A.E.J. Grote, *Anachorese und Zönbium. Der Rekurs des frühen westlichen Mönchtums auf monastische Konzepte des Ostens* (Historische Forschungen 23), Stuttgart 2001, 215–217; zur Quellenfrage von Augustins Kenntnissen über das östliche Mönchtum cf. ib. 25–28.

²⁵ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚opus autem suum tradunt eis quos decanos vocant, eo quod sint deis praepositi, ut neminem illorum cura sui corporis tangat neque in cibo neque in vestimento neque si quid aliud opus est vel quotidianae necessitati vel mutatae, ut assolet, valetudini.‘

²⁶ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚rationem tamen etiam ipsi reddunt uni, quem patrem vocant.‘

²⁷ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚conveniunt ad singulos patres terna ut minimum hominum millia, nam etiam multo numerosiores sub uno agunt.‘

²⁸ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚quos filios appellant.‘

²⁹ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚non solum sanctissimi moribus sed etiam ... omnibus rebus excelsi, ... consulunt iis.‘

³⁰ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚divina doctrina excellentissimi.‘

vor dem Abendessen nützten.³¹ Das gegenseitige Verhältnis von *pater* und *fili* sei durch *auctoritas* und *obtemperantia* bestimmt,³² die sich auch und gerade während der Ansprache des Oberen zeige.³³

Ausführlich schildert Augustinus die Einfachheit der Ernährung in diesen Gemeinschaften. Die abendliche Mahlzeit diene nur der körperlichen Stärkung und Gesundheit, so daß lediglich ein kärgliches Mahl bereitet werde.³⁴ Es gebe daher weder Fleisch noch Wein und auch sonst keine erlesenen Speisen, um erst gar keine Lust am Essen und Trinken aufkommen zu lassen.³⁵ Der Überschuß, der in diesen Gemeinschaften aufgrund ihrer Arbeitserträge und einfachen Lebensweise entstehe, werde sorgfältig unter Bedürftige verteilt und sei mitunter so groß, daß ganze Schiffsladungen in Notstandsgebiete entsandt werden könnten.³⁶ Wie die Lebensweise der Anachoreten setzt Augustinus auch die der östlichen Zönobiten abschließend als allgemein bekannt voraus.³⁷

Ergänzend zu diesen Männergemeinschaften berichtet Augustinus von ähnlich lebenden weiblichen Zönobiten im Osten, die sich in der weiteren Umgebung der männlichen befänden.³⁸ Er betont dabei nachdrücklich, wie diese alles tun, um ihren guten sittlichen Ruf zu bewahren, so daß allenfalls alten und ehrwürdigen Mönchen Zutritt zu ihnen

³¹ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚conveniunt autem diei tempore extremo de suis quisque habitaculis, dum adhuc ieiuni sunt, ad audiendum illum patrem.‘

³² *Mor.* 1,67: ‚magna sua in iubendo auctoritate, magna illorum in obtemperando voluntate.‘

³³ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚audiunt autem incredibili studio, summo silentio.‘

³⁴ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚corpus deinde reficitur, quantum saluti et salubritati satis est ..., ne profundat vel in ea ipsa quae praesto sunt parce et vilissima.‘

³⁵ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚ita non solum a carnibus et a vino abstinere pro sufficientia domandarum libidinum, sed ab his etiam quae tanto concitatus ventris et gutturis provocant appetitum, quanto quasi mundiora nonnullis videntur.‘ Dies ist auch eine Polemik gegen die sogenannten *electi* der Manichäer, die zwar fleischlos, jedoch um so erlesener speisen (cf. *mor.* 2,29).

³⁶ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚sane quicquid necessario victui redundat—nam redundat plurimum ex operibus manuum, et epularum restrictione—, tanta cura egentibus distribuitur, quanta non ab ipsis qui distribuunt comparatum est. nullo modo namque satagunt, ut haec sibi abundent, sed omni modo agunt, ut non apud se remaneat quod abundaverit usque adeo, ut oneratas etiam naves in ea loca mittant, quae inopes incolunt.‘ Eine weitere Polemik gegen die Manichäer, die zur Vermeidung einer erneuten Bindung des Lichts in unwürdigen Körpern keinen Überschuß weggeben durften; cf. Rutzenhöfer, *Augustinus. De moribus* (wie n. 2) 131 n. 95.

³⁷ *Mor.* 1,67: ‚non opus est plura de re notissima dicere.‘

³⁸ *Mor.* 1,68: ‚haec etiam vita feminarum deo sollicitate casteque servientium, quae habitaculis segregatae ac remotae a viris quam longissime decet.‘

gewährt werde, aber auch dies nur bis zur Vorhalle.³⁹ Mit den männlichen Zönobien bildeten die weiblichen dennoch eine Art ‚Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft‘, indem erstere sie mit allem Lebensnotwendigen versorgten, wofür sie von letzteren im Tausch die Kleidung als Ergebnis der körperlichen Arbeit der Frauengemeinschaften erhielten.⁴⁰

Dieses Paradigma der zönobitisch lebenden Asketen und Asketinnen des Ostens schließt Augustinus mit einem Bescheidenheitstopos ab: Deren Lebensweise, Ordnung und Einrichtung würdevoll zu loben, sei ihm nicht möglich.⁴¹ Und würde er anstelle des schlichten, erzählenden Stils den erhabenen eines Lobredners wählen, dann fürchte er, so verstanden zu werden, als könnte das Dargelegte als solches ohne rhetorischen Schmuck nicht gefallen.⁴² Daher, so Augustinus ironisch, könnten die Manichäer lediglich an dieser seiner rhetorisch schmucklosen Darstellungsweise Kritik üben.⁴³

2.3. Kleriker

In einem nun relativ kurzen Abschnitt führt Augustinus als drittes Beispiel vorbildlicher und wahrer christlicher Askese die Kleriker an (*mor.* 1,69): In hierarchisch absteigender Reihe nennt er Bischöfe, Priester, Diakone⁴⁴ und weitere auf verschiedenste Weise im Dienst an den Sakramenten stehende Amtsträger.⁴⁵ Deren Lebensweise im Detail zu beschreiben, erscheint ihm nicht erforderlich, denn er begnügt sich mit dem Hinweis auf ihre Tugendhaftigkeit (*quorum virtus*). Stattdessen betont er sogleich deren besonders schwierige und entsprechend hoch einzuschätzende Leistung: Die Kleriker dienten Gott inmitten der unruhigen Welt und unter den verschiedensten Menschen—je unruhiger (*turbulentiore*) das mit diesem Dienst verbundene Leben sei, desto schwieriger (*difficilius*) und daher um so bewundernswerter (*mirabilior*), rühmenswerter

³⁹ *Mor.* 1,68: ‚ad quas iuvenum nullus accessus est neque ipsorum quamvis gravissimorum et probatissimorum senum nisi usque ad vestibulum.‘

⁴⁰ *Mor.* 1,68: ‚lanificio namque corpus exercent atque sustentant vestesque ipsas fratribus tradunt, ab his invicem quod victui opus est praesumentes.‘

⁴¹ *Mor.* 1,68: ‚hos mores, hanc vitam, hunc ordinem, hoc institutum si laudare velim, neque digne valeo.‘

⁴² *Mor.* 1,68: ‚vereor ne iudicare videar per seipsum tantummodo expositum placere non posse, si super narratoris simplicitatem cothurnum etiam laudatoris addendum putavero.‘

⁴³ *Mor.* 1,68: ‚haec, Manichaei, reprehendite, si potestis.‘

⁴⁴ *Mor.* 1,69: ‚quam enim multos episcopos optimos viros sanctissimosque cognovi, quam multos presbyteros, quam multos diaconos ...‘

⁴⁵ *Mor.* 1,69: ‚... et cuiuscemodi ministros divinatorum sacramentorum.‘

(*maiore praedicatione*) und wertvoller (*dignior*) erscheine es.⁴⁶ Die seelsorgerlichen Pflichten brächten es außerdem erschwerend mit sich, daß man sich weniger mit sich selbst beschäftigen könne, als sich vielmehr um die anvertraute Gemeinde kümmern müsse, die eben noch nicht so weit wie man selbst in der Tugend fortgeschritten sei. Zu diesem Zwecke müßten die Kleriker dem Lasterhaften ihrer Umgebung erst einmal selber standhalten, bevor sie dagegen angehen könnten.⁴⁷ Sozusagen mit einer Sentenz formuliert Augustinus: ‚*hi agunt ubi vivere discitur, illi ubi vivitur.*‘ Verglichen mit den zuvor beschriebenen Asketen des Ostens lebten die Kleriker also noch unter ‚Anfängern‘ im christlichen Glauben, während erstere sich schon unter ‚Fortgeschrittenen‘ aufhielten. Dennoch: Gerade diese Schwierigkeiten sind es, die für Augustinus den überragenden Wert einer solchen Lebensweise ausmachen, und so steigert er sich stilistisch in seinem Referat vom Komparativ zum Superlativ: ‚*difficillimum est hic tenere optimum vitae modum et animum pacatum atque tranquillum*‘—Die beste Lebensweise (‚*optimum vitae modum*‘) und den Seelenfrieden (‚*animum pacatum atque tranquillum*‘) zu bewahren, ist hier—also dort, wo die Kleriker tätig sind—am schwierigsten (‚*difficillimum est*‘).⁴⁸ Augustinus formuliert also hier in aller Deutlichkeit, daß trotz aller damit verbundenen Härten dies gewissermaßen das Ideal christlichen Lebens darstellt.⁴⁹

2.4. Stadtklöster im Westen

Nach dem Klerus zählt Augustinus nun als weiteres *exemplum* für wahre christliche Askese zönotische Gemeinschaften in Städten auf (*mor.*

⁴⁶ *Mor.* 1,69: ‚*quorum virtus eo mihi mirabilior et maiore praedicatione dignior videtur, quo difficilius est eam in multiplici hominum genere et in ista vita turbulentiore servare.*‘

⁴⁷ *Mor.* 1,69: ‚*non enim sanatis magis quam sanandis hominibus praesunt. perpetuanda sunt vitia multitudinis ut curentur, et prius toleranda quam sedanda est pestilentia.*‘

⁴⁸ *Mor.* 1,69: Cf. G. Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule*, Oxford 1987, 41: ‚Augustine here exalts the active life of the minister [sc. of religion] as the best‘. Lawless kommt jedoch etwas vorschnell zu seinem Ergebnis, denn die syntaktische Konstruktion der von Augustinus verwendeten Formulierung zeigt eine Abhängigkeit des Akkusativs *optimum vitae modum* vom Subjektsinfinitiv *tenere*, d. h. es geht zunächst darum, an der sittlich besten Lebensform—also dem asketischen Leben—auch in diesem dafür ungünstigen Umfeld (*hic*) festzuhalten; eine inhaltlich naheliegende und auch aus dem Kontext, wie noch weiter zu zeigen sein wird, abzuleitende Übersetzung, nach der es sich hier um den *optimus vitae modus* handle, ist nicht korrekt.

⁴⁹ Cf. Coyle, *Augustine's „De moribus“* (wie n. 2) 206 und 410 sq.; R. Dodaro, *Minister, ministerium: Augustinus-Lexikon* (hrsg. von C. Mayer et al.) 3 (2004–2010) (im Druck).

1,70–74). Dabei präsentiert er Beispiele aus dem Westen des Römischen Reiches, genauer: aus Italien. Das gemeinschaftliche Leben ermögliche es diesen Asketen, sich mitten im Getriebe der Stadt zurückzuziehen und ihrem Ideal treu zu bleiben.⁵⁰ So berichtet Augustinus von einem Kloster (*diversorium*) in Mailand, welches unter der Leitung eines hervorragenden und sehr gelehrten Priesters stehe.⁵¹ In Rom gebe es sogar mehrere solcher Gemeinschaften, die jeweils von einem durch Würde, Klugheit und theologische Bildung ausgezeichneten Mann geleitet würden; ihre Lebensführung sei gekennzeichnet durch christliche Liebe, Heiligkeit und Freiheit.⁵² Wie bei der Schilderung der östlichen Zönobiten hebt Augustinus auch hier hervor, daß die Mönche nicht von Almosen bzw. Bettelern lebten, sondern von ihrer Hände Arbeit, und zwar geschehe dies—wie er ausdrücklich betont—einerseits nach eben diesem östlichen Vorbild (*orientis more*), andererseits nach dem Beispiel des Apostels Paulus (*Pauli apostoli auctoritate*; vgl. 2 Thess 3,8–12).⁵³ Diesem Thema, der Handarbeit der Mönche, wird er später als Bischof von Hippo auf Bitten seines Amtskollegen Aurelius von Karthago ein eigenes Werk widmen.⁵⁴

Neben der körperlichen Arbeit der Mönche beeindruckte Augustinus in Rom das strenge Fasten: drei- oder mehrtägiger ununterbrochener Verzicht auf Speisen und Getränke. Dies hält er für bemerkenswert, da sonst allenthalben eine Mahlzeit am Abend sehr gebräuchlich sei.⁵⁵

Das Beispiel ‚Zönobitische Gemeinschaften in Städten des Westens‘ beendet Augustinus allerdings nicht, ohne auf weibliche Asketen

⁵⁰ Mor. 1,70: ‚laudabile Christianorum genus ... qui in civitatibus degunt a vulgari vita remotissimi.‘

⁵¹ Mor. 1,70: ‚vidi ego sanctorum diversorium Mediolani non paucorum hominum, quibus unus presbyter praeerat vir optimus et doctissimus;‘ zu den Fragen, inwieweit an diesem Kloster Bischof Ambrosius von Mailand beteiligt war und ob es mit dem Mailänder Kloster aus *conf.* 8,15 identisch ist, sowie zu seiner Lage in bzw. bei der Stadt cf. Coyle, *Augustine's ‚De moribus‘* (wie n. 2) 221–224.

⁵² Mor. 1,70: ‚Romae etiam plura cognovi, in quibus singuli gravitate atque prudentia et divina scientia praepollentes ceteris secum habitantibus praesunt Christiana caritate, sanctitate, libertate viventibus.‘

⁵³ Mor. 1,70: ‚ne ipsi quidem cuiquam onerosi sunt, sed orientis more et Pauli apostoli auctoritate manibus suis se transigunt.‘

⁵⁴ *De opere monachorum* aus etwa dem Jahre 400; cf. Grote, *No scriptorium* (wie n. 23).

⁵⁵ Mor. 1,70: ‚ieiunia etiam prorsus incredibilia multos exercere didici, non quotidie semel sub noctem reficiendo corpus, quod est usquequaque usitatissimum, sed continuum triduum vel amplius saepissime sine cibo ac potu ducere;‘ zum römischen Fastenbrauch cf. auch Aug. *ep.* 36 an Casulanus aus dem Jahr 396 und Johannes Cassian, der in den *Instituta* 3,10 gegen eine Verallgemeinerung des römischen Brauches eintritt.

hingewiesen zu haben: auf Witwen und Jungfrauen, die in ähnlicher Art und Weise zusammenlebten wie die Männer, ihren Unterhalt durch Spinnen und Weben verdienten und denen jeweils eine würdige, erprobte, in der Organisation und sittlichen Führung erfahrene sowie in der geistlichen Leitung geschickte Frau vorstehe.⁵⁶

Die Schilderung der westlichen monastischen Gemeinschaften gliedert Augustinus also parallel zu seiner Beschreibung der östlichen Zönbien (*mor.* 1,67 sq.). Ausgehend von der grundsätzlichen Differenzierung in männliche und weibliche Asketengemeinschaften hebt er in beiden *exempla* Ähnliches hervor: bei den Männerklöstern das einträchtige, heiligmäßige Leben, den selbsterarbeiteten Lebensunterhalt, die Qualitäten der Oberen; bei den Frauenklöstern das Anfertigen von Textilien sowie die gleichfalls in mehrfacher Hinsicht herausragenden Oberinnen.

Im folgenden führt Augustinus anhand der Speise- und Fastenvorschriften—v. a. unter Berufung auf Paulus, der mehrfach und ausführlich zitiert wird—aus, daß die asketische Praxis keinen Selbstzweck darstelle, sondern vielmehr nur das Mittel sei, um zum Endziel, nämlich zur Liebe, zu gelangen. So werde auch die Abstinenz von Wein und Fleisch nur aus Rücksicht auf die Schwachen, die solche Enthaltensamkeit noch nötig hätten und keinen Anstoß nehmen sollten, geübt oder um der eigenen sittlichen Freiheit willen.⁵⁷ Auch gebe es keine grundsätzlich unreinen Speisen (z. B. Fleisch), ganz im Gegensatz zu den Vorschriften der Manichäer.⁵⁸ Diese sich über drei Paragraphen (*mor.* 1,71–73) erstreckende Passage wird durch den Zweck der gesamten Schrift, speziell ihres Schlußteils (*exempla*), verständlich: Es geht Augustinus nicht um—wie er es nennt—törichte und abergläubische Verhaltensweisen, die keinesfalls zu einem heiligmäßigeren Leben führen,⁵⁹ sondern um die richtige christliche Askese, die primär in der inneren Einstellung wurzelt, im

⁵⁶ *Mor.* 1,70: ‚neque hoc in viris tantum sed etiam in feminis; quibus item multis viduis et virginibus simul habitantibus et lana ac tela victum quaeritantibus praesunt singulae gravissimae ac probatissimae, non tantum in instituendis componendisque moribus sed etiam instruendis mentibus peritae ac paratae.‘ Der Zusammenhang macht es wahrscheinlich, daß es sich hier um römische Frauenklöster handelt; cf. Coyle, *Augustine's De moribus* (wie n. 2) 409.

⁵⁷ *Mor.* 1,73: ‚continent se igitur hi qui possunt ... et a carnibus et a vino duas ob causas, vel propter fratrum imbecillitatem vel propter libertatem suam.‘

⁵⁸ *Mor.* 1,71; cf. W.J. Collinge, *Developments in Augustine's Theology of Christian Community Life After A.C. 395: Augustinian Studies* 16 (1985) 49–63, hier 49.

⁵⁹ *Mor.* 1,72: ‚et stulte nonnullos recusantes fraterne admonent, ne vana superstitione debiliores citius quam sanctiores fiant.‘

Gegensatz zur äußerlichen, eher auf asketische ‚Rekordleistungen‘ ausgerichteten Praxis der Manichäer, was er schließlich dem Unterschied zwischen Sein und Schein gleichstellt.⁶⁰

2.5. Einzelne ‚normale‘ Katholiken

Indem sich Augustinus danach gegen manichäische Vorwürfe verwahrt, einzelne sittlich schlechte Christen, von denen auch er mehr als genug kenne,⁶¹ als symptomatisch für die gesamte katholische Kirche anzusehen, zumal kein einziger der manichäischen *electi* die eigenen Vorschriften einhalte—abgesehen davon, daß sie ohnehin nichtig, schädlich und gotteslästerlich seien—, präsentiert er abschließend eine fünfte beispielhafte Gruppe für vorbildliches christliches Leben (*mor.* 1,75–80). Denn parallel zu den alleinlebenden Anachoreten des ersten *exemplum* schildert er nun einzelne Katholiken aus allen Bevölkerungsgruppen, die die Dinge der Welt „nicht gebrauchen“ oder zumindest „so gebrauchen, als ob sie sie nicht gebrauchen“; dazu gehörten Reiche ebenso wie Familienoberhäupter aus dem Bauernstand, Kaufleute wie Soldaten, Stadtvorsteher wie Senatoren, und zwar jeweils beiderlei Geschlechts.⁶² Diese seien mit ihrer inneren Einstellung nicht dieser Welt verhaftet und bewiesen somit—wie die Märtyrer früherer Zeiten durch ihren Tod—, daß sie die irdischen Güter beherrschten und nicht umgekehrt von ihnen beherrscht würden.⁶³ Mit weiteren ausführlichen Bezugnahmen auf Paulus (*mor.* 1,78–80) argumentiert Augustinus nochmals gegen die Manichäer und ihre extremen Vorschriften und legt erneut dar, daß es primär auf die innere Einstellung ankomme.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ *Mor.* 1,74: ‚iam videbitis quid inter ostentationem et sinceritatem ... intersit.‘

⁶¹ *Mor.* 1,75 sq.: Augustinus zählt zu diesen auch von ihm Kritisierten, die nur dem Namen nach Christen sind: Abergläubige, den Begierden Verfallene, Gräber- und Bilderverehrer, Totenmähler Haltende und Asketen, die sich nur so nennen.

⁶² *Mor.* 1,77: ‚sunt in ecclesia catholica innumerabiles fideles qui hoc mundo non utuntur, sunt qui utuntur tamquam non utentes ... quot enim tunc pecuniosi homines, quot patresfamilias rusticani, quot negotiatores, quot militares, quot primates urbium suarum, quot denique senatores, utriusque sexus.‘

⁶³ *Mor.* 1,77: ‚haec omnia vana et temporalia relinquentes, quibus utique quamvis uterentur, non detinebantur, mortem pro salubri fide ac religione subierunt demonstraruntque infidelibus a se potius illa omnia quam se ab eis esse possessos.‘ Diesen Argumentationszusammenhang stellt Augustinus auch in c. *Faust.* 5,9 her; cf. Coyle, *Augustine's ‚De moribus‘* (wie n. 2) 424–426.

⁶⁴ *Mor.* 1,80: ‚etsi exterior homo noster corrumpitur, sed interior renovatur de die in diem.‘

2.6. *Die Synthese von Askese und Pastoral als Ideal*

Die Beispielreihe Augustins in *mor.* 1,65–80 lautet zusammengefaßt also folgendermaßen:

- (1) Anachoreten des Ostens
- (2) männliche und weibliche Zönobiten des Ostens
- (3) Kleriker
- (4) männliche und weibliche Zönobiten des Westens
- (5) vorbildlich lebende einzelne ‚normale‘ Christen/Katholiken.

Hierbei fällt zunächst ein symmetrisches Anordnungsprinzip der fünf Beispiele auf: Um ein Zentrum, das Beispiel (3), sind gleichsam zwei Rahmen gelegt. Zunächst bilden die Beispiele (1) und (5), also Anachoreten des Ostens und vorbildlich lebende einzelne ‚normale‘ Gläubige, einen äußeren Rahmen; hier werden individuell asketisch lebende Christen vorgestellt. Innerhalb dieses Rahmens ordnet Augustinus mit den Beispielen (2) und (4), d. h. östlichen und westlichen Zönobiten beiderlei Geschlechts, einen zweiten Rahmen an; dieser wird von in Gemeinschaft lebenden Asketen gebildet. Den Mittel- und somit gewissermaßen Brennpunkt des Schlußteils dieses ersten Buches von *De moribus* bildet mit dem Beispiel (3) der asketisch, aber als Seelsorger mitten in der Welt lebende Klerus; dies ist das Zentrum, auf das es Augustinus hier in seinen Ausführungen ankommt.

Graphisch läßt sich dies folgendermaßen darstellen:

Anachoreten des Ostens
 männliche und weibliche Zönobiten des Ostens
 Kleriker
 männliche und weibliche Zönobiten des Westens
 einzelne ‚normale‘ Christen

Neben diese formale Auszeichnung, der zentralen Anordnung im Kontext, mit der die Kleriker bedacht werden und der auch nicht der im Vergleich geringste Umfang in der Darstellung der fünf Beispiele entgegensteht—eher ist das Gegenteil der Fall, wenn sich Augustinus auf wenige, aber eindeutige Aussagen beschränkt—, tritt eine inhaltliche: Obwohl der Autor in der gesamten, die katholische Kirche rühmenden Passage gattungsbedingt mit Superlativen nicht gerade zurückhaltend umgeht, so fällt doch ihre Häufung beim Preis der Askese und Pastoral verbindenden Lebensweise der Kleriker auf. Besonders sticht

dabei der dreimalige Gebrauch des Superlativs *optimus* heraus: ‚mores optimi, episcopus optimos, optimum vitae modum.‘

3. PARALLELTEXTE

Diese Hochschätzung kirchlicher Ämter in Verbindung mit der Klage über damit einhergehende Mühen und die fehlende Möglichkeit zur Kontemplation kommt auch in zwei weiteren Texten Augustins zum Ausdruck, die er etwa zeitgleich bzw. wenig später verfaßte. Im Jahr 389 schrieb er an seinen Freund Nebridius (*ep.* 10), daß es ein großes Gut sei, wenn von Gott bestimmte Kirchenvorsteher inmitten des Weltlärms, der zerstreuenden Gespräche und der Unterredungen Ruhe fänden und mit Gott ganz vertraut würden.⁶⁵ Noch deutlicher wird er in seinem Brief an den Bischof Valerius von Hippo kurz nach seiner Priesterweihe 391, in dem er um eine befristete Freistellung von seinen seelsorgerlichen Pflichten bittet, um sich auf diese durch intensives Schriftstudium vorbereiten zu können (*ep.* 21): Auch hier sieht er in den Ämtern, sofern sie ernstgenommen werden, den Höhepunkt aller Schwierigkeiten, Mühseligkeiten und Gefahren im Diesseits, preist sie jedoch als die größte Seligkeit vor Gott.⁶⁶ Augustinus fühlt also deutlich eine Spannung zwischen den mit dem kirchlichen Amt verbundenen Aufgaben, die ihn von einem Leben abzuhalten drohen, das er der Philosophie, dem Gebet, dem Studium und der Arbeit widmen wollte,⁶⁷ und dem Bewußtsein, daß es gerade diese apostolische Tätigkeit ist, die vor Gott am meisten zählt. Es überrascht daher nicht allzusehr, wenn Augustinus hier in *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* trotz der enormen Schwierigkeiten, den Seelenfrieden zu bewahren, die apostolische Tätigkeit, d. h. die Ausübung eines kirchlichen Amtes, zumindest objektiv als die beste bezeichnet—wenn auch vielleicht (noch) nicht für sich persönlich.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Aug. *ep.* 10,2: ‚hoc tantum bonum concedi arbitror, ut inter strepitus inquietosque conventus atque discursus cum morte familiaritatem ... faciant; deificari enim ... in otio licebat.‘

⁶⁶ *Ep.* 21,1: ‚item nihil esse in hac vita et maxime hoc tempore difficilius, laboriosius, periculosius episcopi aut presbyteri aut diaconi officio, sed apud deum nihil beatius, si eo modo militetur, quo noster imperator iubet.‘

⁶⁷ Aug. *conf.* 3,7–9 und 6,24; cf. A. Zumkeller, *Das Mönchtum des heiligen Augustinus* (Cassiciacum 11), Würzburg ²1968, 36 sq., 45 sq., 57.

⁶⁸ Coyle, *Augustine's 'De moribus'* (wie n. 2) 411: ‚The clerical state might be the ‚*optimus vitae modus*‘; but it was not, Augustine believed, the ideal state for him“ im Jahre 389. Diese Aussage ist inhaltlich—wie dargelegt—zweifelsohne korrekt, darf sich jedoch

4. CHARAKTERISTIKA DES AUGUSTINISCHEN MÖNCHTUMS

4.1. Augustins eigene Entwicklung

Nach diesen Beobachtungen zu Buch 1 von *De moribus* sowie zu den eben genannten *Briefen* 10 und 21 ist ein Blick auf Augustins Vorstellungen vom monastischen Leben—aber auch seine eigene Biographie—sehr aufschlußreich. Das wohl auffallendste Merkmal des augustinischen Mönchtums ist die „Synthese des Mönchischen und Kirchlichen“.⁶⁹ Sie zeigt sich darin, daß Augustinus „clericalized the monk“ und „monasticize[d] the cleric“.⁷⁰ Diese Einheit war jedoch keineswegs bereits am Anfang seines monastischen Lebens vorhanden, vielmehr ist sie erst das Ergebnis einer Entwicklung, die Augustinus bis hin zu seiner Tätigkeit als ‚Mönchsbischof‘ durchmachte.⁷¹ Sie muß zugleich als Teil seiner gesamten Entwicklung gesehen werden, die mit der Konversion 386/387 noch nicht abgeschlossen war, sondern in der auf das Mailänder Gartenerlebnis folgenden Taufe nur einen weiteren—wenn auch sehr markanten—Höhepunkt erreichte, sich aber noch bis in die Zeit seines Hirtenamtes von Hippo fortsetzte.⁷² Während Augustinus auf dem Cassiciacum nach seiner Bekehrung versuchte, ein eher philosophisches Leben zu führen, indem er sich besonders mit seinem ‚Ich‘ und dem Verhältnis zu Gott auseinandersetzte,⁷³ waren in diesem Zustand des Alleinseins seine Gefährten auf diesem Landgut vor allem Helfer bei der Suche nach der Wahrheit.⁷⁴ In der Folgezeit begann dann, wie in *mor.* 1,69 deutlich wird, das Bild des asketisch lebenden Seelsorgers, wenn auch in für ihn zunächst unerreichbarer Ferne, als Ideal aufzuleuchten. Schrittweise

nicht alleine auf die hier zumindest unscharfe Übersetzung des Satzes ‚difficillimum est hic tenere optimum vitae modum et animum pacatum atque tranquillum (*mor.* 1,69)‘ stützen; cf. oben n. 48. Augustinus ist in seiner Entwicklung offensichtlich noch nicht zu dem Punkt gelangt, dies direkt auszusprechen.

⁶⁹ R. Lorenz, Die Anfänge des abendländischen Mönchtums im 4. Jahrhundert: *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 77 (1966) 1–61, hier: 41; cf. A.E.J. Grote, *Monachus: Augustinus-Lexikon* (hrsg. von C. Mayer et al.) 3 (2004–2010) (im Druck); id., *Monasterium*: ib. (im Druck).

⁷⁰ Lawless, *Monastic Rule* (wie n. 48) 62.

⁷¹ Cf. auch A. Wucherer-Huldenfeld, Mönchtum und kirchlicher Dienst bei Augustin nach dem Bilde des Neubekehrten und des Bischofs: *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 82 (1960) 182–211.

⁷² Cf. H.-U. von Balthasar, *Augustinus. Das Antlitz der Kirche*, Einsiedeln ²1955, 11.

⁷³ Wucherer-Huldenfeld, Mönchtum und kirchlicher Dienst (wie n. 71) 183–191.

⁷⁴ Wucherer-Huldenfeld, Mönchtum und kirchlicher Dienst (wie n. 71) 196 sq.

führte ihn sein Weg weg vom eher kontemplativen, vorwiegend der Philosophie gewidmeten und zurückgezogenen Leben hin zu einer aktiven Tätigkeit innerhalb der Kirche.⁷⁵

Nach Afrika zurückgekehrt gründete er in seiner Heimatstadt eine monastische Gemeinschaft. Diese gelangte wohl schnell in den Ruf einer besonderen Frömmigkeit und Gelehrsamkeit,⁷⁶ und damit erschien deren Leiter als geeigneter Bischofs-Kandidat. Augustinus war sich ganz offensichtlich dessen bewußt, fürchtete jedoch um seine bisherige Lebensweise für den Fall einer Tätigkeit innerhalb der kirchlichen Hierarchie, so daß er—jedenfalls nach der Aussage seines Biographen Possidius—jeden Ort mit einem vakanten Bischofssitz mied.⁷⁷ Als er gleichwohl in Hippo 391 zunächst widerstrebend auf Verlangen der Gemeinde zum Priester geweiht worden war und dort das sogenannte ‚Gartenkloster‘ gegründet hatte, „empfing sein monastisches Leben zunehmend apostolischen Charakter“;⁷⁸ die verkündende Tätigkeit sah er nun als eine Pflicht an, der sich der Mönch nicht entziehen darf, wenn sie von ihm gefordert wird.

Allerdings empfand er weiterhin die Spannung zwischen Mönchtum und Priestertum, die er nun aber überwinden zu können glaubte, indem er seine „Auffassungen vom Mönchtum eng verknüpfte mit seiner Lehre von der Kirche. Die Ekklesiologie des Kirchenvaters aber wird beherrscht und geprägt durch die paulinische Vorstellung des *Corpus Christi*“.⁷⁹ Klösterliches Leben ist dabei ein hervorragendes Glied am Leibe Christi,⁸⁰ indem es nämlich—bildlich gesprochen—die Stelle des Saumes am Halsausschnitt eines Gewandes, das die Kirche als Ganzes verkörpere und durch welches Christus, das Haupt, schlüpfe, einnehme.⁸¹

Die endgültige Verschmelzung von Mönchtum und apostolischer Tätigkeit als charakteristisches Merkmal des augustinischen Mönchtums

⁷⁵ So stellte er das schon in Rom begonnene, jedoch wohl erst 391 in Thagaste beendete Werk *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*, aber auch weitere Schriften dieser Zeit in den Dienst der Kirche. Außer Briefen sind dies z. B.: *De Genesi adversus Manichaeos* oder *De vera religione*; cf. Possid. *vita Aug.* 3; cf. Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 57 sq.

⁷⁶ Possid. *vita Aug.* 3: „comperta eius bona fama atque doctrina.“

⁷⁷ Possid. *vita Aug.* 4: „solebat autem laicus, ut nobis dicebat, ab eis tantum ecclesiis, quae non haberent episcopos, suam abstinere praesentiam;“ cf. Aug. *ep.* 21; s. 355,2.

⁷⁸ Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 72.

⁷⁹ Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 144.

⁸⁰ Aug. *Io. eu. tr.* 13,12: „honorabilius membrum;“ cf. Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 145–147.

⁸¹ Aug. *en. Ps.* 132,7–9.

geschah schließlich nach der Bischofsweihe Augustins 395/396, indem er einerseits seinen Klerus in einem eigenen Kloster, dem *monasterium clericorum*, zusammenfaßte⁸² und andererseits vor allem das ‚Gartenkloster‘ zur Pflanzstätte des Diözesanklerus erhob.⁸³ Diese beiden Aspekte—gleichsam die Vorder- und Rückseite ein und derselben Münze—gilt es nun deutlicher herauszuarbeiten.

4.2. ‚Monastisierung‘ des Klerus

Der Entschluß Augustins, auch nach Antritt seines Hirtenamtes in Hippo die monastische Lebensweise im Kreise Gleichgesinnter weiterzuführen, ohne aber die Mitbrüder des Gartenklosters mit der Unruhe, die seine neuen Aufgaben zwangsläufig mit sich brachten, zu belasten, führte zur Gründung einer neuen, nur aus Klerikern bestehenden mönchischen Gemeinschaft direkt am Bischofshof.⁸⁴ Im Laufe der Zeit versuchte er sogar, seinen gesamten Klerus auf diese Lebensweise zu verpflichten, und weihte schließlich nur noch den Kandidaten, der bereit war, so zu leben.⁸⁵ Diese Auffassung mußte ihn konsequenterweise zur Intervention veranlassen, als zwei seiner Mönche das Kloster verlassen hatten, um sich in ihren Heimatdiözesen weihen zu lassen, da sonst gespottet würde, „ein schlechter Mönch könne ein guter Priester sein“.⁸⁶ Ebenso wurde ein Kleriker, der sein mönchisches ‚Gelübde‘ brach, suspendiert.⁸⁷ Die Aufnahme ins Klerikerkloster hatte demzufolge eine Art Profest mit Besitzverzicht und der Verpflichtung zum gemeinsamen Leben zur Vor-

⁸² Aug. s. 355,2.

⁸³ Possid. *vita* Aug. 11: ‚sub sancto et cum sancto Augustino in monasterio deo servientes ecclesiae Hipponiensi clerici ordinari coeperunt. ... nam ferme decem, quos ipse novi, sanctos ac venerabiles viros continentes et doctos beatissimus Augustinus diversis ecclesiis, nonnullis quoque eminentioribus, rogatus dedit;‘ cf. Aug. *ep.* 60,1 und 64,3.

⁸⁴ Aug. s. 355,2: ‚et ideo volui habere in ista domo episcopii mecum monasterium clericorum;‘ cf. s. 356,1.

⁸⁵ Aug. s. 356,14: ‚quomodo ergo quicumque voluisset extra manere et de suo vivere, non ei tollerem clericatum;‘ cf. s. 355,6.

⁸⁶ Aug. *ep.* 60,1: ‚vulgares de nobis iocabuntur dicentes ‚malus monachus bonus clericus est;‘ cf. *ep.* 64,3 und auch die Akten des Konzils von Karthago (13. Sept. 401) *Registri Ecclesiae Carthaginensis Excerpta* VII, Nr. 80 (CCL 149, p. 204).

⁸⁷ Aug. s. 356,14: ‚qui habere voluerit proprium et de proprio vivere et contra ista praecepta nostra facere, parum est ut dicam, non mecum manebit: sed et clericus non erit. ... sed delebo eum de tabula clericorum. ... ubi ego episcopus sum, ille clericus esse non possit.‘

aussetzung.⁸⁸ Das Leben dort dürfte im übrigen dem des Gartenklosters grundsätzlich vergleichbar gewesen sein, außer daß an die Stelle der körperlichen Arbeit die Seelsorge trat.⁸⁹

Betrachtet man die Entwicklung Augustins seit seiner Mailänder Zeit mit dem dort erwachenden Interesse für das zönotitische Mönchtum bis hin zum ‚Mönchs-bischof‘ von Hippo, der mit seinen Klerikern in einer Gemeinschaft zusammenlebte, so erscheint es eher unwahrscheinlich, daß dieses *monasterium clericorum* lediglich „ganz spontan aus praktischen Erwägungen“⁹⁰ entstanden sein soll. Vielmehr hat Augustinus das zönotitische Leben so hoch geschätzt, daß er es auch als Bischof nicht nur nicht aufgeben wollte, sondern gerade die Synthese von mönchischem Leben und priesterlichem Dienst als das Ideal ansah, wie es sich bereits schemenhaft in *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* abzeichnete.⁹¹ Daß überdies nach all dem bisher Gesagten die enge Bindung zwischen dem Bischof und dem Kleriker-kloster „zweifello“ von Ambrosius übernommen wurde,⁹² kann daher nur insofern richtig sein, als sich Augustinus von diesem Mailänder Beispiel, das er ja kannte,⁹³ wohl durchaus inspirieren ließ, es jedoch qualitativ auf eine völlig neue Ebene brachte, indem das Mönchtum und der priesterliche Dienst von ihm auch theologisch miteinander verbunden wurden.

4.3. ‚Klerikalisierung‘ des Mönchtums

Die Entsprechung zur ‚Monastisierung‘ des Klerus durch Augustinus bildet die enge Einbindung des Mönchtums in die Kirche und ihren apostolischen Auftrag.⁹⁴ Da in seiner von Paulus geprägten Ekklesiologie das Mönchtum ein Bestandteil, und zwar ein hervorragender,⁹⁵ der Gesamtkirche (*corpus Christi*) ist—also nichts, was neben der Kirche steht—,

⁸⁸ Aug. s. 355,6: ‚sic et clericus duas res professus est, et sanctitatem et clericatum. ... professus est communiter vivendi societatem;‘ cf. ib. 355,3 und s. 356,3.

⁸⁹ Aug. *op. mon.* 35 und 37; cf. Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 83.

⁹⁰ Lorenz, *Anfänge* (wie n. 69) 41.

⁹¹ Aug. *mor.* 1,69.

⁹² Lorenz, *Anfänge* (wie n. 69) 39, n. 7.

⁹³ Aug. *mor.* 1,70; *conf.* 8,15; ob Augustinus auch das Kleriker-kloster des Eusebius von Vercelli bekannt war, von dem Ambrosius *epist. extra coll.* 14,66 und 14,71 spricht, ist ungewiß.

⁹⁴ Cf. auch Wucherer-Huldenfeld, *Mönchtum und kirchlicher Dienst* (wie n. 71) 204–211.

⁹⁵ Aug. *Io. eu. tr.* 13,12: ‚paucarum feminarum est, et si dici virginitas in viris potest, paucorum virorum sancta integritas etiam corporis est in ecclesia, et honorabilius membrum est;‘ cf. *en. Ps.* 132,9; cf. Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 144.

und da das Mönchtum in besonderer Weise das Ideal der Urgemeinde (‚ein Herz und eine Seele‘) zu verwirklichen suchte, hat es wie die Kirche als Ganze auch teil an der Verkündigung der Frohen Botschaft. Diesem apostolischen Auftrag dürfe sich ein Mönch nicht entziehen, nur um in seiner eigenen Ruhe nicht gestört zu werden, sondern wenn ihn die Kirche rufe, habe er diese Pflicht zu erfüllen.⁹⁶ Der Mönch sei dann nicht berechtigt, sich auf sein *otium sanctum* zu berufen,⁹⁷ obwohl auch Augustinus dieses immer ersehnte, da der apostolische Auftrag und die damit verbundene Verantwortung stets eine Last für ihn bedeuteten.⁹⁸ Dies ist allerdings kein grundsätzliches Votum Augustins gegen ein vorwiegend kontemplatives Leben, vielmehr anerkennt er dieses durchaus, sofern die Mönche mit ihren Gebeten den Nöten der Kirche zu Hilfe kommen.⁹⁹ In der apostolischen Tätigkeit jedoch gelangten die Mönche „durch selbstlosen Dienst an der Gemeinschaft ... zur Vollendung in der Liebe“.¹⁰⁰

Daher sei es auch Unrecht, wenn das beschauliche Leben jemanden, der für ein kirchliches Amt geeignet ist, zurückhalte.¹⁰¹ Augustinus übernahm demzufolge entsprechend qualifizierte Laienmönche in den Klerikerstand,¹⁰² so daß vor allem das Gartenkloster von Hippo zur Pflanzstätte seines Diözesanklerus wurde und schließlich sogar mehrere Bischöfe aus den von ihm gegründeten Klöstern hervorgingen.¹⁰³

Um die Mönche auf ihre pastoralen Aufgaben vorzubereiten, besaßen in den unter augustinischem Einfluß stehenden Klöstern die Bibellektüre

⁹⁶ Aug. *ep.* 48,2 an die Mönche der Insel Capraria: ‚si qua opera vestra mater ecclesia desideraverit, nec elatione avida suscipiatis nec blandiente desidia respuatis, sed miti corde obtemperetis deo cum mansuetudine ... nec vestrum otium necessitatibus ecclesiae praeponatis;‘ cf. *op. mon.* 37; *en. Ps.* 38,4 sq.

⁹⁷ Aug. *ep.* 220,3; cf. *ib.* 10,2 sq.; 48,1; 213,5 sq.; *en. Ps.* 54,8.

⁹⁸ Aug. *s.* 339,4: ‚praedicare, arguere, corripere, aedificare, pro unoquoque satagere magnum onus, magnum pondus, magnus labor. quis non refugiat istum laborem?‘; cf. *ep.* 21,1–4; *mor.* 1,69.

⁹⁹ Aug. *ep.* 48,1,3; cf. Wucherer-Huldenfeld, Mönchtum und kirchlicher Dienst (wie n. 71) 209 sq.

¹⁰⁰ Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 245; cf. Aug. *ep.* 130; 157; 210; 231.

¹⁰¹ Aug. *c. Faust.* 22,57: ‚sed quia bonum est, ut etiam haec vita latius innotescens popularem gloriam mereatur, iniustum est autem, ut eam consequatur, si amatorem suum administrandis ecclesiasticis curis aptum et idoneum in otio detinet, nec gubernationi communis utilitatis inperit.‘

¹⁰² Aug. *ep.* 60,1: ‚cum ex his, qui in monasterio permanent, non tamen nisi probatiores atque meliores in clerum adsumere soleamus;‘ cf. *ib.* 64,3; Possid. *vita Aug.* 11.

¹⁰³ Laut Possid. *vita Aug.* 11 stammen zehn nordafrikanische Bischöfe aus Augustins Klöstern; cf. Zumkeller, *Mönchtum Augustins* (wie n. 67) 117 sq.

und das vertiefende Studium der Hl. Schrift einen hohen Stellenwert.¹⁰⁴ Augustinus erbat sich ja selbst zu Beginn seiner priesterlichen Tätigkeit Urlaub, um sich intensiv mit der Hl. Schrift beschäftigen zu können.¹⁰⁵ Schließlich gehört hierher auch die Tatsache, daß Augustinus Priester mit der Leitung von Klöstern beauftragte.¹⁰⁶

4.4. Die besondere monastische Konzeption Augustins

Diese Charakteristika des augustinischen Mönchtums, d. h. die Synthese von Askese und Pastoral, die sich bereits in *mor.* 1,69 abzeichnen, sind im frühen Mönchtum singulär. Von einem ‚Mönchspriester‘ oder ‚Klerikermönch‘ als Vertreter einer monastischen Lebensform finden wir im Ostteil des Römischen Reiches keine nennenswerten Spuren, geschweige denn als Idealvorstellung—im Gegenteil: Das Mönchtum und die ‚Amtskirche‘ stellten dort meist zwei nahezu völlig verschiedene Welten dar, wobei sich die erste mühte, der zweiten möglichst aus dem Wege zu gehen.¹⁰⁷

Pachomius¹⁰⁸ z. B. lehnte es ab, daß Mönche seines Klosterverbandes zu Klerikern geweiht wurden. Er fürchtete Streitsucht, Neid und Eifersucht für den Frieden der Gemeinschaften.¹⁰⁹ Wenn umgekehrt ein Kleriker in eines der Klöster seines Verbandes eintreten wollte, so hatte er sich der allgemeinen Klosterregel unterzuordnen, ohne irgendeine

¹⁰⁴ Aug. *reg.* 2 3; cf. Possid. *vita Aug.* 3: ‚bonis operibus in lege domini meditans ... sermonibus ac libris docebat.‘

¹⁰⁵ Aug. *ep.* 21.

¹⁰⁶ Aug. *reg.* 3 7,1: ‚oboediatur ... multo magis presbytero, qui omnium vestrum curam gerit;‘ *ep.* 210 salutatio: ‚dilectissimae et sanctissimae matri Felicitati et fratri Rustico et sororibus quae vobiscum sunt;‘ *ib.* 211,4: ‚novum non accepistis nisi praepositum; ... in vobis namque regendis sic praepositi rudimenta turbantur.‘

¹⁰⁷ Dies dürfte auch einer der beiden Gründe sein, warum Augustinus später nirgends das östliche Mönchtum als vorbildhaft darstellt—es gab dort kein solches Vorbild. Der andere Grund wird in einigen Charakteristika etlicher bereits vor seiner Rückkehr nach Afrika dort existierender monastischer Gruppierungen liegen, die als typisch orientalisch gelten mochten: Betteln statt arbeiten für den Lebensunterhalt—auch unter dem Vorwand des immerwährenden Betens—, Tragen langer Haare, Absonderung von der Umgebung, Vorstellung von einer Aufhebung der Geschlechtsunterschiede durch Askese: cf. Grote, *Anachorese und Zönobium* (wie n. 24) 39 sq.

¹⁰⁸ Zum Pachomius-Mönchtum cf. F. Ruppert, *Das pachomianische Mönchtum und die Anfänge klösterlichen Gehorsams* (Münsterschwarzacher Studien 20), Münsterschwarzach 1971; H. Bacht: *Das Vermächtnis des Ursprungs. Studien zum frühen Mönchtum*, 2 Bde. (Studien zur Theologie des geistlichen Lebens 5; 8), Würzburg 1972–1983; P. Rousseau: *Pachomius. The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt* (The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 6), Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1985.

¹⁰⁹ *Vita Pachomii Graeca prima* (ed. Halkin) 27.

Sonderstellung zu beanspruchen.¹¹⁰ Für sich selbst umging Pachomius konsequenterweise ebenfalls die Priesterweihe: Als er anlässlich einer Visite des Erzbischofs Athanasios von Alexandria in Syene/Assuan auf Vorschlag seines Ortsbischofs geweiht werden sollte—gleichsam zum Haupt aller Mönche dieses Bistums—, tauchte er solange in der Menschenmenge unter, bis der Erzbischof wieder abgereist war.¹¹¹ Auch andere Quellen zum ägyptischen Mönchtum grenzen diese beiden Bereiche voneinander ab.¹¹²

Ebensowenig enthalten die Schriften des Kappadokiers Basilius¹¹³ Hinweise auf eine Art von Klerikerkloster oder die Einbindung des Mönchtums in den apostolischen Auftrag der Kirche, obwohl Basilius selbst als Mönch zum Priester geweiht wurde und später den Bischofssitz von Caesarea einnahm. Er förderte und ordnete lediglich die Entfaltung des Zönotitentums.

Johannes Cassian¹¹⁴ schließlich, ein Zeitgenosse Augustins, dem das Verdienst zukommt, den Westen mit dem östlichen Mönchtum in besonderer Weise vertraut gemacht zu haben, mahnte, „der Mönch müsse auf jede Weise vor Frauen und Bischöfen fliehen“.¹¹⁵ Dies begründete er mit dem Verlust von Ruhe und Reinheit, den Voraussetzungen für Kontemplation, die durch Beziehungen zu Frauen einerseits und durch priesterlich-apostolische Tätigkeit als Folge der bischöflichen Weihe andererseits verloren gingen. Der *divinae theoriae per sanctarum rerum intuitus* als Ziel des mönchischen Lebens gerate sonst in große Gefahr;¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ *Vita Pachomii Graeca prima* (ed. Halkin) 27; lediglich wenn Kleriker in die Klöster zu Besuch kommen, billigt Pachomius ihnen einen ehrerbietigen Empfang zu, verbunden mit einer Einladung zum gemeinsamen Gebet (cf. Pachomius, *Praecepta* 51).

¹¹¹ *Vita Pachomii Graeca prima* (ed. Halkin) 30; zum Verhältnis der Pachomianer zur kirchlichen Hierarchie cf. auch H. Bacht, Mönchtum und Kirche. Eine Studie zur Spiritualität des Pachomius: J. Daniélou/H. Vorgrimler (Hrsg.), *Sentire Ecclesiam*, Freiburg 1961, 113–133, hier: 115–123.

¹¹² Cf. *Apophthegmata Patrum* (Gerontikon/Alphabeticum), Theodor von Pherme 25, Makarios d. Ägypter 1, Moses 4 oder Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca* 11 (Ammonios).

¹¹³ Zu Basilius von Caesarea cf. P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 20), Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford 1994.

¹¹⁴ Zu Johannes Cassian cf. O. Chadwick: *John Cassian. A Study in Primitive Monasticism*, Cambridge 1950; ²1968; C. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, Oxford/New York et al. 1998; Grote, *Anachorese und Zönotium* (wie n. 24) 193–329.

¹¹⁵ Cassianus, *Instituta* 11,18: „omnimodis monachum fugere debere mulieres et episcopos.“

¹¹⁶ Cassianus, *Instituta* 11,18; cf. Wucherer-Huldenfeld, Mönchtum und kirchlicher Dienst (wie n. 71) 206 sq.

zudem sei die Ruhmsucht (*cenodoxia*) durch das Streben nach der Priesterweihe zu befürchten.¹¹⁷ Nicht zuletzt sieht er das tätige Leben als dem beschaulichen Leben untergeordnet an.¹¹⁸

Was das Lérinsener Mönchtum in Südgallien betrifft,¹¹⁹ das sehr von den Vorstellungen Cassians geprägt wurde, so entstammt diesem zwar etliche Inhaber von Bischofssitzen, die dann das Mönchtum weiter förderten; doch die augustinische enge Verzahnung beider Bereiche unterblieb auch hier. Ein Blick auf die übrigen westlichen Mönchslandschaften hebt ebenfalls die singuläre Position Augustins in dieser Frage hervor.

5. ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Augustinus beendet das erste Buch von *De moribus* über die Sitten der katholischen Kirche mit einer Reihe von fünf Beispielen vorbildlicher christlicher Askese (*mor.* 1, 65–80). Diese *exempla* ordnet er so in der Form von zwei Klammern um ein Mittelstück an, daß er in der äußeren Klammer nachahmenswerte Christen beschreibt, die für sich als Individuen asketisch leben, nämlich die nahezu übermenschlichen Anachoreten des Ostens einerseits und gute ‚gewöhnliche‘ Katholiken in der Welt andererseits. Die innere Klammer weist er östlichen zönotischen Gemeinschaften und westlichen Stadtklöstern, die nach östlichem Vorbild leben, zu und unterteilt dabei nach Männer- und Frauenklöstern. Den Kern des Ganzen aber bildet die Schilderung des asketisch lebenden Klerus inmitten der Welt (*mor.* 1, 69). Augustinus läßt seine besondere Hochschätzung dieser Lebensform auch durch die dreifache Verwendung des Superlativs *optimus* zuteil werden.

Es wurde also deutlich, daß sich bereits in dieser Passage des bald nach seiner Taufe verfaßten Werkes *De moribus* die Konzeption Augustinus einer Synthese von Askese und Pastoral abzeichnet, die später für das von ihm begründete Mönchtum charakteristisch werden sollte: zum einen die ‚Monastisierung‘ des Klerus, zum anderen die ‚Klerikalisierung‘ des Mönchtums.

¹¹⁷ Cassianus, *Instituta* 11,14: ‚nonnumquam vero clericatus gradum et desiderium presbyterii vel diaconatus inmittit.‘

¹¹⁸ Cf. Grote, *Anachorese und Zönotium* (wie n. 24) 201–208.

¹¹⁹ Zum Mönchtum von Lérins cf. C.M. Kasper, *Theologie und Askese. Die Spiritualität des Inselmönchtums von Lérins im 5. Jahrhundert* (Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinertums 40), Münster 1991.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

DID AUGUSTINE WIN HIS DEBATE WITH FORTUNATUS?

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For two days in August of 392, Augustine, Catholic priest of Hippo, engaged in debate with Fortunatus, the leader of the city's Manichaean community. Who won this debate?¹ Augustine thought he had. But he is scarcely an objective witness. Despite that fact, commentators have taken his word for it down through the centuries, up to and including the most recent biographies and reference works on the career of Augustine.² Even at its best, scholarship has been decidedly biased in favor of Augustine's view of the encounter, in many cases passing off mere paraphrases of Augustine's attacks in the debate as analytical conclusions about deficiencies in the Manichaean system. The traditional reading of the debate as a victory for Augustine has been shaped by a teleological tendency in favor of Augustine's positions in Western intellectual history, by the detail that it is Fortunatus who calls for an end to the debate, and by the impression that the Nebridian Conundrum posed by Augustine is decisive in the debate because he persists in posing it in a way that does not acknowledge any answer from Fortunatus. In recent decades, however, a number of researchers have begun to re-assess the traditional reading of the debate, and trace the strength of Fortunatus's arguments both in themselves and in their impact on Augustine.

¹ This contribution began as a paper delivered to the Manichaean Studies Group at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Nashville, November 20, 2000. It has benefitted in the meantime from the publication of the new edition and translation, with introduction and commentary, by François Decret and Johannes van Oort, *Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004) in the series *Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum*.

² E.g., the entry on the *Acta Contra Fortunatum* in the encyclopedia *Augustine through the Ages*, in which J. Kevin Coyle, reflecting the standard position, matter-of-factly refers to Fortunatus's 'defeat' (371). Garry Wills goes further in his recent biography of Augustine (*Saint Augustine*. New York: Viking, 1999), reviving the long controverted notion that Fortunatus actually converted to Catholicism.

The rehabilitation of Fortunatus began with François Decret in his 1970 work, *Aspects of Manichaeism in Roman Africa*.³ While still regarding Fortunatus as a defeated debater, Decret gives the Manichaean his due as a subtle and insightful intellect. Decret was the first researcher to question the criteria by which Augustine himself judged Fortunatus's abilities. He pointed out that Augustine's judgment was based on two measures: (1) Fortunatus's rhetorical skill in argument, and (2) his recognition and responsiveness to Augustine's arguments. Decret highlights passages in the debate where Augustine showed acute frustration with Fortunatus, and this frustration seems to have caused Augustine to lose respect for his opponent. For Decret, Fortunatus walks away from the debate defeated but with his principles and coherence of thought intact.

In two articles published in 1974 and 1975, M.E. Alflatt furthered the reassessment of Fortunatus.⁴ He highlighted the strength of the Manichaean presbyter's arguments, and pointed out Augustine's own failings in the debate. Most significantly, Alflatt outlined the clear influence of Fortunatus on Augustine's subsequent intellectual development, both in his abandonment of the free will position he held in the debate, and in a deeper engagement with the letters of Paul. While still considering the debate a formal victory for Augustine, Alflatt demonstrated that Augustine's surface disdain for his opponent masked the profound impact the latter actually made on him. Paula Fredriksen affirmed Alflatt's analysis in her 1979 dissertation on 'Augustine's Early Interpretation of Paul.' She, too, found considerable force in Fortunatus's performance, and contrasted it to Augustine's 'unscrupulously aggressive' and 'badgering' manner in the debate.⁵ Fredriksen continues to hold that Augustine won the debate formally, but credits Fortunatus with pointing out serious flaws in Augustine's position, prodding the latter in the direction of his later development. Elke Rutzenhöfer has more recently raised the key question regarding the usual construal of the debate's end, puzzling over why

³ François Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine: les controverses de Fortunatus, Faustus et Felix avec saint Augustin* (Paris, 1970).

⁴ M.E. Alflatt, 'The Development of the Idea of Involuntary Sin in St. Augustine,' *REA* 20 (1974): 113–134; 'The Responsibility for Involuntary Sin in Saint Augustine,' *RA* 10 (1975): 171–186.

⁵ Paula Fredriksen, 'Augustine's Early Interpretation of Paul,' (Princeton diss., 1979), 88.

Fortunatus would capitulate, given the consistency of his defense of his position throughout the debate, and the weakness of Augustine's own arguments.⁶

My intention here is to push the reassessment one step further towards vindication of Fortunatus. In my reading of the debate, Fortunatus emerges every bit as frustrated as Augustine with the incoherence of his opponent's statements, and marshals a coherent and consistent argument of his own view. Again and again he answers Augustine's questions and challenges him in turn with considerable acumen and cogent argument. It is Augustine who seems incapable of recognizing and responding to his opponent's reasoning. In the end, Fortunatus's statement that he does not know what to say comes not as a capitulation to Augustine but as an admission that the two debaters have talked past each other for two days, and further talk seems pointless. When we revisit the debate with fresh eyes, without a presumed outcome or prejudice in favor of certain beliefs over others, we are able to see how well Fortunatus upheld a world view greatly at odds with that of Augustine. By placing the debate within a larger setting that includes the ideas Augustine brought to the debate, and the fate of those ideas after it, we are in a better position to see which of these two figures was able to walk away from the debate with his position more or less intact. Augustine found himself unable to sustain the positions for which he argued in the debate. Not only did he yield ground during the debate in the face of strong experiential and scriptural arguments mounted by Fortunatus, but he further abandoned those positions in the years following the debate, as he gradually came to terms with the strength of Manichaean arguments. In light of all this, on what grounds can Fortunatus be said to have lost the debate?

The debate between Augustine and Fortunatus encapsulates the confrontation between the two chief competing theodicies of late antiquity. At the heart of the debate is the classic impasse between assertions of God's omnipotence and of God's goodness. At stake is the justice of God's actions with respect to the human encounter with evil. Agreeing that God is not responsible for evil, Augustine and Fortunatus divide over their respective identifications of the root cause of evil, and consequently accuse each other of positions that indeed do make God responsible for

⁶ Elke Rutzenhöfer, 'Contra Fortunatum Disputatio: Die Debatte mit Fortunatus,' *Augustiniana* 42 (1992): 5-72.

evil. For Fortunatus, it is a powerful contrary force or substance. For Augustine it is a perversion of the soul's will, a turning from God allowed by conditions of free will.

Fortunatus efficiently disposes of three of Augustine's main lines of argument: (1) that humans have free will, (2) that evil is rooted entirely in human action, and (3) that God's omnipotence precludes an independent origin of evil. Even though Fortunatus makes extensive use of scripture, his counter-arguments depend equally on the Manichaean predilection for experiential evidence. That humans do not have free will is evident, he contends, and Paul's words in Romans 7 merely articulate an experience individuals have themselves. That evil is not an exclusively human phenomenon, he likewise argues, is obvious from natural evils that occur all around us. Scripture again only confirms human experience. That God's qualities do not preclude the existence of evil is likewise a fact of human experience, and its cause and meaning must be discerned, rather than the experience of evil denied in subordination to the premises of some theoretical theology. Fortunatus pairs the undeniability of evil with the theological premise that God is good; it is necessary, therefore to posit a root of evil independent of God. Augustine's alternative starting premise—that God is omnipotent—inescapably puts the origin of evil under God's control, and ultimately makes Augustine's God as responsible for the human predicament as, in Augustine's eyes, is the Manichaean God through weakness.

Fortunatus's success in turning away these three arguments is shown by Augustine's own behavior in the debate. One by one, he drops each of these lines of attack, and on the second day qualifies his positions on the first two points in ways that concede that his initial positions on them are untenable, while insisting on the third as a premise without being able to demonstrate it. The only argument that he sustains throughout the debate is the Nebridian Conundrum. Thus, by his own handling of the debate, Augustine signals that he found only this one opening to his advantage, and that his other arguments fail.

The key to the question of whether Augustine won his debate with Fortunatus, then, is the cogency of the 'Nebridian Conundrum,' the problem originally raised within the Manichaean community in Carthage by Augustine's friend and (at the time) fellow Manichaean Nebridius (*Conf.* 7.2.3): If God could not be harmed by evil, why did he, according to the Manichaean account, consign a part of himself to combat with evil, leading to the suffering of human souls entangled with evil? If God was constrained to act, it only could be because he was vulnerable to harm. Is it

appropriate to conceive of God as vulnerable to harm? Augustine, who had already deployed this challenge to Manichaeism in earlier writings (*Ord.* 2.17.46; *Mor. Man.* 12.25–26), keeps coming back to it throughout the debate, and Fortunatus replies to it no less than six times (*C. Fort.* 7, 8, 16, 20, 22, 28).

Fortunatus answers the Nebridian Conundrum first by showing the consistency of the Manichaean understanding of God's response to evil with that found in the Christian scriptures. He cites Paul's exhortation in Phil. 2:5–8 that individuals are to think of themselves and their duties in the same terms as Christ's voluntary self-emptying to servitude and death. The divine root of human souls entered into combat with evil in the same way as Christ entered into the world to suffer and die (*C. Fort.* 7). The mission of the collective soul is 'to impose a limit on the contrary nature.' It is an ultimately successful stratagem analogous to the mission of Christ to overcome evil and find heavenly exaltation in the end.

Augustine ignores Fortunatus's scriptural argument, complaining that Fortunatus has not addressed by his response God's responsibility for what the souls do. But, of course, this is not an argument Augustine should be making, since he himself relies on the free agency of souls in absolving God of responsibility for sin. In fact, Fortunatus's response is perfectly cogent within Augustine's own free will position, and may have been formulated with his opponent's position in mind. So he turns it back on Augustine more pointedly in his second answer to the conundrum: any objection Augustine might raise to God sending the human soul into pain and suffering and death would apply equally to God sending Christ to the same fate (*C. Fort.* 8). Augustine cannot reject the Manichaean position without at the same time opposing the biblical one.

We can see the effectiveness of these answers by how Augustine is forced to shift away from pressing the Nebridian Conundrum on the first day, and turn his attack on the Manichaean identification of the human soul with Christ and ultimately God on which Fortunatus's response is premised. This new line of argument becomes a long digression on differing metaphysics of creation, which leaves the two opponents at an impasse. Augustine finds only one more opportunity to bring up the Nebridian Conundrum on the first day. Fortunatus cuts this fresh assault short with the argument that God acted with prescience in the particular course of action he chose, despite the short-term suffering it causes, in order to achieve more pervasive and permanent goals than would have been achieved by ignoring the assault of evil (*C. Fort.* 16). Far from abandoning the soul entangled with evil, God actively redeems

and empowers it to achieve its ultimate victory over evil, as Fortunatus once again demonstrates from scripture (Eph. 2:1–18). Augustine proves incapable of turning this biblical testimony to his own free will position, and the first day of debate ends with Augustine in dire straits.

Just how much trouble Augustine felt himself to be in becomes evident in the radical shift of position he adopts in the second day of debate. Responding to the experiential and scriptural arguments of Fortunatus, Augustine ultimately concedes before the second day is through that the will is constrained, albeit by habit (*consuetudo*), not an independent force of evil. By explaining the constrained will by habit, Augustine returns responsibility to individual souls, rather than either God or some substantial evil. He similarly acknowledges the experience of evil, while again finding a way to trace its cause back to human origins. These modified positions are primarily defensive, however, and offer nothing new by which Augustine may press his attack. Instead, he simply reiterates the Nebridian Conundrum as exposing an unacceptable view of God's vulnerability within the Manichaean system.

In his fourth response to this charge, Fortunatus focuses on the unacceptability of Augustine's alternative view, with its implications of God's ultimate responsibility for evil. Either Augustine is saying against all human experience that there is no such thing as evil in God's good creation, or he must concede that God makes a universe containing evil options that humans freely choose, as well as a flawed soul that makes such bad choices. By identifying human souls as the source of evil, Augustine locates evil within something that he definitely attributes to God's creation. Therefore Augustine cannot escape the charge that God is responsible for sin and evil in his system (*C. Fort.* 20). While not a direct defense of the mythic scenario attacked by the Nebridian Conundrum, this line of argument once again forces the debate into other tracks about the nature of creation. The two opponents cannot agree on the nature of the choices presented to the human will, nor on the capacity of the human will to respond to those choices unaided by divine intervention.

When Augustine eventually returns to the Nebridian Conundrum, Fortunatus is ready with yet another line of defense from scripture: Just as we do not object to Jesus sending his disciples 'in the midst of wolves' (Mt. 10:16), so we cannot object to God sending souls into battle with evil (*C. Fort.* 22). Augustine's contention in response—that this passage refers to divine actions taken in response to an already fallen condition—is quite beside the point. Whether one believes that evil exists eternally or

has arisen in time, the passage shows how God responds to it—evidently by sending beings into a situation where they will be vulnerable to harm at evil's hands.

Augustine returns to the Nebridian Conundrum for the last time towards what would prove to be the end of the debate, either in the belief that Fortunatus has failed to answer it effectively, or as an act of desperation counting on the audience's confusion over the fine points of the issue. Fortunatus, with determined patience, once again addresses it, summarizing the points of defense he has already outlined (*C. Fort.* 28). First, he reiterates that the conundrum works equally against the Christian position. If the Manichaean God sent souls into suffering needlessly, it is just as willfully and needlessly cruel for God to create humans knowing full well that they would misuse free will, fall, and become enmeshed in sin to the point of damnation, as Augustine's view has it. Next, he returns to the analogy of Christ. The Manichaean understanding of the place of the soul in the world is built on a fundamental likeness to Christ. The entire Christ story, his mission into the world, is about the high price of salvation, about being constrained to a certain martyrdom to evil in pursuit of the rescue of life from death. If God sends Christ into misery and death for good cause, and both Catholics and Manichaeans acknowledge this, then we must be prepared to accept that God does the same with all souls.

Augustine counters that when Christ is sent into the world, there are already souls to be rescued; but in the Manichaean account, when the souls are sent into combat with evil, there is not yet anything to be rescued. For Fortunatus, however, the mission of the souls does have rescue for its purpose; but it is a preemptive rescue, not a belated redemption. The beings of the realm of light are saved from entanglement with evil by the voluntary excursion of the souls, who 'impose a limit on the contrary nature,' preventing its breach of the boundaries of heaven.

Besides, insists Fortunatus, Augustine has unfairly characterized the events he describes. Augustine is working with models more appropriate to Christianity than to Manichaeism. The Manichaean mission of the souls is not analogous to the Christian damnation of sinners. The Manichaean God did not send the souls to their doom. God's plan will work; the souls will be retrieved. The analogy to Christ comes in again. He said, 'I have power to lay down my soul and take it up again' (Jn. 10.18; *C. Fort.* 27). The individual human, like Christ, is working through this same basic maneuver that overcomes evil and yet allows ultimate liberation. Augustine highlights the terrible consequences of

this mission for the souls that enter into suffering. Yes, replies Fortunatus, but God redeems the souls from those consequences.

Augustine repeatedly asks 'why?' Why does God do it this way? But Fortunatus has already answered him in terms of the purpose of the mission of the souls. If by 'why?' Augustine means to ask about God's mental processes, Fortunatus has already referred to God's assumed prescience of the best course of action. Beyond that, he does not know what else to say to satisfy Augustine. Augustine demands an answer he himself could not give: explain the mind of God. Fortunatus must simply give up. We can imagine his frustration at this petulant youth not listening to him, ignoring his answers, claiming that Fortunatus has not explained what, in fact, Fortunatus has explained repeatedly and in detail. Gracefully, he ends the debate by acknowledging that his answers have not satisfied his opponent, and that he will ask his superiors for the kind of answers Augustine demands. The debate has run aground on Augustine's failure to move on once the Nebridian Conundrum has been answered.

Augustine cannot move on, however, because he has exhausted his arguments. His handling of the debate makes that clear. He drops every other line of argument in the face of Fortunatus's opposing observations from experience and expert exegesis of scripture. Augustine preferred deductive logic from first principles to reasoning inductively from experience, and did not possess the exegetical skill and experience to meet Fortunatus on scriptural ground. In his own repertoire, Augustine has only logic, a Platonic cosmology, and a few points from the Christian creed. It is a pretty thin toolkit. He therefore has a lot invested in the success of the Nebridian Conundrum, and would continue to use it throughout his anti-Manichaean compositions in the years to come,⁷ even while gradually developing a richer set of positions and arguments.

ANSWERING NEBRIDIUS

At the end of the second day of debate, Fortunatus appears genuinely puzzled as to why Augustine keeps repeating a challenge he has already answered. Apparently, Augustine thought the challenge had not been answered, and the traditional reading of the debate has sided with Augus-

⁷ *C. Adam.* 28.1; *C. Faust.* 13.6, 21.14, 22.22; *C. Sec.* 20; *C. Fel.* 1.19, 2.8; *Nat. boni* 43. It is also borrowed by his associate Evodius in *De fide contra Manichaeos* 18.

tine in that assessment. To accept that judgment would be to grant to Augustine a Pyrrhic victory, winning the day until someone counted up the cost to his own position. Fortunatus had shown generally how discrediting the dualist explanation for evil forces one into unpalatable conceptions of God, and specifically how vulnerable Augustine's own position was to similar critical challenge. But leaving the fate of Augustine's position aside, does Nebridius's question force the Manichaean who adheres to their particular myth of God's response to evil into the conundrum of accepting either a vulnerable deity or one that unnecessarily subjects souls to evil? The answer turns out to be no—and Augustine may well have known that all along.

At first, Augustine questions whether God was vulnerable to evil, and Fortunatus insisted that he was not. Towards the end of the first day of debate, however, Augustine slips in an expansion of his claim, insisting that both God *and the realm of light* are invulnerable to evil in the Manichaean position (*C. Fort.* 17). But Fortunatus has never said that the realm of light was equally immune to the assault of evil, and Augustine himself knew that the myth did not make this claim. Several years before the debate, he had reported that the Manichaeans teach that 'the kingdom of God had some territory which could be invaded by a hostile race, but ... God himself could not be violated in any way' (*Mor. man.* 12.26). Evidently, therefore, either Augustine did not understand how this detail of the myth resolved the apparent conundrum, or counted on Fortunatus not being quick enough to use it in response to the challenge. When we turn to primary sources on Manichaean cosmogony, we find that God acts not to defend himself, but the realm of light. God himself may be impervious to evil within this myth, but the realm of light is a community of beings who, while 'of God' and of God's substance, apparently are vulnerable.⁸ Manichaean passages talk of God recognizing that he had to protect these companions in the realm of light, and also understanding that they were not suited to the required combat with evil.⁹ For that purpose he projected a part of himself able to be engaged by evil, and hence to overcome it in its own subtle way. We therefor must take three

⁸ That, at least, is the express logic of the scenario in most Manichaean texts. Augustine may have had good grounds to probe an inconsistency in Manichaean sources, however, based on a line in Mani's *Fundamental Epistle*, in which it is said that God's 'most splendid kingdoms were founded upon the bright and blessed land so that they could never be moved or shaken by anything' (*C. Ep. fund.* 13.16).

⁹ A point of detail likewise known to Augustine prior to the debate (*Vera rel.* 9.16), as well as to Alexander of Lycopolis (ed. Brinkmann) 3.5.19 ff.

details of the Manichaeian myth into account: (1) God could not be harmed by evil; (2) the other beings of the realm of light could be, but did not have the capacity to combat evil; (3) God emanated beings whose qualities did not include invulnerability, but did include a capacity to meet evil in its own realm.

It is the pacific nature of the realm of light that makes impossible within the Manichaeian mythic construct any response to evil other than the one God chooses. The beings of the realm of light are incapable of violence; they cannot meet brute force with brute force. Only martyrdom is left to them. It is not by any direct action that they destroy evil; that is accomplished instead simply by being what they are, beings of light, a nature so contrary to darkness that the latter is dissipated and restrained by contact with light (*Mor. man.* 12.25, 15.36). Fortunatus only alludes to this cosmogony. He is content to cite the phrase 'to impose a limit on the contrary nature,' and to clarify that the role of the souls is to stop and constrain evil and keep it from running freely around the perimeter of the realm of light. Once this limit has been imposed, once evil has been stopped and vitiated and thrown back on itself, the souls are recalled to the realm of light. The mission is a success, even though there are some casualties in the process.

Despite the puzzlement of Nebridius (and Augustine), no conundrum exists for Manichaeism because the religion does not accept the premises on which the conundrum builds. It does not define God primarily in terms of power, but of prescience and wisdom. It does not see the suffering of souls as disastrous, but as heroic. It does not equate the realm of light with the invulnerable God, but imagines it to be inhabited by derivative, vulnerable beings. To these false premises of the conundrum, Augustine adds a further confusion of the leap of the souls into heroic battle with a fall of souls into sinfulness—a conflation never found in Manichaeism itself. Fortunatus recognizes this confusion in his opponent, and carefully distinguishes the primordial scenario of the mixture of substances from the subsequent conditions in which isolated and mixed souls might be led into sinfulness (*C. Fort.* 20).

THE WINNING ARGUMENT?

Even if Fortunatus tied his own hands by his reluctance to go into the full details of the Manichaeian myth in front of a largely non-Manichaeian audience, the notion that the Nebridian Conundrum won the debate for

Augustine falls short on three points: (1) It fails to recognize that Fortunatus turned the conundrum effectively back on Augustine's position, and showed that the latter, too, seemed to make God accountable for human entanglement with evil; (2) it fails to recognize that Fortunatus effectively defended the scenario challenged by the conundrum on the basis of scripture; (3) it fails to recognize that Augustine himself abandoned the very positions he argued for in the debate in his subsequent work, shifting dramatically away from his free will arguments towards views heavily indebted to Fortunatus.

The Conundrum of God and Evil

Augustine opens the debate by asserting that it is impious to believe that God could be constrained by necessity, or be forced to have recourse to a method of defeating evil that entailed harm and loss to human souls. This would make God responsible for the human predicament of being embroiled in sin. Fortunatus warns Augustine that raising such a point will not serve him well at all, and Fortunatus is proven correct as Augustine proceeds to unfold a position that is entirely vulnerable to the criticisms he has just made. Augustine's God is constrained by the necessity of giving free will to humans so that his punishment of them will be just, no less than Fortunatus' God is constrained by the assault of evil to respond. Augustine's God has recourse to a method of defeating evil that entails even greater harm and loss to the human soul than does that of the Manichaean God, since the plan of fall and redemption known to Augustine leaves more souls in damnation than does the combat of the three times known to Fortunatus.

Augustine contends that the Manichaean view makes God ultimately responsible for entangling the soul in evil. Here, too, Fortunatus tries to warn Augustine off. Augustine's omnipotent creator of all things cannot escape the very charge he has made against the Manichaean God. There are only two ways to absolve a monotheistic God of responsibility for evil: either dualism, or the denial of the reality of evil. Lacking these options, Augustine will be left with a Christian God who either creates evil or abets its advance by withdrawing protection from his creation solely for the sake of free will—in other words, for the sole purpose of justifying his punishment of those who will fall victim to the lure of sin.

Free will in itself cannot explain the existence of evil. Either God must himself make the evil options, or else these evil options must be made by some other. Augustine can only avoid these equally distasteful choices

by asserting that evil is simply a negation. Fortunatus charges that this is simply a non-answer that, if taken literally, would deny the existence of evil and would leave unexplained the apparent power of evil to compel the soul in its action. Augustine throughout his career will insist that evil has no positive existence, that it is simply an adjective to describe a particular attitude of the human will. But he will never find the means to reconcile this view with a growing recognition of a second category of evil that Fortunatus points to in the debate: natural evil.

Fortunatus, therefore, argues that a conundrum of the kind posed by Nebridius works equally against the Christian position. If the conundrum implies that the Manichaean God sent souls into suffering needlessly, it is just as willfully and needlessly cruel for God to create humans knowing full well that they would misuse free will, fall, and become enmeshed in sin to the point of damnation, as Augustine's world view has it. Augustine's God is constrained by necessity to give humans free will. But free will is 'necessary' only for the justice of condemning sinners, already presupposing a foreordained doom of God's human creation. In other words, if God did not set out to punitively doom large portions of humanity, there would be no 'necessity' to set up the justification of punishment. Even though God redeems many of those sinners, the method of fall and redemption as a solution to evil entails harm and loss to human souls.

The Scriptural Case for How God Responds to Evil

Augustine defines God as all-powerful, unchanging, and incorruptible. Having those characteristics, Augustine argues, God could not have been threatened by evil or constrained by it to launch a defensive action that resulted in the entrapment of souls. God could have remained placidly within his realm of light, impervious to evil. So his sending forth of souls is unnecessary, and he is responsible for the soul's imprisonment in evil.

In defending the Manichaean scenario, Fortunatus opposes Augustine's theoretical theology with a biblical one. Scripture informs us of God's ways in a manner that may defy the expectations of human values. So, for instance, the Manichaean understanding of the place of the soul in the world is built on a fundamental likeness to Christ. The entire Christ story, his mission into the world, is about the high price of salvation, about being constrained to a certain martyrdom to evil in pursuit of the rescue of life from death. If God sends Christ into misery and

death for good cause, and both Catholics and Manichaeans acknowledge this, then it would be consistent with this view that God does the same with all souls. Like Christ, the soul works in humility and service, rather than grasping for the immunity from evil that God enjoys. The soul willingly makes itself, as Christ did, subject even to death. Any objection Augustine might raise to God sending the human soul into pain, suffering, and death would apply equally to God sending Christ to the same fate. The Manichaean mission of the souls is not analogous to the Christian damnation of sinners, but to the saving work of Christ and his apostles. Christ said, 'I have power to lay down my soul and take it up again' (Jn. 10:18). The individual human soul, like Christ, enters into the struggle to overcome evil, and through this suffering entanglement with evil looks forward to ultimate exaltation.

Fortunatus twice points to the rhetoric of moral exhortation in scripture, that calls individuals to reject and flee evil, and speaks of combating and slaying sin. Fortunatus contends that such language only works in a dualistic universe. If the evil or sin to be rejected or slain is indeed a part of us, as Augustine maintains, then we are doomed to destruction, because we cannot separate ourselves from ourselves. This point goes to the heart of Augustinian thought, which would grow increasingly darker and more pessimistic the more Augustine recognized the cogency of Fortunatus's ironic observation, and chose to embrace it.

Augustine's Fortunatan Turn

After his debate with Fortunatus, Augustine fails to sustain the positions he took in the debate. He gave up his early free will position, and eventually came to embrace an emphasis on grace very similar to that of Fortunatus. He did so in large part by adopting Fortunatus's readings of Paul. It was from the lips of Fortunatus that Augustine first heard a reading of Paul that emphasized grace over free will (*C. Fort.* 16, exegeting Eph. 2:1–18), and Alflatt and Fredriksen have argued persuasively that it was this debate with Fortunatus that set in motion both the great reversal in his thinking about free will and the radical transformation in his understanding of Paul.

It has long been recognized that Augustine shifts his position on free will over the long course of his composition of *On Free Choice*. In the first book written circa 387–388, arguing on the basis of reason, Augustine asserts the complete freedom of the human will. By the time he wrote the third book circa 395, arguing substantially from scripture,

Augustine describes a greatly vitiated will, retaining only the fig-leaf of an original free will in Adam (*Lib. arb.* 3.18.51–3.20.55). In between those two compositional moments falls the debate with Fortunatus in 392. A similar shift can be detected in the closing sections of *On the Two Souls*, arguably added to the work in the immediate aftermath of the debate.

Not only does Augustine move dramatically in the direction of Fortunatus's position; he does so with close attention to precisely those Pauline passages cited by Fortunatus in the debate.¹⁰ The correspondence is startling. Before the debate with Fortunatus, Paul is almost entirely absent from Augustine's writing. The debate with Fortunatus apparently embarrassed Augustine enough to drive him to an intense study of Paul in the following years. In his *Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans* 45–46 (written circa 394), Augustine combines Romans 7:18–19 with Ephesians 2:3, just as Fortunatus did in the debate. Augustine repeats the combination in *On Free Choice*, 3.54. In *On Free Choice*, 3.51, he combines Romans 7:23–25 with Galatians 5:17—again, exactly as Fortunatus did in the debate. In other words, the system of intertextual exegesis of Paul that Augustine adopts is heavily influenced by Fortunatus. Augustine resists complete capitulation to Fortunatus's reasoning for some time. But by the end of the decade, he has swung over entirely to Fortunatus's reading of Romans 7, and proceeds to go even further, past the Manichaean view of the embattled will, into a radical determinism.

We can see, then, that Augustine opposes Fortunatus with a free will position he begins to abandon immediately after the debate. The lengthy discussion of God's foreknowledge in *On Free Choice*, books 2 and 3, is probably an attempt by Augustine to work through Fortunatus's charge that the Catholic God is equally guilty under the terms of the Nebridian Conundrum as the Manichaean God is, since he knew beforehand that free will would lead to the fall and damnation of humankind. Despite such efforts, Augustine fails to find a way to understand God's actions in connection to the human fall into sin that would be any more defensible against the conundrum than was the Manichaean teaching on the same subject.

¹⁰ Noted by Alflatt, 'Development,' 133; C.P. Bammel, 'Augustine, Origen and the Exegesis of St. Paul,' *Augustinianum* 32 (1992): 341–368, at 349–350.

THE BIG PICTURE

Augustine's debate with Fortunatus needs to be viewed with a larger context that extends at least five years earlier to his first writings as a convert to Nicene Christianity, and five years later to the writings that are usually treated as the dawn of his mature period as a thinker. This broader perspective provides a before-and-after contrast of two very different understandings of Christianity. Undoubtedly, there were many forces at work in the changes Augustine underwent during this decade; but the debate with Fortunatus is certainly one of the turning points, both in its direct impact on Augustine and in how it led him to yet other sources of influence.

Augustine came to the debate convinced that free will was a prerequisite for the justification of God. Sin is punished. For God to be the punisher of the sinner, it must have been possible for the sinner to have acted differently than he or she did. Otherwise, God would be unjust. There is an impeccable logic to Augustine's understanding of free will as a precondition for just condemnation of the sinner. The problem for Augustine is that it has nothing to do with the Manichaean world view, and so it was not an effective point of engagement with Fortunatus in their debate.

Manichaeism does not see God as a punisher of sin. God is, rather, an opponent of the alien infection of evil and a redeemer of souls. So Augustine's just punishment argument misses its mark. For Fortunatus, God is justified in his actions against evil not because humans have freely chosen evil, but because evil itself is neither of God nor a constituent of the soul of the Manichaean. To use a familiar contemporary line, God hates the sin, not the sinner, and God punishes—that is, combats—not the human soul afflicted by sin but the sin that afflicts the human soul. The doom or damnation of a soul is not something that God causes punitively, rather it is something that God actively resists. 'I have spoken about substances, not about sin that dwells in us,' Fortunatus says. He does not endorse the language of Augustine that makes sin something about the soul that would cause God to reject or punish it. God and the soul are in sympathy. Both are ultimately incorruptible. But the soul endures a temporary encapsulation in evil for the greater good.

Augustine returns again and again in the debate to the issue of the just attribution of sin to humans. It is the fixed idea he brought to the debate from his unfinished work *On Free Choice*. He charges that the Manichaean view cannot explain how humans are to be held accountable for sin, for by its account their involvement in sin is involuntary, a

consequence of God's command rather than their own will. Augustine's fixation on this point tells us much more about his concerns than it does about the Manichaean position. Augustine fails to hear two key counterpoints made by Fortunatus. First, contact with evil *is* voluntary on the part of the soul according to the Manichaeans. That is, it is a voluntary self-sacrifice for the greater good, analogous to Christ's. Second, the very issue of just attribution of sin to humans is entirely outside of Manichaean interests. The Manichaeans are not interested in justifying a punitive God, so they hardly need to be concerned about the conditions by which such punishment is made justly. God does not punish humans as sinners; their suffering comes from contact with evil or sin itself. God's actions are entirely liberating, not condemning.

For Fortunatus, a God who gives free rein to sin for the sake of a condition of free will, in order to justify his own punishment of the sinner, is only a trickster god, a co-conspirator with evil in the entrapment of human souls. An omnipotent God would have to willingly withdraw protection from the human soul to give evil entry, and this is why Augustine's God falls afoul of the Nebridian Conundrum, since no good reason can be given for God to throw his creation over to this vulnerability to evil—and, what is more, to a doom involving the majority of souls for all time. If God did not make way for sin, then he would not be constrained to form humanity with the free will by which they would deserve punishment for sin. Augustine's free will argument, in fact, is hopelessly circular.

At the time of the debate with Fortunatus, Augustine seems to have no concept of someone suffering evil rather than causing evil. There are no victims in Augustine's world, only justly condemned sinners. 'Nothing can happen to you which you do not will' (*Lib. arb.* 2.54). Evil is something that people bring out of themselves. This determination to place the ultimate responsibility for every kind of evil squarely on human shoulders is the central defining motif of Augustine's thought. Augustine was right to see a gulf separating him from all of his opponents on this point. The human soul with evil at its very core was Augustine's most significant contribution to Christian thought. Yet Augustine had to completely rework the theoretical basis on which he established this utter depravity of humanity from the one with which he had started. He had to take better account of actual human experience of constraint, as well as the rhetoric of the embattled will to be found in Paul. Augustine no doubt was a fine rhetorician, but Fortunatus had drawn him towards the well-springs of public persuasion, where greater attunement to the human condition might strengthen the plausibility and appeal of his message.

Much of what we give Augustine credit for in developing the introspective conscience of the West is a direct consequence of his encounter with Manichaeism. The Manichaeans were there before him, sifting the complex workings of the human will in a way that Augustine's own earlier facile free will position did not. But ironically, the darker side of that Western introspective conscience, the condemnation of the self, the assurance that the human will is itself the root of all evil, derives from Augustine's own unique misprision of the Manichaean view of the hobbled will of the embodied soul. Nothing could be more at odds with Manichaeism, and in key respects Augustine seems to have formulated it with a specifically anti-Manichaean emphasis. Regardless of one's opinion of the formal outcome of the debate, everything connected to the debate that is historically important about Augustine comes from ways in which he lost the debate to Fortunatus. Even if his own conscious perception of the experience was merely one of frustration that his opponent could not appreciate his arguments, this reaction in itself appears to have prompted Augustine to revisit his positions and find ways to better present them to people with Manichaean concerns. More than this, Augustine grappled with scripture in ways he never would have, had not Fortunatus made an impression with his exegetical arguments; and he paid his opponent the complement of adopting a number of his readings, with profound results for the future of Christian self-understanding.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

SECUNDINUS IN DER DISKUSSION MIT AUGUSTINUS ÜBER DAS MALUM: BEOBACHTUNGEN ZU DEN AUGUSTINISCHEN QUELLEN DER *EPISTULA SECUNDINI*

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1. EINLEITUNG UND FRAGESTELLUNG

Der Brief des Manichäers Secundinus¹ ist eine wichtige Primärquelle des westlich-lateinischen Manichäismus. Er ist unter vielen Gesichtspunkten von großem Interesse, doch hat er bisher nur begrenzte Aufmerksamkeit gefunden. In neuerer Zeit hat der Jubilar eine Spezialuntersuchung über die biblischen Zitate und Anspielungen im Secundinusbrief vorgelegt.² Er zeigt, dass Secundinus sehr stark auf die christlich-biblische Tradition Bezug nimmt—allerdings in typisch manichäischer Vorgehensweise und Interpretation. Dies geschieht sicherlich im Blick auf den Adressaten, den

¹ Zu Person und historischem Kontext vgl. F. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne (IV^e–V^e siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale* 1, Paris 1978, 141–145; J.K. Coyle, 'Secundinum Manicheum, Contra', in: A. Fitzgerald (Hrsg.), *Augustine Through the Ages*, Grand Rapids 1999, 759 f.; G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Introduzione', in: *Agostino, Polemica con i Manichei* (NBA 1,13,2), Rom 2000, 504–506; J. Desmulliez u.a. (Hrsg.), 'Secundinus 2', in: *Prosopographie de l'Italie chrétienne* (313–604) 2, Paris 2000, 2008 f.; A. Hoffmann, 'Secundinus, Manichäer', in: *LACL* (32002), 627 f.

² Vgl. J. van Oort, 'Secundini Manichaei Epistula. Roman Manichaeae „Biblical“ Argument in the Age of Augustine', in: J. van Oort/O. Wermelinger/G. Wurst (Hrsg.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West. Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht Symposium of the International Association of Manichaeae Studies (IAMS)* (NHMS 49), Leiden 2001, 161–173. Überblick über die Literatur ebd. 161 Anm. 1. Besonders ist zu verweisen auf die verschiedenen Arbeiten von Decret, vor allem *L'Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1, 141–150; 2, 99–104; Sfameni Gasparro, 'Introduzione' (Anm. 1) 503–518. Eine mit kurzen Anmerkungen versehene englische Übersetzung des Briefes von M. Vermes findet sich in I. Gardner/S.N.C. Lieu (Hrsg.), *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 2004, 136–142. Leider unveröffentlicht: M. Vermes, *Epistula Secundini and contra Secundinum: a translation with commentary of the Epistula Secundini and the contra Secundinum of St Augustine of Hippo* (typescript), University of Warwick 1997.

weithin bekannten katholischen Bischof von Hippo Regius, zum anderen aber auch aufgrund der bereits im Ursprung begründeten christlichen Prägung des Manichäismus, die in seinen christlich dominierten Ausbreitungsgebieten nochmals verstärkt ist.³

Doch viele andere Probleme, so bereits die Datierung,⁴ sind noch weitgehend offen und bedürfen näherer Untersuchungen. Hierzu gehört auch die Frage nach den Quellen des Secundinus. Nach eigener Aussage hat er ‚ziemlich viele Schriften‘ wiederholt und intensiv gelesen, in denen Augustinus ‚der Wahrheit so zürn(e) wie Hortensius der Philosophie‘.⁵ Pierre Courcelle hat wahrscheinlich gemacht, dass Secundinus die augustinischen Confessiones kannte, und versteht den Brief als Reaktion auf deren Veröffentlichung.⁶ Da bestimmte alttestamentliche Stellen,

³ Die neuere Forschung—besonders seit der Auswertung des CMC—betont die originäre Nähe des Manichäismus zum Christentum, vgl. z. B. J. van Oort, ‚Augustinus und der Manichäismus,‘ in: A. Van Tongerloo / J. van Oort (Hrsg.), *The Manichaean NOYΣ. Proceedings of the International Symposium organized in Louvain* (Manichaean Studies 2), Louvain 1995, 296–298; ders., ‚Epistula‘ (Anm. 2) 164; ders., ‚The Emergence of Gnostic-Manichaean Christianity as a Case of Religious Identity in the Making,‘ in: J. Frishman u. a. (Hrsg.), *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundation. The foundational Character of authoritative Sources in the History of Christianity and Judaism*, Leiden 2004, 285; ‚Originally, Manichaeism and Catholicism were far from alien religions; rather, they were ‚frères ennemis‘. In discribing Manichaeism not as a foreign religion but as a *secta*, therefore, all Catholic Christian authors have basically been right.‘ Etwas zurückhaltender S.N.C. Lieu, ‚Christianity and Manichaeism,‘ in: A. Casiday / F.W. Norris (Hrsg.), *Constantine to c. 600* (Cambridge History of Christianity 2), Cambridge 2007, 279–295.— Zum christlichen Anspruch der nordafrikanischen Manichäer vgl. G. Wurst, ‚Der lateinische Manichäismus im 4. Jahrhundert in Nordafrika und Italien,‘ in: V.H. Drecoll (Hrsg.), *Augustin Handbuch*, Tübingen 2007, 91 f.; J.K. Coyle, ‚Characteristics of Manichaeism in Roman Africa,‘ in: J.D. BeDuhn (Hrsg.), *New Light on Manichaeism. Papers from the Sixth International Congress on Manichaeism* (NHMS 64), Leiden 2009, 104 Anm. 17; M. Bierbaums, ‚Zur Geltung von Freiheit oder Unfreiheit des Willens (Augustinus, *Contra Felicem Manichaeum* II),‘ in: A. Van Tongerloo / L. Cirillo (Hrsg.), *Il Manicheismo. Nuove prospettive della ricerca. Quinto congresso internazionale di studi sul manicheismo. Atti* (Manichaean Studies 5), Louvain 2005, 32 f. Anm. 16.

⁴ Die Angaben schwanken zwischen 399 und 411. Die Frühdatierung ist wohl kaum haltbar; konsensfähig ist die immer noch breite Spanne von 404/405–411. Vgl. van Oort, ‚Epistula‘ (Anm. 2) 162 f. mit Anm. 5; P.-M. Hombert, *Nouvelles Recherches de Chronologie Augustinienne*, Paris 2000, 31 f.

⁵ Vgl. Sec., ep. 3 (895,8–12): ‚Legit enim aliquanta exile meum et quaecumque Romani hominis ingenium reuerendae tuae dignationis scripta, in quibus sic irascere ueritati ut philosophiae Hortensius. haec itaque cum suspenso animo agilique oculo iterum iterumque repetissem ...‘ Gemeint sind primär—allerdings nicht zwingend ausschließlich—die antimanichäischen Schriften Augustins.

⁶ Vgl. P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les confessions de Saint Augustin*, Paris² 1968, 236–238. Nicht alle Indizien sprechen ausschließlich für die confessiones—auch in den frühen Bezügen auf den eigenen Werdegang erwähnt Augustinus seine weltliche Karriere, die

die Secundinus aufgreift, von Augustinus in *contra Faustum* behandelt werden, vermutet Pierre-Marie Hombert, dass Secundinus auch diese umfangreiche Schrift Augustins kannte.⁷

Dennoch erfordert diese Frage weitergehende Studien.⁸ Hierzu wollen die folgenden Ausführungen einige Beobachtungen beitragen. Sie konzentrieren sich, da eine umfassende Behandlung hier nicht möglich ist, auf das Problem des ‚malum‘ (des ‚Schlechten‘ im Sinne des physischen Übels und des ethisch Bösen). Damit geht es nicht nur um dessen Ursprung (‚unde malum‘)—für Mani und die manichäische Mission die ‚Fundamentalfraße‘⁹—und Wesen, sondern auch um die Struktur der Wirklichkeit, das Wesen Gottes,¹⁰ die Seele und die Sünde, also um zentrale ontologische, anthropologische und ethische Probleme. Die malum-Problematik spielt sowohl in der intellektuellen Biographie des jungen Augustinus als auch in seiner späteren Auseinandersetzung mit den Manichäern eine zentrale Rolle und hat starken Einfluss auf die Entwicklung seiner Theologie.¹¹ Auch Secundinus schneidet sie wiederholt

Begeisterung für den Hortensius, die Annäherung an die Akademische Skepsis, wenn gleich dies alles in den *conf.* wesentlich deutlicher ausgeführt wird. Vgl. weiter van Oort, ‚Epistula‘ (Anm. 2) 171 f. sowie die wiederholten Beobachtungen von R. Jolivet / M. Jourjon, *Six traités anti-manichéens* (BA 17), pass., bes. 516 Anm. 3. Für die Lektüre der *conf.* spricht m.E. vor allem die kurze Anspielung auf den Vater Augustins (vgl. *Sec.*, ep. 3 [896,3 f.]): ‚tanto tempore cum parente tuo in medio tenebrarum constitutus numquam subsannasti ...‘

⁷ Vgl. Hombert (Anm. 4) 32 Anm. 73. Entscheidend sei die Behandlung von *Hos* 1,2 in *c. Faust.* 22,80.89. Die These erfordert eine gesonderte Prüfung, zwingend scheint sie allerdings nicht. Secundinus muss nicht notwendigerweise durch augustinische Ausführungen angeregt worden sein, sondern könnte durchaus ein antijüdisches ‚Florilegium‘ bieten, vgl. van Oort, ‚Epistula‘ (Anm. 2) 165 mit Anm. 16. Zweitens muss man beachten, dass Secundinus seine Einwände als Fragen formuliert. Drittens spricht sein Hinweis, dass Augustinus dies alles ‚schon immer verabscheut habe‘ (*Sec.*, ep. 3 [897,2 f.]), nicht für den Bezug auf konkrete positive Wertungen dieser Stellen in Augustins Schriften.

⁸ Vgl. van Oort, ‚Epistula‘ (Anm. 2) 163 mit Anm. 7.

⁹ Vgl. J.K. Coyle, *Manichaeism and Its Legacy* (NHMS 69), Leiden 2009, XIV. Zur Bedeutung dieser Frage in der manichäischen Mission vgl. *Aug.*, *mor.* 2,2 (89,5–7): ‚Saepe atque adeo paene semper, Manichaei, ab his quibus haeresim uestram persuadere molimi, requirits unde sit malum.‘

¹⁰ Zu diesem Konnex vgl. J.K. Coyle, ‚God’s Place in Augustine’s Anti-Manichaean Polemic,‘ *Augustinian Studies* 38 (2007) 87–102, bes. 102 (= ders., *Manichaeism* [Anm. 9] 265–282, bes. 282): Augustinus zielt bei den Überlegungen zum malum-Problem, bei denen er immer (auch) die Manichäer im Auge habe, zentral auf die Frage nach dem Wesen Gottes ab.

¹¹ Zum Überblick vgl. nur die einschlägigen Abschnitte im *Augustin Handbuch* (Anm. 3) mit weiterführender Literatur, bes. G. Wurst, ‚Augustin als ‚Manichäer‘,‘ 148–153; V.H. Drecoll, ‚Die ‚Bekehrung‘ in Mailand,‘ 153–164; W. Löhr, ‚Sündenlehre,‘ 498–506; zur Bedeutung der Frage in der Hinwendung Augustins zu den Manichäern vgl.

an und grenzt sich dabei nachdrücklich gegen augustinisch-katholische Positionen ab. Daher bietet sie sich als Untersuchungsgegenstand an. Im ersten Schritt werden die Äußerungen des Secundinus zum Problem des *malum* analysiert. Im zweiten Schritt wird untersucht, welche Äußerungen Augustins die Grundlage für Secundinus bilden könnten. Dabei beschränken sich die Ausführungen auf die in diesem Zusammenhang wichtigsten antimanichäischen Schriften.¹²

2. WESEN UND URSPRUNG DES ‚MALUM‘ AUS DER SICHT DES SECUNDINUS¹³

2.1. Die Aggressivität des ‚malum‘

Die fundamentale Differenz zwischen ‚katholischer‘ und manichäischer Lehre und damit auch der für Secundinus ‚neuralgische Punkt‘¹⁴ liegt im Dualismus von Licht und Finsternis. Secundinus vertritt hier die bekannte Grundposition manichäischer Lehre, dass das ‚malum‘ ein eigenständiges, dem Guten entgegengesetztes Prinzip darstellt.¹⁵ Besonders betont er dessen aggressiven Charakter. Wie es im Anfang ‚kam‘,

E. Feldmann, *Der Einfluss des Hortensius und des Manichäismus auf das Denken des jungen Augustinus von 373*, Diss. masch. Münster 1975, 599–616; zum anti-/manichäischen Kontext vgl. bes. F. Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique Romaine. Les controverses de Fortunatus, Faustus et Felix avec Saint Augustin*, Paris 1970, 271–310; G. Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione generale,‘ in: Agostino, *Polemica con i Manichei* (NBA 1,13,2), Rom 2000, XXVI–XXXII (Lit.!); K.E. Lee, *Augustine, Manichaeism, and the Good* (Patristic studies 2), New York 1999, 41–59; R. van Vliet, *Der Manichäismus. Geschichte und Zukunft einer frühchristlichen Kirche*, Stuttgart 2007, 186–196; Coyle, ‚God's Place‘ (Anm. 10) 93–101 (= *Manichaeism* [Anm. 9] 272–281).

¹² Weitgehend ausgeklammert wird lib. arb., da Augustinus selbst voraussetzt, dass Secundinus diese Schrift nicht kennt. Zu lib. arb. vgl. J. Brachtendorf, ‚Einleitung,‘ in: *Augustinus, De libero arbitrio—Der freie Wille* (AOW 9), Paderborn 2006, 7–69, bes. 11–36.44–63; Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione generale‘ (Anm. 11) XXXVIII–XLIII; als Zusammenfassung der frühen Sündenlehre vgl. Löhr (Anm. 11) 498–500.—Die Schriften Augustins werden nach den gängigen Ausgaben zitiert (vgl. AL 2 [1996–2002] XI–XXIV). In Klammern werden bei CSEL-Ausgaben Seiten (p.) und Zeilen (l.), beim CCL Kapitel (c.) und Zeilen angegeben. Textgrundlage des Secundinusbriefes ist die Ausgabe von J. Zycha (CSEL 25,2 [893,2–901,13]) mit der Paragrapheneinteilung von Jolivet/Jourjon, BA 17, 510–525.

¹³ Zum Folgenden vgl. bes. Decret, *L'Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,334–336.343–346; Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione‘ (Anm. 1) 507–513. Zur Antwort Augustins vgl. bes. c. Sec. 9–11 (Ontologie und Seelenlehre), 12–18 (Wesen der Sünde); 19 (malum als willentliche Sünde und gerechte Sündenstrafe).

¹⁴ Vgl. Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione‘ (Anm. 1) 506.

¹⁵ Vgl. Sec., ep. 6 (900,8): ‚contraria natura.‘

um ‚in fremdes Eigentum einzudringen‘,¹⁶ ist es auch jetzt stets ‚bereit zu kommen‘.¹⁷ Je nach Kontext erscheint das Abstraktum ‚malum‘ in unterschiedlicher Personifizierung: als ‚grausamer Geist‘ (atrox spiriritus),¹⁸ der seine Angriffe—so Secundinus im Anschluss an Eph 6,12—durch ‚principes‘,¹⁹ ‚potestates‘ und ‚spiritalia nequitiae‘ ausführen lässt,²⁰ als ‚spiritus uitiorum‘²¹ oder als ‚diabolus‘.²² Sein Angriffsziel bleibt die Lichtsubstanz, und das ist in der mittleren Zeit der Vermischung vornehmlich die menschliche Seele. Der Körper, an den sie gefesselt ist, ist die Waffe der Finsterniswelt.²³ Die Seele muss sich gegen den ‚Feind‘ rüsten²⁴ und darf ihm keinerlei (Angriffs-)Möglichkeit bieten.²⁵ Das malum ist ein Dieb (fur), der es darauf abgesehen hat, die Seele um ihr Erbe zu bringen.²⁶ Es jagt den Menschen Angst ein, verleitet sie (wie im Fall Augustins) zur Treulosigkeit und bringt sie vom schmalen Pfad des Erlösers ab.²⁷

Mit Recht sieht sich Secundinus hier in Übereinstimmung mit der Lehre Manis.²⁸ Die Aggression der Finsterniswelt ist einer der bestimmenden Grundgedanken des kosmogonischen Mythos. Dies zeigt allein schon die für den lateinischen Manichäismus höchst wichtige Epistula fundamenti, die den Hörern die rettende ‚Erleuchtung‘ brachte.²⁹ Die

¹⁶ Vgl. Sec., ep. 6 (900,6–8): ‚quod nisi primo conicias, quia ... ultimum ... facinus est inuadere aliena, ad hoc uero cum uenerit contraria natura ...‘

¹⁷ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (893,15 f.); zur Grundlage im *Diatessaron* vgl. van Oort, ‚Epistula‘ (Anm. 2) 168.

¹⁸ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (893,23).

¹⁹ Dies erinnert an die ‚principes‘ im Finsternisreich und deren ‚princeps et dux‘, vgl. ep. fund. frg. 6b Feldmann (*Die „Epistula Fundamenti“ der nordafrikanischen Manichäer. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion*, Altenberge 1987) = 2,9 Stein (*Manichaica Latina* 2. *Manichaei epistula fundamenti. Text, Übersetzung, Erläuterungen*, Paderborn 2002).

²⁰ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (894,1–5).

²¹ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,15).

²² Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,26). Zum Satan / Diabolos in koptischen Manichaica vgl. P. Van Lindt, *The Names of Manichaeon Mythological Figures. A Comparative Study on Terminology in the Coptic Sources* (Studies in Oriental Religions 26), Wiesbaden 1992, 196 f.

²³ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (894,7 f.). Nach ep. fund. frg. 9 Feldmann (= 6,7 Stein) (Anm. 19) ist die ‚natura mali‘ die ‚Bildnerin der Körper‘ (corporum formatrix) (vgl. dazu Stein 2,95 f. mit Parallelen). Intention der ‚Formung‘ des ersten Menschenpaares und damit des menschlichen Körpers ist die Bindung des Lichtes, vgl. Aug., nat. b. 46 (884,29–886,17); c. Faust. 20,22 (565,28–566,1).

²⁴ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,19).

²⁵ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (893,16).

²⁶ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (893,19 f.).

²⁷ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (893,23 f.).

²⁸ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (894,9): ‚... hoc ipse testatur Manichaeus.‘

²⁹ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 5,6 (197,7–10); 25,28 (224,26–28).

Erzählung von dem Angriff der Finsternis, ihrem Kampf und vorläufigen Sieg über das Licht³⁰ belegt bereits hinreichend den aggressiven Charakter der Finsternis. In der einleitenden Anrufung der drei göttlichen Größen wird darum gebeten, dass die ‚Rechte des Lichtes‘ alle Hörer dem ‚übelwollenden Ansturm und den Fallstricken der Welt entreiße‘.³¹ Für Secundinus ist der aggressive Charakter des *malum* aber auch in den neutestamentlichen Schriften belegt. Besonders stützt er sich auf Eph 6,12.³² Wenn der Apostel hier vom Kampf gegen ‚Fürsten und Mächte‘ (*principes et potestates*), gegen die ‚Geister der Bosheit‘ (*spiritalia nequitiae*) spricht, deutet Secundinus dies auf die Auseinandersetzung der Seele mit dem ‚*malum*‘ als dem ‚Geist der Laster‘ (*spiritus uitiorum*), der sie auf seine Seite zu ziehen versucht; er ist der ‚Feind‘ (*inimicus*), gegen den sich die Seele bewaffnen muss.³³ Er ‚zwingt‘ Petrus, den Herrn dreimal zu verleugnen, hindert Thomas daran zu glauben, mischt unter den guten Samen des Säckmanns Unkraut und ‚raubt‘ Judas aus dem Kreis der Jünger, betreibt die erniedrigende, grausame Kreuzigung, die allerdings den ‚geistigen Erlöser‘ nicht treffen kann, sorgt nach der Himmelfahrt für Differenzen unter den Gläubigen, wodurch zugleich der Anspruch des ‚Katholischen‘ untergraben wird, und verursacht in der Gegenwart das unsittliche Verhalten der breiten Menge.³⁴ Somit ergibt sich insgesamt bei Secundinus das Bild vom *malum* als einer persönlichen negativen Kraft, die in der Gesamtwirklichkeit aktiv ist und aggressiv gegen das Gute vorgeht.

Secundinus grenzt sich damit bewusst gegen Augustins ontologisch fundierte Bestimmung des *malum* ab. Unmittelbar nach dem Dank an

³⁰ Vgl. frg. * 4 (Stein), dazu Stein 2 (Anm. 19), 88f.

³¹ Vgl. ep. fund. frg. 3 Feldmann (= 1,3 Stein) (Anm. 19): ‚*dextera luminis tueatur et eripiat uos ab omni incursione maligna et a laqueo mundi*.‘

³² Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (894,1–9) mit dem Schluss (ebd. l. 9): ‚*hoc Paulus, hoc ipse testatur Manichaeus*.‘ Vgl. van Oort, ‚*Epistula*‘ (Anm. 2) 164f. Zur möglichen Anspielung in Keph. 38 (101,3–8a) vgl. J. Ries, ‚*Saint Paul dans la formation de Mani*,‘ in: J. Ries/F. Decret/W.H.C. Frend/M.G. Mara (Hrsg.), *Le epistole paoline nei manichei, i donatisti e il primo Agostino*, Rom² 2000, 27.

³³ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,15–20). Auch Fortunatus verweist auf diesen Vers. Er deutet ihn—in Kombination mit Mt 10,16—auf den leidvollen Kampf des Guten, d.h. der Lichtteile, in der bösen Welt (Aug., c. Fort. 22 [107,8–14]). Im Vergleich mit Secundinus spricht er deutlicher vom Kampf des Guten sowohl gegen Fleisch und Blut als auch gegen die geistigen Mächte des Bösen. Secundinus legt den Akzent stärker auf letztere, da sie die eigentlichen Gegner sind und das Körperliche als Kampfmittel benutzen. Nach Aug., agon. 4 (106,18–107,4) beziehen sich die Manichäer in ihrer Mission auf diesen Vers, um daran die Frage nach dem Ursprung des *malum* zu knüpfen.

³⁴ Vgl. Sec., ep. 4 (897,10–898,12).

die ‚trinitarische‘ Gottheit lehnt er bereits im zweiten Satz die Vorstellung ab, das malum sei das Nichts, und betont dagegen dessen aggressiven Charakter.³⁵ Am Ende seiner Ausführungen über den Kampf des guten und bösen Prinzips um die Seelen, die damit verbundenen Gefahren bis hin zur Möglichkeit, dass die Seele endzeitlich von der Rückkehr in das Lichtreich ausgeschlossen bleibt, nimmt Secundinus das neutestamentliche Wort vom Teufel und seinem Feuer (Mt 25,41) auf.³⁶ Er sieht bei Augustinus zwei mögliche Erklärungen für den Teufel: Entweder hält er ihn für einen gefallenen Erzengel—dies ist für einen Manichäer durchaus akzeptabel, da Mani selbst die Henoch-Tradition in seinem Buch der Giganten verarbeitet hat³⁷—oder aber er räumt ein, dass der diabolus ‚das Nichts‘ sei.³⁸ Secundinus lässt keinen Zweifel daran, dass er Letzteres für völlig abwegig hält. Er verweist auf die ‚Gerechten‘, denen die Herrschaft verheißen ist, sowie auf die Apostel und Märtyrer, die die Siegeskrone erhalten.³⁹ Die Formulierungen spielen mit biblischen Anklängen und nehmen in christlichem und manichäischem Schrifttum gängige Wendungen einer Kampfmetaphorik auf.⁴⁰ Das ‚Nichts‘ hat keinerlei

³⁵ Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (893,14): ‚... (illud malum), non quod nihil est ...‘

³⁶ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,26 f.). Die Stelle ist ein Beispiel der manichäischen Technik, den biblischen Text im eigenen Sinn abzuwandeln: Statt vom Feuer, das dem Teufel und Sündern ‚bestimmt‘ ist, spricht er vom Feuer, ‚aus‘ dem der Teufel ‚stammt‘ (vgl. Sfameni Gasparro, Introduzione [Anm. 1] 511 f.).—Felix zitiert richtig (Aug., c. Fel. 2,2 [829,30 f.]).

³⁷ Zum Gigantenbuch vgl. bes. J.C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaeism Cosmogony. Studies in the Book of Giants Traditions* (Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 14), Cincinnati 1992. Allerdings bezeugt Augustinus in Io. eu. tr. 42,12 (l. 9–20), dass sich Manichäer mit der Erklärung des Teufels als gefallenem Engel nicht zufrieden geben, sondern nach dessen Ursprung weiterfragen (vgl. u. Anm. 124). Grundlage ist eine Missdeutung von Joh 8,44, vgl. dazu K. Kaatz, ‚The Light and the Darkness: The two Natures, free Will, and the Scriptural Evidence in the Acta Archelai,‘ in: J. BeDuhn/P. Mirecki (Hrsg.), *Frontiers of Faith. The Christian Encounter with Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus* (NHMS 61), Leiden 2007, 116.

³⁸ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,27–895,1): ‚quem (sc. diabolum) tua mira prudentia aut ex archangelo factum memorat aut nihil esse fatetur.‘

³⁹ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (895,1 f.). Vgl. van Oort, ‚Epistula‘ (Anm. 2) 170 f.

⁴⁰ Zum Herrschen der Gerechten vgl. z. B. Röm 5,17; 1 Kor 6,9. Zur Siegeskrone der Heiligen und Märtyrer (corona martyrii/martyrio coronari), angeregt durch Apk 2,10; 3,11; 1 Kor 9,25; 2 Tim 4,7 f.; Phil 3,14 u. ö. vgl. z. B. Mart. Polyc. 17,1; 19,2; Cypr., ep. 37,3,1 (l. 63); Aug., conf. 6,2 (c. 2,24 f.); c. Faust. 20,21 (562,15) und häufig in den sermones, vgl. dazu Th. Baumeister, *Die Anfänge der Theologie des Martyriums* (MBT 45), Münster 1980, 198.214.254 f.; F. Gahbauer, ‚Der Kranz (Krone)—ein vieldeutiges Symbol in der Alten Kirche,‘ *Orthodoxes Forum* 23 (2009) 32 f. Zur Verwendung des Motivs in manichäischer Literatur vgl. nur die ausgewiesenen Texte bei A. Böhlig, *Die Gnosis 3. Der Manichäismus*, Zürich/München 1980, 414 f. s. v. ‚Kranz‘ und ‚Krone.‘

‚Kraft‘ (uirtus) oder ‚Eigenschaften‘. Wenn dies der Gegner der Apostel und Märtyrer ist, wird ihr ‚Vermögen‘ und ihre Leistung (potentia), die ja bis zur Hingabe des eigenen Lebens geht, völlig entwertet.⁴¹

2.2. Die Seele und die Sünde—Zwang und Willensentscheidung

Secundinus verwirft ebenfalls schon zu Beginn seines Briefes die Vorstellung, das malum entstehe durch menschliches Tun und Erleiden.⁴² Im Kontext des Briefes ist deutlich, dass er damit zwei Teilgedanken ablehnt, nämlich die Bindung des malum letztlich allein an den Menschen sowie die Vorstellung, dass es hervorgebracht wird. Dagegen betont der Manichäer die eigenständige, gesamtkosmische Existenz des malum, das bereits vor der Entstehung des Menschen vorhanden war, ja seine Schaffung betrieben hat und weiter von außen und über den körperlichen Anteil auf ihn einwirkt.

Secundinus stellt in einem recht ausführlichen Teil des Briefes sein Verständnis von Sünde systematisch und klar geordnet dar.⁴³ Im Anschluss an Eph 6,12 sieht er die Seele in einer Mittelstellung zwischen dem ‚Geist der Tugenden‘ und dem ‚Geist der Laster‘.⁴⁴ Er unterscheidet

⁴¹ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (895,3 f.). Zum manichäischen Gebrauch von ‚uirtus‘ für Kräfte des Licht- und Finsternisreiches vgl. Stein 2 (Anm. 19), 90 f. 96.97 f.; E. Rutzenhöfer, ‚Contra Fortunatum Disputatio. Die Debatte mit Fortunatus,‘ *Augustiniana* 42 (1992) 67–72; J. van Oort, ‚Heeding and Hiding their Particular Knowledge? An Analysis of Augustine’s Dispute with Fortunatus,‘ in: Th. Fuhrer (Hrsg.), *Die christlich-philosophischen Diskurse der Spätantike. Texte, Personen, Institutionen* (Philosophie der Antike 28), Stuttgart 2008, 117.118 f.

⁴² Vgl. Sec., ep. 1 (893,14 f.): ‚(illum malum) ... non ... quod factione passioneque mortalium gignitur.‘

⁴³ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,10–27), zu Parallelen bei Fortunatus vgl. u. 3.6. Vgl. Decret, *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,343–346; Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione‘ (Anm. 1) 508–512. Zum manichäischen Verständnis des Bösen und der Sünde vgl. nur die grundlegenden Arbeiten von H.-Ch. Puech, ‚Der Begriff der Erlösung im Manichäismus,‘ in: G. Widengren (Hrsg.), *Der Manichäismus* (WdF 168) Darmstadt 1977, 145–213, bes. 189–191 (erstveröffentlicht 1936); ders., ‚Die Religion des Mani,‘ in: F. König (Hrsg.), *Christus und die Religionen der Erde. Handbuch der Religionsgeschichte* 2, Freiburg 1951, 546 f.; Decret, *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,323–346; A. Böhlig, ‚Das Böse in der Lehre des Mani und des Markion,‘ in: ders., *Gnosis und Synkretismus. Gesammelte Aufsätze zur spätantiken Religionsgeschichte* 2 (WUNT 48), Tübingen 1989, 612 ff., bes. 613–623 (erstveröffentlicht 1983).

⁴⁴ Decret, *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,334–336 unterstreicht, dass es demnach nicht um einen einfachen Gegensatz zwischen Licht und Materie geht. Die Finsternis wirkt innerhalb des Menschen durch eigene Kräfte, die mit dem Guten im Kampf liegen. Decret sieht hierin einen Beleg für die von Augustinus behauptete manichäische Lehre von den ‚zwei Seelen‘; sie sei nicht etwa eine ‚spiritualisierende‘ (ebd. 336) Sonderlehre des Secundinus,

grundsätzlich zwei Wege. Im Idealfall stellt sich die Seele auf die Seite des Geistes der Tugenden—dann gewinnt sie das ewige Leben und nimmt das vom Herrn verheißene Reich in Besitz. Andernfalls gibt sie dem Geist der Laster nach. Hier unterscheidet Secundinus wiederum mehrere Möglichkeiten. Den entscheidenden Einschnitt bildet die Gnosis, die Secundinus als Selbsterkenntnis der Seele umschreibt.⁴⁵ Vor der Gnosis handelt die Seele bei Fehlverhalten nicht aus eigenem Willensentschluss, sondern aufgrund der ‚Vermischung mit dem Fleisch‘. Auch wenn sie dem Bösen zustimmt, wird sie doch durch die Verlockungen des bösen Geistes angezogen. Die Hauptschuld liegt bei der Finsternismacht,⁴⁶ die Seele ist entlastet. Secundinus verwendet in diesem Zusammenhang—ob absichtlich oder unbewusst—das Stichwort der Sünde nicht. Allerdings spricht er von der möglichen späteren ‚Reue‘ der Seele. Sie setzt eine Erkenntnis der Verfehlung (durch den Licht-Nous) voraus, die jedoch nicht ausdrücklich erwähnt wird. Die Reue jedenfalls ermöglicht die Vergebung (*indulgentia*). Nach der Gnosis jedoch⁴⁷ gehen die Zustimmung und das Fehlverhalten auf den eigenen Willen zurück; hier spricht Secundinus von ‚Sünde‘ (*peccare*). Auch in diesem Fall ist nach der Reue Vergebung möglich. Der Manichäer lässt erneut durchblicken, dass das Fehlverhalten letztlich auf die bösen Mächte zurückzuführen ist. Die eigentliche Schuld der Seele liegt darin, dass sie sich nicht hinreichend gegen den Feind geschützt hat. Bestraft wird nicht das Fehlverhalten, sondern die fehlende Reue. Somit ergeben sich nochmals zwei mögliche Fälle. Wenn die Seele ihre Verfehlung bereut, erhält sie Vergebung und wird

sondern habe Parallelen in anderen manichäischen Quellen (bes. Fortunatus). Allerdings sprechen manichäische Quellen und auch Secundinus nicht explizit von einer zweiten, schlechten ‚Seele‘, sondern von ‚*terrenae uirtutes*‘ (z. B. ep. fund. frg. 9 Feldmann = 6,9 Stein [Anm. 19]). Secundinus und Fortunatus betonen ausdrücklich, dass das ‚*malum*‘ eine äußere Kraft darstellt, von der mit dem menschlichen Körper ‚ein Teilchen‘ mit der lebendigen, guten Seele verbunden sei und einen schädlichen Einfluss auf sie ausübe (insbesondere durch die Begierden). Die Lehre der ‚zwei Seelen‘ ist eher eine ‚wohl polemische Verzeichnung‘ durch Augustinus (G. Wurst, ‚Augustins Auseinandersetzung mit den Manichäern,‘ in: *Augustin Handbuch* [Anm. 3] 168; vgl. Sfameni Gasparro, ‚*Introduzione*‘ [Anm. 1] 508 Anm. 18).

⁴⁵ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,18): ‚... cum se ipsam cognouerit ...‘

⁴⁶ Decret, *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,334f. verweist als Hintergrund auf Keph. 6: Alle Schlechtigkeit und Bosheit, alle Angriffe auf das Licht gehen vom ‚König der Welt des Rauches‘ aus, einer der fünf ‚Welten‘, die aus der Finsternis hervorgehen. Mani warnt abschließend die *Electi* vor der Knechtschaft dieser Finsternismächte, ‚auf daß ihr entgehet ihrer Fessel und ihrer Strafe ewiglich‘ (p. 34,11 f.).

⁴⁷ Vgl. den scharfen Gegensatz: ‚... at si ...‘ (Sec., ep. 2 [894,22]).

gerettet. Verweigert sie aber bewusst diese Reue—wie Augustinus⁴⁸—bis zum Ende des menschlichen Lebens, geht sie der endzeitlichen Verdammung im Bolos entgegen.

In dieser differenzierten Position verbindet Secundinus die These von der verführerischen Macht der Finsternis, die sie über die körperliche ‚Beimischung‘ auf die Seele ausübt, mit der Möglichkeit einer willentlichen Entscheidung nach Erlangung der Gnosis. Beide Ansätze liegen in manichäischer Tradition vor, werden aber, wenn überhaupt, nur andeutend in einem Gesamtkonzept verbunden.⁴⁹ Im Vordergrund steht die Überzeugung, dass die Seele durch die Vermischung mit der Finsternismaterie so in Mitleidenschaft gezogen ist, dass sie ihr Bewusstsein verloren hat und ihr falsches Verhalten nicht erkennt oder aber so geschwächt ist, dass sie von den Finsternismächten überwältigt wird.⁵⁰ Die Position des Secundinus hat deutliche Parallelen in den Kephalaia 138 und 38.⁵¹ Im Menschen ‚wohnt‘ die lebendige Seele in der Verbindung mit dem Körper, sie ‚befindet sich in der Vermischung‘.⁵² Sie ist nämlich in ihren

⁴⁸ Entsprechend ruft Secundinus, ep. 5 (898,20–899,2) den Adressaten zur Umkehr auf und stellt ihm die Vergebung in Aussicht.

⁴⁹ Vgl. Stein 2 (Anm. 19), 113–115 mit weiterer Literatur, der von einem Widerspruch im Denken ausgeht; ähnlich Coyle, *Manichaeism* (Anm. 9) 61–63, bes. Anm. 56. Für Bierbaums (Anm. 3) 32–35 sind beide Ansätze zumindest im Konzept des Felix vermittelbar, da sich nach der Gnosis ‚Zwang‘ durch die böse Natur und Willensfreiheit nicht ausschließen.

⁵⁰ Vgl. z. B. den Beichtspiegel für Hörer nach X^uästvānīft, ed. J.P. Asmussen, 167–199, hier zitiert nach Böhlig, *Gnosis* 3 (Anm. 40) 198–207: Im Kampf mit den Finsternismächten wurde der ‚Fünfgott‘ und damit zugleich die Seele des einzelnen Menschen verwundet, mit den bösen Mächten und ihrem schlechten Wissen, vor allem ihrer Gier (personifiziert im ‚Äz-Teufel‘) vermischt und dadurch ‚verstandeslos und willenlos‘ (ebd. 199). Entsprechend flehen die Beter in jedem Abschnitt ihres Bekenntnisses um die Vergebung mit der Formel: ‚wenn wir jemals, ohne es zu wissen, irgendwie ... gesündigt haben‘ (ebd. 200 u. ö.). Zur Begierde (Äz, concupiscentia) der Finsternismächte, die die in ihrem Wesen gute Seele ‚infiziert‘ und überwältigt, vgl. M. Stein, *Manichaica Latina* 1. *epistula ad Menoch. Text, Übersetzung, Erläuterungen*, Köln 1998, 67 (zu ep. Menoch. frg. 2,4 mit Bezug auf 1 Tim 6,10, allerdings mit ‚concupiscentia‘ als Übertragung von *φιλᾶγωγυρία*!) mit Parallelen bes. der lateinischen Manichaica. Die ‚concupiscentia‘ ist das zentrale Thema der *epistula ad Menoch* (so weit sie erhalten ist), vgl. dazu fragg. 2–6 ed. Stein; vgl. auch die vorige Anm. Zur ‚concupiscentia‘ im augustinish-manichäischen Kontext vgl. J. van Oort, ‚Augustine and Mani on concupiscentia sexualis,‘ in: J. den Boeft / J. van Oort (Hrsg.), *Augustiniana Traiectina. Communications présentées au Colloque International d'Utrecht 13–14 novembre 1986*, Paris 1987, 137–152; Lee (Anm. 11) 53–59; Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione generale‘ (Anm. 11) XLIII–XLIX.

⁵¹ Vgl. Keph. 138 (ed. W.-P. Funk) (340,20–341,24); 38 (94,17–97,26), zum Inhalt vgl. I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary* (NHMS 37), Leiden 1995, 93 f.

⁵² Keph. 138 (341,3).

‚Gliedern‘ an bestimmte Teile des Körpers gefesselt. Dieser ist der ‚alte Mensch‘. In ihm ‚wohnt eine mächtige Kraft‘, die Sünde.⁵³ Kephalaion 138 differenziert zwei Fälle, die die Grundlage für die Unterscheidung zwischen der Sünde vor der Gnosis und nach der Gnosis bilden können, wie sie Secundinus vornimmt. Im ersten Fall ‚zwingt‘ der Körper die Seele zur Verfehlung. Daraufhin gibt ihr der Licht-Nous das Bewusstsein, falsch gehandelt zu haben; als der ‚neue Mensch‘ wendet sie sich von der Sünde ab, bittet um Vergebung und ihr wird verziehen.⁵⁴ Im zweiten Fall kommt es nach der ‚Belehrung‘ zur Sünde.⁵⁵ In der ‚Bedrängnis‘ durch den alten Menschen ‚vergisst‘ die Seele die Belehrung durch den Licht-Nous, der sie an ihr wahres Wesen ‚erinnert‘ hat. Der Licht-Nous belehrt sie erneut, veranlasst sie zur ‚Buße‘ (μετάνοια, eig. ‚Umdenken‘ mit neutestamentlichem Anklang [Mk 1,15 u. ö.]), reinigt sie und weist ihr den Weg der Rückkehr in ihre Heimat.⁵⁶ Kephalaion 38 bestätigt, dass die Versuchung zur Sünde auch nach der Gnosis immer wieder neu aus dem Körper heraufkommt und auch diese Verfehlung durch Belehrung und Vergebung in der Gemeinschaft gesühnt werden kann.⁵⁷ Diese Möglichkeit steht grundsätzlich auch denen offen, die ‚verleugnet‘ haben.⁵⁸ Es kann aber auch zur bewussten Verweigerung gegenüber der Gnosis oder zur Abwendung von ihr kommen. Wer sich von der Kirche Manis trennt, ja zu ihrem Feind wird und dem bösen Geist dieser Welt Raum gibt, wird vom Nous verlassen.⁵⁹ ‚Lästerern‘ und Feinden der Kirche Manis drohen

⁵³ Vgl. Keph. 38 (94,17–22). Zum ‚alten‘ und ‚neuen Menschen‘ vgl. weiter Keph. 136; 146 (‚Speisen‘ des alten und neuen Menschen) u. ö.; *Traité Chavannes-Pelliot* 546–548 (E. Chavannes/P. Pelliot, *Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine*, Paris 1912).

⁵⁴ Vgl. Keph. 138 (341,3–10); Keph. 91 (232,8–17): Die ‚ersten Sünden‘ vor der Gnosis sind vergeben, sofern der Bekehrte in der Gnosis bleibt.

⁵⁵ Allerdings ist die Einzelseele auch schon vor dem Weckruf durch die Vermischung in ‚Schlaf‘ und ‚Trunkenheit‘ versunken. Daher ist schon die (erste) Belehrung eine ‚Erinnerung‘ an das ursprüngliche Wissen, vgl. z. B. Fortunatus in Aug., c. Fort. 20 (99,21 f.).

⁵⁶ Vgl. Keph. 138 (341,11–24).

⁵⁷ Vgl. Keph. 38 (97,26–100,6); vgl. Keph. 86 (bes. 215,1–25; 216,14–21): Unruhe und Verwirrung im ‚neuen Menschen‘ entstehen durch den Körper und die falsche Nahrung, die er aufnimmt; Keph. 88 (220,6–10.15–22). Keph. 128 (304,18–306,26) unterstreicht die Möglichkeit der Buße und rät zur—wiederholten—Vergabung, damit die Seele ‚ohne irgendwelche Behinderung‘ zum Lichtreich zurückkehren kann (305,23 f.).—Die Beicht- und Bußpraxis der Manichäer ist durch zahlreiche Dokumente belegt, vgl. Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione‘ (Anm. 1) 510 f. mit Anm. 26 (Lit.); G. Wurst, *Das Bemafest der ägyptischen Manichäer*, Altenberge 1995, 142 f.

⁵⁸ Vgl. Hom. 23,7–9.

⁵⁹ Vgl. Keph. 38 (99,2–17). Vgl. dazu den manichäischen Spruch: ‚lumen per illum transitum fecit‘ (Aug., util. cred. 3 [6,4]). Zum positiven Gegenbild des vollkommenen Katechumenen vgl. Keph. 91.

die ewige Verdammnis und der ewige Tod.⁶⁰ Auch hier geht der ‚Angriff‘ vom Finsternisreich aus. Die Verantwortung des Menschen liegt in mangelndem Widerstand, fehlender Vorsicht oder zu geringem Bemühen um Erkenntnis.⁶¹ Secundinus erhebt ebenfalls diesen Vorwurf für die Sünde nach der Gnosis, betont aber wesentlich deutlicher den Eigenanteil des Menschen aufgrund seiner Willensentscheidung.⁶²

3. GRUNDLAGEN BEI AUGUSTINUS

3.1. Problemstellung

Nach Augustins eigenem Zeugnis zieht sich die Frage nach dem Wesen und Ursprung des malum wie ein roter Faden durch seine intellektuelle Biographie.⁶³ Sie beschäftigt ihn schon in der Jugend ‚bis zur Erschöpfung‘ und ist einer der ausschlaggebenden Gründe für den Anschluss an die Manichäer.⁶⁴ Neben dem Versprechen, Rationalität und wahres Christentum miteinander zu verbinden, war es ganz offensichtlich die manichäische Erklärung des malum durch den dualistischen Ansatz, den die Manichäer in ihrer Mission in den Vordergrund stellten⁶⁵ und der auch Augustinus anzog.⁶⁶ Die Annahme einer schlechten, gottfeindlichen Natur erklärte die täglich erfahrbare Wirkmacht des malum, entlastete den guten Gott, da das malum und die Sünden nun nicht mehr ‚wie mit einer Kette‘ an ihn gebunden erschienen,⁶⁷ und entband (zu einem beträchtlichen Teil) den Menschen von der Verantwortung für

⁶⁰ Vgl. Keph. 41 (106,11–13): ‚... damit ihr entrinnt dem schlimmen Ende der Verleugner und Lasterer, die gesehen haben die Wahrheit mit ihren Augen und sich zurückgewandt haben von ihr;‘ 39 (104,6–20); 150 (363,6–17): Zur ewigen Strafe wird die (der Kirche Manis) ‚fremde Sippe‘ verdammt, d. h. die Verräter und Kreuziger, diejenigen, die zu den ‚Sekten‘ und ‚Spaltungen‘ gehen, der Kirche (Manis) schaden und Verfolgungen auslösen, und schließlich die Leugner und Lasterer.

⁶¹ Vgl. Keph. 38 (99,2 f.); thes. frg. 2 (Stein 2 [Anm. 19], 113) (= Aug., c. Fel. 2,5 [832,22–27]); ep. fund. frg. 11 Feldmann (= frg. 8 Stein, dazu Stein 2,100–103) (Anm. 19); die Seelen erhalten daher das, was sie ‚verdient‘ haben (frg. 8,3 Stein).

⁶² Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,18–20).

⁶³ Deutlich zu verfolgen in den conf., vgl. Coyle, ‚God’s Place‘ (Anm. 10) 91–93 (= *Manichaeism* 269–271).

⁶⁴ Vgl. Aug., lib. arb. 1,4 (c. 2,2–5): E. ‚... dic mihi unde malum faciamus. A. Eam quaestionem moues, quae me admodum adulescentem uehementer exercuit et fatigatum in haereticos impulit atque deiecit.‘ Nach dem Kontext sind eindeutig die Manichäer gemeint.

⁶⁵ Vgl. Aug., mor. 2,2 (89,5–7) (o. Anm. 9); util. cred. 36 (46,17 f.); agon. 4 (106,14–18).

⁶⁶ Neben Aug., lib. arb. 1,4 (o. Anm. 64) vgl. conf. 3,12 (c. 7,1–3).

⁶⁷ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 10 (63,15–21).

die eigenen Fehler. Nach den *Confessiones* stellt die Frage des *malum* in der allmählichen Ablösung von den Manichäern das größte Problem dar.⁶⁸ Den Schlüssel zu ihrer intellektuellen Überwindung findet Augustinus mit der Lektüre der ‚*libri Platonici*‘ in der neuplatonischen Ontologie mit ihrer Annahme einer gestuften Seinsordnung, die vom höchsten immateriellen, unwandelbaren, unvergängliche Sein mit dem nicht mehr qualifizierbaren ‚*Einen*‘ bis zum Nichtsein reicht.⁶⁹ Diese Neuentdeckung bildet von Beginn an die philosophische Basis in der Auseinandersetzung mit den Manichäern.

Daher können die *confessiones* durchaus Grundlage für die Äußerungen des Secundinus sein. Bereits im Bericht über seine Begeisterung für den Manichäismus merkt Augustinus reflektierend an, er habe seinerzeit noch nicht gewusst, dass das *malum* lediglich in der ‚Minderung an Gutem bis hin zum Nichtsein‘ besteht.⁷⁰ Dies führt er im Kontext der Platonikerlektüre deutlicher aus. Sie habe ihn erkennen lassen, dass das *malum* keine eigene Substanz, sondern ‚*(boni) priuatio*‘ bzw. ‚*corruptio*‘ ist. Sofern etwas ‚ist‘, ist es auch (in abgestuften Graden) gut; wenn das Gutsein vollständig fehlt, bedeutet dies das Nichtsein.⁷¹ Dabei verwendet er allerdings nicht das Stichwort ‚*nihil*‘, sondern drückt das Nichtsein stets verbal aus. Augustinus erzählt auch von der allmählich gewonnenen Einsicht, dass der freie Wille (*liberum arbitrium*) in seiner Wendung zu niederen Gütern der Ursprung des *malum* ist, wobei er zwischen dem bösen Handeln (*facere*) und dem Erleiden (*pati*) der gerechten Strafe unterscheidet.⁷² Im Zusammenhang mit der Gartenszene reflektiert er,

⁶⁸ Vgl. Aug., *conf.* 5,18 (c. 10,6–12); 5,20 (c. 10,58–63); 7,4 (c. 3,5–12); 7,7.

⁶⁹ Vgl. V.H. Drecoll, ‚Neuplatonismus,‘ in: *Augustin Handbuch* (Anm. 3) 79 f.; ders., *Die Entstehung der Gnadenlehre Augustins* (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 109), Tübingen 1999, 106–121, bes. 114–118; Th. Fuhrer, ‚Augustin in Mailand,‘ in: dies. (Hrsg.), *Diskurse* (Anm. 41) 63–79; W. Geerlings, *Libri Platoniorum. Die philosophische Bildung Augustins*, in: Th. Kobusch / B. Mojsisch (Hrsg.), *Platon in der abendländischen Geistesgeschichte. Neue Forschungen zum Platonismus*, Darmstadt 1997, 60–70; Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione generale‘ (Anm. 11) XXVII–XXVIII mit Anm. 92 (Lit.). Zur ‚*corruptio*‘ bei Augustinus vgl. Ch. Müller, ‚*Corruptio—incorruptio*,‘ in: *AL* 2 (1996–2002) 47–53 (Lit.).

⁷⁰ Vgl. Aug., *conf.* 3,12 (c. 7,7 f.): ‚... non noueram malum non esse nisi priuationem boni usque ad quod omnino non est.‘ Zur notwendigen Trennung von Narration und Reflexion in den *conf.* vgl. Feldmann, *Einfluss* (Anm. 11) 1, 364.375 ff., bes. 529–540.

⁷¹ Vgl. Aug., *conf.* 7,18 (c. 12,1–14); weiter 7,7 (c. 5,21–23); 7,19 (c. 13,1). Zur Abstufung des Gutseins ebd. 7,19.

⁷² Vgl. Aug., *conf.* 7,5 (c. 3,13–15): ‚Et intendebam, ut cernerem quod audiebam, liberum uoluntatis arbitrium causam esse, ut male faceremus et rectum iudicium tuum ut pateremur‘ (vgl. ebd. l. 21 f.); 7,22 (c. 16,7–9).

wiederum in antimanichäischer Ausrichtung, ausführlich über die Willensproblematik.⁷³ Schließlich erwähnt Augustinus in den *confessiones* auch die Entstehung des Teufels durch den Engelsturz und dessen Macht, den Menschen zur Sünde zu verleiten.⁷⁴

Dennoch ist damit die Frage nach den augustinischen Quellen des *Secundinus* noch nicht hinreichend beantwortet. Insbesondere die pointierte Formulierung vom *malum* als dem ‚Nichts‘ wirft—sofern man nicht von einer eigenständigen Formulierung des *Secundinus* ausgeht—die Frage auf, ob sich Hinweise auf andere Schriften Augustins erkennen lassen. Im Folgenden werden daher Augustins Positionen zum *malum*-Problem in antimanichäischen Schriften analysiert. Leitend ist dabei die Frage, inwieweit sie Grundlagen für die Reaktion des *Secundinus* geboten haben könnten.

3.2. *de moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*

Bereits in seiner ersten antimanichäischen Schrift behandelt Augustinus in Verbindung mit der Frage nach dem höchsten Gut das *malum*-Problem ausführlich.⁷⁵ Es ist dem Bereich der Ethik zuzuordnen,⁷⁶ erfordert aber zunächst eine ontologische Fundierung, die der Frage nach dem Ursprung des *malum* vorausgehen muss.⁷⁷ Augustinus definiert das *summa bonum* als das ‚höchste und ursprüngliche Sein‘ (*summa ac primitus esse*), das sich durch Unveränderlichkeit, Unzerstörbarkeit und Überzeitlichkeit auszeichnet.⁷⁸ Dieses identifiziert er mit Gott. Wenn nach dem negativen Gegenteil zu Gott gefragt wird, ‚gibt es überhaupt nichts‘,

⁷³ Vgl. Aug., *conf.* 8,20–24 mit Ablehnung der den Manichäern zugeschriebenen Zwei-Seelen-Lehre (dazu o. Anm. 44); zu *conf.* 8,24 vgl. c. Sec. 13.

⁷⁴ Vgl. Aug., *conf.* 7,5 (c. 3,28–31); 7,27 (c. 21,34–38).

⁷⁵ Zur Schrift vgl. E. Rutzenhöfer, ‚Einleitung,‘ in: *Augustinus, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum. Die Lebensführung der katholischen Kirche und die Lebensführung der Manichäer* (AOW 25), Paderborn 2004, 7–40, sowie die Kommentierung; F. Decret, ‚De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum. Livre II: De moribus Manichaeorum,‘ in: ders., *Essais sur l'Église manichéenne en Afrique du Nord et à Rome au temps de saint Augustin. Recueil d'études* (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 47), Rom 1995, 159–193 (= *Lectio Augustini. Settimana Agostiniana Pavese, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum, De quantitate animae. Commento*, Palermo 1991, 59–119).

⁷⁶ Vgl. Aug., *mor.* 2,1 (88,2–4).

⁷⁷ Vgl. Aug., *mor.* 2,2 (89,10–15).

⁷⁸ Aug., *mor.* 2,1 (88,6–14), dazu ausführlicher bereits *mor.* 1,10.21–24; vgl. Rutzenhöfer, ‚Einleitung‘ (Anm. 75) 14 f.

oder pointierter übersetzt: ‚ist da überhaupt nur das Nichts‘.⁷⁹ Dass letztere ontologische Akzentuierung zutrifft, zeigt der Folgesatz: ‚Denn das Sein hat kein Gegenteil außer dem Nichtsein.‘⁸⁰ Er greift damit eine Position auf, die er zu Beginn der Soliloquien knapp formuliert: Gott schenkt den Wenigen, die zum wahren Sein Zuflucht nehmen, die Erkenntnis, dass das ‚malum das Nichts ist‘.⁸¹

Nachfolgend diskutiert er drei mögliche manichäische Bestimmungen des malum: das, was gegen die Natur ist, das, was Schaden bringt, oder allgemein die ‚corruptio‘.⁸² Die drei Antworten werden im Kontext manichäischen Denkens erläutert und als unhaltbar erwiesen, um dann im zweiten Schritt die richtige Position der catholica zu entwickeln. In der Grundaussage münden alle Beweisführungen in die These, das malum an sich bestehe in der Minderung des Seins und der Annäherung an das Nichtsein.⁸³ Die Eingangsthese, das ‚malum‘ an sich sei das Nichts, wird also bereits hier präzisiert durch den Hinweis, dass die konkret existierenden ‚mala‘ zwar auf das Nichtsein zustreben, aber nicht darin übergehen. Diese Präzisierung ist notwendig aufgrund des anderen Axioms, dass alles Seiende in abgestuften Graden gut ist; denn es geht auf den einen guten Schöpfer zurück, hat positive Eigenschaften und fügt sich in die harmonische Ordnung ein.⁸⁴ Dies hat im Übrigen auch zur Konsequenz, dass Gott nicht der Urheber des malum ist.

⁷⁹ Vgl. Aug., mor. 2,1 (88,16–18): ‚Hanc (sc. manentem in se atque incommutabiliter sese habentem naturam) nihil aliud quam deum possumus dicere, cui si contrarium recte quaeras, nihil omnino est.‘

⁸⁰ Aug., mor. 2,1 (88,18 f.): ‚Esse enim contrarium non habet nisi non esse.‘

⁸¹ Vgl. Aug., sol. 1,2 (4,12 f.): ‚Deus, qui paucis ad id quod vere est refugientibus, ostendis malum nihil esse;‘ ord. 2,46 (c. 17,31 ff., bes. 42–50 mit antimanichäischer Perspektive); ord. 2,23 (c. 6,81 f.) ist textkritisch sehr unsicher und vermutlich sekundär (vgl. J. Trelenberg, *Augustins Schrift De ordine. Einführung, Kommentar, Ergebnisse*, Tübingen 2009, 259). In der Aussage des Licentius ebd. 1,15 (c. 6,8–13) ist ‚nihil‘ wohl nicht ontologisch aufzufassen, vgl. Trelenberg 110. Augustinus vereinfacht damit—wohl selbständig—die Neuplatoniker, vgl. Drecoll, *Gnadenlehre* (Anm. 69) 116.

⁸² Vgl. Aug., mor. 2,2 (89,15–17) (quod contra naturam est); 2,5 (91,5 f.) (quod nocet); 2,7 (93,1 f.) (corruptio); vgl. Decret, ‚De moribus‘ (Anm. 75) 166 f. Zu ‚corruptio‘ vgl. u. Anm. 170.

⁸³ Vgl. Aug., mor. 2,2 (90,1–3); 2,3 (90,7–9); 2,6 (92,12–14); 2,8 (94,2–4; 95,1 f.); 2,9 (95,5–8.17.21). Das malum wird in diesen Ausführungen nicht ausdrücklich als das nihil bezeichnet, statt dessen verwendet Augustinus verbale Wendungen (non esse oder auch den ‚neuen‘ Begriff ‚essentia‘, vgl. 2,2 [89,24–26]) oder prozessuale Termini wie z. B. ‚deficere a ...‘ (2,8 [94,2 f.]), ‚conari perducere (ad ...)‘ (ebd. [94,1]), ‚mutari in ...‘ (ebd. [94,6 f.]), auch bereits hier ‚tendere ad ...‘ (ebd. [95,1 f.; vgl. 94,12 f.]).

⁸⁴ Vgl. Aug., mor. 2,10 (96,6–11); 2,14 (100,12–14). Eine der positiven Eigenschaften ist z. B. der ordo, vgl. 2,8 (94,11–22). Für die manichäische Natur der Finsternis ergibt

Nur kurz schneidet Augustinus die Frage des freien Willens in der Diskussion des *malum* als *corruptio an*.⁸⁵ Die vernunftbegabten Seelen entscheiden sich u.U. für ein niederes Gut in der Schöpfungsordnung und fallen so von sich selbst ab. Entsprechend erhalten sie aufgrund göttlichen Urteils die ihnen zukommende Stufe in der Seinsordnung. Damit ist zwar der Zusammenhang zwischen der Willensentscheidung und den Straffolgen angedeutet, aber nicht ausführlich thematisiert und zudem stark ontologisch fundiert.

Secundinus kann also in der Ablehnung der These, das ‚*malum*‘ sei das ‚Nichts‘, wörtlich (neben den Soliloquien) auf die Einleitung des zweiten Buch *de moribus* zurückgreifen. Hierfür spricht weiter die Aufforderung des Secundinus an seinen Adressaten, er solle sich nicht als tastend Suchenden (*palpans*) darstellen. Diese nicht sehr häufig gebrauchte Vokabel verwendet Augustinus, wenn er in *mor.* 2,1 direkt nach der These, das *malum* sei das Nichts, die Manichäer auffordert, vorsichtig und schrittweise ‚nicht wie Sehende, sondern wie Tastende‘ nach der Einsicht in die Wahrheit zu suchen.⁸⁶ Die doppelte Parallele spricht sehr dafür, dass Secundinus Augustins Schrift ‚*de moribus Manichaeorum*‘ kannte.

3.3. *De Genesi aduersus Manichaeos*

Augustins erster Versuch, die Schöpfungserzählungen auszulegen und gegen manichäische Angriffe zu verteidigen,⁸⁷ beruht auf den ontologischen Grundlagen der Frühdialoge, die hier differenzierter als in *mor.* zum Ausdruck kommen. Der ewige Gott hat allein den Sohn aus sich gezeugt, alles andere aber aus freiem Entschluss aus dem Nichts geschaffen. Somit steht die Schöpfung ontologisch unter dem Vater und dem

sich daraus: Wenn sie vollkommen schlecht war, konnte sie keine *corruptio* erleiden—dem Lichtreich dagegen drohte nach dem Mythos die *corruptio*, vgl. 2,7 (93,5–18).

⁸⁵ Vgl. *Aug.*, *mor.* 2,9 (bes. 95,8–12). Ausführlicher mit gleichem Grundgedanken c. *Sec.* 11; 15 (927,4–928,2).

⁸⁶ Vgl. *Aug.*, *mor.* 2,1 (89,1–4): ‚... conemur ... ad qualemcumque tantae rei notitiam peruenire pedetemptim atque caute, non ut uidentes sed ut palpantes solent quaerere‘; *Sec.*, ep. 5 (899,2f.): ‚noli te fingere palpare, qui dudum uidisti, noli uelle discere, qui potes docere‘.

⁸⁷ Zur Schrift vgl. D. Weber, ‚*Genesi aduersus Manicheos* (De -)‘, in: *AL* 3,1–2 (2004) 132–140 (Lit.); dies., ‚Einleitung‘, in: *Augustinus, De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (CSEL 91), Wien 1998, 9–29, bes. 11–18; dies., ‚Augustinus, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*. Zu Augustins Darstellung und Widerlegung der manichäischen Kritik am biblischen Schöpfungsbericht‘, in: van Oort u. a. (Hrsg.), *Augustine* (Anm. 2) 298–306; Decret, *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,41–50.

Sohn, sie ist aber in sich gut.⁸⁸ Alles Geschaffene hat Maß, Zahl und Ordnung, was auf Gott als die Quelle und das Höchstmaß dieser Qualitäten verweist; es ist in sich schön und trägt zum harmonischen Ganzen bei.⁸⁹

Auf diesen Grundlagen begegnet Augustinus manichäischen Angriffen auf Gen 1,3. Wenn Gott das Licht schuf, so die Manichäer, gab es zuvor die Finsternis. Woher stammte sie, war sie ewig oder wer schuf sie bzw. brachte sie hervor? Als Hintergrund macht Augustinus den manichäischen Dualismus deutlich, indem er kurz auf die Erzählung vom Reich der Finsternis (*gens tenebrarum*) samt den in ihr lebendigen Kräften und vom Kampf gegen das Lichtreich verweist. Dagegen bestimmt er—dem ontologischen Ansatz der ‚*priuatio*‘ folgend—die Finsternis als Fehlen des Lichts.⁹⁰ Wie also die Stille ein (das) Nichts ist, so ist auch die Finsternis ein (das) Nichts.⁹¹ Die manichäische These einer eigenständigen Existenz der Finsternis verweist Augustinus daher in den Bereich der ‚*uanitates*‘. In polemischem Ton leitet er zur manichäischen Vorstellung vom Angriff des Finsternisreiches über und unterstreicht so die Diskrepanz zwischen beiden Ansätzen. Secundinus hebt sie ebenso scharf hervor, wenn er die These vom *malum* als dem Nichts mit dem Schicksal der Apostel und Märtyrer kontrastiert.⁹²

Den ethischen Aspekt des *malum*-Problems greift Augustinus im Zusammenhang mit der manichäischen Kritik an den negativen Erscheinungen der Schöpfung auf. Letztlich ist die menschliche Sünde der ursächliche Grund aller *mala*. Sie wurden erst nach dem Sündenfall ein Bestandteil der Weltordnung und sind als göttliche Strafe, als Mahnung zur Abkehr von der Sünde oder auch als ‚Herausforderungen‘ (*exercitationes*) für die Menschen intendiert.⁹³ Aufgabe des Menschen ist es, gehorsam gegenüber den Geboten Gottes zu leben, die inneren Regungen zu beherrschen und statt der Unüberlegtheit und Sünde der Vernunft und Gerechtigkeit zu folgen.⁹⁴

⁸⁸ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 1,4.

⁸⁹ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 1,26 (l. 1–12); 1,32.

⁹⁰ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 1,7 (l. 1–8). Dies erläutert er durch weitere Beispiele: Stille = Fehlen eines Geräusches, Nacktheit = Fehlen von Bekleidung, Leere = Fehlen eines Körpers.

⁹¹ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 1,7 (l. 17 f.): ‚*Sicut autem silentium nihil est, sic et tenebrae nihil sunt.*‘

⁹² Vgl. oben Anm. 39.

⁹³ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 1,19; 1,26 (l. 16–20); 2,5.8 u. ö.; zur Strafe ausführlich ebd. 2,26–29. Zur Entstehung des ‚*malum*‘ nach der Schöpfung vgl. bereits ord. 2,23.46.

⁹⁴ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 1,43 (l. 25–30).

Im Kontext der Sündenfallerzählung verbindet Augustinus dies mit dem ontologischen Ansatz. Die Seele steht in der Mitte zwischen der körperlichen Welt und Gott. Sie soll sich auf Gott hin ausrichten und die Körperwelt mit ihren Begierden verlassen. In der Sünde aber wendet sich die Seele von Gott ab, richtet sich statt dessen auf sich selbst und will die eigenen Fähigkeiten genießen, d. h. selbst über alles herrschen und so wie Gott sein. Der Urgrund der Sünde ist also der Hochmut.⁹⁵ In den abschließenden Kurzantworten auf kritische Anfragen der Manichäer an die alttestamentlichen Schöpfungserzählungen vertieft Augustinus diesen Ansatz nochmals sehr konzentriert und verdeutlicht den philosophischen Hintergrund.⁹⁶

In der Ausdeutung der Sündenfallerzählung fügt Augustinus das Wirken des ‚diabolus‘ in diesen Ansatz ein.⁹⁷ Der diabolus ‚fiel‘ aus seiner Glückseligkeit, da er nicht in der Wahrheit blieb (vgl. Joh 8,44), d. h. sich von Gott abwandte.⁹⁸ Er ‚schuf‘ sich damit selber durch die willentliche Sünde.⁹⁹ Durch verlockende ‚Eingebungen‘ (suggestiones) beeinflusste er Eva, die wiederum Adam zur Sünde verleitete. Dies hebt Augustinus durch allegorische Deutung auf eine allgemeinmenschliche Ebene.¹⁰⁰ Durch das Wirken des diabolus üben gedankliche Vorstellungen oder Sinneseindrücke einen Anreiz (suggestio) auf den Menschen aus. Falls dadurch die Begierde (cupiditas, libido¹⁰¹) nicht geweckt wird, begeht der Mensch keine Sünde. Wenn die cupiditas jedoch auflebt, hat die List des Teufels zunächst im nichtrationalen Teil des menschlichen Geistes Erfolg. Dieser Teil, den Augustinus in Eva symbolisiert sieht, soll unter der Kontrolle und Führung des Verstandes (ratio), repräsentiert durch Adam, stehen. Wenn der Verstand dieser Aufgabe nachkommt, sündigt der Mensch nicht. Gibt er jedoch der Begierde nach und entscheidet sich für die entsprechende Handlung, wird er aus der Glückseligkeit wie aus dem Paradies vertrieben. Grund der Sünde und damit auch der

⁹⁵ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,12 (l. 30–35); 2,22 (zur Versuchung, wie Gott sein zu wollen).

⁹⁶ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,43 (l. 25–35).

⁹⁷ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,20–22. Zum ‚diabolus‘ und Engelfall bei Augustinus vgl. C. Bianchi/Chr. Müller, ‚Diabolus,‘ in: *AL* 2 (1996–2002) 381–396 (Lit.), bes. 382 f. 385–388; J. den Boeft, ‚Daemon(es),‘ in: *AL* 2 (1996–2002) 213–222, bes. 214; G. Madec, ‚Angelus,‘ in: *AL* 1 (1986–1994) 303–315.

⁹⁸ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,20 (l. 5–7); 2,24 (l. 15–19).

⁹⁹ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,42 (l. 19 f.; vgl. 31 f.).

¹⁰⁰ Zum Folgenden vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,21.

¹⁰¹ Sie sind die Triebfedern des Schlechten, vgl. Aug., lib. arb. 1,6–11.

mala ist allein die willentliche Entscheidung des Menschen.¹⁰² Augustinus beschreibt sie als ein ‚Ringen‘. Wenn sich der Verstand durchsetzt, gewinnt der Mensch die ‚Siegeskrone‘.¹⁰³

Für einen Manichäer sind hier durchaus Anknüpfungspunkte vorhanden, insofern das Böse als eine verlockende Kraft dargestellt wird, gegen die der Mensch ankämpfen muss.¹⁰⁴ Auch Secundinus geht von einer Mittelstellung der Seele zwischen dem Guten und dem Bösen aus.¹⁰⁵ Auch er spricht—wenngleich in martyrologischem Kontext—von der ‚Krönung‘ (coronari) für den Sieg des Menschen über das Böse.¹⁰⁶ Sein Hinweis, dass der Teufel auch von Augustinus als gefallener ‚archangelus‘ verstanden werden könne, der für das Böse verantwortlich ist, kann als Versuch eines Brückenschlages für die ‚Wiederbekehrung‘ Augustins verstanden werden.

3.4. *de uera religione*

In seiner ausdrücklich antimanichäisch motivierten Schrift¹⁰⁷ *de uera religione* spricht Augustinus mehrere der von Secundinus aufgegriffenen Themen an, wobei Ontologie und Ethik jetzt noch enger miteinander verbunden werden. Ausgangspunkt ist der manichäische Anstoß an den ‚mala‘ in der Welt und damit die Frage nach der Verantwortung Gottes für das Schlechte, womit wiederum die Frage ‚unde malum‘ gestellt ist.¹⁰⁸ Augustinus begegnet dem zunächst mit ontologischen Überlegungen,

¹⁰² Damit ist Gott vom malum entlastet. Vgl. auch die Kurzantworten auf die manichäische Genesiskritik: Der Mensch hätte nicht sündigen sollen, Eva und Adam hätten den Teufel nicht an sich heranlassen sollen. Die von Gott aus dem Nichts geschaffene gute Natur (des Menschen) wurde durch den Willensentscheid verändert (Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,42 f.).—Zur notwendigen Kontrolle der ratio gegenüber den Verlockungen der libidines vgl. Aug., c. Faust. 22,27–29.

¹⁰³ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,21 (l. 10 f.): Wenn wir die ‚cupiditas‘ im Zaum halten, ‚non labimur in peccatum, sed cum aliquanta luctatione coronamur.‘

¹⁰⁴ Zur Diskussion, ob sich hier ein manichäisches ‚Erbe‘ bei Augustinus andeutet, vgl. Lee (Anm. 11) 41; 108 Anm. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Vgl. Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,12 (l. 20–23): ‚Lignum autem vitae plantatum in medio paradisi sapientiam illam significat, qua oportet intellegat anima in medio quodam rerum se esse ordinatam ...‘ mit Sec., ep. 2 (894,11 f.): ‚... horum (sc. spirituum) in medio posita est anima ...‘

¹⁰⁶ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (895,2), dazu oben Anm. 39 f.

¹⁰⁷ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 16 f., dazu J. Lössl, ‚Einleitung,‘ in: *Augustinus, De vera religione—Die wahre Religion* (AOW 68), Paderborn 2007, 9 f.53 f. Zur Schrift vgl. weiter Decret, *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,66–72; Lee (Anm. 11) 44–51 (zur ‚consuetudo‘); Drecoll, *Gnadenlehre* (Anm. 69) 106–121.

¹⁰⁸ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 16 (c. 9,6–8).

die aber sogleich mit dem ethischen Aspekt verbunden werden. Wie Gott das Leben schlechthin und Quelle allen Lebens, der Tod dagegen der Verlust des Lebens ist, so ist Gott das höchste Sein und das höchste Gut.¹⁰⁹ Auch alles von ihm Geschaffene ist, insofern es eine (innere) Form (*forma*) und Merkmale (*species*) besitzt,¹¹⁰ grundsätzlich gut, wenngleich in Abstufungen höheren und niederen Gut-Seins bis hin zur Annäherung an das Nichts (*nihil, nihilum*), aus dem Gott alles Seiende geschaffen hat.¹¹¹

Dass dieser ontologische Ansatz ethisch gewendet wird, deutet sich an, wenn der Tod für das Leben als ‚*nequitia*‘ bestimmt und eine Parallele zu den ‚*nequissimi homines*‘ gezogen wird. Man nennt sie, so Augustinus, auch ‚*nihili homines*‘. Ihre ‚*nequitia*‘ besteht in der willentlichen Abwendung von Gott hin zum Körperlichen. Ihr Streben richtet sich vom Sein weg auf das Nichts hin (*uergit ad nihilum*).¹¹² Die Liebe zur Körperwelt verstrickt die Seele und die Lebensvollzüge in das niedere körperliche Sein. Folgen wie der körperliche oder geistige Schmerz¹¹³ über den Verlust des Wohlbefindens bzw. des Genusses sind bereits Strafen für dieses Verhalten. Diese Gedanken wird Augustinus in seiner Antwort auf Secundinus aufgreifen.¹¹⁴ Damit gelangt Augustinus zu der Bestimmung des *malum* als Sünde und Sündenstrafe, wobei er mit antimanichäischer Zielrichtung unterstreicht, dass es darüber hinaus kein *malum* gibt.¹¹⁵ Er greift dies wenig später in etwas veränderter Formulierung wieder auf: Das hauptsächliche ‚*uitium*‘ der mit Vernunft ausgestatteten Seele liegt im Willen, das zu tun, was die höchste, innerste Wahrheit verbietet.¹¹⁶ Da dieser Entschluss ohne jeden Zwang frei gefasst wird,¹¹⁷ folgt die gerechte Strafe. ‚Der Fehler der Seele ist also das, was sie tat, und die aus diesem

¹⁰⁹ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 21 (c. 11,19); 26 (c. 13,13); 28 (c. 14,21–25); 35 (c. 18,4 f.) u. ö.

¹¹⁰ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 35. Zur Differenzierung vgl. Lössl, AOW 68 (Anm. 107), 141 Anm. 202.

¹¹¹ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 22,35; vgl. *diu. qu.* 6,21. Zum neuplatonischen Hintergrund Lössl, AOW 68 (Anm. 107), 30–37, bes. 33 f. mit weiterer Lit.

¹¹² Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 21 (c. 11,1–8). Zum ‚*uergere ad nihilum*‘ vgl. Lössl, AOW 68 (Anm. 107), 119 Anm. 144.

¹¹³ Vgl. dazu Lössl, AOW 68 (Anm. 107), 55 f.

¹¹⁴ Zu ‚*uergere/tendere ad nihilum*‘ vgl. Aug., *c. Sec.* 8 (916,7–9); 11 (922,20–27) (zur ‚Verkörperlichung‘ des Geistigen durch Hinwendung zur Körperwelt); 15 (927,15–21); 17 (931,7–9).

¹¹⁵ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 23 (c. 12,14 f.): ‚*Et hoc est totum quod dicitur malum, id est peccatum et poena peccati*.‘

¹¹⁶ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 38 (c. 20,1 f.).

¹¹⁷ Die Entscheidungs- und Willensfreiheit begründet Augustinus wiederum mit klar antimanichäischer Zielrichtung in *uera rel.* 27.

Fehler folgende Beschwerne ist die Strafe, die sie erleidet. Hierin besteht das Schlechte insgesamt.¹¹⁸ Augustinus verwendet hier wie auch im Auftakt von *de libero arbitrio* und späteren *Antimanichaica*¹¹⁹ zur Bestimmung des *malum* die Stichworte ‚*facere*‘ und ‚*pati*‘. In ihrer substantivischen Form mit deutlich verbaler Grundbedeutung nimmt sie Secundinus auf, um die zweite der aus seiner Sicht falschen augustinischen Antworten auf das *malum*-Problem wiederzugeben.¹²⁰

Dem Sünder stellt Augustinus den ‚geistlichen Menschen‘ (*homo spiritualis*) gegenüber und spekuliert über dessen Zustand nach dem Tod.¹²¹ Durch Christi Gabe des Heiligen Geistes wird die Seele gesund, sie macht auch den Körper rein und erfüllt ihn mit neuem Leben. Mit der Sünde ist auch die Sündenstrafe beseitigt. Augustinus schließt die Frage nach dem Verbleib des *malum* an, das er durch das Zitat von 1 Kor 15,55 als den Tod konkretisiert. Die Antwort wechselt wieder auf die ontologische Ebene: ‚Denn es siegt das Sein über das Nichts.‘¹²² Die Formulierung erinnert stark an die rhetorische Frage des Secundinus, warum denn die Apostel und Märtyrer die Siegeskrone erhalten haben—, *totum propterea, quia uicerunt nihil?*¹²³ Der Kontext ist zwar bei Secundinus deutlich anders akzentuiert; ihm geht es um den realen Kampf von Menschen mit dem Bösen während ihres Lebens, Augustinus aber um den Zustand in den Eschata. Und doch verbindet beide die Frage nach dem Wesen des ‚*malum*‘. Secundinus kann diese Äußerungen auch ohne Beachtung des Kontextes als Position Augustins zum *malum*-Problem im Gedächtnis behalten haben.

¹¹⁸ Aug., *uera rel.* 39 (c. 20,21 f.): ‚*Vitium ergo animae est quod fecit, et difficultas exitio poena quam patitur. Et hoc est totum malum*‘; das *malum* ist also keine eigene Substanz (ebd. l. 22–24); 38 (c. 20,16 f.).

¹¹⁹ Vgl. Aug., *lib. arb.* 1,1 (c. 1,4–6): ‚*Duobus enim modis appellare malum solemus: uno, cum male quemque fecisse dicimus, alio, cum mali aliquid esse perpessum*‘; c. *Adim.* 26 (184,22–24): ‚*dupliciter enim appellatur malum: unum quod homo facit, alterum quod patitur; quod facit, peccatum est; quod patitur, poena*‘; c. *Faust.* 22,22 (616,19–21): ‚*a uoluntate ... initium peccati; unde autem initium peccati, inde initium mali uel faciendi contra iustum praeceptum uel patiendi secundum iustum iudicium*‘; ebenso c. *Sec.* 19 (935,4–6): ‚*et hoc est totum malum, partim quod iniuste facit, partim quod iuste patitur*‘.

¹²⁰ Vgl. *Sec.*, ep. 1 (893,14 f.): ‚... (*illud malum*), non ... quod factione passionequē mortalium gignitur.‘

¹²¹ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 24 f.

¹²² Aug., *uera rel.* 25 (c. 12,43–45): ‚*Ablato ergo peccato auferetur poena peccati; et ubi est malum? Vbi est, mors, contentio tua? Vbi est, mors, aculeus tuus? Vincit enim essentia nihilum et sic absorbetur mors in uictoria*‘.

¹²³ *Sec.*, ep. 2 (895,2 f.).

Unmittelbar anschließend kommt Augustinus auf den *diabolus* zu sprechen. Er sieht in ihm einen gefallen Engel, wie *Secundinus* es als eine Denkmöglichkeit Augustins voraussetzt.¹²⁴ Bei der weiteren Erklärung des Engelfalls hebt Augustinus neben der ontologischen Einordnung des *diabolus*¹²⁵ stark auf die Willens- und Entscheidungsfreiheit ab. Durch den allmählichen Übergang zum ‚wir‘ der Menschheit wird deutlich, dass in diesem Punkt Engel und Menschen ihrem Wesen nach gleich sind.¹²⁶ Sünde und gerechte Strafe setzen die Freiwilligkeit der Tat voraus. Mit Blick auf die Manichäer widerspricht Augustinus demjenigen, der einerseits die Freiwilligkeit der Sünde bestreitet, andererseits jedoch darauf beharrt, dass sich die Seele durch Buße bessern und Gnade erhalten kann bzw. bei fortgesetztem Verstoß gegen das göttliche Gesetz mit der Verdammung rechnen muss.¹²⁷ Die Ausführungen des *Secundinus* zum manichäischen Sündenverständnis lesen sich wie eine direkte Antwort auf diesen Einwand. Indem er zwischen unfreiwilliger Sünde vor der Gnosis und der wissentlich-willentlichen Sünde nach der Erkenntnis unterscheidet, bestätigt er genau die These, die Augustinus bestreitet.

3.5. *de duabus animabus*

In *duab. an.* vertieft Augustinus mit antimanichäischer Zielrichtung die (vorwiegend) ethische Seite der *malum*-Problematik.¹²⁸ Die Kernthesen sind nicht neu: Die lebendige Seele ist als Teil der intelligiblen Welt allem Körperlichen, sinnlich Wahrnehmbaren ontologisch überlegen (1–8), alles Seiende, so auch die Seele, geht allein auf den einen Schöpfergott zurück (9), dieser Gott ist das höchste Gut, ihn zu erkennen führt zum ewigen Leben, die Abwendung von der Erkenntnis Gottes bringt den geistlichen Tod (10). Es rückt dann die Frage nach der Sünde in den

¹²⁴ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 26 (c. 13,7–10); *Sec.*, ep. 2 (894,27–895,1). Allerdings spricht *Secundinus* vom ‚archangelus‘. Augustinus verwendet diese Bezeichnung für den früheren Stand des *diabolus* nur selten, vgl. *Gn. litt.* 3,10,14 (73,16–18); 11,26,33 (358,26–359,2). Zum Engelfall gegen die manichäische Lehre vom Ursprung des Teufels aus dem Finsternisreich vgl. *Io. eu. tr.* 42,10–13 (bes. 10 l. 33–36) (Oktober 413) (vgl. o. Anm. 37).

¹²⁵ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 26: Da er sich selbst mehr liebte als Gott und sich somit vom höchsten Sein abwandte, sinkt er selbst in der Seinsordnung ab und ‚ist weniger, als er (vorher) war‘ (c. 13,14 f.).

¹²⁶ Vgl. bes. Aug., *uera rel.* 26,29; Lössl, *AOW* 68 (Anm. 107) 126 Anm. 163.

¹²⁷ Vgl. Aug., *uera rel.* 27 (c. 14,8–11): ‚Non autem recte negat peccasse animam, qui et paenitendo eam corrigi fatetur et ueniam paenitenti dari et perseuerantem in peccatis iusta dei lege damnari.‘

¹²⁸ Zur Schrift vgl. F. Decret, ‚*Duabus animabus* (De -)‘, in: *AL* 2 (1996–2002) 667–672; ders., *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,81–92.

Mittelpunkt. Mit klar antimanichäischer Tendenz verdeutlicht Augustinus zunächst durch Beispiele, dass Taten, die im Schlaf oder unter Zwang getan werden, allgemein als nicht schuldhaft angesehen werden.¹²⁹ Ziel ist die pointierte These, dass die Sünde allein im Willen begründet ist.¹³⁰ Die beiden zentralen Stichworte werden nachfolgend definiert und in Abgrenzung gegen manichäische Positionen erläutert. Der Wille (*uoluntas*) ist demnach ein Antrieb des Geistes ohne jeden Zwang, etwas nicht zu verlieren oder etwas zu erhalten.¹³¹ Augustinus unterstreicht besonders den Freiheitsaspekt: Wer gezwungen wird, handelt nicht aus freiem Willen, wer aber nicht unter Zwang steht, vollzieht oder unterlässt eine Handlung willentlich.¹³² Sünde (*peccatum*) ist der—laut erster Definition: freie—Wille, etwas zu behalten oder zu erhalten, was die Gerechtigkeit verbietet und von dem man sich frei fernhalten kann.¹³³ Mit dem Begriff ‚Gerechtigkeit‘ ist ein bewusst offen formulierter ethischer Maßstab eingeführt.¹³⁴

Aus der Sicht Augustins ist mit diesen beiden Definitionen der ganze ‚Fall‘ der Auseinandersetzung mit den Manichäern erledigt.¹³⁵ Die manichäische Auffassung von den ‚zwei Seelen‘, d. h. den guten geistigen Kräften des Lichtes und den schlechten der Finsternis, stellt sich als unsinnig heraus. Die Finsterniswelt hat durchaus gute Eigenschaften; da die schlechten geistigen Kräfte substantiell mit der Finsternis identisch sind, können sie nicht völlig schlecht sein. Wenn sie aber von Natur aus schlecht sein sollen, sind sie es folglich nicht aufgrund einer Willensentscheidung und können daher nicht als ‚sündig‘ bezeichnet werden.¹³⁶ Die guten geistigen Kräfte, substantiell göttliche Lichtelemente, sündigen nach manichäischer Lehre, denn sie bedürfen der Reue und Vergebung.¹³⁷ Andererseits begehen sie diese Taten in und aufgrund der Vermischung. Sie stehen also unter Zwang, gegen den sie sich nicht wehren

¹²⁹ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 12 (66,19–68,2).

¹³⁰ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 12 (68,2f.): ‚quibus concessis colligerem nusquam scilicet nisi in uoluntate esse peccatum.‘

¹³¹ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 14 (68,23–25; 70,9–11): ‚uoluntas est animi motus cogente nullo ad aliquid uel non amittendum uel adipiscendum.‘

¹³² Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 14 (69,7–19).

¹³³ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 15 (70,15–17; 71,4–6): ‚peccatum est uoluntas retinendi uel consequendi quod iustitia uetat et unde liberum est abstinere.‘

¹³⁴ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 15 (70,18): ‚... malui grossius quam scrupulosius definire.‘

¹³⁵ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 16 (71,7–14).

¹³⁶ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 16f.

¹³⁷ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 18 (74,14–20); 22f.

können. Daher kann man auch hier nicht von Sünde sprechen. Unter beiden Gesichtspunkten ist das Göttliche, das höchste Gut, mit großen ‚mala‘ versehen.¹³⁸

Demgegenüber entwickelt Augustinus die eigene Position von der einen Seele, die—wie bereits in Gn. adu. Man. ausgeführt—in der Mitte zwischen Gut und Böse steht und sich frei entscheiden kann. Dabei wird sie einerseits vom ‚Fleisch‘ durch die Begierde, d. h. durch die äußeren, niederen, sinnlich wahrnehmbaren Dinge, andererseits vom Geist durch das Empfinden für das moralisch Richtige, d. h. durch die innere, intelligible, geistige Wirklichkeit beeinflusst. Hier führt Augustinus allerdings eine Einschränkung der Willensfreiheit ein. Nach dem Sündenfall ist diese Seele durch die schlechte Gewohnheit (*consuetudo*), die zusammen mit dem ‚Fleisch‘ entstanden ist, und die Sünden geschwächt. Sie ‚kämpfen in gewisser Weise‘ gegen die guten Bestrebungen des Menschen und machen ihnen Schwierigkeiten.¹³⁹

Verbindungslinien zum Secundinusbrief liegen in der Sündenlehre. Secundinus geht ebenfalls von einer Mittelstellung der Seele zwischen Gut und Böse aus. Dass er die Möglichkeit der willentlichen Sünde herausstellt, kann man als Reaktion auf Augustins Kritik am manichäischen Sündenverständnis in duab. an. verstehen. Dennoch drängt sich der Eindruck einer Kenntnis dieser Schrift bei Secundinus nicht auf. Er bestätigt zwar, dass auch die Finsternis durch geistige Kräfte (*spiritus uitiorum*) wirkt, doch geht er stets von der einen guten Seele im Menschen aus, ohne auf die These der zwei Seelen zu reagieren.¹⁴⁰

3.6. *contra Fortunatum*

In der Diskussion mit Fortunatus ist die Frage nach dem malum, somit auch nach dem Wesen des Menschen und der Sünde, der zentrale Streitpunkt.¹⁴¹ Während Fortunatus dem dualistischen Ansatz entsprechend

¹³⁸ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 18 (74,14–75,7).

¹³⁹ Vgl. Aug., duab. an. 19 (75,27–76,8); vgl. dazu lib. arb. 3,51 ff. mit den (späteren) Überlegungen zu den Folgen der Sünde Adams, die Augustinus hier noch als eine ‚Art ‚Erbschaden‘ (W. Löhr, ‚Sündenlehre,‘ [Anm. 11] 500) versteht. Zur Bedeutung der ‚consuetudo‘ in der Auseinandersetzung mit den Manichäern vgl. Lee (Anm. 11) 42–53. Wollen, Begierde, Gewohnheit und Zwang bringt Augustinus in conf. 8,10 (c. 5,10–12) in einen Folgezusammenhang.

¹⁴⁰ Decret, ‚Duabus animabus‘ (Anm. 128) 671 f. wertet dies als stillschweigende Zustimmung.

¹⁴¹ So Aug., retr. 1,16,1 (8–11). Zur Schrift vgl. bes. die Einleitung und Kommentierung von F. Decret sowie die Übersicht über manichäische Termini und Konzepte von

alles Schlechte strikt von Gott trennt,¹⁴² führt Augustinus die gesamte Wirklichkeit auf den einen, guten Gott zurück.¹⁴³ Da die Schöpfung in sich wohlgeordnet ist und aus (gestuften) ‚bona‘ besteht, ist Gott nicht Schöpfer von ‚mala‘.¹⁴⁴ Innerhalb dieser Schöpfung steht der vernunftbegabte Mensch. Aufgrund seines freien Willens (uoluntas, liberum arbitrium) kann er sich für oder gegen die Befolgung des göttlichen Gesetzes entscheiden.¹⁴⁵ In der weiteren Diskussion wird Augustinus unter dem Eindruck (!) der von Fortunatus zitierten Paulusstellen (Röm 8,7; 7,23–25a; Gal 5,17; 6,14) wie in duab. an. die Freiheit des Willens unter Verweis auf die von Adam ausgehende schlechte ‚consuetudo‘ einschränken.¹⁴⁶ Die Freiheit der Entscheidung ist dadurch lediglich erschwert, sie bleibt aber logische Voraussetzung der Möglichkeit, gut oder schlecht zu sein und Lohn oder Strafe zu erhalten.¹⁴⁷ Im Übrigen spricht die Notwendigkeit der Sündenvergebung, die der entscheidende Grund für das Kommen des Erlösers Christus ist, wie Augustinus aus Eph 2,1–18 ableitet, für den Verdienstcharakter menschlichen Verhaltens, und eben diese setzt wiederum den freien Willen voraus.¹⁴⁸

In diesem Rahmen unterscheidet Augustinus zwei Arten des malum, nämlich die Sünde als willentlicher Verstoß des Menschen gegen das göttliche Gesetz und die Strafe von dem Gott, der nicht nur der gute Schöpfer, sondern auch der gerechte Richter ist.¹⁴⁹ Da sie jedoch lediglich

J. van Oort in: *Augustinus, Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum* (CFM SL 2), Turnhout 2004; Rutzenhöfer, ‚Contra Fortunatum‘ (Anm. 41) 5–72; F. Decret, ‚Acta contra Fortunatum Manicheum,‘ in: *AL* 1 (1986–1994) 53–58; G. Wurst, ‚Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum (Akten der Verhandlung gegen den Manichäer Fortunatus),‘ in: *Augustin Handbuch* (Anm. 3) 309–312; zu Augustins Aufnahme manichäischer Terminologie vgl. van Oort, ‚Heeding‘ (Anm. 41) 113–121.

¹⁴² Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 19 (97,15–21).

¹⁴³ Vgl. zum Folgenden Aug., c. Fort. 15,20–21.

¹⁴⁴ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 15 (91,21–92,3); 20 (97,22 f.).

¹⁴⁵ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 20 (98,4 f.); vgl. c. Faust. 22,27 (621,12–15): ‚Ergo peccatum est factum uel dictum uel concupitum aliquid contra aeternam legem. lex uero aeterna est ratio diuina uel uoluntas dei ordinem naturalem conseruari iubens, perturbari uetans ...‘

¹⁴⁶ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 22, dazu Lee (Anm. 11) 52 f. Daher gilt zwar weiterhin, dass der Mensch (zunächst) einen freien Willen im Sinne der Entscheidungsfreiheit hat, diese wird dann aber durch die negativen Folgen des ‚Falls‘ gemindert, vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 25 (108,18–20).

¹⁴⁷ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 15 (92,5–9, dazu Rutzenhöfer, ‚Contra Fortunatum‘ [Anm. 41] 32–34); 20 (98,5–10,15 f. 19–21); 21 (100,9–11). Vgl. Aug., lib. arb. 1,1 (c. 1,22 f.).

¹⁴⁸ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 17 (94,4–8).

¹⁴⁹ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 15 (91,22–92,5).

die gerechte Folge der Sünde ist, geht das *malum*—entgegen der manichäischen These—letztlich allein auf den Menschen zurück.¹⁵⁰

Aufgrund dieser Voraussetzungen kritisiert Augustinus die manichäische Position. Die Manichäer gehen, wie Fortunatus später bestätigt, vom Zwang zur Sünde aus.¹⁵¹ In einer *sermocinatio* lässt Augustinus die ‚manichäische‘ Seele fragen, warum ihr die Sünden überhaupt angerechnet werden.¹⁵² Wenn sie zum Kampf gegen die Finsterniswelt ausgesandt, von dieser überwältigt und in der Vermischung so geschädigt wurde, dass der freie Wille nicht gewahrt wurde und sie unter dem Zwang (*necessitas*) der gegnerischen Macht steht,¹⁵³ warum wird sie dann für die Sünde bestraft? Warum soll sie Buße tun und wofür wird ihr Vergebung versprochen?¹⁵⁴ Hierfür besteht, so Augustinus, kein Grund, da die Seele eben nicht frei entscheiden kann. Zudem fällt die Sünde als Folge der Vermischung nach manichäischer Logik auf Gott zurück, weil er die Seele in den Kampf geschickt hat, obwohl er von ihren kommenden Leiden wusste und ihm der Angriff der Finsterniswelt nichts anhaben konnte.¹⁵⁵ Mit letzterem greift Augustinus das Nebridius-Argument wieder auf, das jedem manichäischen Argument für die Aufnahme des Kampfes durch Gott den Boden entzieht. Nach dem Ursprung der Sünde gefragt nennt Augustinus unter Berufung auf 1 Tim 6,10 die *cupiditas*, die nach den Worten des Apostels die eine Wurzel aller ‚mala‘ sei.¹⁵⁶

In seiner Antwort erläutert Fortunatus Grundsätze manichäischer Sündenlehre.¹⁵⁷ Er unterscheidet wie Secundinus zwischen dem Zustand vor und nach der Gnosis. Vor der Gnosis steht die Seele unter dem Einfluss der Finsternismächte und sündigt unwissend. Fortunatus spricht ausdrücklich vom Zwang zur Sünde durch die feindliche Natur.¹⁵⁸ Mit

¹⁵⁰ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 20 (97,22 f.); 21 (100,23 f.).

¹⁵¹ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 17 (93,24–26); vgl. auch u. Anm. 158.

¹⁵² Vgl. zum Folgenden Aug., c. Fort. 17 (94,8–95,4); 21 (101,8–102,1); weiter c. Faust. 22,22, bes. p. 614,8–12 mit dem Gegenstück einer Bitte Gottes an die Seelen, ihm zu vergeben.

¹⁵³ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 17 (94,13 f.); 21 (101,24–26).

¹⁵⁴ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 17 (94,15–17); 21 (101,8–102,1). Vgl. bereits Aug., Gn. adu. Man. 2,40 (l. 8 f.): ‚... qui libenter audiunt, quod lascive quicquid faciunt non ipsi faciunt, sed gens tenebrarum.‘

¹⁵⁵ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 17 (94,16–20); 21 (101,22–24).

¹⁵⁶ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 21 (100,23–101,8).

¹⁵⁷ Vgl. hierzu Decret, CFM SL 2 (Anm. 141) 66–68; Rutzenhöfer, ‚Contra Fortunatum‘ (Anm. 41) 44–53; Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione‘ (Anm. 1) 509 f.

¹⁵⁸ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 20 (99,20–22): ‚nam quia inuiti peccamus et cogimur a contraria et inimica nobis substantia, idcirco sequimur scientiam rerum. qua scientia admonita anima et memoriae pristinae redditae recognoscet ...‘; 21 (102,4 f.).

Nachdruck betont er gegen Augustinus, dass das Schlechte nicht auf den Menschen und seinen körperlichen Anteil beschränkt ist, sondern eine universell-kosmische Macht darstellt.¹⁵⁹ Dieses allgemeine malum, das über den Körper auf die einzelne Seele einwirkt, ist die eigentliche Quelle der cupiditas. Secundinus spricht etwas zurückhaltender von der ‚(Ver-)Führung‘ der Seele aufgrund der Vermischung.¹⁶⁰ Auch für ihn ist das malum eine äußere, selbständige Kraft.¹⁶¹ Eine entscheidende Wende tritt durch die ‚Erkenntnis der Dinge‘ (scientia rerum) ein, die der Erlöser (saluator) vermittelt.¹⁶² Durch die Gnosis wird die Seele an ihren Ursprung und ihr früheres Wissen ‚erinnert‘, sie erkennt ihr jetziges Elend und die Möglichkeiten, ihre unfreiwilligen Sünden auszugleichen, d. h. sich von Schmutz und Lastern der Welt zu reinigen, und kann so zur Heimat des göttlichen Reiches zurückkehren.¹⁶³ Erst wenn sie *nach* dieser Erkenntnis—wiederum unter dem Einfluss der lichtfeindlichen Mächte—falsch handelt, begeht sie eine ‚Sünde‘ im eigentlichen Sinn, für die Reue und Buße notwendig sind. Veranlasst wird sie wiederum durch die feindliche, dem Gesetz Gottes nicht unterworfenen Natur, nicht ‚durch eigenen Antrieb‘.¹⁶⁴ Auch hiermit stimmt Secundinus überein. Seine Ausführungen erscheinen insgesamt wie eine konzentrierte und systematisierte Zusammenfassung dessen, was Fortunatus vorgebracht hat, die Secundinus allerdings—unter dem Eindruck der Kritik Augustins, wie er sie vielleicht gerade gegen Fortunatus vorgebracht hat—im Punkt der bewussten Ablehnung der Gnosis weiterführt und verdeutlicht.

¹⁵⁹ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 21 (102,4–21); 22 (107,11–14). Zur Differenzierung zwischen der Sünde im einzelnen Menschen und der bösen Natur vgl. auch ebd. 20 (99,17–19).

¹⁶⁰ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (894,15 f. 17 f.).

¹⁶¹ Sie benutzt den Körper als Waffe, vgl. o. Anm. 23.

¹⁶² Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 21 (103,7), vgl. 20 (99,21). Mit ‚Erlöser‘ ist Christus gemeint, wobei allerdings klar ist, dass die Botschaft Christi auf dem Hintergrund der Lehre des ‚Paraketen‘ Mani interpretiert wird, was Fortunatus an dieser Stelle tunlichst unerwähnt lässt.

¹⁶³ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 20 (99,21–100,3); vgl. 21 (103,6–10). Unverkennbar sind die typisch gnostischen Elemente, wie sie etwa in den Fragen des Theodot oder auch im Perlenlied deutlich werden, vgl. nur H.-J. Klauck, *Die religiöse Umwelt des Urchristentums 2. Herrscher- und Kaiserkult, Philosophie, Gnosis*, Stuttgart 1996, 145–148.196–198; A. Henrichs/L. Koenen, ‚Ein griechischer Mani-Codex (P. Colon. inv. nr. 4780)‘, *ZPE* 5 (1970) 171–182, bes. 178–181 zu Schlaf/Trunkenheit und erweckendem Ruf.

¹⁶⁴ Vgl. Aug., c. Fort. 21 (103,6 f. 13 f.): ‚unde paret recte esse paenitentiam datam post aduentum saluatoris et post hanc scientiam rerum ... paret ergo his rebus, quod anima bona factione illius, quae legi dei non est subiecta, peccare uidetur, non sua sponte.‘ Zur Buße bei den Manichäern vgl. Decret, CFM SL 2 (Anm. 141) 68; Sfameni Gasparro, ‚Introduzione‘ (Anm. 1) 510 mit Anm. 26.

Kurz geht Augustinus auf den Teufel als gefallenen Engel ein. Er reagiert damit auf das Zitat von Eph 6,12 durch Fortunatus. Wie Secundinus nutzt Fortunatus die Paulusstelle als Beleg für die Existenz einer selbständigen, Gott und der göttlichen Seele feindlich gegenüberstehenden Kraft. Augustinus deutet dagegen die ‚Fürsten und Mächte‘ auf den Teufel und seine Engel, die wie die Menschen durch Sünde zu Fall gekommen sind und das Irdische, d.h. die Menschen als Wirkungs- und Herrschaftsreich erhalten haben.¹⁶⁵

3.7. *contra epistulam Manichaei quam uocant fundamenti*

Ähnlich wie in *mor.* macht Augustinus auch in seiner Widerlegung der *epistula fundamenti* die methodische Voraussetzung, gemeinsam mit den manichäischen Adressaten wie Unwissende nach der Wahrheit zu suchen und die eigene Sicht der ‚Wahrheit‘ auszuklammern.¹⁶⁶ Er wolle die Manichäer nicht belehren, sondern gleichsam jetzt von ihnen lernen, was ihm während seiner Zugehörigkeit zur Kirche Manis nicht gelungen sei.¹⁶⁷ Hierauf könnte Secundinus antworten, wenn er Augustinus auffordert, nicht lernen zu wollen, obwohl er doch lehren könne.¹⁶⁸

Das *malum*-Problem behandelt Augustinus im letzten Teil von *c. ep. Man.* Er bestimmt das *malum* ontologisch konsequent als ‚*corruptio*‘¹⁶⁹ im Sinne der Minderung des Guten bzw. des Gutseins.¹⁷⁰ Sie ‚tendiert‘ zum Nichtsein, ohne allerdings im Nichts aufzugehen.¹⁷¹ Die Frage nach

¹⁶⁵ Vgl. Aug., *c. Fort.* 23 (107,19–25).

¹⁶⁶ Vgl. Aug., *c. ep. Man.* 3,4 (195,20–23). Zur Schrift vgl. F. Decret, ‚*Epistulam Manichaei quam uocant fundamenti*,‘ in: *AL* 2 (1996–2002) 1070–1078 (Lit.); ders., *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,107–124.

¹⁶⁷ Vgl. Aug., *c. ep. Man.* 10,11 (206,5–8).

¹⁶⁸ Vgl. Sec., *ep.* 5 (899,3).

¹⁶⁹ Vgl. Aug., *c. ep. Man.* 35,39 (239,18f.): ‚*Quis enim dubitet totum illud quod dicitur malum nihil esse aliud quam corruptionem.*‘

¹⁷⁰ Vgl. Aug., *c. ep. Man.* 35,40 (bes. 240,11 f.21–25). Die häufig verwendete Übersetzung ‚Zerstörung‘ impliziert die völlige Vernichtung und ist daher nicht passend. Eher angemessen ist ‚Schädigung‘; hierzu findet man jedoch keine parallele Adjektivbildung bei der Übertragung von ‚*corruptibilis*‘.

¹⁷¹ Vgl. Aug., *c. ep. Man.* 38,44 (244,15–21): Wenn von einer ‚*natura corruptibilis*‘ gesprochen wird, verweist das Wort ‚*natura*‘ auf Gott, ‚*corruptibilis*‘ aber auf das Nichts (‚... [*pertineat*] *ad nihilum*‘); 39,46 (246,10–26): Niemand dürfte so blind und begriffstutzig sein, *ut ... non sentiat, quanto magis quidque corrumpitur, tanto magis ad interitum tendere; omne autem quod ad interitum tendit, non esse tendere. cum ... id ...*,

dem Ursprung der ‚corruptio‘ (‚unde malum‘) erhält eine doppelte Antwort. Ontologisch ist sie dadurch begründet, dass der ‚inkorruptible‘ Gott die Welt nicht aus sich ‚gezeugt‘, sondern geschaffen hat, und zwar aus dem Nichts.¹⁷² Zum anderen ist das malum im Sinne der corruptio durch die Sünde des Menschen verursacht.¹⁷³ Der Mensch hat durch die Sünde selbst begonnen, sich zu schädigen (corrumpere), und hat daher die ‚corruptio‘ als Strafe verdient.¹⁷⁴ Diese Sünde hat mit Adam ihren Anfang genommen.¹⁷⁵ Sie besteht im Ungehorsam gegen Gott, und so liegt auch die Strafe darin, dass das, was ontologisch unter der Seele steht, ihr nicht mehr gehorcht oder sie unter dessen Herrschaft gerät.¹⁷⁶ Dass diese Sünde auf dem freien Willen des Menschen beruht, wird zwar erwähnt, aber nicht weiter ausgeführt.¹⁷⁷ Sowohl das Leiden an der Strafe wie auch die Freude über die Ordnung der Güter deutet Augustinus als pädagogische Maßnahmen, um die Seele zu Gott zurückzuführen.¹⁷⁸ Diese Überlegungen wird Augustinus in c. Sec. stringenter formuliert aufnehmen.¹⁷⁹

Das Hauptinteresse Augustins liegt in c. ep. Man. offenbar weniger bei der Existenz des Menschen als vielmehr beim Wesen Gottes sowie bei der ontologischen Struktur und Ordnung seiner Schöpfung. Ihm liegt besonders daran, Gott vom Vorwurf zu entlasten, ein ‚Verderbergott‘¹⁸⁰ zu sein. Insgesamt ist auch hier der innere Zusammenhang zwischen ‚malum‘ und ‚nihil‘ zwar klar, doch meidet Augustinus die einfache Identifizierung und spricht präziser von ‚corruptio‘. Secundinus bezieht sich demnach wohl eher auf frühere Äußerungen Augustins, die er allerdings hier (bei weniger genauer Lektüre) bestätigt sehen konnte.

quod dicitur nihil, penitus non esse manifestum sit ... et cum ... cognoueris, ... quanto magis augetur corruptio, tanto magis tendere, ut non sit ...; corruptio ... aucta cogit non esse, et constat, quod non est, nihil esse ...‘

¹⁷² Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 36,41 (241,23–26); 37,42; 38,44 (244,1–3).

¹⁷³ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 37,43 (243,16–27).

¹⁷⁴ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 38,44 (244,21–26).

¹⁷⁵ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 37,43 (243,18–20) ohne nähere Ausführung.

¹⁷⁶ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 37,43 (243,16–18).

¹⁷⁷ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 38,44 (244,25 f.); 39,45 (245,4–6) (in der Ausdeutung von 1 Kor 3,17).

¹⁷⁸ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 37,43 (243,20–29); 38,44 (244,4–8).

¹⁷⁹ Vgl. Aug., c. Sec. 11 (bes. 922,20–27 mit der pointierten Formulierung, dass der Geist durch die Hinwendung zur Körperwelt in der Sünde ‚verkörperlicht‘ [corporascit] [l. 26 f.]).

¹⁸⁰ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 39,45 (245,8–10.13–20).

3.8. *contra Faustum*

Augustins Erwiderung auf Faustus¹⁸¹ kann hier nicht im Einzelnen analysiert werden und erfordert eine eigenständige Untersuchung. Eine grobe Durchsicht fördert jedoch kaum klare Berührungspunkte mit dem Secundinusbrief zu Tage. Auf die These des Faustus, Gott sei nicht unendlich, weil das malum existiere und ihn begrenze,¹⁸² lässt sich Augustinus nicht näher ein. Diese Diskussion sei sinnlos, solange die Manichäer rein materiell-körperlich denken.¹⁸³ Im Übrigen wiederholt Augustinus seine bekannten Auffassungen: Die Sünde setzt den freien Willen voraus.¹⁸⁴ Sie besteht im Handeln, Sprechen und Wollen, das gegen das göttliche Gesetz verstößt.¹⁸⁵ Die Sünde zieht die gerechte Sündenstrafe nach sich. Das malum in seiner Gesamtheit bestimmt Augustinus daher wie in früheren Schriften als Handeln und Erleiden.¹⁸⁶ Somit ist der Mensch, nicht eine böse Natur der Ursprung des malum.¹⁸⁷ Weiter ausgebaut ist jetzt die Lehre von der Ursünde Adams und deren Aufhebung durch Christus.¹⁸⁸

3.9. *contra Felicem*

Die Diskussion mit Felix¹⁸⁹ kreist am zweiten Tag zentral um das Nebrius-Argument. Primär will Augustinus das Gottesbild der Manichäer problematisieren, das aus seiner Sicht die ‚corruptibilitas‘ Gottes impliziert. Felix vermeidet zunächst eine direkte Antwort. Statt dessen setzt er beim Problem des Dualismus ein¹⁹⁰ und stellt damit die Frage nach dem Ursprung des ‚malum‘. Augustins Antwort fasst seine bekannte Position konzentriert zusammen.¹⁹¹ Er erwähnt recht knapp die Herkunft

¹⁸¹ Zur Schrift vgl. F. Decret, ‚Faustum Manicheum (Contra -)‘, in: *AL* 2 (1996–2002) 1244–1252; G. Wurst, ‚Contra Faustum Manicheum (Gegen den Manichäer Faustus)‘, in: *Augustin Handbuch* (Anm. 3) 312–316; zum Inhalt J.E. Rotelle, ‚Introduction‘, in: *The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*, 1,20. *Answer to Faustus, a Manichean (Contra Faustum Manichaeum)*, Hyde Park (NY) 2007, 9–63.

¹⁸² Vgl. Faustus in Aug., c. Faust. 25,1 (726,25–727,2).

¹⁸³ Vgl. Aug., c. Faust. 25,2 (727,3–24).

¹⁸⁴ Vgl. Aug., c. Faust. 22,22 (614,16–615,13; 616,6–21).

¹⁸⁵ Vgl. Aug., c. Faust. 22,27 (621,12–15), vgl. o. Anm. 145.

¹⁸⁶ Vgl. Aug., c. Faust. 22,22 (616,19–21), vgl. o. Anm. 119.

¹⁸⁷ Vgl. Aug., c. Faust. 22,22 (616,21–617,3).

¹⁸⁸ Vgl. Aug., c. Faust. 14,4–6; 24,2 u. ö.

¹⁸⁹ Zur Schrift vgl. F. Decret, ‚Felicem Manicheum (Contra -)‘, in: *AL* 2 (1996–2002) 1256–1263.

¹⁹⁰ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,2. Im Zentrum steht die These, dass der manichäische Dualismus durch Aussagen des NT (bes. Mt und Paulus) bestätigt wird.

¹⁹¹ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,3 (831,7–25).

der gesamten Wirklichkeit von dem einen Schöpfergott, legt aber nach der Zitation von 2 Kor 4,4 und 12,7–9a durch Felix den Hauptakzent auf das Problem der Sünde und ihre Folgen. Der Schöpfer hat alle geistbegabten Wesen, d.h. Engel und Menschen mit der Entscheidungsfreiheit (*liberum arbitrium*) ausgestattet. Sie können daher frei zwischen Gehorsam und Ungehorsam gegenüber dem göttlichen Gesetz wählen. Dass dies auch für die Engel gilt, zeigt sich an dem Engel, der zum ‚diabolus‘ wurde.¹⁹² Im ersten Fall erhalten sie als Lohn die ewige Glückseligkeit oder, wie Augustinus später sagt und ähnlich auch Secundinus formuliert, die ‚Krone‘,¹⁹³ im anderen Fall die gerechte Strafe. In für manichäische Ohren provozierender Offenheit stellt Augustinus fest, dass die Sünde allein von der freien Entscheidung gegenüber dem göttlichen Gebot abhängt. Bei der anschließenden Gegenauslegung der von Felix zitierten Schriftstellen vertieft Augustinus seinen Ansatz in zwei Richtungen.¹⁹⁴ Zum einen präzisiert er den ontologischen Hintergrund durch den Hinweis auf die Stufenordnung der Güter, insbesondere die Unterscheidung zwischen den höheren ‚himmlischen‘, ‚unvergänglichen‘ und niederen ‚irdischen, vergänglichen‘, unter denen die Seele wählen kann. Zum anderen verdeutlicht er den Aspekt der Sünde und Sündenstrafe: Wenn sich die Seele den niederen Gütern zuneigt, bekommt sie die Strafe ‚vom Niederen her‘ zu spüren.¹⁹⁵

Für Augustinus vertreten die Manichäer grundsätzlich die Auffassung vom ‚Zwang‘ (*necessitas*, *cogi*) zum Fehlverhalten. Andererseits habe aber Mani selbst ungewollt die Willensfreiheit eingeräumt, wenn er in seinem ‚Schatz‘ von den Seelen spricht, die das vom Erlöser gegebene Gesetz nicht einhalten wollten.¹⁹⁶ Der Bischof hat das Zitat gut vorbereitet, indem er selbst vorausgehend immer wieder vom ‚Wollen‘ und ‚Nichtwollen‘ gesprochen hat. Er verdeutlicht den Unterschied zwischen ‚nolle‘ und ‚non posse‘ bzw. ‚cogi‘; dem entspreche die

¹⁹² Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,11 (839,22–840,4).

¹⁹³ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,12 (842,7).

¹⁹⁴ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,4.

¹⁹⁵ Vgl. Aug., c. ep. Man. 37,43–38,44, dazu o. Anm. 173–176.

¹⁹⁶ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,5 (832,17–27); 2,12 (841,30–842,1); zum Zwang zur Sünde 2,5 (832,30–833,5); 2,8 (836,23–29). Nach Felix ‚konnten‘ die zum Bolos verurteilten Seelen nicht die Gebote halten (2,8 [836,3 f.]). Nach Bierbaums (Anm. 3) 32 widerspricht er damit nicht der Lehre Manis, da er so ‚die Wirkung mangelnder Anwendung der Freiheit des Willens‘ bezeichne: ‚Wenn die Seele den Willen zur Erlösung nicht in entschiedenes Wirken umsetzt und trotz Aufrufen zur Umkehr sich in die Welt verstrickt oder sich gar zur Hyle bekennt, verliert sich ihr Vermögen, sich zum Licht zu lenken‘.

Differenzierung zwischen ‚uoluntas‘ und ‚necessitas‘.¹⁹⁷ Der freie Wille ist aus Sicht Augustins die notwendige Voraussetzung dafür, überhaupt von Sünde, Strafe, Reue, Vergebung und Erlösung sprechen zu können.¹⁹⁸

Mit dem eingestreuten Zitat von Röm 7,23 führt Augustinus die bereits bekannte Begrenzung der Willensfreiheit ein. Das ‚Gesetz der Sünde‘, von dem Paulus spricht, erklärt er nachfolgend als die von Adam ausgehende ‚schlechte Gewohnheit‘ (consuetudo mala¹⁹⁹), die Menschen freiwillig aufnehmen, dann aber nur schwer wieder überwinden können. Daraus resultiert die menschliche ‚Schwäche‘ (infirmitas), das gewollte Gute zu tun. Sie erfordert die Heilung durch Gott, die aber nur den Demütigen zuteil wird, die ihre Sündhaftigkeit eingestehen.²⁰⁰ Die ‚Hochmütigen‘, in denen man unschwer die Manichäer erkennt, gehen dagegen dem ewigen Feuer entgegen.²⁰¹

3.10. *de natura boni*

Die Schrift zielt gegen die Manichäer und wird in den retractationes unmittelbar vor contra Secundinum einordnet.²⁰² Augustinus formuliert zunächst sehr konzentriert seinen ontologischen Ansatz einer gestuften Ordnung veränderlicher bona, die von Gott, dem höchsten, unveränderlichen Gut, aus dem Nichts geschaffen wurden.²⁰³ Alles Seiende ist durch die grundlegenden guten Qualitäten (tamquam bona generalia) von Maß (modus), äußeren Merkmalen (species) und Ordnung (ordo) qualifiziert.²⁰⁴ Entsprechend bestimmt er das malum als ‚corruptio‘ im Sinne der Minderung in diesen drei Grundqualitäten und damit

¹⁹⁷ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,5 (832,28–833,7); vgl. c. Faust. 22,22 (616,8–21).

¹⁹⁸ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,8 (836,12–29).

¹⁹⁹ Vgl. dazu bereits Aug., mor. 1,3 (5,18–21); Gn. adu. Man. 2,29; uera rel. 3 (c. 3,24) u. ö.

²⁰⁰ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,8 (836,30–837,11).

²⁰¹ Vgl. Aug., c. Fel. 2,8 (837,11–17). Sie machen die Gruppe derer aus, die sagen ‚quia non peccant ipsi, sed aliud in illis peccat et alia natura de illis peccat‘ (837,11–13).

²⁰² Vgl. Aug., retr. 2,9. Zur antimanichäischen Ausrichtung vgl. auch nat. b. 2: Es geht um diejenigen, die an Bosheit und Sterblichkeit Anstoß nehmen und daher eine zweite Natur einführen, die nicht von Gott geschaffen sei. Vgl. weiter ebd. 12.41. Zur Schrift vgl. Decret, *L’Afrique* (Anm. 1) 1,125–140, zur antimanichäischen Tendenz ebd. 126.

²⁰³ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 1.3.10 (859,12f.).

²⁰⁴ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 3 (856,17–21) mit weiteren Differenzierungen ebd. 5.8; vgl. Gn. adu. Man. 1,26 (o. Anm. 89); uera rel. 35 (oben Anm. 110); c. Faust. 26,3 (731,6f.) (von Gott, dem Schöpfer, stammt ‚omnis modus, numerus, ordo naturae‘).

des Gutseins.²⁰⁵ Die ontologische Perspektive wird dann um die ethische erweitert. An der Spitze der geschaffenen Dinge steht der vernunftbegabte Geist. Nur er hat die Möglichkeit, in seinem Gutsein nicht gemindert zu werden und die Glückseligkeit zu erlangen. Grundlage ist sein Wille, der es ihm ermöglicht, sich frei für den Gehorsam gegenüber Gott und damit für das höchste Gut zu entscheiden oder aber dagegen. In letzterem Fall wird sein Gutsein gemindert, zum einen in der Sünde durch den eigenen Willen, zum anderen durch die Strafe des gerechten Gottes, die der Geist gegen den eigenen Willen hinnehmen muss.²⁰⁶ Später ergänzt Augustinus, dass die Sünde nicht in der Hinwendung zu an sich ‚schlechten Naturen‘, sondern zu geringeren Gütern besteht, die somit falsch gebraucht werden.²⁰⁷

Augustinus sucht in einem zweiten Hauptteil seinen Ansatz biblisch zu untermauern.²⁰⁸ In diesem Zusammenhang geht er auch auf den diabolus und seine Begleiter ein.²⁰⁹ Deutlicher als zuvor betont er die ‚Macht‘, die Gott ihnen zugeteilt habe, um die Beharrlichkeit der guten Menschen zu prüfen und die bösen zu strafen.²¹⁰ Im Blick auf den Secundinusbrief ist von besonderem Interesse, dass sich Augustinus hier (kurz) auf Eph 6,12 bezieht und die ‚Geister der Bosheit in den himmlischen Regionen‘ mit dem Teufel und den bösen Engeln identifiziert.²¹¹ In diesem Zusammenhang bezieht er sich zudem auf Mt 25,41 (mit dessen Wiederaufnahme in 2 Petr 2,4), um die endzeitliche Strafe des Teufels zu belegen.²¹² Beide Stellen sind für Secundinus im Kontext der malum-Problematik wichtig. Außerdem ist anzumerken, dass Augustinus—besonders im Kontext der Sündenproblematik—nachdrücklich auf die Gerechtigkeit als

²⁰⁵ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 4 (857,4 f.); 6 (857,25–27; 858,1 f.). Ausdrücklich widerspricht er ebd. 25 manichäischen Deutungen, die in Joh 1,3 (‘sine ipso factum est nihil’) einen Beleg für das ‚nihil‘ als real vorhandenes Gegenprinzip zum Guten (also ein ‚Etwas‘) sehen wollen.

²⁰⁶ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 7 (858,7 f.) in einer prägnant parallelen Formulierung: ‚... quoniam uolentes corrumpuntur in peccatis, nolentes corrumpantur in poenis‘. Vgl. weiter nat. b. 35.

²⁰⁷ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 36 (873,5–8) mit dem ‚Merksatz‘: ‚malum est enim male uti bono‘ (l. 7 f.).

²⁰⁸ Zum Ursprung der Sünde allein im freien Willen des Menschen vgl. Aug., nat. b. 28; zur gerechten Sündenstrafe ebd. 31.

²⁰⁹ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 32 f.

²¹⁰ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 32 (870,24–871,6).

²¹¹ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 33 (871,24–27). Zur näheren lokalen Bestimmung der ‚caelestia‘ vgl. ebd. (871,19–24).

²¹² Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 32 (871,9–11); 33 (871,18 f.).

ein Wesensmerkmal Gottes hinweist.²¹³ Mit ihr argumentiert Secundinus wiederum in seiner Antwort auf das Nebridiusargument.²¹⁴

Schließlich startet Augustinus im Schlussteil als Konsequenz der vorausgehenden Argumentation einen Generalangriff auf fundamentale Aussagen des manichäischen Mythos. Der Ton fällt sehr scharf aus—Secundinus könnte hier ausreichenden Grund finden, um von einem ‚wütenden Angriff‘ zu sprechen. Er richtet sich gegen die nach den augustinianischen Voraussetzungen unhaltbaren Qualifizierungen der schlechten und der guten ‚Natur‘ (bzw. der beiden Reiche).²¹⁵ Er kritisiert das Leiden des Lichtes in der Vermischung bis hin zum Verlust der göttlichen Substanz im endzeitlichen Bolos und stellt dabei wiederum die Nebridius-Frage, die Secundinus zu beantworten sucht.²¹⁶ Wie in der Diskussion mit Felix findet er bei Mani selbst das Wissen um die Willensfreiheit der Seele, das dieser allerdings, wie Augustinus jetzt deutlicher formuliert, nur gezwungenermaßen und ungewollt zu erkennen gebe, da er sonst die Sünde als Zwang der feindlichen Natur verstehe.²¹⁷ Augustinus bezieht sich weiter auf die Lehre vom Dritten Gesandten, von der Ausläuterung des Lichtes durch die Nahrungsaufnahme der Electi sowie von der Entstehung des ersten Menschen, wobei er sehr bewusst auf die anstößigen Elemente abhebt.²¹⁸ In der abschließenden Bitte an Gott äußert er die Hoffnung, dass sich auch die Anhänger des Manichäismus, die trotz besseren Wissens nur aus Gewöhnung an zeitlich-irdische Vorteile in dieser Gemeinschaft bleiben, dem einen wahren Gott zuwenden. Wie eine Entgegnung liest sich die Mahnung des Secundinus, Augustinus solle seine Abwendung von der Kirche Manis rückgängig machen, die durch Angst oder durch die Hoffnung auf irdischen Erfolg motiviert sei.²¹⁹

²¹³ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 1 (855,12); 32 (871,6–8); 37 (873,15–19) u. ö. Dass die Gerechtigkeit ein Wesensmerkmal Gottes ist, vertritt Augustinus bereits seit den Frühschriften, vgl. z. B. ord. 2,22.

²¹⁴ Vgl. Sec., ep. 6 (900,5–13).

²¹⁵ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 41. Vgl. dazu duab. an. 16–18 (o. Anm. 136–137); c. ep. Man. 30,33; c. Faust. 21,13–16.

²¹⁶ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 42 (876,24–878,3); 43; vgl. dazu Sec., ep. 6 (900,5–14).

²¹⁷ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 42 (878,7–9). Als Beleg dient ihm hier ep. fund. frg. 11 Feldmann (= frg. 8,1 Stein) (Anm. 19), in c. Fel. 2,5 der Thesaurus, vgl. dazu oben Anm. 61.196.

²¹⁸ Vgl. Aug., nat. b. 44–47. Er betont u. a. die sexuellen Motive bis hin zu Andeutungen, dass Electi auch menschliches Sperma zu sich nehmen oder dies zumindest in der Logik manichäischen Denkens liege (ebd. 47 [886,20–887,11]).

²¹⁹ Vgl. Sec., ep. 2 (895,5–7); 5 (899,3 f.).

4. SCHLUSS

Die Durchsicht zeigt, dass Secundinus mit dem *malum*-Problem einen zentralen Punkt der augustinisch-manichäischen Kontroverse aufgreift. Für den Manichäer geht es um das Basisaxiom der ‚zwei Prinzipien‘ und—das ist Secundinus besonders wichtig—um die gefährliche, unheilvolle Macht, die von der Finsternisnatur in der Welt und im Menschen ausgeübt wird. Im Kampf gegen die Verkündigung der Manichäer muss das Thema daher für Augustinus im Zentrum stehen, es erhält aber zusätzliches Gewicht durch seine besondere Bedeutung in Augustins intellektueller Biographie. Entsprechend großen Raum nimmt es in den antimanichäischen Schriften Augustins ein und lässt sich vom Beginn der Auseinandersetzung bis zur Abfassung von *contra Secundinum* kontinuierlich verfolgen.

Secundinus hatte daher neben den *confessiones* genügend Ansatzpunkte für seine Reaktion. Er verwirft explizit die augustinische These, das *malum* sei das Nichts bzw. es entstehe durch die willentliche Entscheidung des Menschen und die nachfolgende Strafe. Einen Anknüpfungspunkt sieht er im Konzept vom Teufel als gefallenem Engel. Secundinus formuliert dabei absichtlich äußerst knapp und zusammenfassend.²²⁰ Daher bleibt jeder Versuch, die augustinischen Vorlagen zu ermitteln, unsicher. Unter diesen Voraussetzungen lässt sich mit aller Vorsicht folgendes feststellen:

1. Grundlage für die These, das ‚*malum*‘ sei das ‚Nichts‘, sind offenbar die frühen antimanichäischen Schriften. Die deutlichsten Parallelen zeigt neben den einleitenden Gebetsanrufungen der Soliloquien die Eröffnung des zweiten Buches *de moribus*. Eine Bestärkung und zugleich eine Provokation kann Augustins Gleichsetzung der ‚Finsternis‘ mit dem Nichts in der Ausdeutung von Gen 1,3 dargestellt haben, die ausdrücklich die manichäische Erzählung vom Finsternisreich als ‚*uanitates*‘ verwirft. Die Provokation für den Manichäer liegt nicht nur im polemischen Ton, sondern vor allem in der völligen Verkennung der gefährlichen Wirkmacht, die der Finsternisnatur in der Welt zukommt. Schließlich liegt die Annahme nahe, dass Secundinus mit der rhetorischen Frage, ob denn die Apostel und Märtyrer das Nichts besiegt haben, auf *de uera religione* 25 reagiert. Dort hatte Augustinus unter Bezug auf 1 Kor 15,54 f.

²²⁰ Vgl. Sec., ep. 7 (901,9 f.): Er habe nur ‚*eximios ... sensus summatim tetigisse*‘ und Weitschweifigkeit gemieden.

vom Sieg des Seins über das ‚Nichts‘ gesprochen, wenn nach dem körperlichen Tod durch den Heiligen Geist Sünde und Sündenstrafe aufgehoben und somit das ‚malum‘ beseitigt werden.—Augustinus vermeidet zunehmend die ausdrückliche Identifikation des malum mit dem nihil. Stattdessen spricht er präzisierend von Seinsminderung (*corruptio*, *priuatio*), die auf das Nichtsein zustrebt. Offenbar will er, wie er in der Antwort auf Secundinus nochmals unterstreicht, gerade gegenüber manichäischer Kritik deutlich machen, dass jeder Teil der Wirklichkeit ein ‚bonum‘ ist. Secundinus kann hierin die These, das malum sei das nihil, immer wieder bestätigt sehen, die Formulierung selbst aber dürfte auf die genannten frühen Antimanichaica zurückgehen. Die Differenzierung zwischen ‚Nichts‘ und Annäherung an das Nichtsein deutet er nicht an.

2. Während in den ersten antimanichäischen Schriften die ontologische Perspektive dominiert, gewinnt die ethische Dimension mit der Frage nach Sünde und Willensfreiheit langsam an Bedeutung und findet in *de uera religione*, *de duabus animabus* und vollends in *de libero arbitrio* deutlichen Niederschlag. Augustinus wie auch die Manichäer gehen grundsätzlich von einer Mittelstellung der Seele zwischen Gut und Böse aus, kommen jedoch zu völlig unterschiedlichen Folgerungen. Grundpfeiler der augustinischen Argumentation sind die Willens- und Wahlfreiheit der vernunftbegabten Seele, die für Augustinus die notwendige Voraussetzung für die Sünde ist und an der er immer offensiver die manichäische Sündenlehre misst, sowie die göttliche Sündenstrafe. Damit sieht er die Ursache und Verantwortung für das ethische und physische malum letztlich allein beim Menschen. Secundinus charakterisiert die augustinische Position sehr präzise und pointiert durch die beiden Begriffe Tun (*factio*) und Erleiden (*passio*). Neben den *confessiones* und *de libero arbitrio* können hier *de uera religione*, *contra Adimantum* oder vielleicht auch *contra Faustum* Grundlage sein.

In der Sündenproblematik zeigen sich deutliche Übereinstimmungen zwischen Secundinus und Fortunatus. Beide stehen auf den Grundlagen manichäischer Lehre. Daher ist eine direkte Abhängigkeit zwischen ihnen nicht eindeutig nachzuweisen. Dennoch scheint Secundinus die Position des Fortunatus zu systematisieren und unter dem Eindruck der augustinischen Kritik im entscheidenden Streitpunkt der Willensentscheidung fortzuführen. Um den Adressaten zur Kirche Manis zurückzuführen, hebt er besonders die Möglichkeit der willentlichen Abkehr von der Gnosis hervor, die zur endzeitlichen Verdammung führt.

3. Augustinus rekurriert in seinen antimanichäischen Schriften immer wieder auf den Teufel als Beispiel der willentlichen Entscheidung gegen Gott und seine Gebote sowie als böswillige Kraft, die den Menschen wie bereits Eva und Adam zum Bösen zu verleiten sucht. Letzterem kann Secundinus durchaus zustimmen. Für ihn ist der *diabolus* die führende Gestalt der Finsternismacht, deren unheilvolles Wirken die Menschheitsgeschichte und auch die neutestamentlichen Schriften klar bezeugen. Unter den *Antimanichaica* Augustins verdienen *de uera religione* (26 f.) sowie *contra Fortunatum* (23) und *de natura boni* (32 f.) besondere Beachtung. Letztere sind von besonderem Interesse, da Augustinus hier Eph 6,12 sowie Mt 25,41 verwendet, auf die Secundinus im Kontext der *malum*-Problematik ebenfalls rekurriert.

Die Beobachtungen zum *malum*-Problem deuten somit darauf hin, dass Secundinus mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit die frühen antimanichäischen Schriften Augustins, insbesondere *de moribus Manichaeorum*, vermutlich auch *de uera religione* sowie die Akten der Diskussion mit Fortunatus kannte. Die Untersuchung müsste für weitere Themen fortgeführt werden, die Secundinus am Ende seines Briefes aufgreift,²²¹ so das Verhältnis der beiden Reiche in der Anfangszeit, die Gründe für den Kampf (*Nebriusargument*) und die Eschatologie. Dadurch wird sich das Ergebnis dieser Untersuchung insbesondere im Blick auf *contra Fortunatum*, *contra epistulam Manichaei* und *contra Felicem* erhärten, aber auch ausweiten.

²²¹ Vgl. Sec., ep. 6 (899,16–901,2).

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

THE DISPUTATION WITH FELIX: THEMES AND MODALITIES OF AUGUSTINE'S POLEMIC

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1. THE IDENTITY OF *FELIX CHRISTIANUS*, *CULTOR LEGIS MANICHAEI*

In order to historically assess the *Contra Felicem Manichaeum*, we need to refer to the information provided by Augustine in the *Retractationes*, which evokes, albeit briefly, the circumstances of its composition. Directly after the *Contra Faustum* he records the *Contra Felicem Manichaeum, libri duo*, and offers precious insights into an event which, as already in the case of the *Contra Fortunatum*, takes place outside the *scriptorium* in which the author draws up his polemic treatises against the many adversaries of the faith. We have here a contemporary account of an actual debate:

In a church in the presence of the people, I argued for two days against a certain Manichaean, Felix by name. In fact, he had come to Hippo to sow this very error; for he was one of their preachers and, although without a liberal education, yet, more adroit than Fortunatus. The proceedings are an ecclesiastical record, but they are numbered among my books. They comprise, then, two books. In the second of these, there is a discussion on free choice of the will to do evil or good. But we were not compelled by necessity to argue more precisely about grace by which they about whom it was written: 'If the Son makes you free, then you will be free indeed' [Io 8, 36], are truly made free since he, with whom we were holding the discussion, was the kind of man he was. This work begins as follows: 'On the seventh of December in the sixth consulship of Honorius Augustus'.¹

¹ *Retract.* 2 8 (35).

The account offers some useful pointers for a correct assessment of the work and its protagonists. In the first place, it establishes its nature as a real record of a public debate entered into, over two days, by the Bishop in the presence of the people in the church of Hippo and by an authoritative representative of the Manichaean community. Felix had in fact been awarded the title of *doctor*, in other words he was recognized as the legitimate depositary, interpreter and missionary of the Manichaean faith, which he had in fact come to preach in the city. He thus did not belong to the Manichaean church of Hippo but was one of those travelling masters who, according to the precepts of the prophet and founder, was entrusted with the essential task of spreading the salvific message.

Possidius, Augustine's biographer, confirms the event and defines Felix as an elect involved with Augustine in the public debate recorded by the *notarii*.² He is judged by the bishop to be somewhat lacking in erudition in the profane letters but nevertheless *versutior Fortunato*, or—rather 'more able' than his previous adversary in a similar debate, as suggested by R. Jolivet and M. Jourjon³ who see in this definition a sort of homage made to the person—who was 'more astute', since he was often able to evade Augustine's pressing dialectic using skilful arguments or studied reticence.⁴

In recalling the experience of the debate, Augustine does not record that which, in the *Acta* making up the *Contra Felicem*, was his victory, in other words inducing the Manichaean doctor to sign the abjuration of his faith, as the biographer proudly stresses.⁵ It is difficult to understand the reason for this silence. We may wonder whether Augustine was aware that the 'conversion' in question had simply been a tactical expedient to withdraw from a debate without any way out, in which the two contenders spoke such diverse languages that they were unable to find any common ground. This 'conversion' in truth disconcerts the reader of this text, in which Felix stresses his views with unwavering conviction,

² Possidius, *Vita Aug.* 16, 4: 'Cum quodam etiam Felice, de numero eorum quos electos dicunt Manichaei, publice in Hipponiensi ecclesia notariis excipientibus disputavit populo adstante.'

³ R. Jolivet – M. Jourjon, *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin* 17, 2e S.: *Dieu et son oeuvre, Six traités anti-manichéens*, BA 17 (Paris 1961) 639.

⁴ Cf. F. Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine. Les controverses de Fortunatus, Faustus et Felix avec saint Augustin* (Paris 1970) 71–89.

⁵ Possidius, *Vita Aug.* 16, 4: 'After two or three conferences, that Manichaean, seeing the false vanity of his sect weakened, converted to the faith of our Church ("ad nostram conversus est fidem atque ecclesiam"), as a rereading of the report may show'.

and at the end shows no signs of giving in to his adversary's arguments, only then suddenly to sign the anathema against Mani.

There has been much debate about the possibility of identifying the Manichaean doctor with figures mentioned in other sources, namely with Augustine's interlocutor in *Ep.* 79 and with a second Felix who signed a formula of abjuration published by A. Mai. The first of these was an author of propaganda and polemics and he did not tend to withdraw from direct debate with his adversaries. Augustine orders him to prove himself able to 'resolve the issue in which [his] predecessor Fortunatus had been beaten' or to leave the city.⁶

According to F. Decret,⁷ the anonymous Manichaean to whom *Ep.* 79 is written is the Felix with whom the Bishop of Hippo engaged in a public debate, and this conclusion is also accepted by other scholars.⁸ The detailed analysis to which Decret submits the document and the comparison he makes with the *Contra Felicem*, in the wider context of the historical circumstances in which the events were situated, show that this identification is likely, without however achieving absolute certainty since many Manichaean missionaries, apart from the well-known Fortunatus and Felix, may have come to Hippo with clear propagandistic aims.⁹

Less probable, if not downright unacceptable, is the suggestion that our Felix is the namesake recorded as having signed a formula of abjuration of his Manichaean faith, and who also reported to the authorities

⁶ The anonymous Manichaean had come to the city for the purposes of proselytism and had started to take part in discussions with Catholics, saying that he did not fear death (*Ep.* 79), evidently alluding to the state of persisting unlawfulness in which the repeated imperial decrees against heresy in general and against Manichaeism in particular forced the followers of the religion of light to live. Augustine rejects this claim with a few ironic phrases and once again underlines the incongruousness of a doctrine in which a good God is supposed to have mixed the two substances, respectively good and evil, corresponding in man to soul and body. He then takes up once more the classic 'argument of Nebridius' (what would the inhabitants of the darkness have done if God had refused to fight with them?), and recalls one of his texts in which he was said to boast of the credit given to the Manichaeans by their Catholic adversaries in making them the object of controversy and in hindering their propaganda.

⁷ F. Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme*, 74–77; *L'Afrique manichéenne (IVe–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*, (Paris 1978) vol. 1, 363 f.

⁸ A. Mandouze *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire. I. Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne (303–533)* (Paris 1982) vol. 1, 417 f.

⁹ The recourse to the 'argument of Nebridius', a central theme in the dispute with Felix, cannot be considered conclusive either, since this is a constant in Augustine's anti-Manichaean polemics. Cf. along these lines R. Jolivet – M. Jourjon, *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin*, 640 f.

some brothers known to him living in Mauretania Caesariensis.¹⁰ The *Felix conversus ex manichaeis* who states that he knows only the twelve heretics whose names he lists cannot be the master of Hippo who, in the fulfilment of his function as an itinerant missionary, will definitely have had contacts with numerous Manichaean communities.¹¹ Without denying the historical reality of this second Felix,¹² a converted Manichaean, we must rule out identifying him as the protagonist of the public debate with Augustine.¹³

The date of the debate is clearly specified by Augustine in the passage in the *Retractationes*, quoted above, and is also mentioned in the *Acta* making up the two books of *Contra Felicem*. Most scholars place it on 7 and 12 December 404, in fact corresponding to the sixth consulship of Honorius ('Honorio Augusto sextum consule, septimo idus decembris').¹⁴

2. THE DEBATE BETWEEN AUGUSTINE AND FELIX: THE ARGUMENTS PRESENTED

As is seen in the entire organisation of the discussion recorded in the *Acta*, the meeting between the Bishop of Hippo and the Manichaean doctor was imposed on the latter, who had no way of avoiding the debate, due to the severe legislative measures to which his religion had been subject for some time. Faced with Augustine's pressing questions, at a certain point, Felix seems to be overwhelmed by his precarious position as an 'inquisitee' rather than a free participant in an open debate on an equal footing: 'Non tantum ego possum contra tuam virtutem, quia mira vir-

¹⁰ Text edited by A. Mai, *Nova Patrum Bibliotheca*, I, Roma 1852, 383; PL Suppl. II, 4, 1389.

¹¹ Cf. Decret *Aspects du manichéisme*, 328–336; *L'Afrique manichéenne*, vol. 1, 364 f. He underlines that the Felix of the *Acta* did not de facto abjure, but merely signed a document proposed by Augustine, thus submitting to the bishop's authority.

¹² This is the line taken in a brief note by S.N.C. Lieu & J.M. Lieu, 'Felix conversus ex Manichaeis—a case of mistaken identity?', *Journal of Theological Studies* N.S. 23/1 (1981) 173–176. They believe that the term *felix* in the formula of abjuration is not a proper noun but an adjective to be attributed to that *Cresconius unus ex Manichaeis* who was the first person to sign the document. Cf. Decret's objections to this interpretation (*Essais sur l'Église manichéenne en Afrique du Nord et à Rome au temps de saint Augustin. Recueil d'études* [Roma 1995], 118 f. n. 21).

¹³ It is instead accepted by Jolivet & Jourjon, *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin*, 641.

¹⁴ P. Monceaux's proposal to correct the misinterpreted text so as to read IV rather than VI and thus to move back the date to 398 does not seem acceptable (*Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres* 1908, 51–53). Cf. Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme*, 77 f.

tus est gradus episcopalis'—he in fact exclaims, and immediately adds—'deinde contra leges Imperatorum.'¹⁵ While a pagan emperor such as Diocletian had already issued an edict which established the death penalty for Manichaeans and the destruction of their books,¹⁶ the Christian emperors, starting in 372 with Valentinian and Valens,¹⁷ had sentenced them to exile and the confiscation of their property, in a series of laws which intensified under Theodosius. The latest, issued on 17 May 399, addressed to the *Vicarius Africae*,¹⁸ was recent enough to represent a serious risk,

¹⁵ *C. Fel.* 1, 12.

¹⁶ From the extensive literature on the issue, I mention only a few publications: W. Seston, 'De l'authenticité et de la date de l'Édit de Dioclétien contre les Manichéens,' in: *Mélanges de Philologie, de Littérature et d'Histoire anciennes offerts à Alfred Ernout* (Paris 1940), 345–354; E.H. Kaden, 'Die Edikte gegen die Manichäer von Diokletian bis Justinian' in: *Festschrift für Hans Lewald bei Vollendung des vierzigsten Amtjahre als ordentlicher Professor im Oktober 1953* (Basel 1953) 55–68; E. Volterra, 'La costituzione di Diocleziano e Massimiano contro i Manichei,' in: *La Persia e il mondo greco-romano*. Atti del Convegno (Roma 11–14 aprile 1965), Acc. Naz. Lincei CCCLXIII, Quaderno N.76 (Roma 1966) 17–50; P. Brown, 'The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire,' *Journal of Roman Studies* 59 (1969) 92–103; repr. in: idem, *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine* (London 1972), 94–118; H. Chadwick, 'The Relativity of Moral Codes: Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity,' in: W.R. Schoedel – R.L. Wilken (eds.), *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition. In Honorem Robert M. Grant* (Paris 1979), 135–153; L.D. Bruce, 'Diocletian, the Proconsul Iulianus, and the Manichaeans,' in: C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, vol. III (Bruxelles 1983) 336–347 and lastly, for an overview of the issue, P. Pachis 'Extra imperium et religionem nulla salus. Die Religionspolitik des römischen Staates gegen die Manichäer,' *KAIROC* 4 (1994) 815–828. The most probable dating is 302.

¹⁷ *Cod. Theod.* XVI, 5, 3 ed. Th. Mommsen, *Codex Theodosianus*, vol. 1, 855. A text edition and commentary with a French translation of the section *De haereticis* can be found in Th. Mommsen – J. Rougé † – R. DelMaire – F. Richard, *Les lois religieuses des empereurs romains de Constantin à Théodose II (312–438)*, vol. I *Codex Theodosien Livre XVI*, Texte latin Th. Mommsen—Traduction J. Rougé †, Introduction et notes R. DelMaire avec la collaboration de F. Richard et d'une équipe du GDR 2135, SC 497 (Paris 2005). See P. Beskow, 'The Theodosian Laws against the Manichaeism,' in: P. Bryder (ed.), *Manichaean Studies. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Manichaeism, August 5–9, 1987*, Lund 1988, 1–11 on the problem.

¹⁸ *Cod. Theod.* XVI, 5, 35, 866. This lays down a 'congrua et severissima emendatio' against anyone discovered to be a Manichaean as well as punishments for their protectors. The previous legislative provisions had prevented the Manichaeans from being testators or beneficiaries of wills, and had imposed the confiscation of their property: *Cod. Theod.* XVI, 5, 7, 857 f. of 381; XVI, 5, 9, 858 f. of 382; XVI, 5, 11, 859 of 383 (forbidding meetings upon pain of exile). On Theodosian legislation, which often put Manichaeans on the same level as other heretics espousing Encratite ideas, see also J. Rougé, 'La législation de Théodose contre les hérétiques. Traduction de C.Th. XVI, 5, 6–24,' in: J. Fontaine – Ch. Kannengiesser (eds.), *EPEKTASIS. Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou* (Paris 1972) 635–649.

perhaps not for the Manichaeans's physical safety, but certainly for his freedom to travel and spread propaganda.

Augustine gives no credit to Felix's fear and states that the debate will take place in an atmosphere of the utmost calm, while the Christians present in the church listen in silence, without harming him in any way.¹⁹ He then adds that the Apostles, while also being afraid, did not hesitate to proclaim their faith openly, implicitly insinuating that his adversary is deceitful.²⁰ He then mentions the daring attitude shown by Felix himself, as on the previous day he had even sent the city *curator* a *libellum* asking for the return of his books which had been confiscated, saying that he was ready to be burnt with them 'if anything evil had been found in them'. We can deduce from this that the legislation in force against the Manichaeans provided for the confiscation and destruction by burning of the *codices* and—it would seem—also of their owners, measures dating back to the edicts of Diocletian and recognised as still valid under the Christian emperors. None of the legislative measures issued by the latter in fact envisage such punishments, for which Diocletian's measures were considered applicable. In any case, the examination of the texts as a test bed of the truthfulness of Manichaean teaching on one hand and of Catholic teaching on the other is the central issue of the debate.

It is Augustine who shifts the discussion to the field of Manichaean scripture²¹ while Felix, although on one hand accepting this and insistently asking for the return of his Codices with the *auctores* they contain,²² at the same time claims the right to also quote New Testament texts to support his doctrines, thus denying his Catholic adversary the exclusive appropriation of their authority. There is thus established a marked tension between the two interlocutors, one aiming to circumscribe discussion to the works of Mani, and precisely to the *Fundamental Epistle*

¹⁹ *C. Fel.* 12.

²⁰ For this charge, often associated with the assignment of a secret teaching reserved for the Elects, and directed by Augustine at his previous companions, cf. F. Decret, 'Du bon usage du mensonge et du parjure. Manichéens et Priscillianistes face à la persécution dans l'Empire chrétien (IV^e–V^e siècles)', in: M.-M. Mactoux – E. Geny (eds.), *Mélanges Pierre Lévêque*, vol. 4 *Religion*, (Paris 1990) 141–149 = Decret, *Essais*, 115–124.

²¹ *C. Fel.* 1: 'Hesterno die scis te dixisse quod possis defendere scripturas Manichaei, et asserere quod veritatem habeant; si hoc placet tibi hodie facere, aut praesumis te posse, dic.'

²² *Ibidem*: 'Ego me non nego dixisse defendere legem meam, si proferantur auctores legis meae in medio.' A precise review of the Manichaean scriptures used in the two debates against Fortunatus and Felix and in the drawing up of the *Contra Faustum* is provided by Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme*, 93–121.

so familiar to him, aiming to highlight all the incongruous aspects of a doctrine revolving around a horde of figures and interwoven complex events, and the other, who without disavowing this variegated mythical scenario, intends to find the justification for his own dualistic faith in Christian Scripture.²³

At the beginning of the debate, Augustine produces a *codex* containing the *Fundamental Epistle* and, after having submitted it to Felix for inspection, so that he may acknowledge its authenticity, he asks the latter to read it. After he has read Mani's opening address, the Bishop introduces the theme that, already in his confutation of this document,²⁴ he had circumscribed as the central issue of the dispute, i.e. demonstrating that the Prophet was, as he claimed, an Apostle of Jesus. His apostrophe to his interlocutor is peremptory: 'Proba nobis ergo quomodo Manichaeus iste sit apostolus Iesu Christi.'

While the *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* shows us the entire structure of the argument constructed by Augustine to respond to this claim, whose essential contents we will now examine,²⁵ the text examined here shows a Manichaean doctor explaining the reasons for his faith in Mani as an apostle of Christ, which is an essential basis of the entire religious construct in which he is a firm believer. In reply to Augustine's objection that no Gospel text mentions Mani, while the names of all the Apostles are well known, Felix immediately overturns the perspective and,

²³ An analytical examination of the quotes or paraphrases of the New Testament texts adopted by Felix, together with those to which Fortunatus and Faustus appeal, can be found in Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme*, 151–167.

²⁴ For a more extensive discussion of Augustine's arguments presented in *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* and of the problems of interpreting this Epistle, one of the fundamental texts for understanding the teaching of the Prophet of Babylon, see my introduction and comments dedicated to the edition, with an Italian translation, of the text in the NBA (*Sant'Agostino. Polemica con i Manichei*, NBA XIII/2, *Contro Adimanto Contro la Lettera del Fondamento di Mani Disputa con Felice Contro Secondino*, Testo latino dell'edizione maurina confrontato con il CSEL, Introduzione generale, Introduzioni particolari e note illustrative di Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, Traduzioni di Cesare Magazzù, Augusto Cosentino, Indici di Franco Monteverde [Roma 2000], 229–387). Cf. M. Scopello, 'Agostino contro Mani: Note sull'opera polemica del *Contra Epistulam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti*', in: *La polemica con i Manichei di Agostino di Ippona, Lectio Augustini XIV—Settimana Agostiniana Pavese* (Roma 2000) 7–34 and eadem, 'L'Epistula Fundamenti à la lumière des sources manichéennes du Fayoum', in: J. van Oort – O. Wermelinger – G. Wurst (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West. Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht Symposium of the International Association of Manichaean Studies (IAMS)* (Leiden-Boston-Köln 2001) 205 ff.

²⁵ Without being able to discuss this argument here, I propose an analysis in Sfameni Gasparro, *Sant'Agostino. Polemica con i Manichei*, 229–296.

supported by the promise made by Jesus in Io 16, 13²⁶ which proves to be the keystone of his argument, asks Augustine to show that the promise has been fulfilled *extra scripturam istam*, in other words in other writings apart from Mani's *Epistle*. At the same time he says he is ready to refute Mani's Scriptures if he can find in other writings the 'total truth' (*omnis veritas*) which he firmly believes is contained in the revelation of his Master.²⁷

There thus begins a discussion which sees the two contenders debate on the interpretation of New Testament texts, extensively quoted by the Catholic bishop. Felix does not object to this approach, but on the contrary, draws further support from them for his own positions. In fact, after Augustine has read extensive passages from the Gospel (Lc 24, 36–49) and above all from the Acts of the Apostles, the Manichaean doctor asks whether one of the Apostles themselves was able to teach him *de initio, de medio, et de fine* (*C. Fel.* 1, 6). This question brings to the fore the totalising vision, with its typical division into the 'three times', which connotes the Manichaean revelation, and which precisely in the *Fundamental Epistle* is so vividly exemplified.

When Augustine asks for his opinion on Paul's status as a beneficiary of the Spirit, Felix is prepared to recognise him as such; at the same time, in a skilful strategic move, he uses Paul's own statement in 1 Cor 13, 9–10 to demonstrate how the Apostle, affirming that 'ex parte scimus, et ex parte prophetamus: cum venerit autem quod perfectum est, abolebuntur ea quae ex parte dicta sunt,' acknowledges that his knowledge is only partial, and thus defers to a future, complete revelation of which he does not feel he is the depositary. This allows the Manichaean doctor to emphasise the foundations of his own faith:²⁸ 'While we listened to these words of Paul, Mani arrived with his preaching and we accepted him on the basis of what Christ said: 'I will send you the Holy Spirit'. Paul came too and he also said that he would come, and afterwards no one came: so we welcomed Mani'.

Paul, after Christ himself, thus becomes the witness not only of Mani's apostolicity but also of his capacity as Paraclete, providing the most authoritative credentials for that revelation which, according to the Saviour's promise, must disclose the entire scenario of reality. Conse-

²⁶ As Decret (*Aspects du manichéisme*, 160f.) notes, there is no textual quotation, but a sort of 'scriptural orchestration' which welds together a number of corresponding passages (Io 16, 16 + 16, 28; 15, 26; 16, 13 and 14, 25).

²⁷ *C. Fel.* 1, 2.

²⁸ *C. Fel.* 1, 9.

quently, Felix can quote the essential contents of the Manichaean message, in the certainty that they, precisely because they cover 'the Beginning, the Middle and the End',²⁹ represent the complete realisation of that message of Truth that only the Holy Spirit would be able to bestow: 'And since Mani came and through his preaching he taught us about the Beginning, the Middle and the End: he taught us about the construction of the world, why it was made, who its creators were and whence they came; he taught us about the movement of the sun and the moon. Since we had heard nothing of this in Paul or in the writings of the other Apostles, for this reason we believe that he is the Paraclete.'³⁰

Despite Augustine's able demonstrations, constructed by virtue of his consummate dialectic skill and backed up by the authority of the New Testament texts, Felix is unmoved, and supports his position by quoting Io 16, 13 and observing that neither Paul nor the other Apostles fulfilled its promise of a total unfolding of the truth.³¹ Urged by the Bishop to provide a textual demonstration of his theories, Felix states that he can only do so if he is given the 'scripturas Manichaei, quinque auctores quos tibi dixi.' These are those works that had been confiscated by the city authorities and whose return the Manichaean doctor requests in order to be able to debate with Augustine on an even playing field. The Bishop then replies that the same *Fundamental Epistle* is part of those *auctoritates*, implicitly deciding that no recourse to other texts is necessary. To this, Felix adds that if he is unable to give a satisfactory explanation of Mani's nature as Paraclete on the basis of the *Epistle*, he would however be able to do so if he had access to the 'second' of those works. When Augustine asks what he means, he specifies that he is talking about the *Thesaurus*.

²⁹ Cf. the *Psalm of Bema* 221, ed. C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Part II with a contribution by H. Ibscher, (Stuttgart 1938), 7, 8–10: '... for truly thou (Mani) art he that proclaims the Beginning, the Middle and the End.'

³⁰ *Ibidem*. On the notion of Mani-Paraclete and his distance from the Catholic notion of the Holy Spirit of the Trinitarian formule, cf. F. Decret, 'Mani, "l'autre Paraclete"', *Augustinianum* 32 (1992) 105–118 = Decret, *Essais*, 195–207.

³¹ *C. Fel.* 14: 'Christ said that he would send the Holy Spirit, which would introduce the full truth'. And faced with Augustine's objection, as he refuses to identify this truth in the items of cosmological knowledge listed above by his adversary, he replies: 'Et ego dico, quia si Paracletus per Apostolos locutus est, et per Paulum; et ego peto Sanctitatem tuam, ut illa mihi ostendas quae iam dixi.' We can note his skill at turning round against his adversary the request to 'demonstrate' his assumption: it is not Felix who has to demonstrate the quality of Mani as Paraclete but it is up to Augustine to prove, on biblical grounds, the presence of the Spirit in the Apostles and in Paul.

There is thus introduced into the debate a theme of primary importance from the Manichaean perspective, which we will see emerge on various occasions in the arguments presented by Felix: only in the revealing word of the apostle and founder, consigned in his Scriptures and faithfully guarded by the disciples who received it, is it possible to find the foundation and justification of truth. As the Manichaean doctor would later say, 'the Scripture explains itself'.³² In other words, it contains within itself the reasons for its own truthfulness, nor may it be subjected to interpretation, since Mani, in his capacity as last divine envoy, on the one hand was the interpreter of the truths hidden under the veil of figures and symbols presented by his predecessors, including Jesus and Paul, and on the other communicated his message in a clear and self-explanatory way. This message, then, may not be subjected to any exegesis whatsoever. The same notion is stressed forcefully later, when Felix is asked by Augustine to clarify the sense of a passage in the *Epistula Fundamenti*, and he then replies: 'I cannot explain this Scripture to you, and illustrate that which it does contain; to do so would be to commit a sin.'³³

3. THE FIVE *AUCTORES* OF FELIX

This lapidary formula, *ipsa sibi interpret est*, expresses with matchless efficiency the absolute value of Mani's revelation, and its independence from any human power of investigation. The specification of five *auctoritates* raises the problem of defining the Manichaean canon, and establishing whether it should formally be considered to be composed of five texts or whether, as other sources suggest, it contains seven or more works.

Without looking at the issue in detail, we need merely mention some sources, especially those in Coptic closest in time to the period in which Felix was active, to see whether or not they correspond with his statement.

One text which, while full of lacunae, offers an important testimony, is one of the *Psalms of the Wanderers* (*Psalmoi Sarakoton*), in which the faithful, exalting the person of the Apostle, exclaim: 'The Mind (νοῦς) and the Wisdom (σοφία), that are lodged in his Writings (γραφή). His

³² *C. Fel.* 1, 17: 'Ipsa se scriptura interpretatur.'

³³ *C. Fel.* 1, 19.

five holy books. The King of the Writings (γραφή), His Great Gospel (Ἐυαγγέλιον): His New Testament (Διαθήκη): The manna of the skies. The inheritance (κληρονομία) of []. The Θεσαυρός of Life, his second great book. The [] and (?) the cures, The [] [] The shame on the sons of Error (πλάνη). The Book of the *Pragmateia* (Πραγματεία), [] [], The Book of [], The νάρτηξ of his cures. The book of the Letters (ἐπιστολή), The zeal (σπουδή) of the Elect (ἐκλεκτός), [] of the Catechumens. [] The judgement of the Righteousness (δικαιοσύνη). The prayers of our Lord. [] []. The two Psalms (ψαλμός). The citadel (πολίτευμα) of the angels.³⁴

There are absent from this list two books which are well attested by other sources, namely *The Book of the Giants* and the *Book of the Mysteries*, probably due to the lacunae. We may however note that even though the texts listed number at least six, to which we should add the two mentioned, the Psalmist defines the complete works of Mani as 'his five holy books', thus forming a Pentateuch of the kind known to Felix. We should thus agree with M. Tardieu³⁵ when he concludes that, in order to achieve the number five, some works were considered to constitute a 'sub-unit'. This would result in an arrangement of the following kind: 1. *Gospel*; 2. *Treasure*; 3. *Pragmateia*, *Book of the Mysteries*, *Book of the Giants*; 4. *Letters*; 5. two *Psalms* and *Prayers*.

This scheme de facto emerges clearly from a list of Mani's works as offered by the *Keph.* 148³⁶ which is entitled 'On the five books which belong to the Fathers', and reads: 'The great living Gospel (εὐαγγέλιον) is the gift of the Envoy (πρεσβευτής). The Treasure (θησαυρός) of life is the gift of the Column (στύλος). The *Pragmateia* (Πραγματεία), The Book of Mysteries (μυστήριον), The writing (γραφή) of the Giants (γίγας), which

³⁴ Psalm *Sarakoton*; ed. C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 139, 54–140, 24; cf. A. Villey, *Psaumes des errants. Écrits manichéens du Fayyum* (Paris 1994), Hymn II, 69f. See the analysis of the issue by M. Krause, 'Die Aussagen von Sarakoton—Psalm 2 (Man.PsBook 139, 52–140, 17) über die heiligen Schriften der Manichäer', in: H. Preissler-H. Seiwert (eds.), *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte. Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag* (Marburg, 1994) 131–141.

³⁵ M. Tardieu, *Le manichéisme* (Paris 1981); it. trans., (Cosenza 1988, 1996²) 67–81. Nine writings by Mani are listed, while it should be noted that in the sources, the number of writings listed as belonging to the 'canon' varies between seven and five with the exclusion of the *Shaburagan* and the *Images*.

³⁶ Coptic text with German translation in: C. Schmidt – H.J. Polotsky, *Ein Mani-Fund in Aegypten. Originalschriften des Mani und seiner Schüler*. Mit einem Beitrag von H. Ibscher, SPAW (1933) 35 f. (translation); 86 (text).

form a single 'writing', are the gifts of the Twin of Light. All of the Letters (ἐπιστολή) meanwhile which I read to you from (κατά) time to time, are my gifts and offers (δῶρον). This is the good fruit (καρπός) I have given you from the good tree'.

If, on the other hand, in line with F. Decret, we consider the definition of the Manichaean canon as a Heptateuch to be more correct,³⁷ the three works grouped under point 3 should be considered as separate.

It should moreover be observed that neither of these solutions are entirely satisfying, since the other lists include a further work of the Prophet, namely the *Images*, while the *Shaburagan*, the first writing by Mani and written in the Iranian language, is usually considered to be outside of the 'canon', insofar as it was composed for a person whose descendants showed themselves not only hostile to the Prophet but actually persecuted him. Nevertheless, the text was de facto widely known in the East and Far East, and in a passage of the *Kephalaia* it seems to be alluded to by Mani himself as a text containing his teaching, in the same way as all the others.³⁸

Further lists of the canonical writings are provided in the Coptic Homilies,³⁹ in the *Psalm of Bema* 241,⁴⁰ in a context rich in symbols

³⁷ See F. Decret, *Introduzione generale*, in: *Sant'Agostino. Polemica con i Manichei*, Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana (NBA) XIII/1 (Roma 1997) XXVII–XXIX.

³⁸ In the introduction to the *Kephalaia* the Apostle announces the fundamental dogmas of his doctrine and states: 'I have written [them in / my bo]oks of light: in *The Great Gospel* (Εὐαγγέλιον) and *Treasury / of the Life* (Θεσαυρός); in the *Προγραμματεία*; in *The One of the Mysteries* (Τὰ τῶν μυστηρίων); in *The Writing* (Γραφή) which I wrote on account of the Parthians; and also all my *Epistles* (Ἐπιστολή); in *The Psalms* (Ψάλμος) and the *Prayers*' (trans. I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in translation with commentary*, NHMS XXXVII [Leiden-New York-Köln 1995] 11). In *The Writing* which Mani states he composed 'on account of the Parthians' rather than *The Book of the Giants* it seems we can identify that first work dedicated to the Iranian sovereign Shapur to illustrate his teaching. For a mention of *The Great Gospel* see *Keph.* 61, ed. H.J. Polotsky – A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia*, Band I,1 Hälfte, Lieferung 1–10, "Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin" (Stuttgart 1940) 153, 30; trans. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, 161 while the *Treasury of the Life* is mentioned in *Keph.* 91 (ed. Polotsky – Böhlig, *Kephalaia* 230, 7–10; trans. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, 237).

³⁹ *Hom.* ed. H.J. Polotsky, *Manichäische Homilien mit einem Beitrag von H. Ibscher*, Band 1, "Manichäische Handschriften der Sammlung A. Chester Beatty" (Stuttgart 1934), 25, 1–7: in addition to the aforementioned books, there is also that of the *Images*. Cf. also *Hom.* ed. Polotsky, *Manichäische Homilien* 94, 18–22.

⁴⁰ Ed. C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Part II with a contribution by H. Ibscher, (Stuttgart 1938) 46, 20–47, 4.

and figures borrowed from medical language,⁴¹ and in the third article of the Chinese doctrinal *Compendium*.⁴² Without being able to decide with certainty whether to define the canon as a Pentateuch or Heptateuch, it is important to note Felix and Augustine's joint testimony regarding the African Manichaeans' possession of a rich scriptural heritage placed under the authority of the Founder and summarised in the form of five *auctores*, including the *Fundamental Epistle*, and in which the second book was the *Thesaurus* from which Augustine would quote a passage. As is also clear from his references to it in the *De natura boni*, he must have had a copy of the work in his 'library'.

Moreover, in his *Confessions*, the Bishop of Hippo on a number of occasions mentions the Manichaean books circulating in his environment in Latin translation. On the episode of the priest to whom his mother had turned to ask him to convince Augustine to abandon his Manichaean error, Augustine recalls that the person had had the same experience, having been consigned *parvulum* by his Manichaean mother to the members of that community. In this condition he 'had not only read, but even recopied almost all their books'.⁴³ Of Faustus, the master so long awaited but then recognised as being unsuitable to dispel his doubts, he reports that he was little experienced in the liberal arts, having

⁴¹ For the 'medical' aspects of the figure and activity of Mani, see W.B. Oerter, 'Mani als Arzt? Zur Bedeutung eines manichäischen Bildes,' in: V. Vavrinek (ed.), *From Late Antiquity to Early Byzantium*. Proceedings of the Byzantinological Symposium in the 16th International Eirene Conference (Praha 1986) 219–223; J.D. BeDuhn, 'A Regimen for Salvation: Medical Models in Manichaean Asceticism', *Semeia* 58 (1992) 109–134; J.D. BeDuhn, 'Magical Bowls and Manichaeans', in: M. Meyer – P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Leiden-New York-Köln 1995) 425. Cf. also H.-J. Klimkeit, 'Jesus, Mani and Buddha as Physicians in the Texts of the Silk Road', in: *Convegno internazionale sul tema: La Persia e l'Isia centrale da Alessandro al X secolo in collaborazione con l'Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente* (Roma, 9–12 novembre 1994), *Atti dei Congressi dei Lincei* 127 (Roma 1996) 589–595; J. BeDuhn – G. Harrison, 'The Tebessa Codex: A Manichaean Treatise on Biblical Exegesis and Church Order', in: P. Mirecki-J. BeDuhn (eds.), *Emerging from Darkness. Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, NHMS XLIII, Leiden-New York-Köln 1997, 33–87; J.K. Coyle, 'Healing and the "Physician" in Manichaeism', in: J.K. Coyle-St.C. Muir (eds.), *Healing in Religion and Society, from Hippocrates to the Puritans. Selected Studies* (Lewiston-Queenston-Lampeter 1999), 135–158; A. Van Tongerlo, 'Manichaeus Medicus', in: R.E. Emmerick -W. Sundermann-P. Zieme (eds.), *Studia manichaica. IV. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus, Berlin, 14.-18. Juli 1997* (Berlin 2000) 613–621.

⁴² Chinese Compendium: third article 56–59 ed. and trans. N. Tajadod, *Mani le Boud-dha de Lumière. Catéchisme manichéen chinois* (Paris 1990) 56 f. For correspondences with the other lists of Mani's works, cf. *ibidem*, 37–39.

⁴³ *Conf.* 3, 12.21: '... et omnes paene non legisse tantum verum etiam scriptitasse libros eorum.'

little knowledge of authors such as Cicero, Seneca and the poets, while he had read 'suae sectae si qua volumina latine atque composite conscripta erant'.⁴⁴

In other works Augustine repeatedly mentions Manichaean literature,⁴⁵ although his allusive references often make it impossible to distinguish between the works of the founder himself and those of his disciples, which we may also suppose were numerous, judging by the texts surviving in Coptic and the various Oriental languages. In Latin, we know the *Antitheses* of Adimantus⁴⁶ and the interesting document contained in the manuscript found in Tebessa, entirely built on a close-knit weave of New Testament *auctoritates*, confirming the marked Christian connotation of African Manichaeism.⁴⁷ Mani was without doubt the author of the many letters that Augustine mentions in *C. Ep. Fund.* 25, 28 and of the other books to which the Manichaeans refer to describe the various types of

⁴⁴ *Conf.* 5, 6, 11. On the many Manichaean writings, cf. also *Conf.* 5, 3, 6, 55 f.; 5, 7, 12, 64 f.

⁴⁵ Cf. *De Gen. c. Manich.* 1, 1; *De mor. Eccl. Cathol. et de mor. Manich.* I, 29, 61.

⁴⁶ Cf. Sfameni Gasparro, *Sant'Agostino. Contro i Manichei*, 3–98 and G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'Addas—Adimantus unus ex discipulis Manichaei: for the History of Manichaeism in the West', in: R.E. Emmerick – W. Sundermann – P. Zieme (eds.), *Studia Manichaica. IV Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus*, Berlin 14–18 July 1997, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, (Berlin 2000) 546–559; J.D. BeDuhn, 'Biblical Antithesis, Adda, and the Acts of Archelaus', in: J. BeDuhn – P. Mireki (eds.), *Frontiers of Faith. The Christian Encounter with Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus*, NHMS LXI, (Leiden – Boston 2007) 131–147.

⁴⁷ Cf. P. Alfarcic, 'Un manuscrit manichéen. Le document de Tebessa', *Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature Religieuses* ns 6 (1920) 62–98; R. Merkelbach, 'Der manichäische Codex von Tebessa', in: P. Bryder (ed.), *Manichaean Studies*, Lund 1988, 229–264; F. Decret, 'Aspects de l'Église manichéenne. Remarques sur le Manuscrit de Tébéssa', in: A. Zumkeller (ed.), *Signum pietatis*. Festgabe für Cornelius Petrus Mayer OSA zum 60. Geburtstag, (Würzburg 1989) 123–151 = Decret, *Essais*, 27–53 and lastly, for an update on the issue, F. Decret, *Essais sur l'Église manichéenne*, with his many contributions on the peculiar aspects of Manichaeism in Africa ('Le manichéisme présentait-il en Afrique et à Rome des particularismes régionaux?', *Augustinianum* 34 (1994) 5–40 = Decret, *Essais*, 209–240; 'Objectif premier visé par Augustin dans ses controverses orales avec les responsables manichéens d'Hippone', in: J. van Oort – O. Wermelinger – G. Wurst (eds.) *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West. Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht Symposium of the International Association of Manichaean Studies (IAMS)* [Leiden – Boston – Köln 2001], 57–66). On this issue, in the framework of the local 'variations' of the Manichaean religion, cf. also L.H. Grondijs, 'Numidian Manichaeism in Augustinus' Time', *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 95 (1954–1955) 21–42; idem, 'Analyse du manichéisme numidien au IV^e siècle', in: *Augustinus Magister*, vol. III, (Paris 1954) 391–410; id., 'La diversità delle sette manichee', in: *Silloge bizantina in onore di S.G. Mercati* [Studi Bizantini e Neo-ellenici 9], (Roma, 1957) 176–187; R. Lim, 'Unity and Diversity among Western Manichaeans: A Reconsideration of Mani's sancta ecclesia', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 35 (1989) 231–250; A. Hoffmann, 'Erst Einsehen, dann glauben. Die Nordafrikani-

inhabitants of the five kingdoms of darkness.⁴⁸ Equally, in his reply to the *Epistle* of the Roman Manichaean Secondinus, he explicitly refers to the works of the prophet when he says that he can quote 'innumerable passages from the books of Mani' regarding the two opposing kingdoms of light and darkness, thus confirming his extensive and thorough knowledge of the founder's literary corpus.⁴⁹

4. THE THEMES OF THE DEBATE: THE NATURE OF GOD AND HIS KINGDOM

After a series of exchanges between the two interlocutors regarding the texts on which to base the demonstration of Mani's authority or untruthfulness, Felix resigns himself to limiting the discussion to the *Fundamental Epistle*. Another passage is thus read, corresponding to the opening address already quoted by Augustine in his *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti*, with the addition of a significant conclusive passage which introduces, alongside the *Deus veritatis* and the *Dextera luminis*, the *Spiritus sanctus*, thus establishing a series with evident Trinitarian overtones.

It is precisely such overtones which probably justify Augustine's extraordinary statement: 'Adhuc nihil mali audivimus, nisi quod ausus est Manichaeus apostolum Christi se nominare.' It is here that the Bishop concedes most to his adversary, without however letting slip the opportunity to remark once more on the impiety of the title arrogated by the Prophet of Babylon. We should however note that the discussion concludes without Augustine managing to even slightly weaken his adversary's conviction on this issue. They both remain solidly anchored to their respective positions, since the main bone of contention remains untouched, and marks an unbridgeable gap between them.

Augustine then shifts the debate to the content of Mani's revelation, and more precisely to the dualistic structure of the two opposed kingdoms, an issue which he had already subjected to extensive confutation in his treatise *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti*. Even though Augustine here produces basically the same arguments, what interests us is the range of

schen Manichäer zwischen Erkenntnisanspruch, Glaubenforderung und Glaubenskritik', in: Van Oort-Wermelinger-Wurst 2001, 67–112 and, more extensively, the essays on the subject in Van Oort-Wermelinger-Wurst, *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*.

⁴⁸ *C. Ep. Fund.* 27, 32.

⁴⁹ On the methods of the polemical dispute with the Roman Manichaean, see my essay on the subject (Sfameni Gasparro, 'Au coeur du dualisme manichéen').

arguments adopted by Felix to defend this structure, since this allows us to assess how well and to what extent the Manichaean message was understood by its followers. We perceive in this way the shift from the fixed view of doctrine announced apodictically in the written text to the mobile existential reality of the individual believer, in this case a *doctor* who in turn had the task of communicating the message, and thus represented its indispensable intermediary and sound box.

Asked by the bishop to define the relationship between God and the *lucida et beata terra* over which he rules, and more precisely to state whether he created or generated it, or if it is *aequalis ac coeterna* to him, Felix surprisingly⁵⁰ turns to the text of *Genesis* 1, 1–2 of which he proposes a markedly dualistic reading, whereby it would be possible to distinguish between a Heaven and Earth made by God, and an Earth, existing per se, *invisibilis, coinquinabilis et incomposita*,⁵¹ in which we identify the second principle, in line with Manichaean teaching: ‘In principio fecit Deus coelum et terram, et terra erat: quasi duae terrae mihi videntur esse, secundum quod Manichaeus dicit duo regna.’

In the face of Augustine’s pressing questions, which are aimed at eliciting his adversary’s clear opinion on the issue, Felix at first tries to get around the obstacle, both by arguing that it is impossible to comment on a revelation, using the formula already quoted (‘*ipsa se scriptura interpretatur*’), and by referring to further scripture that he considers to contain an adequate response. However, he is gradually forced to admit the substantially homogeneous nature of God and the *terra* in which he resides, thus revealing one of the fundamental postulates of the Manichaean religious vision, in other words the consubstantiality between all the realities of the world of light on one hand⁵² and those of the world of darkness on the other.

Moreover, the Manichaean doctor, once forced to admit to this notion, which he perceives to be alien to the Biblical perspective, clearly reveals his doctrinal view, and provides further specification supported by

⁵⁰ Augustine does not fail to stress this anomalous use of the Old Testament texts by a Manichaean, more used to *blasphemare* the Old Testament.

⁵¹ *C. Fel.* 1, 17.

⁵² Cf. Ibn al Nadim, *Fihrist* ed. B. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim. A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, voll. 1–2, New York – London 1970, vol. 2, 777: ‘Together with his attributes he [Light] is eternal. With him are two eternals, one of which is the Sky (atmosphere) and the other the Earth’. There is then the description of these realities according to the typical five-part pattern.

the other documents known, stating that 'Imo tres sunt pater ingenitus, terra ingenita, et aer ingenitus' and acknowledges—in the words of Augustine—that 'hoc totum una substantia est'.⁵³

Although in some Psalms we find an evocation, together with the 'Land of Light', of the 'Air of our city',⁵⁴ or of the 'Living Air',⁵⁵ it is in a long passage in the work of Faustus quoted by Augustine that this reality comes to the fore, and is assimilated in fact with the Holy Spirit, in a dimension clearly qualified in a 'Trinitarian' sense. The Manichaean bishop in fact states: 'We then worship one and the same power under the threefold appellation of the Almighty God the Father, and Christ his Son and the Holy Spirit. While these are one and the same, we believe also that the Father properly dwells in the highest or principal light, which Paul calls 'light inaccessible' (1 Tim 6, 16). The Son meanwhile resides in the second, visible light. And as the Son is himself twofold, according to the apostle, who speaks of Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1, 24), we believe that His power dwells in the Sun, and His wisdom in the Moon. We also believe that the Holy Spirit, which is the third Majesty, has His seat and His home in the whole circle of the atmosphere. By His influence and spiritual infusion, the earth conceives and brings forth the suffering Jesus, who, as hanging from every tree, is the life and salvation of men. Though you oppose these doctrines so violently, your religion resembles ours in attaching the same sacredness to the bread and the wine that we do to everything'.⁵⁶

The debate between Augustine and Felix continues on the basis of the *Fundamental Epistle*, whose reading continues at the former's request, up to the point where we encounter the aggressive will of the darkness aimed against the divine world. The 'Father of the Most Blessed Light', however, has foreknowledge of this and plans to send a powerful *numen* to fight it. We thus see a new, precious fragment of the Manichaean work⁵⁷ which introduces the 'middle time', in which the struggle between the two kingdoms begins and the mixture of the substances takes place.

⁵³ C. Fel. 1, 18.

⁵⁴ *Psalm of Wanderers* ed. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 136, 13–140, 53; trans. Villey, *Psaumes des errants*, 63–70.

⁵⁵ *Psalm of the Bema* 223 ed. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 9, 12–16. On the various denominations of this entity in the Coptic texts, see P. Van Lindt, *The Names of Manichaean Mythological Figures. A Comparative Study on Terminology in the Coptic Sources* (Wiesbaden 1992) 31 ff.

⁵⁶ C. Faust. 20, 2.

⁵⁷ Fr. 7 ed. E. Feldmann, *Die 'Epistula Fundamenti' der nordafrikanischen Manichäer. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion*, Altenberge 1987.

At this point of the debate there arises what is for Augustine the central issue, and from this moment on, he will constantly press his adversary on the matter. This is the so-called argument of Nebridius, constantly mentioned by Augustine in the anti-Manichaean polemic, which he considers the ace up his sleeve: how could the *gens tenebrarum* harm God? He argues that 'if in fact it could harm him, he was not incorruptible by nature: if however it could not, there was no reason at all for him to fight it, or to send the power mentioned.'⁵⁸

From this moment on, the entire discussion revolves around the issue of divine nature and the origin of evil, considered by the Manichaean doctor to be a substantial and independent principle of reality in a dualistic picture which contemplates the divine consubstantiality of the spiritual element of man, while the Catholic bishop presents a wide range of arguments to set forth the biblical notions of the absolute transcendence of the creator with respect to his creatures and their moral freedom. Although Felix constantly asks to have his books returned to him, so that he can better respond to Augustine's objections,⁵⁹ his arguments actually turn out to be founded entirely on the authority of the Gospels and Paul, rather than on the content of those books, which are in fact not given back to him, but which we may imagine he was extremely familiar with.

This is already demonstrated by the immediate response to Augustine's question, formulated before his request for an adjournment of the debate to allow him to put together a more reasoned defence. Felix in fact counters this question with his own, which casts doubt on the very substance and foundation of Christian faith: 'if nothing is against God—as is affirmed in Mani's writings, or there is another kingdom—then why was Christ sent to free us from the snare of this death? Whose is this snare and death? If God has no adversary, why have we been baptised? Why the Eucharist, why Christianity, if nothing is against God?'⁶⁰

His explicit desire to claim loyalty to Christian teaching is expressed in his self-definition attached to the document marking the conclusion of the first day: 'Felix christianus, cultor legis Manichaei',⁶¹ and will clearly emerge in the extensive exposition of dualistic theology he offers his listeners when the debate resumes, on 12 December.

⁵⁸ *C. Fel.* 1, 19.

⁵⁹ *C. Fel.* 2, 1.

⁶⁰ *C. Fel.* 1, 19.

⁶¹ *C. Fel.* 1, 20.

Starting with Mani's fundamental assumption, in other words the claim that there are two natures, good and evil respectively, Felix intends to demonstrate that what his master is accused of is clearly expressed in Jesus' revelation and confirmed by Paul. Weaving a close-knit fabric of Gospel quotes, taken in particular from the text of Matthew, that is confirmed as the basic document for the Manichaeans, and the texts of Paul, the Manichaean doctor outlines a clearly dualistic scenario. In an attempt to show that the Saviour's teaching affirms the existence of two principles of reality, Felix runs the gamut of Gospel texts, from the parable of the two trees (Mt 7, 17), (*auctoritas* par excellence for all dualist Christians, from the Gnostics to the Marcionites and Manichaeans) to that of the darnel in Mt 13, 27–28, and the large eschatological section of Matthew (25, 31–46) on which the Prophet of Babylon had built his vision of the end of time in the *Shaburagan*.⁶² If the two trees with their opposite fruits exemplified the two radically different natures, the 'enemy' who sows the darnel in the field in an attempt to suffocate the good seed must be an entity outside God.⁶³

Equally, the clear division between lambs and goats in the eschatological judgement⁶⁴ authorises us to accept the conclusion proposed by Mani: 'Hoc enim Manichaeus dicit, quia quos Christus damnat, ipsius non sunt.'⁶⁵ There follows a series of Pauline passages which confirm Felix's position,⁶⁶ leading him to confidently conclude: 'Ecce quid Apostolus dixit, ecce quid Evangelista: cum Manichaeus hoc asserat, quia est extraneus a Deo, qui contra Deum bellavit: sive quia Christus crucifixus

⁶² Cf. M. Hutter, 'Mt 25: 31–46 in der Deutung Manis', *Novum Testamentum* 33 (1991) 276–282; N.A. Pedersen, *Studies in The Sermon on the Great War. Investigations of a Manichaean-Coptic Text from the Fourth Century*, Aarhus 1996, 127–144.

⁶³ *C. Fel.* 2, 2: 'Manichaeus dicit duas esse naturas, et modo inde culpatur, quia dixit duas esse, bonam et malam. Christus in Evangelio duas dicit esse arbores: Arbor bona nunquam facit fructum malum, et arbor mala nunquam facit fructum bonum (Mt 7, 17). Ecce duas naturas. Deinde in Evangelio scriptum est: Numquid bonum semen seminasti in agro? Unde apparuerunt zizania? Hoc inimicus fecit (Mt. 13, 27–28). Iste inimicus si non est extraneus a Deo, probetur mihi: si ad Deum pertinet inimicus iste, quale semen seminavit?'

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*. A clear reference to the parable of the darnel is also found in the CMC 107, 1–108, 12 where we see Mani himself presented in the act of proclaiming before the synod of the Baptists a web of Gospel figures and notions at the basis of his dualistic doctrine. A new edition of this fundamental document, with an extensive introduction, commentary and updated bibliography, is proposed by L. Cirillo, 'La Vita di Mani. Il Codice greco di Colonia', in: G. Gnoli et al. (eds.), *Il manicheismo*, vol. I *Mani e il Manicheismo* (Milano 2003) 3–127.

⁶⁶ Rom 8,7; 2 Cor 4,4; 2 Cor 12,7–9.

est, sive quia Apostoli omnes propter Dei mandatum; iste qui eos crucifixit, cui mandatum Dei non placet; hoc mihi dicat Sanctitas tua, si ad Deum pertinet.⁶⁷ His firm belief in his dualistic faith allows him to overturn the situation, and, as already seen on many other occasions, to cast off his role as interrogee and become the interrogator. He thus asks the Bishop to resolve the problem of the origin and nature of the 'adversary' referred to in all the contexts mentioned, whose aggressive action has resulted in nothing less than the death of the Saviour and his apostles.

Augustine accepts the challenge and introduces the theme of free will linked to the notion of the non-substantiality of evil—issues he has extensively thrashed out in his long, difficult search for an answer to the unavoidable question of *unde malum*. While the motivations Augustine adduces here are well known,⁶⁸ we should note how he also chooses an extremely specific *ad hominem* argument to induce his adversary to acknowledge his own mistake. He in fact appeals to the very authority of Mani to demonstrate the effectiveness of human free will and thus deny the existence of a second, evil principle.⁶⁹ He in fact quotes a brief yet significant passage from that *Thesaurus* which he was so familiar with, which shows the final destiny of the reprobates, presented as 'those who by their own negligence have not allowed themselves to be cleansed from the stain of the spirit mentioned earlier and have failed to obey the divine commandments at all, and have refused to observe any further the law given them by their liberator, and have not governed themselves as was fitting'.⁷⁰

In the Prophet's words, Augustine sees the notion of human free will outlined, since those who did not observe the divine law 'did not want to' and were thus not subject to coercion by the *gens tenebrarum*. Naturally, in emphasizing this fact, Augustine fails to grasp the specific nature of the Manichaean position, which joins together, in a variously balanced dialectic, the two notions: first, the substantiality of evil, identified with matter and active above all in man's somatic dimension; second, the necessary commitment of the nature of light imprisoned in the body

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸ Cf. the arguments presented in Sfameni Gasparro, *Sant'Agostino. Polemica con i Manichei*, XXVI–XXXII.

⁶⁹ *C. Fel.* 2, 3: the faculty of free will may be demonstrated 'non solum in divinis Scripturis, quas non intelligitis, sed etiam in verbis ipsius Manichaei vestri.'

⁷⁰ *C. Fel.* 2, 5 transl. I.M.F. Gardner-S.N.C. Lieu (eds.), *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 2004, 159. The same passage is used, as coming from the second book of the *Thesaurus*, by Evodius, *De fide*, ed. I. Zycha 1892, 952, 22–27.

to procure, once illuminated by gnosis, the separation of the substances by means of strictly abstentionist conduct. The ontological and ethical dimensions are de facto brought together in the Manichaean vision, since the former is actually the essential basis for the latter, while the Augustinian notion, with its biblical foundations, excludes any ontological basis for evil.

A second witness to which the bishop appeals to prove his assertions is represented by one of the apocryphal texts which we know were extremely familiar to the Manichaeans with whom Augustine debated, although they did not adopt them as part of their own works or use them in public debates, aware of Catholic reservations about, if not downright condemnation of, this literature.⁷¹ The quotation used by Augustine, allegedly taken from the *Actus apostolorum* compiled by Leucius,⁷² has been recognised as probably coming from the *Acts of Andrew*.⁷³ What is interesting about Augustine's testimony, together with that of his friend Evodius,⁷⁴ is that it is the first of a series of sources which attribute this literature, very often presented in the form of a *corpus* of five Acts, to this unknown figure.⁷⁵

After these quotations, the bishop returns to discussing the theme of the divine nature, and once more poses the question: if nothing can harm it, why did it deliver a part of itself to be mixed with the demons? There follows a brief mention of the Manichaean myth of the struggle, the mixture of the substances and the purification of the light. According to the usual image, the sun is called the 'ship of light' home to a divine entity

⁷¹ See Sfameni Gasparro, *Sant'Agostino. Polemica con i Manichei* 72–81, regarding the *Contra Adimantum*.

⁷² *C. Fel.* 2, 6.

⁷³ J. Flamion, *Les Actes Apocryphes de l'Apôtre André. Les Actes d'André et de Mathias, de Pierre et d'André et les textes apparentés* (Paris-Bruxelles 1911) 188–190; E. Junod-J.-D. Kaestli, *L'histoire des Actes apocryphes des Apôtres du IIIe au IXe siècle: le cas des Actes de Jean* (Genève – Lausanne – Neuchâtel 1982) 64 f.; J.-M. Prieur, *Acta Andreae* (CC Series Apocryphorum 5–6), voll. 1–2 (Turnhout 1989), vol. 1, 25–28. On the use of the *Acts of Andrew* by the Manichaeans, cf. Prieur, *Acta Andreae*, vol. 1, 100–111.

⁷⁴ *De fide* 5 ed. I. Zycha 1892, 952, 16 f.: 'in actibus etiam conscriptis a Leucio, quos ipsi accipiunt, sic scriptum est.' The same passage quoted by Augustine follows. On Evodius's dependence on the Bishop of Hippo, which can evidently be seen in terms of the use of the *Epistula Fundamenti* and *Thesaurus*, see Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne*, vol. 1, 109 f.: vol. 2, 80 n. 14. Cf. Flamion, *Les Actes Apocryphes*, 177–190; Junod-Kaestli *L'histoire des Actes apocryphes*, 67–70. The Bishop of Uzalis knows the *Acts of Andrea* which he quotes in Chap. 38, where he attributes their authorship to Leucius.

⁷⁵ On the question of Leucius in the patristic tradition, cf. P. Alfarcic *Les écritures manichéennes*, (Paris 1918–1919), vol. 2, 191–192 and more extensively Junod-Kaestli, *L'histoire des Actes apocryphes*, 137–145.

which transforms its *virtutes* respectively into masculine and feminine to excite the lust of the demons, which are also male and female. There is a clear reference to the offensive myth of the seduction of the archons by the Third Ambassador, aimed at the issuing and liberating the luminous substance swallowed by the demonic powers of matter. This was set forth in detail in the *Thesaurus*, in the long passage quoted by Augustine himself in his *De natura boni*.⁷⁶

Confirming Augustine's full awareness of the Manichaean scheme of the 'three times' we hear him state that 'haec sunt media doctrinae vestrae,' since in fact the episode in question is one of the decisive events of the 'middle' age, that of the struggle and mixture but also, through the cosmogonic process, marks the beginning of the purification of the divine substance. The bishop, along the same lines, continues by introducing 'the end,' which will involve that which Augustine considers the extreme scandal, i.e. God's inability to purify all its contaminated nature. A portion of light will in fact remain eternally imprisoned in the darkness 'velut tectorium genti tenebrarum.'⁷⁷

Once more, there is introduced the theme of the eternal condemnation of some particles of light, which Augustine so often mentions to stress the logical absurdity of a doctrine which admits the 'damnation' of the very divine nature. Rather than contesting the correctness of the picture outlined in the words of his adversary, Felix once more stresses the notion whereby 'aliqua pars Dei quae se purgare non potuit, in globo ligata est.' He however does not understand the reasons for Augustine's criticism, but replies that this punishment is not more serious than that which Christ himself sentenced evil souls to, by assigning them to eternal fire.⁷⁸

In turn, Augustine takes up the theme of free will as a motivation for the punishment of evil beings who have sinned in free will, and stresses that the Manichaean doctrine of the struggle of the principles is incongruous, asking: 'Si Deo nocere nihil poterat, quare huc nos misit? Si nocere poterat, non est incorruptibilis Deus.'

By asking this question, Augustine makes a significant shift between the mythical-protological level of sending a 'power' to fight against the darkness, identifiable with the First Man, and the actual-existential level: why did God send 'us', in other words phenomenal men, to be prey to the darkness? In this way he shows he is fully aware of how meaningful

⁷⁶ *De natura boni* 44.

⁷⁷ *C. Fel.* 2, 7.

⁷⁸ *C. Fel.* 2, 8.

the Manichaeon 'myths' are as a basis and explanation of cosmic and human existence. In fact, the myth offers an exemplification of the human existential state.

For a similar parallelism, if not explicit identification, between the vicissitude of the *Anthropos* and that of the individual soul, we may mention, among the many examples, the instance found in one of the *Psalms to Christ*. Here, the believer asks Jesus for salvation and defines himself as 'the love (ἀγάπη) of the Father, being the clothes (στολή)' worn by Christ. He says he descended from the divine world when the evil cast his gaze upon it, gave himself to death and armed himself to fight. Victorious in the first battle, he was then bound to the flesh and forgot his divine origins, being prey to the enemy Powers. He thus asks for Jesus' help, and to be taken by him to the 'wedding chamber'.⁷⁹

Continuing to try and lend authority to his positions on the basis of Christian revelation and convinced that there is an essential continuity between such revelation and the Manichaean message, which actually reveals its true meaning, Felix objects: 'Si Deo nocere nihil poterat, quare huc Filium suum misit?' The central motif of Christian soteriology, in other words the coming to the world of the Son to save mankind, is thus assumed as an irrefutable expression of the need to fight against the mortiferous action of an 'enemy' perceived by the Manichaeans as an ontologically concrete and active principle. Naturally, Augustine rejects the objection, emphasising the difference between the Christian notion of the incarnation of the Son—the result of mercy and not of need, which implies the assumption of a real human nature for the redemption of sinners—and the Manichaean notion. This is vividly outlined in an effective formula which, albeit clearly polemic, highlights all its distinctive traits: 'Pars vero dei vestri, nulla carne assumpta (non enim erat in gente tenebrarum pro qua pateretur), descendit ut teneretur, ligaretur, pollueretur, et turpius quam ligabatur purgaretur'.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Ed. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 116, 24–117, 32. For the theme of the descent of the *Anthropos* and his function as 'saved saviour' in the mythical picture of the Call and Answer, as it is described in Theodorus bar Khonai, we may once again refer to the *Psalm of Heraclides* ed. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 197, 9–202, 26 which stresses the decisive importance of the sacrifice of Primordial Man to the darkness to save the divine world from its attack.

⁸⁰ *C. Fel.* 2, 9: '... Indeed, the part of your God, not assuming any flesh (in fact none was found in the people of the darkness for which he suffered), descended to be captured, bound, degraded, and more shamefully than he had been bound, purged'.

In this formula, which closely links the person of the Saviour to that of Primordial Man, the latter subjected to those events of imprisonment, contamination and purification referred to in Augustine's essential language, we clearly perceive the notion of the deep homogeneity of the divine substance, whereby all the figures acting in the cosmic scenario represent it in the same way. Above all it effectively exemplifies the meaning of Manichaeism 'docetism': the Saviour could not assume any bodily form because there is nothing to save in the material dimension, which is ontologically alien to him and dark-demonic. His activity was in fact exclusively aimed at illuminating the divine substance imprisoned in that dimension to lead it, through self-knowledge, to the world of light from which it had descended.

5. THE CONCLUSION OF THE DEBATE

The debate continues along the same lines in a sort of dialogue between the deaf, as each participant is set on stressing his own reasons: Augustine counters Manichaeism 'myths' with Christian truth, and Felix appeals to the New Testament texts as proof and foundation of his own dualistic faith. In conclusion to a convincing argument not without its own dialectic effectiveness,⁸¹ the Manichaean doctor, confirming his own conception of 'servitude' in which humanity found itself due to the work of a power 'outside' God and the need for liberation by Christ, quotes the Pauline text of Gal 3, 13 containing the reference to Deut 21, 23, which we know as the subject of an 'antithesis' by Adimantus: 'Apostolus dixit: Christus nos liberavit de maledicto Legis: quia scriptum est, Maledictus omnis qui pendet in ligno. Hoc enim Apostolus dicit. Si iste qui maledicit omnes qui pendent in ligno, Dei virtus est: Christus enim pependit in ligno, et Apostoli ipsius omnes qui addicti sunt pro ipsius praecepto; quis ergo iste est qui maledicit omnem qui pendet in ligno?'⁸²

The debate continues in this way, with Augustine insisting on the ethical nature of sin and on the value of redemption, with various references to the unconvincing nature of the Manichaean doctrine⁸³ and to

⁸¹ *C. Fel.* 2, 10.

⁸² *Ibidem*: 'The Apostle said: Christ freed us from the curse of the law, because it is written: Cursed be he who hangs from the wood. This in fact the Apostle says. If he who curses all those who hang from wood is the power of God (Christ in fact was hung from the wood and all his Apostles were condemned for his very teaching): who then is he who curses whoever is hung from wood?' Cf. *C. Adim.* 21 and Sfameni Gasparro, *Sant'Agostino. Polemica con i Manichei*, 49 f.

⁸³ *C. Fel.* 11. Again, *ibidem* § 15.

the notion of the final condemnation of a part of the divine substance.⁸⁴ The bishop plays on this issue, undermining the Manichaean god's inability to purify himself, meaning that the particles of light remain contaminated 'for eternity in the sphere of darkness.'⁸⁵ Felix replies by proposing the Manichaean notion whereby the event is seen as 'custody' rather than punishment. The elements of light could not be purified, Mani claims, 'they were not damned but placed there to guard that race of darkness.'⁸⁶

The last phase of the debate is entirely occupied by the question, raised by Augustine, of the divine consubstantiality of the soul. After a series of arguments by Felix, who aims to show that the very Christian notion of the soul as coming from God involves its profound solidarity with Him from whom it comes, of which Christ's salvific action is proof,⁸⁷ he is led by Augustine's pressing arguments to acknowledge that—according to the Manichaean creed—the soul is *pars Dei* (2, 18). Despite this, he insists that this notion can be found in Christian teaching itself. He concludes his speech with these statements, which reveal his unwavering attachment to Mani's message: 'Si nihil peccatum est, et anima ex Deo est, et polluta est, et venit Christus liberare eam, et eam liberavit a peccato, quid culpamus Manichaeum, qui dicit partem Dei pollutam esse, et iterum mundari?'⁸⁸

After this clear profession of Manichaean faith, the declaration of surrender by Felix would seem sudden and inexplicable, if it were to be interpreted as a capitulation before his adversary's reasoning and as an act of 'conversion'. As it is, the *Acta*, somewhat superficially, record many 'exchanges of opinions' between the two interlocutors ('... cum multis verbis inter se agerent') and then Felix's question: 'Dic iam tu, quid vis faciam?' This is the only way to bring an end to a debate which by now has shown itself to be a dead end in terms of ideological and religious reasoning, since neither participant is able to accept the other's views. Felix thus agrees to sign the anathema, specifying that it must be aimed

⁸⁴ *Ibidem* 2, 13.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem* 2, 15.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem* 2, 16: 'Hoc enim asseris tu, quia damnati sunt; sed Manichaeus hoc dicit, quia non damnati sunt, sed ad custodiam positi sunt illius gentis tenebrarum.'

⁸⁷ *Ibidem* 2, 17: 'Anima nostra ex Deo est, quae polluta est? Si non est ex deo, utquid pro illa Christus crucifixus est? Si ergo paret quia Christus propter animam nostram crucifixus est, paret quia ex Deo est, et polluta erat, et ipse eam mundavit.'

⁸⁸ *Ibidem* 2, 21: 'If nothing is the sin, and the soul is from God, and was soiled, and Christ came to free it, and freed it from sin, what fault can we give to Mani, who says that the part of God has been soiled, and has been once more purified?'

against 'the same spirit that was in Mani and which spoke through him' and asks Augustine to be the first to sign the same anathema.

Is this a last move by the *versutior* doctor to remind the Christian congregation filling the church of their bishop's Manichaean past? Augustine, however, is unperturbed, and says that he has already anathemised (*iam anathemavi*) the person of Mani, his doctrine and the false spirit which spoke in him.⁸⁹ This is followed by Felix's declaration, which accompanies the anathema and provides a brief summary of the main Manichaean doctrinal postulates, precisely those which the bishop had constantly contested during the debate and which most clearly mark the discrepancies between Catholic teaching and the dualistic message. It thus seems that while on the one hand the Manichaean doctor's act of surrender appears to be total, on the other, by completely accepting his adversary's arguments, which he had rejected right up to the end, it may be intended to be seen as an expedient to bring an end to a dispute in which he had not been moved to give up any of his convictions and in which he could thus not accept any bargaining or compromises. What we actually witness is a removal *en bloc*, formal and no longer debatable, of the entire doctrinal framework that his Catholic adversary had attempted to define. Moreover, it does not seem to make any mark on the real substance of the Manichaean faith as it was perceived by the *doctor* Felix, who defines his identity on the basis of his dual and, in his existential experience, perfectly compatible, qualities of *christianus* and *cultor legis Manichaei*.

⁸⁹ On this singular event and its motivations, see the observations of R. Lim, 'Manichaean and Public Disputation in Late Antiquity', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 26 (1992) 264 f.

PART FOUR

STUDIES IN 'OTHER GNOSTICISM':
GNOSTICISM AND 'APOCRYPHAL' TEXTS;
SOURCES OF (PS.) HIPPOLYTUS' *REFUTATIO*;
THE *GOSPEL OF JUDAS*;
MODERN YESIDI GNOSTICISM

CHAPTER THIRTY

„APOKRYPH GEWORDENE SCHRIFTEN“? GEDANKEN ZUM APOKRYPHENBEGRIFF BEI GROSSKIRCHLICHEN AUTOREN UND IN EINIGEN „GNOSTISCHEN“ TEXTEN

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Zu den interessantesten Paradigmenwechseln in der Erforschung altkirchlicher Literatur der vergangenen Jahrzehnte gehört die weitgehende Neubeurteilung der historischen, literarischen und theologischen Bedeutung ‚neutestamentlicher‘ oder im heutigen Sprachgebrauch wohl besser ‚christlicher Apokryphen‘.¹ Was noch vor wenigen Jahrzehnten als ein Seitenzweig christlicher Literatur dargestellt werden konnte, der, ‚einst kräftig und viele Blätter treibend, später allmählich verdorrt und abgefallen‘² sei, bzw. Texte, deren Entstehung sich aufgrund von ‚Wucherungen und Fehleinschätzungen, die teils der erzählerischen Phantasie, teils der Irrlehre entsprangen‘,³ erklären lasse, stellt sich heute als höchst differenziert zu beurteilende ‚Welt‘ von Literaturen dar, deren Wert für unser Verständnis des antiken Christentums je nach Text unterschiedlich beurteilt werden mag, die jedoch Pauschalurteile wie die soeben geäußerten keinesfalls mehr zulassen.

So ist es kein Wunder, dass neben einer Reihe bedeutender Projekte zur Neuedition oder Übersetzung wichtiger apokrypher Texte auch die

¹ Hierzu vgl. weiterführend auch meinen Beitrag T. Nicklas, „Écrits apocryphes chrétiens“. Ein Sammelband als Spiegel eines weitreichenden Paradigmenwechsel in der Apokryphenforschung, *VigChr* 61 (2007): 70–95 [dort auch weiterführende Literaturangaben].

² W. Michaelis, *Die apokryphen Schriften zum Neuen Testament* (Sammlung Dieterich 129; Bremen: Schönmeyer, 1958) xx. Ähnlich J.B. Bauer, *Die neutestamentlichen Apokryphen* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1968) 12–13: „... [D]urch nichts läßt sich die glückliche Hand der Kirche bei der Kanonabgrenzung, oder sagen wir es deutlicher: durch nichts läßt sich anschaulicher und überzeugender zeigen, daß die Kirche vom Geist bei dieser Tat geleitet war, als durch die Lektüre jener Schriften, die sie als apokryph abgetan hat.“

³ So J. Gnillka, *Jesus von Nazaret. Botschaft und Geschichte* (HThK-Sb 3; Freiburg – Basel – Wien: Herder, 1990) 25.

Frage nach der Definition des Begriffs ‚christlicher Apokryphen‘ wieder in den Blick rückte.⁴ Auch wenn es den Anschein hat, dass eine feste Definition im Sinne von ‚Abgrenzung‘ kaum möglich sein wird, sondern es nur um Annäherungen an den Begriff ‚christlicher Apokryphen‘ gehen kann, so sind diese Annäherungen gleichwohl für jegliche Hermeneutik des Umgangs mit den gemeinten Texten von nicht zu unterschätzender Bedeutung.

Ein geradezu genial einfacher und gerade deswegen wertvoller Gedanke geht auf Dieter Lührmann zurück, der in einigen wichtigen Publikationen jüngerer Datums den Begriff ‚apokryph‘ durch ‚apokryph geworden‘ ersetzt hat.⁵ Der Vorteil dieser Redeweise liegt auf der Hand: Wo historisch-kritisch der Blick auf die *Entstehungssituation* von Texten geworfen wird, von denen viele noch vor einer Verfestigung des neutestamentlichen Kanons verfasst wurden,⁶ sollten diese Texte, wenn ihre ursprüngliche Aussageabsicht bzw. ihr Platz in der Geschichte des Christentums und seiner Literatur beleuchtet wird, nicht zu schnell als ‚apokryph‘ abgetan werden, da dieses Label sich häufig erst späteren Urteilen über den Text verdankt. Wo dagegen von ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ Texten gesprochen wird, kann es gelingen, die Perspektivik der Untersuchung präziser in den Blick zu bringen: Was aus heutiger Sicht ‚apokryph‘ erscheint, mag sich aus der Perspektive der Autoren wie auch mancher früher Rezipienten des Textes ganz anders dargestellt haben. Die Beispiele liegen auf der Hand—erinnert sei nur an die Tatsache, dass etwa die griechische *Offenbarung des Petrus* noch durch Clemens von Alexandria als Teil seines Kanons kommentiert (vgl. Eusebius v. Caesarea, *h.e.*

⁴ Hierzu vgl. z. B. C. Marksches, „Neutestamentliche Apokryphen: Bemerkungen zu Geschichte und Zukunft einer von Edgar Hennecke im Jahr 1904 begründeten Quellensammlung,“ *Apocrypha* 9 (1998): 97–132; S.C. Mimouni, „Le concept d’apocryphité dans le Christianisme ancien et médiéval: Réflexions en guise d’introduction,“ *Apocryphité. Histoire d’un concept transversal aux religions du livre. En hommage à Pierre Geoltrain* (ed. S.C. Mimouni; BEHE.R 113; Turnhout: Brepols, 2002) 1–21, sowie T. Nicklas, „Semiotik—Intertextualität—Apokryphität: Eine Annäherung an den Begriff ‚christlicher Apokryphen,“ *Apocrypha* 17 (2006) 55–78.

⁵ Zu erinnern ist in diesem Zusammenhang einerseits an die Textausgabe D. Lührmann, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien* (MThSt 59; Marburg: N.G. Elwert, 2000), sowie die gesammelten Studien in Ders., *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien: Studien zu neuen Texten und zu neuen Fragen* (NovT.S 112; Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2004). Hier kann er parallel auch von ‚kanonisch gewordenen‘ (xi) Evangelien sprechen.

⁶ Einige Texte mögen zudem älter als manche Texte sein, die heute Teil des Kanons sind—zu erinnern ist in diesem Zusammenhang v.a. an das *Thomasevangelium*.

VI 14,1)⁷ und der 3. Korintherbrief bis ins Mittelalter hinein in der armenischen Kirche als Teil des Neuen Testaments akzeptiert wurde.⁸ Und umgekehrt gilt das Gleiche: Was heute (häufig mehr oder weniger selbstverständlich) als Teil des Kanons angesehen wird, galt nicht immer und überall als ‚apostolisch‘ und damit Wert, in den Kanon aufgenommen zu werden: Ich denke in diesem Zusammenhang etwa an die bekannten, z.T. enormen Widerstände gegen die Akzeptanz der Offenbarung des Johannes im Osten wie auch gegen den Hebräerbrief im Westen.

Ich möchte im Folgenden ein wenig auf der von Lührmann gelegten Spur weiter gehen und dabei eine Reihe von Ausdifferenzierungen vorschlagen, die den Wert der Gedanken Lührmanns nicht schmälern sollen, die Anwendung der Rede von ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ Schriften jedoch vielleicht noch einmal etwas ausdifferenzieren können. Dabei beginne ich mit einer Vorbemerkung zu verschiedenen Perspektiven auf den ‚Apokryphen‘-Begriff in der Antike und möchte im Anschluss daran an einigen Beispielen überlegen, wo die Rede von ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ Texten Sinn macht und wo man ihr vielleicht eine Rede von ‚als apokryph konzipierten‘ bzw. ‚apokryph gewollten‘ Texten an die Seite stellen könnte.

1. GEDANKEN ZUM BEGRIFF ‚APOKRYPH‘ BEI EINIGEN ALTKIRCHLICHEN AUTOREN

Besonders interessant im Zusammenhang mit der vorliegenden Problematik erscheint mir die Tatsache, dass der Begriff ‚apokryph‘ bereits in der Antike—je nach der Perspektive, aus der heraus er verwendet wurde—, mit positiven wie auch negativen Konnotationen behaftet sein konnte,⁹ ein Befund, der wissenschaftlich unvoreingenommene, vorurteilsfreie Untersuchungen von Apokryphen bis heute eher behindert

⁷ Vgl. hierzu ausführlicher T.J. Kraus/T. Nicklas (Hg.), *Das Petrus-evangelium und die Petrusapokalypse* (GCS NF 11; Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1; Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 2004) 89.

⁸ Zum 3. Korintherbrief einschlägig V. Hovhannessian, *Third Corinthians: Reclaiming Paul for Christian Orthodoxy* (Studies in Biblical Literature 18; New York et al.: P. Lang, 2000).

⁹ Im Ansatz ist dies ja im Grunde bis heute zu beobachten, wenn einerseits aus der Sicht mancher Autoren Apokryphen als weitgehend wertlose Schriften minderer Qualität dargestellt werden, andererseits Apokryphensammlungen unter reißerischen Titeln, die versprechen, hier werde die eigentliche Wahrheit über die Ursprünge des Christentums oder gar eine Art Gegenbibel oder Bibel der Häretiker geboten, bis heute hohen Absatz finden.

hat. Vielleicht zu lange nämlich wurde die neuzeitliche wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung mit christlichen Apokryphen bewusst wie unbewusst von einem Sprachgebrauch beeinflusst, der sich bereits bei einer Reihe von ‚großkirchlichen‘ (oder, um es in Anlehnung an Lührmann zu beschreiben: ‚großkirchlich gewordenen‘) Autoren findet: In diesem Zusammenhang ist etwa auf das *Fragmentum Muratori* zu verweisen, wo Texte wie der *Brief an die Laodicener* oder auch ein (heute nicht mehr erhaltener) *Brief an die Alexandriner* (Z. 63–64) als Fälschungen auf den Namen des Paulus, die für die Markioniten erstellt worden seien, abgelehnt werden.¹⁰ Bereits hier finden sich Linien angedeutet, die immer wieder begegnen: Bestimmte Texte, die wir auch heute als Apokryphen bezeichnen würden, werden von altkirchlichen Autoren als ‚unecht‘ (und damit nicht von ‚apostolischer Herkunft‘) gebrandmarkt und Verbindungen—sei es auf der Ebene der Entstehung oder sei es nur auf der der Verwendung—zu als häretisch angesehenen Gruppen hergestellt.

Dies bestätigt auch ein Blick in Irenäus von Lyons Abhandlung ‚Gegen die Häresien‘: In *haer.* 1,20 wirft Irenäus seinen gnostischen Gegnern vor, sie brächten ‚eine riesige Menge von apokryphen und gefälschten Schriften‘ (ἀμύθητον πλῆθος ἀποκρύφων καὶ νόθων γραφῶν)¹¹ daher, ‚die sie selbst fabriziert haben, um Eindruck zu machen auf die Unverständigen und auf die, die die Schriften der Wahrheit nicht kennen‘ (1,20,1). Und etwas später heißt es, die Gegner ‚modelten‘ zumindest einiges ‚von dem, was im Evangelium steht‘, ‚zu einem solchen Abbild um‘ (1,20,2), d. h. veränderten dessen ursprüngliche Aussageabsicht. Daran zeigt sich erneut die Idee, ‚Apokryphen‘ seien von ‚Häretikern‘ gefälschte Schriften, denen bereits eine Art ‚Kanon‘ von ‚Schriften der Wahrheit‘ gegenüber gestellt werden kann. Diese Fälschungen wiederum seien zum Zwecke der Täuschung entstanden, wie Irenäus anhand einer ganzen Reihe von Beispielen zu zeigen sucht. Zumindest im Ansatz enthüllt Irenäus’ Text aber auch etwas vom Selbstverständnis zumindest mancher der gegnerischen Schriften. Er schreibt (1,20,1):

¹⁰ Zur formalen Beurteilung und historischen Einordnung dieses Textes vgl. J.-D. Kaestli, ‚La place du *Fragment de Muratori* dans l’histoire du canon. À propos de la thèse de Sundberg et Hahneman,‘ *CrSt* 15 (1994) 609–634, sowie (ausführlich und überzeugend) J. Verheyden, ‚The Canon Muratori: A Matter of Dispute,‘ *The Biblical Canons* (ed. J.-M. Auwers / H.-J. de Jonge; BETL 163; Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 487–556.

¹¹ Zitate und Übersetzungen aus dem 1. Buch ‚Gegen die Häresien‘ des Irenäus von Lyon nach N. Brox, *Irenäus von Lyon: Epideixis. Adversus Haereses. Darlegung des Apostologischen Verkündigung. Gegen die Häresien I* (FC I; Freiburg et al.: Herder, 1993).

Mit derselben Absicht ziehen sie gefälschte Geschichten heran wie die folgende: Als der Herr noch ein Kind war und die Buchstaben lernte, sagte der Lehrer zu ihm im gewohnten Unterrichtsstil: ‚Sag Alpha!‘ Da hat er Alpha geantwortet. Als der Lehrer ihn dann aufforderte, Beta zu sagen, da hat der Herr geantwortet: ‚Sag du mir zuerst, was das Alpha bedeutet, dann sage ich dir, was das Beta ist.‘ Und das deuten sie dahin, dass nur er allein das Unbekannte wusste und es unter der Gestalt des Buchstabens Alpha offenbarte.

Interessant an dieser Passage ist nicht nur die kurze, wohl auf eine Fassung der *Kindheitsgeschichte des Thomas* zurückgehende zitierte Szene,¹² sondern die Schlussnotiz des Irenäus, die im Ansatz etwas von der Perspektive der Gegner auf die entsprechende Schrift enthüllt: Diese sehen bereits im Kind Jesus einen, der Kenntnis des Unbekannten hat und der diese Kenntnis auf geheimnisvolle, nicht allen verstehbare Weise offenbart. Verstanden sie die von Irenäus als ‚apokryph‘ bezeichneten Bücher auch als ‚Offenbarungen‘ besonderer Geheimnisse? Dies würde sich zumindest mit einer anderen Perspektive auf den Begriff ‚apokryph‘ berühren: Das Wort ἀπόκρυφος bedeutet in der antiken griechischen Literatur ja zunächst einmal ‚geheim, verborgen‘.¹³ In der griechischen Bibel begegnet es mehrfach im Zusammenhang mit der Rede von verborgenen Schätzen, so etwa in der Theodotion-Fassung des Danielbuches (Dan 11,43 Θ) oder in 1 Makk 1,23. Ein daran angelehnter Sprachgebrauch findet sich in Kol 2,2–3: Dort ist von Christus als dem Mysterium Gottes (2,2), die Rede, ‚in dem alle Schätze der Weisheit und der Erkenntnis *verborgen* (ἀπόκρυφοι)‘ seien. Gewendet kann daraus natürlich gefolgert werden, dass wahre Erkenntnis, d. h. ‚Gnosis‘,¹⁴ nicht offen zugänglich, sondern nur im Verborgenen, Geheimen zu finden ist.

Die angedeuteten Perspektiven lassen sich auch in weiteren Texten erkennen: So schreibt etwa Hippolyt, *haer.* 7,20 in dem Abschnitt über Basilides, dieser wie auch sein Sohn und Schüler Isidoros behaupteten, Matthias habe ihnen ‚apokryphe‘, d. h. ‚geheime‘ Lehren mitgeteilt, die Letzterer vom Heiland selbst in einer Art Privatoffenbarung erfahren habe.¹⁵ Hippolyt lehnt diese Lehren natürlich ab, gibt gleichzeitig aber

¹² So auch N. Brox, *Irenäus I*, 272 n. 83.

¹³ Eine Vielzahl von Belegen bietet das Lexikon von Liddell-Scott-Jones.

¹⁴ Dass der Kolosserbrief diesen Begriff natürlich noch nicht im späteren häresiologischen Sinne verwendet, ist klar. Und trotzdem kann solche Rede sich in den Augen späterer Leser durchaus so verstanden haben.

¹⁵ Text GCS 1/3: Βασιλείδης τοίνυν καὶ Ἰσίδωρος ὁ Βασιλείδου παῖς γνήσιος καὶ μαθητὴς, φησὶν εἰρηκέναι Ματθίαν αὐτοῖς λόγους ἀποκρύφους, οὓς ἤκουσε παρὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος κατ’ ἰδίαν διδασχθεῖς ...

einen Blick frei auf deren Verständnis unter den Anhängern des Basilides und Isidoros.¹⁶ ‚Apokryph‘ sind aus dieser Sicht Lehren, die durch Sonderoffenbarung mitgeteilt wurden und nicht jedermann zugänglich sind.

Aufschlussreich in diesem Zusammenhang sind schließlich auch einige Aussagen bei Clemens von Alexandrien. Dieser bespricht in *str.* 1,69,6 die Schriften des Pythagoras, des Plato und des Demokrit. Über Letzteren schreibt er, dieser sei in Babylonien, Persien und Ägypten gewesen und habe dort bei Magiern und Priestern gelernt. Von hier aus kommt er etwas unvermittelt wieder auf Pythagoras zu sprechen: ‚Dem Zoroaster aber, dem persischen Magier, eiferte Pythagoras nach, und die Anhänger der Häresie des Prodikos rühmen sich, ‚*apokryphe*‘ Bücher (βίβλους ἀποκρύφους) dieses Mannes zu besitzen.‘¹⁷ Auch aus der Sicht der Gruppe des zuletzt genannten Prodikos¹⁸ also ist man offensichtlich stolz darauf, Bücher zu besitzen, deren Inhalt auf eine große Gestalt der Vergangenheit zurückgeht, die sich (angebliches) Geheimwissen angeeignet hat. Während also das Wort ‚apokryph‘ im Munde altkirchlicher Häresiologen meist die Konnotation von ‚gefälscht‘, ‚wertlos‘ bzw. ‚zur Täuschung anderer fabriziert‘ trägt,¹⁹ kann der gleiche Begriff in der Gegenperspektive den Eindruck vermitteln, man habe über ‚apokryphe Schriften‘ Zugang zu geheimem Elitewissen.

Eine derartige Differenzierung taucht nicht nur hier auf—sie findet sich bereits in frühjüdischer apokalyptischer Literatur: Zu erinnern ist in diesem Zusammenhang z. B. an die siebte Vision des 4. Buches Esra (Kapitel 14 der Vulgata-Version),²⁰ das bereits in seiner Rückschau auf

¹⁶ Vgl. ähnlich auch Tertullian, *resurr.* 63, der von den ‚geheimen Lehren der Apokryphen‘ schreibt und diese gleichzeitig als Gotteslästerungen bezeichnet.

¹⁷ Übersetzung von mir—Griechisches Original nach GCS 52.

¹⁸ Zur Gestalt des Prodikos vgl. auch Clemens’ Aussagen in *str.* 3,30; 7,41,1; 7,103,6.

¹⁹ Vgl. auch—besonders deutlich—*Const. Apost.* 6,16,3, wo von βιβλία ἀπόκρυφα φθοροποιὰ καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐχθρά die Rede ist. Ähnlich auch Cyrill von Jerusalem, *catech.* 4,35–36, der in seinen Taufkatechesen eindringlich vor der Lektüre—öffentlich wie privat—vor Apokryphen warnt, seien sie nun auf das Alte oder das Neue Testament bezogen.

²⁰ 4 Esra dürfte gegen Ende des 1. Jahrhunderts unserer Zeitrechnung als Reaktion auf die Zerstörung des Tempels am Ende des Jüdischen Kriegs entstanden sein. Meist wird vermutet, dass der Verfasser pharisäischen Kreisen entstammt. Zu entscheidenden Einleitungsfragen vgl. M.E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 1–9; A.-M. Denis, *Introduction à la littérature religieuse judéo-hellenistique I* (Pseudépi-graphes de l’Ancien Testament; Turnhout: Brepols 2000) 815–853; G.S. Oegema, *Apokalypten* (JSHRZ VI.1.5; Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 2001) 94–115.

die Sinaioffenbarung zwischen zwei Teilen der Offenbarung Gottes an Mose unterscheidet. So findet sich in 4 Esra 14,4b–6 folgende Gottesrede:²¹

Ich behielt ihn [Mose] bei mir viele Tage lang, teilte ihm viele wunderbare Dinge mit und zeigt ihm die Geheimnisse der Zeiten und das Ende der Zeiten. Ich habe ihm befohlen und gesagt: Diese Worte sollst du veröffentlichen und jene geheim halten.

Als Esra etwas später darum bittet, das beim Brand Jerusalems verlorene Gesetz niederschreiben zu dürfen, „damit die Menschen den Weg finden können und die, welche leben wollen, in der Endzeit das Leben erlangen“ (14,22), willigt Gott ein, Esra die notwendige Einsicht zu verleihen und die Offenbarung mit Hilfe von fünf Schreibern aufzeichnen zu lassen. Esra tut, wie Gott ihm befohlen hat, und diktiert, erfüllt von der Weisheit Gottes, vierzig Tage lang fünf ausgewählten Schreibern, die in ihnen unbekannten Zeichen das Gesagte niederlegen, insgesamt 94 Bücher. Der Text fährt fort (14,45–47a):

Als die vierzig Tage zu Ende waren, redete der Höchste mit mir und sagte: Die ersten Bücher, die du geschrieben hast, leg offen hin. Würdige und Unwürdige mögen sie lesen. Die letzten siebzig aber sollst du verwahren, um sie den Weisen aus deinem Volk zu übergeben. Denn in ihnen fließt die Quellader der Einsicht, die Quelle der Weisheit und der Strom des Wissens.

4 Esra unterscheidet also—wohl in Anlehnung an Dtn 29,28—zwischen allen Menschen zugänglich zu machenden Offenbarungen einerseits und andererseits *geheimen* Offenbarungen, die nur wenigen auserwählten Weisen zu übergeben seien und die keinem Unwürdigen in die Hände fallen dürfen. Damit wird natürlich auch ein Qualitätsurteil abgegeben, das aus dem Gegenüber von ‚offen zugänglich‘ und ‚verborgen‘ lebt. Diesem Begriffspaar korrespondiert auch das Zueinander von ‚allen, d. h. auch den Unwürdigen zugänglich‘ einerseits und ‚nur für elitäre Kreise bestimmt‘ andererseits. Mit der ersten Gruppe aber meint 4 Esra ganz offensichtlich die in der Zeit der Entstehung des Buches am Ende des 1. Jahrhunderts unserer Zeitrechnung mehr oder weniger eindeutig als ‚kanonisch‘ anerkannten Schriften des Judentums.²² Die darüber hinaus

²¹ Zu den im Folgenden zitierten Übersetzungen aus 4 Esra vgl. J. Schreiner, *4 Esra* (JSRZ 5.4; Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 1981).

²² Zur Bedeutung von 4 Esra für die Erforschung alttestamentlicher Kanongeschichte vgl. D.J. Harrington, ‚The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha in the Early Church and Today,‘ *The Canon Debate* (ed. L.M. McDonald/J.A. Sanders; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002) 196–210, hier 198.

gehenden *geheimen* Schriften wiederum wären falsch beurteilt, wollte man ihnen unterstellen, sie würden nun ebenfalls den Anspruch erheben, Teil dieses ‚Kanons‘ zu werden oder—genauer—nun auch in den Kanon der Schriften aufgenommen zu werden, die wir heute Altes Testament oder ‚Bibel‘ nennen würden. Die genannten Texte zielen ja gerade nicht darauf, Teil eines allgemein anerkannten und zugänglichen Corpus von Schriften zu sein—vielmehr fühlen sie sich den Schriften des entstehenden (bzw. zumindest im Ansatz bereits entstandenen) Kanons überlegen. In ihnen findet eine sich als ‚Elite‘ verstehende Gruppe Geheimwissen, das in den offen zugänglichen Schriften des Kanons nicht zu entdecken ist.

Die sich mit dem Begriff ‚apokryph‘ verbindenden Konnotationen hängen also bereits in der Antike mit der Perspektive, aus der heraus gesprochen wird, zusammen: Wird ein Text deswegen als ‚apokryph‘ bezeichnet, weil er von Gegnern der mit dem Text verknüpften Lehre verwendet wird, so verbindet sich mit der Ablehnung der gegnerischen Lehre (und ihrer Vertreter) auch eine Ablehnung ihrer Schriften. Aus einer (ablehnenden) *Außenperspektive* heraus kommend werden Schriften in solchen Zusammenhängen als ‚apokryph‘ bezeichnet—gemeint ist damit meist, dass es sich um gefälschte Texte handle, in denen eine von der eigenen abweichende Lehre vertreten wird.

Aus der *Innenperspektive* von Gruppen mit (im Detail sicherlich unterschiedlich zu definierenden) elitärem Anspruch kann ‚apokryph‘ dagegen ‚geheim‘ in einem ganz positiven Sinne bedeuten. Gemeint sind dann Texte mit einem besonderen, gegenüber kanonischen Schriften überlegenen Anspruch auf Autorität. Schriften, die aus sich heraus einen derartigen Anspruch erkennen lassen, als ‚apokryph gewordene‘ Schriften zu bezeichnen, macht dann aber keinen Sinn: Diese Texte *wollen* apokryph sein bzw. sind bereits als ‚Apokryphen‘—in einem positiv verstandenen Sinn des Wortes—konzipiert.

Dieser Gedanke sei an einigen Beispielen genauer illustriert:

2. EINIGE FOLGERUNGEN IM HINBLICK AUF WICHTIGE FRÜHCHRISTLICHE LITERATUR

2.1. *Apokryph gewordene Schriften*

Recht eindeutig sieht die Situation im Falle des *Petrusevangeliums* aus: Soweit uns aus den heute zugänglichen Fragmenten des Textes nachvollziehbar ist, stellt dieser Text an keiner Stelle den Anspruch, ‚geheimes‘ Wissen zu offenbaren, das nur einer Elite besonders ‚Weiser‘ oder

eventuell ‚Eingeweihter‘ zugänglich gemacht werden dürfe. Trotzdem erhebt der Text ganz offensichtlich einen hohen Anspruch auf Autorität, indem er sich spätestens ab V. 60 als von Petrus selbst erzählt darstellt. Bedenkt man zudem, dass der erhaltene Text des EvPetr mit größter Wahrscheinlichkeit als von den (heute) kanonischen Evangelien literarisch abhängig zu betrachten ist,²³ so ergibt sich, dass das EvPetr wohl in einer Zeit entstand, in dem einerseits bereits bekannte Evangelien vorliegen, die (zumindest in weiten Kreisen) bereits eine gewisse Anerkennung genossen haben, so dass sie offensichtlich nicht mehr völlig verdrängt werden können. Andererseits aber kann noch kein so festgefügtter Vierevangelienkanon vorgelegen haben, dass für ein neues Evangelium gar keine Chance mehr bestand, noch allgemein anerkannt zu werden.²⁴ Das EvPetr scheint also tatsächlich mit dem Anspruch verfasst worden zu sein, *bei einem breiten christlichen Publikum* als autoritativer Text gelesen zu werden, ein Anspruch, den der Text trotz einiger weniger Zeugnisse seiner Rezeption bis ins spätantike Ägypten hinein nicht durchsetzen konnte.²⁵ Ob daran alleine oder maßgeblich das bekannte Urteil des Serapion von Antiochien (bei Eusebius von Caesarea, *h.e.* VI, 12,1–6),²⁶ der den Text wegen seiner Verwendung in doketischen Kreisen ablehnte, Schuld war oder ob der Text einfach zu wenig verbreitet oder zu spät entstanden war, um noch ‚kanonisch zu werden‘, lässt sich heute nicht mehr sicher entscheiden. In jedem Falle aber kann das *Petrusevangelium* mit Fug und Recht als ‚apokryph geworden‘ bezeichnet werden, handelt es sich ja um einen Text, der keineswegs als ‚apokryph‘ produziert, aber aufgrund eines Urteils *von außen*, z.T. wohl aufgrund seiner

²³ Vgl. hierzu u.a. T. Nicklas, ‚Das Petrus-evangelium im Rahmen der antiken Jesus-überlieferung,‘ *Jesus in apokryphen Überlieferungen des antiken Christentums* (ed. J. Frey / J. Schröter; WUNT 254; Tübingen: Mohr, 2010) 223–252.

²⁴ Die Datierungen des Textes schwanken. Auch wenn das vorliegende Fragment des Akhmim-Codex an der einen oder anderen Stelle aufgrund von Eingriffen späterer Abschreiber verändert worden sein dürfte, spricht m. E. alles dafür, den Text in die Mitte des 2. Jahrhunderts einzuordnen.

²⁵ Zur Rezeption des EvPetr in der altkirchlichen Literatur vgl. v.a. M. Meiser, ‚Das Petrus-evangelium und die spätere großkirchliche Literatur,‘ *Das Evangelium nach Petrus: Text, Kontexte, Intertexte* (ed. T.J. Kraus / T. Nicklas; TU 158; Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 2007) 183–196. — Zur möglichen Rezeption des Textes in dem späten Ostrakon *Van Haelst* 741 vgl. D. Lührmann, ‚Petrus als Evangelist — ein bemerkenswertes Ostrakon,‘ *NovT* 43 (2001) 348–367, sowie T.J. Kraus, ‚Petrus und das Ostrakon *van Haelst* 741,‘ *ZAC* 7 (2003) 203–211.

²⁶ Hierzu weiterführend v.a. É. Junod, ‚Eusèbe de Césarée, Sérapion d’Antioche et l’Évangile de Pierre. D’un évangile à un pseudépigraphe,‘ *RSLR* 24 (1988) 3–16, sowie knapp T.J. Kraus / T. Nicklas, *Das Petrus-evangelium* (2004) 12–16.

Verwendung durch Doketen, von einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt an als ‚apokryph‘ im negativen Sinne angesehen wurde. Recht ähnlich, wenn auch vielleicht in Nuancen unterschiedlich, gestaltet sich die Situation bei einigen anderen Texten. Deutlicher als im Falle des *Petrusevangeliums* wird das Ringen um kanonische Anerkennung bei der oben bereits knapp erwähnten griechischen *Offenbarung des Petrus*, die laut *muratorischem Fragment* in der katholischen Kirche als ‚angenommen‘, wenn auch nicht unumstritten galt, die von Autoren wie Clemens von Alexandrien oder Methodius von Olymp als Teil ihres jeweiligen Kanons angesehen wurde und nach Sozomenos noch im 5. Jahrhundert in den Karfreitagsliturgien einiger Kirchen Palästinas auftauchte, sich letztlich aber nicht durchsetzte.²⁷ Gerade hier zeigt sich *auch*, dass die Rede davon, ob ein Text ‚apokryph geworden‘ ist, eine längere Entwicklung, ein Ringen um seine kanonische Geltung umfassen kann, deren Ausgang zumindest in manchen zeitlichen Phasen wie auch unterschiedlichen Gruppen des frühen Christentums keineswegs immer klar gewesen ist. Doch auch der umgekehrte Fall ist bekannt—Texte wie die *Offenbarung des Johannes* oder der *Hebräerbrief*, im Ansatz auch *Judasbrief* und *2. Petrusbrief*, die sich erst nach erheblichen, in einzelnen Teilkirchen unterschiedlich schweren Widerständen durchsetzten.²⁸ In allen genannten Fällen ist die Rede von (in langen, meist nur zum Teil rekonstruierbaren Prozessen) ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ wie ‚kanonisch gewordenen‘ Texten überaus sinnvoll.

Nur wenig lässt sich über eine Rezeptionsgeschichte des ‚*unbekannten Evangeliums auf P.Egerton 2*‘ und damit über die Gründe, warum dieser Text nicht in den Kanon eines Neuen Testaments aufgenommen, aussagen.²⁹ Die erhaltenen Fragmente zeigen zwar eine klare Nähe zur Form

²⁷ Weiterführend T.J. Kraus/T. Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium* (2004), 87–99. Mit den dort genannten Texten sind bei weitem noch nicht alle Zeugnisse einer *möglichen* altkirchlichen Rezeption der *Offenbarung des Petrus* zusammengestellt, sondern nur diejenigen, die explizit diesen Text erwähnen.

²⁸ Zu einem nach Regionen differenzierten Bild der Kanonwerdung vgl. v.a. das klassische Werk von B.M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament. Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford et al.: OUP, ²1997).

²⁹ Kein einziger altkirchlicher Autor scheint sich erkennbar zumindest auf die erhaltenen Fragmente dieses Textes zu beziehen. Einziges Zeugnis seiner Existenz sind im Grunde P.Egerton 2 + P.Köln 255, die konkreten Textzeugnisse. Zu deren Einordnung weiterführend und zu den folgenden einleitenden Bemerkungen weiterführend vgl. T. Nicklas, *„The „Unknown Gospel“ on Papyrus Egerton 2 (+ Papyrus Cologne 255),“ Gospel Fragments* (ed. T.J. Kraus/M. Kruger/T. Nicklas; Oxford Early Christian Gospel Texts; Oxford et al.: OUP, 2009) 11–120. Spezieller zum Kanonbezug des Textes vgl. T. Nicklas, *„Das „unbekannte Evangelium“ auf P.Egerton 2 und die „Schrift“, SNTU.A 33 (2008) 41–65.*

der synoptischen Evangelien und scheinen auch literarisch in Details vor allem vom Johannesevangelium beeinflusst, sie lassen zwar keinen ganz eindeutigen Anspruch des Textes erkennen, als Teil eines (womöglich) im Entstehen begriffenen ‚neutestamentlichen‘ Kanons aufgenommen zu werden, noch weniger aber sich als Text verstehen, der einer Elite geheimes Insiderwissen vermittelt. Obwohl aus der gesamten Alten Kirche kein Beleg erhalten ist, der diesen Text als ‚apokryph‘ ablehnt, würde ich auch hier von einem ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ Text sprechen, weil dieser Text zumindest an keiner erhaltenen Stelle den Anspruch erhebt, als ‚apokryph‘ konzipiert zu sein und weil wir ihn spätestens aus heutiger Sicht als ‚apokryph‘ bezeichnen würden.

2.2. Als ‚apokryph konzipierte‘ Texte

Damit aber ist ein Phänomen, das bisher m.W. in der Rede von ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ Schriften nicht bedacht wurde, angesprochen: Wie oben bereits angedeutet, scheint es auch Schriften zu geben, die bewusst als ‚apokryph konzipiert‘ wurden. Der Begriff ‚apokryph‘ hat dann aber nicht den negativen Beigeschmack wie im Munde altkirchlicher Häresiology, sondern steht für die oben beschriebene zweite Perspektive besonderer Wertschätzung, die bestimmten Texten entgegengebracht werden soll. Hierzu einige Beispiele:

Aufgrund der derzeitigen Diskussion um seine Bedeutung für die Rückfrage nach dem historischen Jesus wurde das *Thomasevangelium* in den vergangenen Jahren v.a. von amerikanischen Exegeten immer wieder als ‚Fifth Gospel‘ bezeichnet und dabei mehr oder weniger deutlich eine Aufnahme dieses Textes in den neutestamentlichen Kanon gefordert.³⁰ Damit aber wird man der Intention dieses Textes m. E. nicht gerecht, wie ein Blick in sein Proömium verrät:

NHC II,2 p. 32,10–12

ΝΑΓΙ ΝΕ ΝΨΑΧΕ ΕΘΗΠ ΕΝΤΑ ΙC ΕΤΟΝΖ ΧΟΟΥ

ΑΥΘ ΑΡCΖΑΙCΟΥ ΝΘΙ ΔΙΔΥΜΟC ΙΟΥΔΑC ΘΩΜΑC

Dies sind die geheimen Worte, die Jesus, der Lebendige gesagt hat und die Didymus Judas Thomas aufgeschrieben hat ...

³⁰ Besonders weit geht R.W. Funk, ‚The Once and Future New Testament,‘ *Canon Debate*, 541–557. Vgl. aber auch die bereits im Titel gezeigte kanonkritische Note bei J.D. Crossan, *Four Other Gospels. Shadows on the Contours of Canon* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985).

P.Oxy. 654, Z. 1–3

οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι οἱ [ἀποκρύφου οὗς ἐλά]λησεν Ἰησοῦς ὁ ζῶν κ[αὶ
ἔγραψεν Ἰούδας ὁ] καὶ Θωμᾶ<ς>

Dies sind die geheimen Worte, die Jesus, der Lebendige, gesagt hat und
die Judas, der auch Thomas (heißt), aufgeschrieben hat ...

Auch wenn das Wort ἀποκρύφου im griechischen Fragment vollständig ergänzt ist, seine Rückübersetzung aus dem Koptischen kann als sicher gelten. Der Text macht damit eine Aussage über sich selbst: Was nun folgt, sind ‚geheime‘ Worte des (wie auch immer) als ‚lebendig‘ zu verstehenden Jesus, die dieser dem Judas Thomas anvertraut hat. Der zweite, direkt darauf folgende Satz des Textes—ob er als die erste Aussage Jesu oder des fiktiven Autors zu verstehen ist, ist nicht zu entscheiden—unterstützt dieses Textverständnis: ‚Wer die Deutung (ἐρμηνεία) dieser Worte findet, wird den Tod nicht schmecken.‘³¹ Der Text selbst also bietet keine ‚Deutung‘ der folgenden Jesusworte, diese muss vielmehr erst ‚gesucht‘ (vgl. auch EvThom 2) und kann offensichtlich nicht von jedermann gefunden werden.

Der folgende Text des *Thomasevangeliums* wiederum zeigt keinen in sich nachvollziehbaren strukturierten Gesamtaufbau, auch wenn bestimmte Abschnitte formal oder aufgrund von Stichwortverbindungen zu kleinen Clustern zusammengefasst werden können.³² Dies muss nicht unbedingt, wie manchmal vermutet, Zeichen eines hohen Alters dieses Textes sein,³³ sondern kann eventuell auch dahingehend interpretiert werden, dass dieser Text sich auch aufgrund seiner für den Nicht-Eingeweihten kaum fassbaren Form, die die Deutung zumindest einiger Logien enorm erschwert, allzu direkter Interpretation sperrt. So würde ich das Thomasevangelium aufgrund des in seinem Proömium zum Ausdruck gebrachten Selbstverständnisses nicht als ‚apokryph geworden‘ Text verstehen. Zumindest die uns heute überlieferten Textformen

³¹ Übersetzung nach J. Schröter / H.-G. Bethge, ‚Das Evangelium nach Thomas (NHC II,2)‘, *Nag Hammadi Deutsch: 1. Band: NHC I,1–V,1* (ed. H.-M. Schenke / H.-G. Bethge / U.U. Kaiser; GCS NF 8; Koptisch-Gnostische Schriften II; Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 2001) 151–213, hier 164.

³² Zur literarischen Eigenart des Textes vgl. weiterführend u. a. U.-K. Plisch, *The Gospel of Thomas. Original Text with Commentary* (Stuttgart: Bibelgesellschaft, 2008) 22–30.

³³ Für Frühdatierungen votieren z. B. H. Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels. Their History and Development* (Harrisburg: Trinity, 1990) 86–95, sowie S.J. Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus* (Sonoma: Polebridge, 1993).—Damit seien die Argumente der genannten Autoren keineswegs pauschal als falsch abgeurteilt: auch ich halte es durchaus für wahrscheinlich, dass das ThomEv einen Kern sehr alter Texte beinhaltet.

machen vielmehr den Eindruck, dass es sich hier um einen ‚apokryph gewollten‘ oder, vielleicht schöner, als im positivsten Sinne des Wortes ‚apokryph konzipierten‘ Text handelt.

Ein ganz ähnlicher Fall scheint mir auch beim *Judasevangelium* vorzuliegen. Auch wenn bereits Irenäus von Lyon, *haer.* 1,31,1 (vgl. auch Theodoret von Cyrus *haer.* 1,15; Epiphanius von Salamis *haer.* 38,1,5) diesen Text erwähnt und ohne Zögern ablehnt, wäre es m. E. ein Irrtum zu glauben, dass in erster Linie das Urteil altkirchlicher Autoren wie Irenäus dazu geführt habe, dass dieser Text nicht Teil eines (wie auch immer konkret gearteten) neutestamentlichen Kanons wurde. Erneut sind bereits die ersten Worte des Textes aufschlussreich:³⁴

ΛΟΓΟΣ[Σ] ΕΤΖΗΠ' ΝΤΑΠΟΦΑΣΙΣ ...

Wie auch immer diese Passage im Detail zu übersetzen ist,³⁵ eines ist klar: Der ‚Logos‘, auf den verwiesen wird, ist als ‚geheim‘ verstanden—mit größter Wahrscheinlichkeit ist davon auszugehen, dass die griechische Vorlage des uns heute überlieferten Textes das Wort ἀπόκρυφος enthielt. Aber auch die Inhalte des Textes legen nahe, dass hier keineswegs ein Text vorliegt, der eine Stellung beansprucht, die anderen—kanonisch gewordenen—gleichzustellen ist. Völlig unabhängig davon, ob der Judas des *Judasevangeliums* nun als Held oder vollkommen negativ angesehen werden muss,³⁶ liegt hier ein Text vor, der in solch überdeutlicher Weise gegen Autoritäten, Riten und Glaubensvorstellungen wie auch

³⁴ Text nach der kritischen Ausgabe, aber ohne die entsprechenden Klammern, die Ergänzungen lakunöser Abschnitte signalisieren: R. Kasser/G. Wurst (Hg.), *The Gospel of Judas together with the Letter of Peter to Philip, James, and a Book of Allogenes from Codex Tchacos* (Washington, D.C. National Geographic, 2007) 185.

³⁵ P. Nagel, ‚Das Evangelium des Judas,‘ ZNW 98 (2007) 213–276, hier 238, übersetzt: ‚Das geheime Gespräch der Unterweisung,‘ J. Brankaer/H.-G. Bethge, *Codex Tchacos: Texte und Analysen* (TU 161; Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 2007) 263: ‚Die verborgene Rede, die Apophasis ...‘, S. Gathercole, *The Gospel of Judas: Rewriting Early Christianity* (Oxford et al.: OUP, 2007) 61: ‚The secret message of revelation ...‘, J. van Oort, *Het Evangelie van Judas* (Kampen: Ten Have, 2006) 87: ‚het geheime verslag van de openbaring ...‘.

³⁶ Zu dieser weiterhin kontrovers diskutierten Frage vgl. z. B. E. Thomassen, ‚Is Judas Really the Hero of the Gospel of Judas?,‘ und A. DeConick, ‚The Mystery of Betrayal: What Does the Gospel of Judas Really Say?,‘ beide in *The Gospel of Judas in Context: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas, Paris, Sorbonne, October 27th–28th, 2006* (hg. von M. Scopello; NHMS 62, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2008) 157–170 und 239–264, sowie A. Marjanen, ‚Does the Gospel of Judas Rehabilitate Judas Iscariot?,‘ *Gelitten—Gestorben—Auferweckt: Passions- und Auferstehungstraditionen im antiken Christentum* (hg. von A. Merkt/T. Nicklas/J. Verheyden, WUNT II; Tübingen: Mohr, 2009) 211–226.

Schriften der werdenden Großkirche polemisiert,³⁷ dass sich das *Judasevangelium* eigentlich nur als ein Text verstehen lässt, der sich an eine sich jenseits der ‚Großkirche‘ etablierende ‚Elite‘ wendet und deshalb auch jenseits eines werdenden Kanons gelesen werden will. Ob dies auch durch das im Text thematisierte Zahlenverhältnis 1:12 zum Ausdruck gebracht wird, ist nicht restlos eindeutig,³⁸ jedoch durchaus denkbar. So würde ich auch das *Judasevangelium* keineswegs als einen durch die Initiativen altkirchlicher Autoren oder auch die Zufälle der Überlieferung ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ Text verstehen, sondern als bewusst ‚apokryph konzipiertes‘ Evangelium, dessen Inhalt sich als ‚geheime‘ Lehre begreift, die nicht allen—und schon gar nicht den als in krassestem Irrtum befindlich gesehenen Vertretern der werdenden ‚Großkirche‘—zugänglich ist.

Ähnliches ließe sich sicherlich auch über andere Texte—gerne Schriften zumindest im Umfeld ‚gnostischer‘ Gruppierungen³⁹—sagen. Erwähnt in diesen Zusammenhang seien nur der *Brief des Jakobus* (NHC 1,1–16,30), der ‚nach eigener Aussage eine Geheimlehre (ἀποκρύφον; p. 1,10) übermittelt, die dann den Hauptteil der Schrift ausmacht (p. 2,7–16,11),‘⁴⁰ das *Buch des Thomas* (NHC II,7) oder das *Apokryphon des bzw. nach Johannes* (NHC II,1; III,1; IV,1; BG 2). Während Letzteres den Begriff ‚Apokryphon‘ zumindest nach einer überlieferten Handschrift bereits im Titel (NHC III,1) trägt, ihn in allen Textzeugen aber zumindest in der *Subscriptio* enthält, gibt das *Buch des Thomas* sich als Sammlung ‚geheime[r] Worte, die der Heiland zu Judas Thomas sprach und die ich,

³⁷ Hierzu vgl. L. Painchaud, ‚Polemical Aspects in the Gospel of Judas,‘ *The Gospel of Judas in Context: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas, Paris, Sorbonne, October 27th–28th, 2006* (hg. von M. Scopello; NHMS 62; Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2008) 171–186, sowie auch meinen Beitrag T. Nicklas, ‚Der Demiurg des Judasevangeliums,‘ *Judasevangelium und Codex Tchacos* (hg. von E.E. Popkes / G. Wurst; WUNT; Tübingen 2011) [im Druck].

³⁸ Wie auch immer die Rolle des Judas im Judasevangelium zu verstehen ist—immerhin wird er als einziger aus den Zwölf ausgesondert, denen keinerlei Erkenntnis zukommt, und erhält er als einziger vertiefte Offenbarungen.

³⁹ Die Verwendung des Begriffs ‚Gnosis‘ wurde in den vergangenen Jahren immer wieder mit Recht kritisiert. Da ich allerdings auch den als Alternative vorgeschlagenen Begriff ‚biblisch demiurgisch,‘ wie ihn M.A. Williams *Rethinking ‚Gnosticism‘: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category*. (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1996) 51–52. 265–266, vorgeschlagen hat, als nicht unproblematisch empfinde, bleibe ich bei der alten Bezeichnung, verwende aber Anführungszeichen.

⁴⁰ J. Hartenstein, *Die zweite Lehre: Erscheinungen des Auferstandenen als Rahmenerzählungen frühchristlicher Dialoge* (TU 146; Berlin: Akademie, 2000) 215.

Matthäus, niedergeschrieben habe.⁴¹ Die in NHC II,1 / NHC IV,1 überlieferte Textform des Johannes-Apokryphons schließlich beschreibt den Text als ‚die Lehre [des] Heilands und [die Offenbarung] der Geheimnisse und [der im Schweigen] verborgenen Dinge ...‘.⁴²

Vielleicht kann man von diesem Punkt aus aber noch einen Schritt weitergehen und überlegen, ob wirklich immer die explizite Erwähnung des Begriffs ‚apokryph‘ nötig ist, um einen Text als ‚apokryph gewollt‘ bzw. ‚als apokryph konzipiert‘ einordnen zu können oder ob nicht in manchen Fällen bereits die Form eines Textes einen solchen Schluss nahe legt. Ich denke in diesem Zusammenhang vor allem an als Offenbarungsdialoge mit dem Auferstandenen konzipierte Dialogevangelien,⁴³ von denen das *Apokryphon des Johannes* bereits erwähnt wurde. H.-J. Klauck beschreibt diese Form in der folgenden Weise:⁴⁴ ‚Ein Dialogevangelium beginnt mit der Erscheinung des auferstandenen Herrn im Jüngerkreis, es folgen Gespräche und Reden und am Schluss verabschiedet sich der Auferstandene und steigt endgültig zum Himmel auf. Wo überhaupt präzise Zeitangaben gemacht werden, können die vierzig Tage, die nach Apg zwischen Ostern und Himmelfahrt liegen, dazu fast beliebig erweitert werden ... Die Ansätze für die Entwicklung der Gattung sind denn auch in den neutestamentlichen Erscheinungsberichten zu suchen; namentlich die Aussendung der Jünger durch den Auferstandenen aus Anlass einer Ostererscheinung auf einem Berg in Galiläa in Mt 28,16–20 bot einen Anhaltspunkt.‘

Dass es auch in diesen Texten regelmäßig um die Offenbarung von Geheimnissen geht, Offenbarungen, deren Existenz vor allem in Apg 1,3 zwar angedeutet, deren Inhalt dort aber nicht wiedergegeben ist, zeigt sich immer wieder: So wird bereits in der Rahmenerzählung der *Sophia Jesu Christi* das zentrale Thema des Textes angesprochen:⁴⁵ das ‚Mysterium des heiligen Heilsplanes‘ (ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΝΤΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑ ΕΤΟΥΛΑΒ; NHC III, p. 91,8–9 sowie BG, p. 78,9–11). Erzählt wird zudem von einer Offenbarung des Erlösers (ΣΩΤΗΡ) in der Form eines Lichtengels,

⁴¹ Übersetzung: H.-M. Schenke, ‚Das Buch des Thomas (NHC II,7),‘ *Nag Hammadi Deutsch* 1, 279–291, hier 284.

⁴² Übersetzung: M. Waldstein, ‚Das Apokryphon des Johannes (NHC II,1; III,1; IV,1 und BG 2),‘ *Nag Hammadi Deutsch* 1, 95–150, hier 101.

⁴³ Der Begriff wurde 1979 von H. Koester, ‚Dialog und Spruchüberlieferung in den gnostischen Texten von Nag Hammadi,‘ *EvTheol* 39 (1979) 532–556, hier 535, eingeführt und hat sich inzwischen mehr und mehr durchgesetzt.

⁴⁴ H.-J. Klauck, *Apokryphe Evangelien: Eine Einführung* (Stuttgart: Bibelwerk, 2002) 189.

⁴⁵ Hierzu weiterführend vgl. auch J. Hartenstein, *Zweite Lehre*, 35–62.

wie sie nur Vollkommenen zugänglich sei. Das *Mariaevangelium* wiederum spricht von ‚Worten des Sôtēr‘, die zwar Maria, die ‚Lieblingsjüngerin‘ Jesu, nicht aber die Jünger Jesu gehört haben (P.Oxy. 3525 Z. 16 f.; BG 10,4–5), worauf Maria den Jüngern eine Offenbarung der ihnen verborgenen Worte gibt. Diese (im überlieferten Text leider zum großen Teil verlorene) Worte stoßen wiederum so sehr auf Widerstand, dass sie von Andreas und Petrus, die hier wohl als Vertreter der werdenden ‚Großkirche‘ aufgefasst sind, in Frage gestellt werden (P.Ryl. 463 21,5–16; BG 17,7–22).⁴⁶ Dass Texte wie die genannten, die vorgeben, derart verstandene ‚Offenbarungen‘ zu enthalten, ebenfalls ‚als apokryph konzipiert‘ verstanden werden sollten, legt sich m. E. nahe.

2.3. *Der Hirt des Hermas—oder die Grenzen heutiger Rede von christlichen Apokryphen*

Noch komplexer stellen sich einige andere Fälle dar—mit welchem Label kann etwa ein Text wie der ‚Hirt des Hermas‘ historisch adäquat bezeichnet werden? Mit dem heutigen Corpus der ‚Apostolischen Väter‘, dem er normalerweise zugeordnet ist, liegt ja eine mehr oder weniger ‚künstliche‘ Sammlung vor, deren Zusammenstellung im Grunde erst in der Textausgabe J.B. Coteliers (1672) erfolgte, wenn auch bereits der mittelalterliche Codex Hierosolymitanus des Jahres 1056 viele der heute als ‚Apostolische Väter‘ genannten Texte enthält.⁴⁷ Das sich mit dem *Hirten des Hermas* verbindende Problem hängt unter anderem damit zusammen, dass die Gegenüberstellung von ‚apokryphen‘ und ‚kanonischen‘ Texten, wie oben geschehen, die altkirchliche Situation noch nicht angemessen beschreibt.

So legt etwa Athanasius von Alexandrien in seinem kanongeschichtlich so bedeutsamen 39. Osterfestbrief des Jahres 367 zwar die älteste bekannte Liste von Büchern des Neuen Testaments vor, die auch mit dem heute als kanonisch Angesehenen übereinstimmt, und grenzt diese von apokryphen Texten, die er als ‚Erfindungen von Häretikern‘ bezeichnen kann, ab.⁴⁸ Daneben aber erwähnt er noch eine dritte Gruppe: Texte, die

⁴⁶ Weiterführend hierzu z. B. C.M. Tuckett, *The Gospel of Mary* (Oxford Early Christian Gospel Texts; Oxford et al: OUP, 2007) 169–203 [dort auch Diskussion weiterer Literatur] ...

⁴⁷ Weiterführend u. a. P. Foster, Preface, *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers* (hg. von P. Foster; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2007) vii–xiii, hier vii–viii.

⁴⁸ Text: P.-P. Joannou (Hg.), *Fonti IX: Discipline générale antique (IV^e–IX^e s.) II: Les canons de Pères grecs* (Roma: Grottaferrata 1963) 71–76.

zwar nicht kanonisch, aber doch zur Lektüre erlaubt seien und sich für die Unterweisung in der ‚Lehre der Frömmigkeit‘ eignen—die Weisheit Salomos, die Weisheit Sirachs, Ester, Judit, Tobias, die *Didache* und den *Hirten des Hermas*. Eine auch begrifflich noch stärkere Differenzierung in drei Gruppen begegnet in der *Expositio Symboli* des Rufin von Aquileja (*symp.* 36; CCL 20,171). Rufin beschreibt nach einer Auflistung kanonischer Schriften auch zwei weitere Gruppen von Texten. Die einen bezeichnet er mit dem Attribut *ecclesiastici*, darunter etwa der *Hirt des Hermas*, die *Didache* sowie ein nicht mehr sicher identifizierbares *Iudicium secundum Petrum*. Diese Bücher dürften in den Gemeinden zwar gelesen, aber nicht zur Bekräftigung der Lehre herangezogen werden. Bei der dritten Gruppe schließlich handele es sich um ‚apokryphe Schriften‘, die auch privat nicht gelesen werden dürften.

Gerade der Status der Texte der mittleren Gruppe scheint keineswegs für alle Zeiten eindeutig festgelegt bzw. überall in gleicher Weise anerkannt gewesen zu sein, wie sich gerade im Fall des *Hirten* sehr deutlich zeigt.⁴⁹ Während das *muratorische Fragment* (Z. 73–80) zwar die private Lektüre des Textes zulässt, seine liturgische Verlesung aber wegen seines mangelnden apostolischen Charakters ablehnt,⁵⁰ zitiert Irenäus (*haer.* 4,20,2) den Text als *γραφή* bzw. *scriptura*⁵¹ oder bezeichnet Ps-Cyprian, *adv. Aleat.* 2, ihn als *scriptura divina*. Tertullian, *De pud.* 10, wiederum lehnt gegenüber Zephyrin von Rom die Schrift ab, ‚worin sich wider Willen eine verbreitete tatsächliche Verbindlichkeit und Rezeption des PH in Rom und Karthago spiegelt‘.⁵² Während noch Hieronymus, *vir. ill.* 10, von der öffentlichen Lesung des Textes in einigen griechischen Kirchen spricht, wird der Text im *Decretum Gelasianum* des 6. Jahrhunderts als apokryph abgelehnt. Doch auch dieses Urteil scheint seine weitere Verbreitung nicht völlig behindert zu haben, wie C. Osiek an Beispie-

⁴⁹ Vgl. auch die Übersicht bei C. Osiek, *The Shepherd of Hermas* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999) 4–7.

⁵⁰ Vielleicht aber lässt gerade die Art der Ablehnung kanonischer Autorität durch das muratorische Fragment den Schluss zu, dass zumindest manche Gruppen dem *Hirten des Hermas* diese zuerkannten.

⁵¹ Hierzu allerdings auch die Kritik von N. Brox, *Der Hirt des Hermas* (KAV 7; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991) 59–60, der bemerkt, dass der sonstige Sprachgebrauch des Irenäus nicht die Folgerung zulasse, dass der *Hirt* hier als kanonischer Text anerkannt sei: ‚Die plausibelste Lesart ist die, dass Irenäus den PH an dieser Stelle mit derselben Selbstverständlichkeit (anonym) als das einführt, was er ist: eben eine ‚Schrift‘ ohne Sonderbedeutung des Wortes, wie er es mit dem 1 *Klem* und seinem eigenen *Opus tut*‘ (60).

⁵² N. Brox, *Hirt*, 62.

len von Boethius über Hildegard von Bingen und Dante bis zu C.G. Jung zeigt.⁵³ Welches Label aber kann einem Text, der zwar von einigen Autoren explizit als ‚apokryph‘ verurteilt, von anderen als Teil des Neuen Testaments, von vielen aber zumindest als hilf- und lehrreich gelesen wurde, eingeordnet werden? Richtig ‚apokryph geworden‘ ist dieser Text nur in einigen Kreisen und zeitweise, während er anderen offenbar als ‚heilige Schrift‘ galt und wieder andere sich von ihm zumindest ‚inspirieren‘ ließen. Ein letztgültiges, der historischen Diversität bzw. ein dem historischem *Werden* angemessenes Label muss daher vielleicht erst gefunden werden—der Text zeigt in jedem Falle, dass all unsere heutigen Ordnungsprinzipien zur wissenschaftlichen Einordnung antiker Texte mit einer gewissen Vorsicht zu genießen sind—und nie die Rückbindung an die Quellenlage selbst verlieren dürfen.

3. FAZIT

Während das Beispiel des Hirten des Hermas zeigt, dass die uns heute zur Verfügung stehenden Labels zur Einordnung historischer Texte nicht immer der tatsächlich feststellbaren historischen Bedeutung der Texte gerecht werden können, zeigt sich zumindest in manchen Fällen, dass die differenzierte Anwendung von Begriffen wie ‚apokryph geworden‘, wenn sie die Perspektivi, aus der gesprochen wird, berücksichtigt, hilfreich sein kann. Die Rede von ‚apokryph gewordenen‘ Schriften erscheint gerade da sinnvoll, wo Texte vorliegen, die einerseits zumindest im Ansatz einen Anspruch erkennen lassen, als (womöglich neben anderen) Texten kanonisch anerkannt zu werden, die aber—aus unterschiedlichen Gründen—aus Sicht von Vertretern der werdenden Großkirche als ‚häretisch‘ bzw. von ‚Häretikern‘ verwendet und/oder gefälscht als ‚apokryph‘ verurteilt wurden. Da die Quellenlage zum 2. und 3. Jahrhundert unserer Zeitrechnung sehr lückenhaft ist, können natürlich nicht immer alle Faktoren, die zu derartigen Entwicklungen geführt haben, im Detail nachvollzogen werden—trotzdem aber dürfte es großen Sinn machen, etwa einen Text wie das *Petrusevangelium* als ‚apokryph geworden‘ zu bezeichnen.

Die Tatsache, dass das Wort ‚apokryph‘ aber auch in positiver Konnotation verwendet werden und dabei Schriften bezeichnen konnte, welche geheime und gleichzeitig besonders hochgeschätzte Offenbarungen zu enthalten vorgeben, verlangt aber nach einer Erweiterung des

⁵³ Vgl. C. Osiek, *Shepherd*, 7.

Konzepts—nicht alle Texte, die heute als ‚apokryph‘ gelesen werden, sind im Verlauf ihrer Rezeptionsgeschichte ‚apokryph geworden‘, einige sind auch ‚als apokryph konzipiert‘.⁵⁴ Dass das Wort ‚apokryph‘ in diesen Texten gänzlich anders konnotiert ist als in den Schriften ihrer ‚großkirchlichen‘ Gegner, versteht sich von selbst.⁵⁵ Gemeint sind Texte, die vorgeben, geheime Lehren zu enthalten, die sich nicht an die Allgemeinheit, sondern nur an Gruppen wendet, die sich als Elite verstehen, der auf diesem Wege besondere Formen der Erkenntnis—‚Gnosis‘—ermöglicht werden.

⁵⁴ Neben den genannten, meist im Umfeld ‚gnostischer‘ Gruppierungen entstandenen oder zumindest von ihnen verwendeten Texten sei zudem auf das *geheime Markusevangelium* verwiesen, das sich selbst zwar nicht als ‚apokryph‘, so doch als τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον bezeichnet. Auch dieser Text ist sicherlich nicht ‚apokryph geworden‘, sondern sicherlich—vielleicht erst in neuerer oder allerneuester Zeit—als apokryph konzipiert.

⁵⁵ Es ist mir eine große Freude, einen Beitrag für die Festschrift meines ehemaligen Nijmegener Kollegen Johannes van Oort liefern zu können: Gerne denke ich an manches angeregte und immer spannende Gespräch über die verschiedensten Fragen altkirchlicher—und besonders verschiedenster apokrypher, ‚gnostischer‘ und manichäischer—Literatur zurück und wünsche ihm noch viele gesunde, kreative und produktive Jahre!

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

QUELLEN REGEN AN: BEOBACHTUNGEN ZUM ,GNOSTISCHEN SONDERGUT‘ DER *REFUTATIO OMNIUM HAERESIUM*¹

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1. FRAGESTELLUNG

Bekanntlich sind acht Häretikerberichte in den Büchern 5–8 der *Refutatio omnium haeresium* zum ‚gnostischem Sondergut‘ erklärt worden.² Es handelt sich um die Referate über die Naassener, die Peraten, die Sethianer, Justins Baruchbuch, die simonianische ‚Apophasis‘, Basilides, die Doketen und den Araber Monoimos. Ebenso ist bekannt, dass diese Berichte untereinander gewisse Übereinstimmungen der allgemeinen Vorstellungen (Drei-Prinzipien-Lehren; die Schlange als Weltprinzip³), eine gemeinsame Bildwelt und Motivik, gleiche Begriffe und Phrasen sowie eine ähnliche Verwendung von Zitaten (z. B. aus Homer), biblischen Gleichnissen und anderen Bibelstellen aufweisen. Freilich ist einzuschränken, dass keineswegs alle acht Berichte unterschiedslos betroffen sind und außerdem die nur auf ‚gnostische‘ Gruppen zielende

¹ Text: P. Wendland, *Refutatio omnium haeresium* = GCS Hippolytus Werke 3 (Leipzig 1916); M. Marcovich, *Hippolytus refutatio omnium haeresium* = PTS 25 (Berlin/New York 1986). Zu den Schwächen der Marcovichedition vgl. D. Hagedorn, ‚Rez. Marcovich‘: *JbAC* 32 (1989) 210–214.

² Vgl. Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 45.

³ Das Schlangenprinzip ist freilich kein geeignetes Kriterium für Gemeinsamkeit. Die Naassener sollen zwar als erste die Schlange verehrt haben und die Ahnherrn anderer Häresien, somit auch der Peraten und Sethianer usw., sein (*Ref.* 5,6,3 f.); vgl. J. Frickel, *Hellenistische Erlösung in christlicher Deutung. Die gnostische Naassenerschrift* = NHS 19 (Leiden 1984) 15. Jedoch übersieht Frickel, dass damit keine sachliche Gemeinsamkeit hergestellt wird, weil die Schlange für den Autor der *Refutatio* polemisch das biblische Prinzip des Irrtums ist (*Ref.* 5,11; 6,1). Die Sethianer und Justin sind jedenfalls keine Schlangenverehrer.

Abgrenzung des ‚Sondergutes‘ bereits zu kurz greift, weil die *Refutatio* noch anderes ‚häretisches Sondergut‘ ohne Entsprechung bei anderen antiken Autoren enthält.⁴

Bisher fehlt eine zufrieden stellende Erklärung für die Gemeinsamkeiten innerhalb des ‚Sondergutes‘. Drei Lösungen werden momentan vorgeschlagen:⁵ Eine erste Hypothese möchte die Übereinstimmungen auf freien, wechselseitigen Austausch der Ideen und Motive der Häresien untereinander zurückführen, sie also auf der Primärebene ansiedeln, ohne sich jedoch über den Ausgangspunkt, die Zwischenglieder und den Endpunkt des Rezeptionsprozesses festzulegen.⁶ Dagegen wird eingewandt, dass die Übereinstimmungen über eine einfache Motivgleichheit hinausgingen. Da sie bis in die Phraseologie hineinreichten, würden sie auf literarische Abhängigkeiten hindeuten.⁷ Detailliert untersucht und definitiv festgestellt sind diese Textübereinstimmungen bisher jedoch nicht.

Des Weiteren wird eine sekundäre Überarbeitung erwogen. Bevor die Quellen als ‚Paket‘ in die Hände des Verfassers der *Refutatio* gelangten, sei entweder ein kirchlicher Redaktor mit häresiologischen Ambitionen ähnlich denen des Autors der *Refutatio* tätig gewesen,⁸ oder ein Bearbeiter aus gnostischen Kreisen habe seine Spuren in den Vorlagen hinterlassen.⁹ Jedoch können beide Varianten nicht befriedigend erklären, warum

⁴ Darauf wies bereits G. Salmon, ‚The Cross-References in the ‚Philosophumena‘, *Hermathena* 11 (1885) 389–402, hin. Erfahrungen lehren, dass die Häretikernamen eher Benennungen des Autors als Selbstbezeichnungen sind. Bisher sind Übereinstimmungen zum ‚nichtgnostischen‘ Sondergut der *Refutatio* nicht gefunden, aber auch noch nicht eigens behandelt worden.

⁵ Die älteren Hypothesen, es handele sich bei den Quellen um Fälschungen von Händlern (Salmon, *Cross-References* [o. Anm. 4], H. Staehelin, *Die gnostischen Quellen Hippolyts in seiner Hauptschrift gegen die Häretiker* = TU 6,3 [Leipzig 1890]), welche die Leidenschaft des Autors der *Refutatio* für Büchersammeln zum eigenen finanziellen Vorteil ausnutzten, oder die Übereinstimmungen gingen auf eine gemeinsame Quelle zurück (E. de Faye, *Introduction à l'étude du Gnosticisme au II^e et au III^e siècle* [Paris 1903] 24–32; 62–72; ders., *Gnostiques et Gnosticisme* [Paris 1925] 189f., identifizierte sie mit dem ophitischen Systemtyp), finden augenblicklich keinen Anhänger. Die ältere Forschung referiert J. Frickel, *Die ‚Apophasis Megale‘ in Hippolyt's Refutatio* (VI 9–18). *Eine Paraphrase zur Apophasis Simons* = OCA 182 (Rom 1968) 11–25.

⁶ Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 46–49.

⁷ W.A. Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule* = WUNT 83 (Tübingen 1996) 295.

⁸ K. Beyschlag, ‚Rez. Frickel, *Apophasis*‘ (o. Anm. 5), *ThLZ* 95 (1970) 668–670, 670; E. Peterson, *Frühkirche, Christentum und Gnosis* (Rom/Freiburg/Wien 1959) 233. 271 Anm. 3.

⁹ K. Koschorke, *Hippolyt's Ketzerbekämpfung und Polemik gegen die Gnostiker* = GöO 6,4 (Wiesbaden 1975) 100f.

die Übereinstimmungen eher scheinbar nebensächliche Details betreffen und Eingriffe nicht in Bezug auf die großen Linien vorgenommen wurden: Die moderne Bezeichnung der acht Lehrgebäude als ‚Dreiprinzipiensysteme‘ spielt die Divergenzen der pleromatisch-kosmologischen Strukturen zwischen den einzelnen Systeme herunter. Gerade die entfernten systemischen Ähnlichkeiten werden zu Recht nicht auf einen Bearbeiter zurückgeführt, da analoge Systemmerkmale eher auf eine gemeinsame Denkwelt als auf redaktionelle Arbeit hinweisen.¹⁰

Eine Variante der Redaktionshypothese meint allerdings, dem potentiellen Redaktor ein gedankliches Profil zusprechen zu können. Er habe die Quellen von einer Theologie her überarbeitet, die der göttlichen Person des Logos bestimmte Eigenheiten zuschreibe.¹¹ Eindeutige Kriterien für das Auffinden redaktioneller Passagen, also einer Sekundärebene der *Refutatio*, speziell des so genannten ‚Logostheologen‘, lassen sich jedoch nicht benennen.¹²

¹⁰ Nur am Rande sei erwähnt, dass die These, ein Exzerpist habe die Quellen zusammengestellt (R. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* [Leipzig 1904 = 1922] 82 f.; W. Gogolin, *Untersuchungen zu den griechischen Quellen der Naassenerpredigt* [Berlin 1978] 9–11), ebenfalls nicht mehr vertreten wird, weil nach Frickel, *Erlösung* (o. Anm. 3) 19–27, häufig benutzte formelhafte Wendungen zeigen, dass der Autor selbst für Eingriffe verantwortlich ist.

¹¹ L. Abramowski, ‚Ein gnostischer Logostheologe. Umfang und Redaktor des gnostischen Sondergutes in Hippolyts „Widerlegung aller Häresien“,‘ dies., *Drei christologische Untersuchungen* = BZNW 45 (Berlin/New York 1981) 18–62. Zur Redaktion sollen etwa Aussagen gehören wie die, dass Gott seinen Logos als Stimme erzeuge (dieser Gedanke findet sich jedoch nur in der ‚Apophasis‘). Den Logostheologen zur Folie des Autors in *Ref.* 10,33,1 zu machen, wertet einen vielleicht nebenbei intendierten Aspekt zu einem antihäretischen Leitmotiv auf. Nirgends ist es das primäre Anliegen des Autors, sich von einer falschen Logostheologie abzusetzen. Das Hauptziel ist vielmehr die Darstellung der wahren Gottes- und Prinzipienlehre und der wahren Theosebeia, also der letztlich universal ausgerichtete protreptisch-apologetische Tenor der *Refutatio*. Ihr Autor will nicht primär Logostheologe sein, sondern falschen Lehren zu den ἀρχαί den Schöpfer als höchstes Prinzip entgegensetzen. Er wendet sich an keiner Stelle explizit gegen einen ‚gnostischen‘ Logostheologen und baut ihn auch nicht als Sparringspartner oder ‚Pappkameraden‘ (Löhr) für seine Kritik auf (so vermutet J. Mansfeld, *Heresiography in Context. Hippolytus' Elenchos as a Source for Greek Philosophy* = PhA 56 [Leiden/New York 1992] 317–325, bes. 320 f.), sondern ignoriert einen solchen Gegner und bekämpft nur Gruppen auf der Primärebene. Die Wahrscheinlichkeit ist groß, dass es den Logostheologen nicht gab.

¹² Redaktionsstücke lassen sich nicht von einem Grundtext abheben und in einer Zusammenschau gegenüber dem Grundtext als durch ein eigenes theologisches Anliegen bestimmt identifizieren. Die Technik des τοῦτό ἐστιν z. B. (so Abramowski, *Logostheologe* [o. Anm. 11] 29–31) ist kein hinreichender Hinweis auf redaktionelle Einschübe auf der zweiten Ebene. Mansfeld, *Heresiography* (o. Anm. 11) 320, nennt *Ref.* 4,51,3 und 4,8,2 als Beleg, dass der Autor selbst mit dieser explikativ-exegetischen Formel operiert. Ebenso

Die dritte Antwort würde schließlich die Gemeinsamkeiten auf den Autor der *Refutatio* selbst zurückführen, sie also auf der Tertiärebene ansiedeln.¹³ Bisher steht jedoch eine Erklärung aus, was den Autor veranlassen haben könnte, Übereinstimmungen in scheinbar Nebensächlichem herzustellen.

Außerdem ist die Liste der Ähnlichkeiten keineswegs endgültig fixiert.¹⁴ Das Phänomen stellt sich somit noch komplexer dar, weil verfeinerte Zusammenstellungen von weiteren inhaltlichen oder sprachlichen Ähnlichkeiten nur noch wenige Berichte des Sondergutes betreffen und zudem Affinitäten auch zu Passagen außerhalb des Sondergutes bestehen sollen: So sei der Redaktor z. B. auch im Valentinianerbericht tätig gewesen.¹⁵

Offenbar ist eine methodische, detaillierte Aufarbeitung des Quellenproblems erforderlich. An dieser Stelle soll nur an markanten Fällen durchgespielt werden, welcher Entstehungsebene sich die tatsächlichen oder vermeintlichen Gemeinsamkeiten am ehesten zuordnen lassen.

2. DIE NATURKUNDLICHEN VERGLEICHE

Als hervorstechendes Beispiel einer kaum zufälligen Gemeinsamkeit¹⁶ gilt die in vier (bzw. drei) Berichten des Sondergutes zu Illustrations-

lässt sich nicht überall ausschließen, dass Logospassagen der Primärebene angehören. Wie soll man entscheiden, ob eine Bemerkung wie *Ref.* 4,48,12–14, auch der Hundsstern ist der Logos' zum Redaktor oder zur Grundschrift gehört? Die allegorischen Logosdeutungen in der *Refutatio* sind vielfältig.

¹³ Am deutlichsten Mansfeld, *Heresiography* (o. Anm. 11) 320 (... interpolations ... may equally be due to Hippolytus himself'), ohne allerdings das Problem des Sondergutes im einzelnen zu behandeln. Zögernd äußert sich Koschorke, *Ketzerbekämpfung* (o. Anm. 9) 99: 'Die einheitlichen Züge gehen auf das Konto H.s. Das läßt sich zwar in Einzelfällen vermuten, erklärt aber nicht das ganze Phänomen.'

¹⁴ Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 45–51 versteht seine Übersicht als Beispielliste. Bereits Salmon, *Cross-References* (o. Anm. 4) 396–400, nennt weitere Ähnlichkeiten. Löhr, *Basilides* (o. Anm. 7) 295–297, vergleicht detailliert das Basilidesreferat mit den anderen Berichten des Sondergutes.

¹⁵ So Abramowski, *Logos-theologie* (o. Anm. 11) 30 Anm. 35; weitere Beobachtungen zu Parallelen von Basilides- und Valentinianerreferat bei Löhr, *Basilides* (o. Anm. 7) 297 f., wobei die Tendenz besteht, den Valentinianerbericht dem Sondergut zuzuschlagen. Wiederum dürfte gelten, dass Systemähnlichkeiten sich leichter erklären lassen als exakte Übereinstimmungen in Details.

¹⁶ Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 46 führt sie offenbar wegen ihrer Auffälligkeit an erster Stelle seiner Liste auf; vgl. Salmon, *Cross-References* (o. Anm. 4) 394 f., Staehelin, *Quellen* (o. Anm. 5) 53–55. Bei Monoimos, Justin, Simon und den Doketen fehlen die Vergleiche. — Die Hinweise auf den Geometrie-, Grammatik- und sonstigen Unterricht in *Ref.* 5,19,1 f.

zwecken genannte Anziehungskraft von Naphtha,¹⁷ Magnet, Bernstein und Dorn/Stachel (κερκίς/κέντρον)¹⁸ des Fisches Hierax.¹⁹

(Sethianer) und 6,12,4; 6,16,5 (Simon) sind ebenso wie die anatomischen Vergleiche in *Ref.* 5,19,7 (Sethianer), 5,17,11 f. (Peraten; vgl. 4,51,10–13), 8,10,3–5 (Doketen) und 5,9,15–18 (Naassener), die in 4,51,13 als Charakteristikum der ‚Gnostiker‘ hingestellt werden, zu unspezifisch, um an ihnen die Frage erörtern zu können. — Für alle Textdetails sind Text und Apparat von Wendland (o. Anm. 1) und Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) zu konsultieren.

¹⁷ Eine kleine Auswahl von Erwähnungen und Beschreibungen des Naphtha (sc. des Erdöls): *Dan.* 3,46, Strabo, *Geogr.* 16,1,15 (aus Poseidonius); Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 36,1b,1; Isigonos, *Fragm.* 18; PsZonares, *Lex.* α 44. Nach Georgius Choeroboscus, *Epimerismi in Psalmos* 191,18, und den Etymologica wird Naphtha von ἀνάπτω abgeleitet und gilt als παρασκευαστικὸν πρὸς τὸ ἐξάψαι.

¹⁸ Vielleicht ist mit κερκίς eine spitz zulaufende Schwanzflosse gemeint: vgl. H.G. Liddell/R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1982) 939.943; *Suppl.* (Oxford 1996) 175: κερκίς Weberschiffchen, Stab, Rute, Dorn, Stift etc.; vgl. E. Trapp, *Lexikon der byzantinischen Graezität* 1 (Wien 2001) 824: κερκίς — Pflock an der Deichsel, Schwanz. Der Unterschied zu κέντρον könnte darin liegen, daß die weiteren Bedeutungen ‚great bone of the leg‘, ‚radius of the arm‘ (Speiche des Armes) für κερκίς (so Liddell/Scott) darauf hinzuweisen scheinen, dass physiologisch die knöcherne Konsistenz des Körperteils im Blick ist; diese Perspektive dient offenbar als Grundlage der Übersetzung ‚backbone‘ (J.H. MacMahon, Hippolytus *The Refutation of All Heresies, Ante-Nicene Fathers* 5 [Edinburgh 1886 = Grand Rapids 1978] 64) und ‚Röhrknochen‘ (K. Preysing, Hippolytus von Rom *Widerlegung aller Häresien, BKV* 40 [Kempten 1922] 110). Vgl. u. Anm. 49.

¹⁹ Zum ἰέραις/ἰρηξ/ἰάραξ (*milvus, ictinus*) ist wenig aus der Antike in Erfahrung zu bringen. Aristoteles kennt den Fisch nicht. Die ersten verwertbaren Nachrichten finden sich bei Ovid, *Hal.* 95 f.: ‚gaudent scombrigue bovesque ... nigro tergore milvi,‘ Horaz, *Ep.* 1,16,51: ‚metuit foveam lupus accipiterque suspectos laqueos et opertum milvus hamum,‘ Plinius, *Nat.hist.* 9,43 (27): ‚volat hirundo, sane perquam similis volucris hirundini, item milvus‘ (‚die Seeschwalbe, welche der Landschwalbe ähnlich ist, fliegt, ebenso der Meerweihe‘ [Übers. Ph.H. Kùlb, *Cajus Plinius Secundus Naturgeschichte* [Stuttgart 1840] 1074, der anmerkt: ‚milvus = Trigla hirundo L., der große Seehahn‘); Kyranides *Magica* (AD 1–2? oder um 200?), *Nat.hist.* 1,1,8 (21 Kaimakis); 4,1,1–8 (244 K.), Oppian (ca. 178), *Hal.* 1,428.435 (248 Mair), Athenaus, *Deipn.* 329a (3,480 Gulick) (aus Epainetos), vgl. *Deipn.* 356d (4,110 Gulick), Aelian (170–240), *Nat.anim.* 9,52 (2,270 Scholfield); vgl. Johannes Philoponos, *Opm.* 5,3. Danach scheint es sich um einen niedrig fliegenden Meeresfisch zu handeln, während andere auffällige physiologische Eigenschaften nicht erwähnt werden; vgl. D’A.W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Fishes* (London 1947) 90. Bei O. Keller, *Die antike Tierwelt* 2 (Leipzig 1913), findet sich das Tier nicht, A.W. Mair (ed.), *Oppian, Colluthus, Tryphiodorus* (Cambridge/London 1968) 248 f., möchte es mit *exocoetus volitans* (χελιδών; Schwalbenfisch; vgl. www.fishbase.org—08.04.2009) identifizieren, was jedoch bereits Thompson, *Glossary* 285–287, abgelehnt hat. F. Fajen, *Oppianus Halieutica. Einführung, Text, Übersetzung* (Stuttgart 1999) 347, führt das Tier allgemein in der Familie der Flugfische; dass, wie Fajen meint, Epicharm, frgm. 68 Kaibel, auf den Fisch zu beziehen ist, ist jedoch zweifelhaft. Wohl ist auffällig, dass der χελιδών nach Oppian, *Hal.* 2,457–461 (322 Mair), wie κόβτιος, σκόρπιος, δράκων und κύων einen Stachel (κέντρον) besitzt.

Die Stelle lautet im Naassenerbericht: ‚Zu diesem (sc. dem überhimmlichen, lebendigen) Wasser, heißt es, kommt jede Natur und wählt die eigenen Wesenheiten aus, und von diesem Wasser geht zu jeder Natur, was (ihr) eigentümlich ist, heißt es, mehr als das Eisen zum Herakleischen Stein (sc. Magneten)²⁰ und das Gold zum Dorn (κερκίς) des Fisches Hierax und das Stroh (ἄχυρον) zum Bernstein.²¹‘

Im Peratenbericht heißt es: ‚... Wie das Naphtha das Feuer von allen Seiten an sich zieht, eher noch wie der Herakleische Stein das Eisen und nichts anderes (an sich zieht), oder wie der Dorn (κερκίς) des Fisches Hierax das Gold und nichts anderes (an sich zieht), oder wie die Spreu vom Bernstein bewegt wird, so wird, heißt es, von der Schlange das ausgeprägte, vollkommene, wesensgleiche Geschlecht, aber nichts anderes, von der Welt weg bewegt, ebenso wie es von ihr herabgesandt wurde.²²‘

Der Text im Sethianerbericht lautet: ‚Alles Vermischte nun, heißt es, hat, wie gesagt, den ihm eigenen Platz und läuft zum eigentümlichen Ort, wie das Eisen zum Herakleischen Stein und die Spreu in die Nähe des Bernsteins und das Gold (in die Nähe) des Stachels (κέντρον) des Fisches Hierax. So eilt der (Strahl) des mit dem Wasser vermischten Lichtes, nachdem er von dem ihm zustehenden Ort durch Unterricht und Lehre erfahren hat, zum Logos, der von oben in Knechtsgestalt gekommen ist, und wird mit dem Logos zum Logos dort, wo der Logos ist, (er eilt dorthin) mehr als das Eisen zum Herakleischen Stein.²³‘

Im Basilidesreferat ist schließlich zu lesen: ‚Wie das indische Naphtha aus weiter Entfernung das Feuer an sich zieht, so dringen von unten aus dem gestaltlosen Haufen die Kräfte bis hinauf zur Sohnschaft. Der Sohn des großen Archon der Achtzahl zieht und nimmt nach Art des Naphtha—er ist gleichsam eine Art Naphtha²⁴—die Gedanken der seligen Sohnschaft hinter dem Zwischenraum an sich.²⁵‘

²⁰ Vgl. Platon, *Ion* 533de: Die meisten nennen den Magnetstein Ἡρακλεῖα λίθος; Aelius Herodianus, *Partitiones* 52,3 Boissonade; Diogenian Gramm., *Paroem.* 5,2,1; Pausanias, *Synag.* η 16; Plinius, *Nat.hist.* 36,25 (126–130). Der Begriff σιδηρίτης findet sich bei Plutarch, *Quaest.conv.* 641C, *De Iside* 376B, *Quaest.Platon.* 1005B. Die ungewöhnliche Bezeichnung σιδηροαγωγούση λίθος findet sich nur in *Ref.* 4,39 und bei Sextus Empiricus, *Adv.math.* 1,226.

²¹ *Ref.* 5,9,19.

²² *Ref.* 5,17,9 f.

²³ *Ref.* 5,21,8 f.

²⁴ Der Text wird mit der Handschrift P und Löhr, *Basilides* (o. Anm. 7) 289 Anm. 19, gelesen.

²⁵ *Ref.* 7,25,6 f.

a. Abhängigkeiten auf Quellenebene?

Die Vergleiche sollen jedes Mal einen kosmisch-soteriologisch relevanten Anziehungsvorgang veranschaulichen, beziehen sich aber auf unterschiedliche Prinzipien der jeweiligen Systeme: das überhimmlische Wasser, die Schlange, den Logos, die Sohnschaft (bzw. den Sohn des großen Archon). Eine exakte Übereinstimmung im Wortlaut liegt nicht vor,²⁶ ferner werden im Basilidesreferat nur eines (Naphtha), im Naassener— (Abfolge: Magnet, Dorn [κερκίς], Bernstein) und Sethianerbericht drei (Abfolge: Magnet, Bernstein, Stachel [κέντρον]) und nur im Peratenreferat alle vier Beispiele (Abfolge: Naphtha, Magnet, Dorn [κερκίς], Bernstein) benutzt. Die Affinität der Berichte besteht also nicht systemisch oder textlich, sondern durch die illustrierende Funktion der Vergleiche.

Die Frage lautet also genauer, ob eine in pädagogischer Vermittlung befindliche Gruppe von der anderen gelernt hat, ein kirchlicher oder häretischer Redaktor deren Lehren illustrieren zu müssen geglaubt hat— dass der vermeintliche Logostheologe seine Spuren hinterlassen hat, kann man höchstens im Falle der Sethianer vermuten, die anderen Berichte sind an dieser Stelle jedenfalls nicht logostheologisch redigiert— oder solches erst der Verfasser der *Refutatio* aus einem noch zu ermittelnden Grund getan hat.

Hilfe scheint zunächst die Erwähnung elektromagnetischer und chemischer Attraktionsphänomene bei anderen antiken Autoren zu versprechen. Die Feststellung, dass die Eigenschaften von Naphtha, Bernstein und Magnet in der Antike weiter bekannt waren, relativiert die Notwendigkeit, die Verwandtschaft des Sondergutes an diesem Punkt ausschließlich durch Abhängigkeiten der Berichte untereinander erklären zu müssen. Antike Texte sprechen über magnetische Phänomene und Wirkungen nicht direkt erklärbarer Kräfte häufig so, dass sie wie in der *Refutatio* verschiedene, ein exklusives Anziehungsverhalten an den Tag legende Stoffe, meist Magnet und Bernstein, nebeneinander erwähnen.²⁷ Auf diese Weise geben sie zu verstehen, dass nach ihrem

²⁶ Abweichungen betreffen Kleinigkeiten wie z. B. ὁ χερσός (*Ref.* 5,9,19)—τὸ χερσίον (*Ref.* 5,17,9f.; 5,21,8), die Reihenfolge, usw.

²⁷ Ohne Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit: Plinius, *Nat.hist.* 37,12 (47f.); Plutarch, *Quaest.conv.* 641C, *Quaest.Platon.* 1005BC, nennt Siderit und Bernstein zusammen. Klemens Alex., *Strom.* 2,26,2, berichtet, dürre Strohhalme könnten leicht von der Kraft des Feuers entflammt werden, und der bekannte (Magnet-)Stein ziehe das Eisen an, wie die suchinische Träne (eine Form des Bernsteins; vgl. Aëtius Med., *Iatricorum lib.* 9,10,121; PsDiscorides Med., *De lapidibus* 10,1) die Strohhalme und der Bernstein die Spreu (ἀχυρομαί) nach oben bewege (vgl. Alexander von Aphrodisias, *MetCom.* 220,28–221,10; Pho-

Verständnis in ihnen eine ähnliche, möglicherweise sogar dieselbe Art von Kraft wirksam ist, obwohl sie nicht eindeutig beantworten können, welcher Art diese Kraft ist und weshalb die verschiedenen Stoffe jeweils nur bestimmte Materialien anziehen.²⁸

Wie in den Berichten der *Refutatio* werden die physischen Eigenschaften der Stoffe häufig dazu benutzt, unanschauliche Anziehungsphänomene auf anderen Gebieten verständlich zu machen: geistige Vorgänge, Abläufe der menschlichen Physis oder Folgerungen naturphilosophischer Postulate. Platon benutzt die magnetischen Kräfte als Bild für die durch die Muse geweckte Gottergriffenheit.²⁹ Für die *Kore Kosmou* zieht die Schau des Göttlichen den Schauer zu sich hinauf wie der Magnetstein das Eisen.³⁰ Philo vergleicht die Erscheinung vor Abraham, die ihn von der chaldäischen Wissenschaft abbrachte, mit der Anziehungskraft des Magneten.³¹ Origenes veranschaulicht mit der natürlichen Anziehung des Magneten auf Eisen und des Naphthas auf Feuer die Anziehung des Glaubens auf die göttliche Kraft des Wundertäters Jesus.³² Ps-

tius, *Bibl. cod.* 279, berichtet, dass nach Galen Bernstein Spreu [Feldabfälle; κηρύβια] anzieht). Asclepius, *MetaphCom.* 10,21, Johannes Philoponos, *Aetm.* 7,14 (274,15–23 Rabe), Eustratius, *AnalPostCom.* 232,10, Scholia in Platonem, *Dialogue* R 600a, kombinieren Magnet und Bernstein. Simplicius, *PhysCom.* 1055,5–10, der erwähnt, Holz ziehe Feuer, Magnet Eisen und Bernstein Stroh an, nennt solches Verhalten als Beispiel für eine durch einen unbewegten Bewegten hervorgerufene Bewegung, die schneller ist als die natürliche Bewegungstendenz; vgl. ders., *PhysCom.* 1345,20–1346,2, die Beispiele dort dienen als Indiz für die Übertragung von Bewegung des Bewegten durch Zwischenglieder. Dass die Beschäftigung mit solchen Stoffen eine längere Geschichte hat, zeigen Demokrit nach Alexander von Aphrodisias, *Quaest.* 2,23 (72,28–73,12 Bruns) = FVS 68A165, und Theophrast, *De lapidibus* 28,3 (der Smaragd zieht wie Bernstein nicht nur Strohhalme und Blätter an, sondern auch Erz und Eisen, wenn diese leicht sind, wie Diokles sage); zu Thales s. u. Anm. 39.

²⁸ Das Thema ist Gegenstand der Problematikliteratur: Vgl. Alexander von Aphrodisias, *Problemata* 1 pr. 44 Ideler: Warum zieht der Magnet das Eisen an und Bernstein nur Spelzen und Halme? Ders., *Quaest.* 72,9–74,30 Bruns: Weshalb zieht der Magnet nur Eisen an? (engl. Übers. bei R. Sharples, *Alexander of Aphrodisias. Quaestiones* 2.16–3.15 [London 1994] 28–31); Ders., *TopCom.* 63,2; *MetaphCom.* 16,5. Ähnlich stellt sich für Themistius, *AnalPostParaphr.* 59,34–62,20, die Frage, warum Magnet, Bernstein und Schräpfkopf (σικνία) Anziehung ausüben.

²⁹ Platon, *Ion* 533de; vgl. Ch. Horn, Magnet; RAC 23 (2010) 999.

³⁰ Corpus Hermeticum 4,11.

³¹ Philo, *Praem.* 58. In *Opif.* 141 vergleicht er die mit der Entfernung abnehmende Wirkung des Magneten mit den über die Generationen abnehmenden körperlichen und seelischen Fähigkeiten des Menschen.

³² Origenes, *MtCom.* 10,19: καὶ τάχα ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων ἐστὶ τις πρὸς τινα φυσικὴ ὁλκή, ὡς τῇ μαγνησίᾳ λίθῳ πρὸς σίδηρον καὶ τῷ καλουμένῳ νάφθα πρὸς πῦρ, οὕτως τῇ τοιαύτῃ πρὸς θεῖαν δύναμιν. Ist es Zufall, dass Origenes anschließend das Gleichnis vom Senfkorn zitiert, das auch im Naassenerbericht und im Basilidesbe-

Galen stellt wie Origenes Magnetstein und Naphtha zusammen, hält ihre Kräfte für natürlich und vergleicht beider Verhalten mit der Anziehung, die das harmonische Körperliche auf die Seele ausübt.³³ Porphyrius vergleicht den Aufstieg der unbelasteten Seele zu Gott mit dem ‚Hinaufsteigen‘ des Eisens zum Magneten.³⁴ Nach Klemens von Alexandrien ziehen die biblischen Bücher lediglich die Leser an, die sie verstehen, ganz wie der Magnet nur das Eisen.³⁵ Die Orphica vergleichen die Kraft des Magneten mit der Liebe zwischen Mann und Frau,³⁶ Galen nennt die Kräfte der Organe,³⁷ Aëlius Aristides die Attraktivität einer Stadt.³⁸

Für Vergleiche solcher Art eignen sich die Stoffe offenbar, weil sie eine exklusive Kraftübertragung paradoxer Art auslösen, deren Ursache nicht sichtbar bzw. mit bekannten Naturkräften wie den Bewegungstendenzen der vier Elemente nicht zu erklären ist. Folglich schreiben einige Stimmen diese Wirkungen nicht der Natur, sondern der Seele zu. Diogenes Laërtius gibt über Thales die Auskunft: ‚Aristoteles und Hippias berichten, er denke sich auch das Leblose beseelt, eine Ansicht, zu der ihn die Beobachtung des Magnetsteins und des Bernsteinsteins führte.‘³⁹ Porphyrius ist der Meinung, die Wirkung des Magneten beruhe auf der Beseelung des Eisens durch das Pneuma des Magnetsteins.⁴⁰

richt (aber auch noch in anderen, bei Marcovich [o. Anm. 1] 46 Anm. 47 genannten Kontexten) auftaucht und als Gemeinsamkeit des Sondergutes gewertet wird?

³³ PsGalen (Porphyrius), *Ad Gaurum* 11,2. Insofern kann man fragen, ob diese Schrift tatsächlich, wie meist angenommen wird, Porphyrius zum Verfasser hat. Auch Johannes Philoponos, *Aetm.* 7,14 (274,15–23) hält die Kräfte für natürlich und vergleicht sie mit der Bewegungsübertragung der örtlich unbewegten Seele mittels des ἀννοειδὲς σῶμα auf die Körper.

³⁴ Porphyrius, *Abst.* 4,20.

³⁵ Klemens Alex., *Ecl.* 27,5. Plutarch, *De Iside* 61,15–20, zieht den Vergleich zu kosmischen Bewegungen.

³⁶ Orphica lithica, *Kerygmata* 11,1 f. (153 f. Halleux/Schamp); vgl. Lukian, *Imagin.* 1 (2,360,15–19 MacLeod).

³⁷ Galen, *De locis affectis* (8,66 Kühn), *ebd.* (8,422 Kühn); zu Galens Sicht der Wirkweise des Magneten vgl. A. Radl, *Der Magnetstein in der Antike* = Boethius 19 (Stuttgart 1988) 65–74.

³⁸ Aëlius Aristides, *Smyrnaikos politikos* [234,11] (1,380 f. Dindorf).

³⁹ Diogenes Laërtius, *Vit.* 1,24; vgl. Aristoteles, *De An.* 1,2 (405a19): ‚Auch Thales scheint nach dem, was man berichtet, die Seele für etwas Bewegungsfähiges aufzufassen, wenn er sagt, der Magnet habe eine Seele, weil er das Eisen bewege‘; vgl. Hippias (FVS 86B7). Die Kombination des Magneten mit dem Bernstein stammt an dieser Stelle möglicherweise von Diogenes.

⁴⁰ Porphyrius, *Abst.* 4,20: ‚Der Magnetstein gibt dem Eisen, das in seine Nähe kommt, Seele, und das schwerste Eisen wird leichtgemacht (oder: emporgehoben), wenn es auf das Pneuma des Steins zu hinaufsteigt.‘ Andere antike Lösungen stellt Radl, *Magnetstein* (o. Anm. 37) 171–202, dar. Die Erklärung mittels eines Pneuma geben auch Plutarch,

Wenn Kombinationen solcher Stoffe, gerade wenn sie zu Vergleichszwecken benutzt werden, verbreitet sind, scheint auf den ersten Blick eine Abhängigkeit der Quellen des Sondergutes voneinander nicht zwangsläufig zu sein. Die Gruppen könnten sich durchaus unabhängig voneinander solcher Illustrationsmittel bedient haben, gerade weil sie für unanschauliche metaphysische Spekulationen gut geeignet sind.⁴¹

b. *Das Problem des Hieraxvergleiches*

Bei näherem Zusehen scheint aber eine direktere Beziehung der Quellen untereinander dennoch nicht von der Hand zu weisen zu sein. Schon Staehelin bemerkte, dass die Anziehung des Goldes durch den Dorn/Stachel des Fisches Hierax in der antiken Literatur nur in der *Refutatio* auftaucht.⁴² Zwar lässt sich ca. dreihundert Jahre später im Physikkommentar des Simplicius ein vierter Beleg finden⁴³ und damit eine weitere Verbreitung dieser Information vermuten, aber die Erwähnung in den drei Berichten der *Refutatio* bleibt auffällig und erklärungsbedürftig.

Allerdings zeigen alle Darstellungen kein genaues naturkundliches Wissen und fußen sicher nicht auf eigener Anschauung, sondern beruhen auf mehrfacher Verwechslung. Daher lässt sich kaum noch aufklären, welches Tier in der *Refutatio* gemeint ist. Denn die anderen, allerdings nicht sehr zahlreichen antiken Beschreibungen des Fisches Hierax⁴⁴ kennen weder eine Gold anziehende Eigenschaft noch wissen sie davon, dass diese Fischart einen Dorn/Stachel besitzt. Manche Forscher identifizieren den Hierax der *Refutatio* mit dem Zitterrochen, wohl weil dieser auf Elektrizität beruhende Eigenschaften und damit potenti-

Quaest. Platon. 1005, und Klemens Alex., *Strom.* 2,26,2 (‚In diesen Fällen gehorcht das, was angezogen wird, deswegen, weil es durch ein geheimnisvolles Pneuma angezogen wird; dabei ist es nicht selbst die Ursache, aber doch Mitursache‘).

⁴¹ Salmon, *Cross-References* (o. Anm. 4) 395: ‚General agreements of this kind, of course, do not suffice to establish identity of authorship. They may be regarded as only showing affinities between the schools to the respective writers belonged, or characteristics of the age in which they lived‘.

⁴² Staehelin, *Quellen* (o. Anm. 5) 54 f.

⁴³ Simplicius, *PhysCom.* 1345,31–33: ‚Auch soll der Knochen des Fisches Hierax Gold anziehen, und vielleicht gibt auch er dem, was er unmittelbar angezogen hat, dieselbe Kraft mit‘.

⁴⁴ Es ist im Einzelfall zu erheben, ob in den Quellen die Vögel *ἰέραξ* (Falke/Habicht) bzw. *ἰέραξ πελάγιος* (Fischadler? Möwenart? ‚sea-hawk‘) oder der hier interessierende Meeresfisch *ἰέραξ θαλάσσιος* (‚sea-hawk‘, ‚sea-falcon‘, ‚Seeadler‘, ‚Seefalke‘) gemeint sind.

ell eine Anziehungskraft wie Bernstein und Magnet besitzt.⁴⁵ Aber der Zitterrochen ist der Antike schon seit alters her unter der Bezeichnung *νάρκη* geläufig,⁴⁶ man kannte seine Lähmung hervorruhenden Eigenschaften und nutzte sie im Übrigen zu medizinischen Zwecken.⁴⁷ Weder besitzt die *νάρκη* nach den antiken Beschreibungen einen einzigen Dorn, noch wurde ihr Anziehungskraft zugeschrieben.⁴⁸ Wohl lässt aufforchen, dass Oppian um 178 n.Chr. der *νάρκη* mehrere *κερκίδες* zuschreibt.⁴⁹ Einen *κέντρον* genannten Stachel besitzt hingegen der Stechrochen (*τρογών*),⁵⁰ ihm werden tödliche Eigenschaften, aber wiederum

⁴⁵ So Koschorke, *Ketzerbekämpfung* (o. Anm. 9) 97, Abramowski, *Logos-theologie* (o. Anm. 11) 34. Möglicherweise ist die Übersetzung von *κερκίς* durch Liddell/Scott, *Lexicon* (o. Anm. 18) 943a, dafür verantwortlich (vgl. u. Anm. 49). Thompson, *Glossary* (o. Anm. 19) 90, hat ebenfalls zur Verwirrung beigetragen, wenn er sich durch den Vergleich des *ἀετός* mit *ἰέραξ* und *τρογών* bei Kyranides, *Nat.hist.* 4,1 (244 Kaimakis [dessen Edition er nicht kannte]) zu der Äußerung hat verleiten lassen, der *ἰέραξ* sei eine Art Rochen (daher auch C. Scholten, *Johannes Philoponos, De opificio mundi* = FC 23,2 [Freiburg 1996] 466): Der Vergleich des Kyranides zwischen *ἀετός* (eagle ray) und *ἰέραξ* bezieht sich nur auf Haut und Farbe des Fisches, nicht aber auf andere Eigenschaften wie Körperform oder Stachel: ‚Der Adler ist ein Meeresfisch, schuppenlos, ähnlich dem Falken, aber schwärzer, in jeder Hinsicht einem Stechrochen ohne Stachel gleichend‘ (*Ἀετός ἐστὶν ἰχθύς θαλάσσιος, ἀλέπιδος, ὅμοιος ἰέρακι, μελανώτερος δέ, παρειακῶς κατὰ πάντα τρογόνι δίχα τοῦ κέντρον*); vgl. Kyranides, *Nat.hist.* 1,1,8 (21 Kaimakis). Danach dürfte der *ἰέραξ* gerade keinen Stachel haben.

⁴⁶ Platon, *Menon* 80a.c; Aristoteles, *Hist. animal.* 9,37 (620b12–23), *De partibus anim.* 4,13 (696a30); Plutarch, *De sollertia animal.* 978B–D (432–434 Cherniss/Helmbold); Aelian, *De natura animal.* 1,36 (1,54 Scholfield).

⁴⁷ Vgl. Aelian, *De natura animal.* 9,14 (2,232–234 Scholfield), Galen, *De locis affectis* (8,421 f. Kühn); die Nutzbarkeit der *νάρκη* für verschiedene Heilzwecke nennen Dioskurides, *De materia medica* 2,15, Aëtius, *Iatricorum lib.* 12,42 und Kyranides, *Nat.hist.* 4,44 (277 Kaimakis); von Anziehungskräften verlautet jedoch nichts. Interessant ist, dass Galen, *De locis affectis* (8,421 f. Kühn), nach der lähmenden Einwirkung der *νάρκη* auf die Hand des Fischers, vermittelt durch dessen Dreizack, als weiteres Beispiel für eine lediglich durch Berührung hervorgerufene Wirkung die sukzessive Anziehung des Magneten auf Eisen nennt.

⁴⁸ Aristoteles, *Hist. animal.* 9,37 (620b18–29): Das Organ der *νάρκη* wird unspezifisch *ρόπτρον* genannt; Aristoteles, *De partibus animal.* 4,13 (696a30): Sie trägt zwei Flossen am Schwanz.

⁴⁹ Oppian, *Hal.* 2,63 f. (286 Mair): ‚Dorne (*κερκίδες*) sind ihr (sc. der Narke) auf beiden Seiten eingeschaften, auf jeder Seite zwei‘. Im Folgenden wird die lähmende Wirkung bei Berührung, z. B. auf Beutetiere, beschrieben. Aber das ‚organ for the electric ray‘, wie Liddell/Scott (o. Anm. 18) 943a, *κερκίς* in 4. Bedeutung eben mit Verweis auf Oppian, *Hal.* 2,63, unpräzise übersetzen (NB: ‚electric ray‘ heißt im Englischen auch der Zitterrochen), übt keine Anziehungskraft aus. Zur Ursache der elektrischen Eigenschaften des Zitterrochens aus physiologischer Sicht vgl. www.fsbio-hannover.de/ofthewek/227.htm, Stand 02.04.09.

⁵⁰ Galen, *De locis affectis* 6 (8,195 Kühn); Aëtius, *Iatricorum lib.* 16,71, vgl. Thompson, *Glossary* (o. Anm. 19) 270 f. Der im Deutschen meist mit ‚Stachelrochen‘ übersetzte Fisch

keine Anziehungskräfte zugeschrieben.⁵¹ Möglicherweise liegt auch eine Verwechslung mit dem *χελιδών*, einem anderen fliegenden Fisch vor, der nach Oppian ebenfalls ein *κέντρον* besitzt.⁵² Es ist denkbar, dass naturkundliches Wissen über Fische mit kräftegeladenen Stacheln, wie es bei Oppian und Aelian greifbar wird, zirkulierte, aber in den Berichten der *Refutatio* falsche Bezüge hergestellt wurden. Der Fehler wird verständlicher, wenn verwertbares Wissen über den Hierax überhaupt erst in der Zeit Aelians (ca. 170–240 n.Chr.), also eben im ungefähren Zeitraum der Entstehungszeit der Quellen der *Refutatio*, Verbreitung gefunden und ins ‚kulturelle Gedächtnis‘ Einzug gehalten haben sollte. Die wie ein Versatzstück aus alchemistischer Tradition anmutende Behauptung Gold anziehender Fähigkeiten dieses und jeden anderen Fisches bleibt in jedem Fall unerklärt. Dass der Nachricht, der Dorn/Stachel des Hierax hätte Gold anziehende Eigenschaften, eine unmittelbare Beobachtung zugrunde liegt, ist auszuschließen.

Die Sethianer jedenfalls, die laut Autor alchemistische Kenntnisse, z. B. über die Scheidung von Gold und Erz, besitzen,⁵³ versicherten, der Stachel (*κέντρον*) des Fisches Hierax sei es, der Gold anziehende Qualitäten besitze. Die Naassener und Peraten hingegen haben das Körperteil des Fisches mit *κερκίς* bezeichnet und so vielleicht die physiologische Ursache der Wirkung angeben wollen, ohne allerdings zu merken, dass sie ebenfalls vom falschen Fisch sprachen.

βάτοξ (vgl. Aristoteles, *Tierkunde*, übers. v. P. Gohlke [Paderborn 1957] 506, Thompson, *Glossary* [o. Anm. 19] 26–28), scheint hingegen nach den Quellen keine Wirkungen mit seinem Stachel hervorzurufen.

⁵¹ Plinius, *Nat. hist.* 32,12 (25), Aelian, *De natura animal.* 1,56; vgl. 2,36; 2,50. Nach Basilius, *Hex.* 7,6, wirkt der Stachel sogar nach dem Tod des Stechrochens. Galen, *De locis affectis* 6 (8,195 Kühn), schreibt dem Stachel zwar Giftwirkung zu, allerdings keine Öffnung am Stachel, durch die das Gift austritt. Der Effekt trete durch eine pneumatische oder feuchte Substanz ein. Nach Dioscorides, *Euporista* 1,67, wirkt der geriebene Stachel gegen Zahnschmerzen.

⁵² Oppian, *Hal.* 2,457–461 (322 Mair); vgl. Thompson, *Glossary* (o. Anm. 19) 287. Allerdings verwechselt Thompson selbst irrtümlich *ίέραι* und *χελιδών*, wenn er Letzterem den Stachel abspricht; worauf sich seine Aussage stützt, der *Dactylopterus* (also wohl der *ίέραι* und nicht der *χελιδών*) habe einen langen und gefährlichen Stachel auf seinem Pre-operculum (vgl. www.fishbase.org/Glossary/Glossary.php?q=preopercle&language=english&sc=is:preopercle: „a boomerang-shaped bone whose edges form the posterior and lower margins of the cheek region; the most anterior of the bones comprising the gill cover“ [sc. Kiemendeckel]), ist nicht zu ersehen. Die Hippolytbelege kennt Thompson nicht.

⁵³ *Ref.* 5,21,4.

Was das Quellenproblem anbelangt, könnten, wenn man eine unmittelbare Abhängigkeit der Berichte voneinander annimmt, die Unterschiede Aufschluss über den Gang des Vermittlungsprozesses geben: Basilides operiert nur mit dem Naphthavergleich;⁵⁴ die Sethianer, die sich um das Beibringen von Anschauungsmaterial gekümmert haben,⁵⁵ könnten die ebenso bereits bekannten Vergleiche von Magnet und Bernstein und den Hieraxvergleich in den Diskurs eingespeist haben, die Naassener letzteren auf einen ‚besseren‘ Wissensstand gebracht und von diesen wiederum die Peraten übernommen haben; denn die Vorschaltung des Naphthavergleichs spricht wohl für sie als letztes Glied in der Kette. Dass in der Richtung von den Sethianern zu den anderen beiden Gruppen die Veränderung des Hieraxvergleichs erfolgt ist, ist eher wahrscheinlich als der umgekehrte Weg von den Naassenern und Peraten zu den Sethianern, weil die seltsamen Kräfte der νόχη bekannt gewesen sein dürften und, wie Oppian zu entnehmen ist, inzwischen vielleicht schon kursierte, dass diese mit der Knochensubstanz zusammenhingen. Simplicius, der sich zurückhaltend gegenüber der ganzen Angelegenheit verhält (λέγεται), äußert sich jedenfalls noch deutlicher in dieser Richtung und spricht nicht mehr von κέντρον oder κερκίς, sondern neutral vom Knochen (ὀστοῦν) des Fisches Hierax, der vielleicht (ἰσως) dem unmittelbar Angezogenen eine Kraft mitteilt, wie es Magnet und Bernstein vermögen.

c. Zwischenbilanz

Auf der Primärebene wäre ein Kontakt von drei, vielleicht vier Gruppen zur Erklärung der Gemeinsamkeiten also denkbar. Man kann aber nicht ausschließen, dass der Hieraxvergleich bereits in zwei Fassungen umlief. Naassener und Peraten wären dann von den Sethianern unabhängig. Es spricht in jedem Fall nichts dagegen, dass bereits physiologisch-medizinisch bewanderte und zugleich philosophisch-religiös interessierte Kreise die Vergleiche geschaffen und ins allgemeine kulturelle Gedächtnis eingespeist haben. Die Gruppen hätte sie übernommen oder vielleicht aneinander weitergegeben, ohne dass dafür eine *literarische* Abhängigkeit erforderlich gewesen wäre.

⁵⁴ Falsch Koschorke, *Ketzerbekämpfung* (o. Anm. 9) 98.

⁵⁵ So der Autor in *Ref.* 5,21,4.7.

d. Die Perspektiven der Redaktions- und Autorhypothese

Liefern die Redaktions- und die Autorhypothese andere Einsichten? Wenn ein Redaktor die Vergleiche eingefügt haben sollte, ist schwer zu verstehen, weshalb er nicht in allen acht Berichten sein Illustrationsmaterial einzutragen versucht hat und weshalb er im Falle der Vergleiche vier verschiedene Fassungen kreiert hat. Es ist auch nicht klar, warum er einmal diese und zweimal jene Variante des Hieraxvergleichs präsentiert, sollte es sich nicht um eine Variante oder Flüchtigkeit handeln. Ein Zusammenhang zu irgendwelchen Redaktorintentionen lässt sich jedenfalls nicht herstellen. Dass ein Bearbeiter aus orthodoxer oder häretischer Sicht häretische Vorstellungen illustrieren zu müssen glaubte, lässt sich zwar nicht ganz ausschließen, aber nicht als durchgängiges Motiv seiner vermuteten Arbeit im ‚Sondergut‘ erheben. Zumindest ist er damit bisher in der Forschung nicht aufgefallen bzw. in dieser Weise charakterisiert worden. Logostheologische Ambitionen können die Einträge auch nicht erklären. Denn selbst wenn man unterstellt, die auffällige Häufung von Logosaussagen im Sethianerbericht ginge in welcher Form auch immer auf einen Redaktor zurück,⁵⁶ bliebe unerklärt, weshalb in den anderen Berichten in diesem Zusammenhang keine logostheologischen Ergänzungen oder Systemkorrekturen vorgenommen wurden.⁵⁷ Umgekehrt geben die Vergleiche für die Rekonstruktion eines gedanklichen oder pädagogischen Profils des vermuteten Redaktors nichts her.

Aus der Perspektive der Autorhypothese sollten die Textabschnitte literarkritisch verwertbare Hinweise auf Einfügungen durch den Verfasser der *Refutatio* enthalten. Allerdings lässt der Umgang des Autors mit seinen Quellen kein durchgängiges Muster erkennen. Allgemeingültige Aussagen zu seiner Arbeitsweise sind schwierig. Nach gegenwärtigem Erkenntnisstand lässt sich die Annahme nicht aufrechterhalten, der Autor gebe seine Vorlagen, auch wenn er sie nicht selten kürze, im Wesentlichen wörtlich wieder.⁵⁸ Vielmehr folgt er keiner festen Methode der Quellenbenutzung: Wörtliche Zitate, Paraphrasen, Erläuterungen

⁵⁶ Abramowski, *Logostheologe* (o. Anm. 11) 27 f., allerdings ohne redaktionelle Abgrenzungen.

⁵⁷ Dass man nach Abramowski, *Logostheologe* (o. Anm. 11) 28, *Ref.* 6,17,7 durch *Ref.* 5,21,9 verstehen kann, besagt nichts über das Vorliegen einer redaktionellen Tätigkeit.

⁵⁸ Die Hypothese wurde entwickelt von Fricke, *Apophysis* (o. Anm. 5), bes. 47–49.

und Zusammenfassungen bilden ein schwer entwirrbares, patchworkartiges Konglomerat, das in Anlehnung an ähnliche antike Gepflogenheiten als Centotechnik bezeichnet wird.⁵⁹

Wohl lässt sich umrisshaft ein plausibles Motiv für Einfügungen durch den Autor dingfest machen: Es ist die Ausrichtung der *Refutatio* an einem heidnisch-christlichen Bildungspublikum. Der Autor verwirklicht sie mit einer Methode, die man als Leserlenkung oder strukturierte Wissensvermittlung bezeichnen kann:⁶⁰ Vorverweise machen Ankündigungen, legen Spuren und wecken die Neugier des Lesers,⁶¹ Zusammenfassungen,⁶² Rückverweise und Wiederholungen sollen ihn an früher Gelesenes erinnern, ihn selbst Zusammenhänge herstellen lassen und ihm Wege des Verstehens öffnen.⁶³ Zur Leserorientierung zählen Hinweise

⁵⁹ Als Indikator von Zitieren oder wenigstens text- bzw. inhaltsnahe Referieren gilt üblicherweise die wiederholt in den Berichten auftauchende Formel $\varphi\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\nu/\varphi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu$, wobei es im Einzelfall festzustellen gilt, ob sie vom Autor oder seiner Quelle stammt. Wie aber Mansfeld, *Heresiography* (o. Anm. 11) 322–325, an Beispielen belegt, ist sie kein verlässliches Indiz für ein wörtliches Zitat oder eine akkurate Paraphrase. Mit der Formel können sogar Aussagen Autoren zugewiesen werden, die diese gar nicht gemacht haben. Offenbar verwendet der Verfasser der *Refutatio* $\varphi\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\nu$ gerne, um den Eindruck von Quellennähe aufrechtzuerhalten und Expertentum zu suggerieren. Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 36: 'The main objective of the *Philosophumena* then seems to be to impress the audience—to show its author as a knowledgeable and learned writer of encyclopaedic education'.

⁶⁰ Dazu zählt mehr als das im Folgende Genannte; vgl. C. Scholten, 'Autor, Anliegen und Publikum der *Refutatio omnium haeresium*': *Colloque intern. sur la 'Réfutation de toutes les hérésies'* Université de Genève juin 2008 (im Druck).

⁶¹ Das betrifft Ankündigungen späterer Häretikerberichte in Teil 1 (*Ref.* 1–4)—vgl. *Ref.* 4,2 (auf Peraten); 4,13 (auf Kolarbasus); 4,46–51,9 (auf Simon und Valentin)—, gilt aber ebenso für Verweise innerhalb des ersten und zweiten Teils der *Refutatio*: vgl. *Ref.* 1,25,2 (... werden wir nicht verschweigen [*sc.* die pythagoreische Technik]); 1,26,4 (werden offenlegen); 4,2,2 (... wenn wir an den Logos darüber kommen); 4,13,1 (... beweisen werden, wenn wir dazu kommen); 4,51,13 (... wie wir zeigen werden, gibt es über Kopf des Drachens einen großen Disput in der fälschlich sog. Gnosis); 5,6,2 (... werden im Folgenden zeigen); 5,9,5 verweist auf 6,9,5 (Apophasis); 7,22,16 auf 7,25,1 (dritte Sohnschaft des Basilides). Dazu zählen auch die Überleitungen am Ende eines Buches, das den oder die nächsten Häretiker ankündigt.

⁶² Etwa *Ref.* 4,43; *Ref.* 10,1–30.

⁶³ Das gilt besonders für die Wiederholungen der philosophischen Lehren aus *Ref.* 1–4 in *Ref.* 5–9; vgl. z.B. Aristoteles als Vorlage des Basilides in *Ref.* 7,14: 'Wenn nun auch schon früher die Meinungen des Aristoteles dargetan wurden, so zögern wir jetzt nicht, sie vorher noch einmal kurz zusammengefasst zu dem Zweck zu behandeln, dass die Leser durch die unmittelbare Gegenüberstellung leicht erkennen, dass die Lehren des Basilides Klügelien des Aristoteles sind'; Platon und Pythagoras für Valentin in *Ref.* 6,21 f.; Heraklit für Noët in *Ref.* 9,8: 'Wenn wir auch schon früher die Lehre des Heraklit in den philosophischen Lehren dargestellt wurde, so ist es doch gut, sie zum Vergleich daneben zu stellen; so werden durch einen bündigeren Beweis die Anhänger dieses

auf eigene und fremde Schriften, die der Vertiefung des Stoffes dienen sollen, aber auch kommentierende Bemerkungen, die ein bestimmtes Wissen beim Leser voraussetzen und ihm das Verständnis eines referierten Stoffes eröffnen wollen.⁶⁴ Dazu zählen sicher auch in weit größerem Maße, als bisher gesehen, Aussagen, die mit der explikativen Wendung τοῦτο ἐστὶν oder in ähnlicher Weise eingeleitet werden.⁶⁵ Das Mittel der Leserlenkung sollte bei der Behandlung des Quellenproblems stärker in Rechnung gestellt werden. Aus dieser Perspektive wird die Existenz eines ‚Logostheologen‘ noch ein Stück zweifelhafter. Weder formal noch inhaltlich wird er den Lesern gezielt nahe gebracht. Der Autor hat ein solches, der Aufmerksamkeit zu empfehlendes Gegenüber nicht wahrgenommen.

Die Verwendung der naturkundlichen Vergleiche zu Illustrationszwecken würde zur Leserorientierung durch den Verfasser passen. Der Autor hätte mit ihrer Hilfe die häretischen Lehren verdeutlicht. Legt man das Motiv der Leserorientierung zugrunde, sind auch die Reihenfolge der Berichte und Rückbezüglichkeiten in der *Refutatio* im Auge zu behalten.

Wenn man mit solchen Überlegungen zum Umgang des Verfassers mit den Quellen und zu seinen Ambitionen gegenüber den Lesern die Vergleiche und ihre Kontexte liest, sind die Details allerdings ambivalent:

Für den Naassenerbericht lassen sich keine klaren Erkenntnisse gewinnen: Im Kontext finden sich zahlreiche φησί-Einschübe, meist direkt am Satz- oder Satzteilanfang nach dem ersten oder zweiten Wort. Das φησί unmittelbar vor den Vergleichen fällt aus dem Rahmen, da es satzmittig eingesetzt ist, signalisiert aber eher den Referatscharakter des Vorhergehenden. Die Vergleiche danach wirken angehängt; ihre Einfügung durch den Autor ist daher möglich, aber auch nicht sicher zu beweisen.⁶⁶ Es kann auch nicht ausgeschlossen werden, dass nur ein Vergleich, z. B. der Hieraxvergleich, vom Verfasser ergänzt wurde.

Mannes (sc. des Noët), die Christi Schüler zu sein vermeinen, klar darüber unterrichtet, dass sie dies nicht sind, sondern Schüler des ‚Dunklen‘ sind, u. a. Es gilt auch für direkte Rückbezüge im Häretikerteil auf den Teil (*Ref.* 1–4) mit den heidnischen Irrtümern: vgl. *Ref.* 6,39,3 (Verweis auf Buch gegen die Magier), und für Rückbezüge innerhalb der Teile: vgl. *Ref.* 1,19,23 (wie wir vorher gesagt haben); 1,20,3 (Platon); 1,20,6; 1,24,3; 4,11,2 (jeweils: vorher gesagt haben).

⁶⁴ Dazu zählen illustrierende Passagen wie z. B. *Ref.* 7,21,5: ‚... um zu verdeutlichen, was sie sagen, (gebe ich folgendes Beispiel) ...‘.

⁶⁵ Vgl. o. Anm. 10 und 12.

⁶⁶ Auch Abramowski, *Logostheologe* (o. Anm. 11) 35, meint, dass die Vergleiche weder syntaktisch noch inhaltlich genau in den Kontext passen und vermutlich τὸ

Im folgenden Peratenbericht sind die Vergleiche vorweg gestellt (ὥσπερ ... οὕτω) und ein φησί nach οὕτω eingeschoben. Das könnte darauf hinweisen, dass alle Vergleiche in der Quelle zu finden waren; sicher ist das jedoch wiederum nicht. Möglich ist auch, dass ursprünglich nur der Naphthavergleich oder die typische Kombination von Naphtha- und Bernsteinvergleich in der Peratenquelle stand. Denn das an den Naphthavergleich anschließende μάλλον δέ wirkt wie die Einleitung einer kommentierenden Bemerkung, ebenso wie die Betonung ἄλλο οὐδέν bzw. ἕτερον οὐδέν bei Magnet und Hieraxdorn einen präzisierend-gelehrten Anstrich haben könnte. Die Erinnerung an den Naassenerbericht könnte den Autor bewogen haben, die Beispiele im Leserinteresse zu komplettieren.

Noch unübersichtlicher ist der Sethianerbericht. Einerseits scheinen die Vergleiche an die Sachaussage (,Alles Vermischte nun, heißt es,⁶⁷ hat, wie gesagt,⁶⁸ den ihm eigenen Platz und läuft zum eigentümlichen Ort'), angeschlossen. Danach aber setzt der Text mit οὕτως an und bietet überdies ein zweites Mal den Magnetvergleich: ,So eilt der (Strahl) des mit dem Wasser vermischten Lichtes ... zum Logos ... mehr als das Eisen zum Herakleischen Stein'. Handelt es sich also bei den drei Vergleichen um eine Bemerkung des Autors, ausgelöst durch seine Erinnerung und durch den kurz darauf genannten Magnetvergleich, der dann im Sethianerbericht gestanden hätte? Gewiss wäre der Text ohne die drei Vergleiche verständlich,⁶⁹ aber es fällt schwer, eine Erklärung zu finden, warum der Autor, wenn er die drei Vergleiche eingeschoben haben sollte, jetzt, nachdem er im Naassener- und Peratenbericht κερκίς benutzt hat, von κέντρον spricht, es sei denn, er habe ohne große Überlegung eine sprachliche Variante gewählt. Es ist also genauso gut möglich, dass erst die zweite Erwähnung des Magnetsteins durch den Autor erfolgt ist. Er hätte den Gedanken des Naassenerberichtes, dass der soteriologische Anziehungsvorgang noch intensiver als die physiologischen Vorgänge wirkt,

οἰκεῖον die Assoziation auslöste. Das spricht für sie dafür, daß die Beispielgruppe ihren sachgemäßen Platz in V 21 [sc. im Sethianerbericht] hat und der Redaktor es ist, der sie auch in V 9 [sc. im Naassenerbericht] untergebracht hat'. Abramowski rechnet also bemerkenswerterweise nicht mit reiner Redaktion, sondern ebenfalls mit einem Ausgangspunkt in den Quellen: Der Redaktor ,läßt die Quellen sich auch gegenseitig interpretieren' (ebd. 37).

⁶⁷ Das eingeschobene frühe φησί bleibt für längere Zeit das letzte.

⁶⁸ καθὼς εἴρηται dürfte in der Quelle gestanden haben.

⁶⁹ ,Alles Vermischte nun, heißt es, hat, wie gesagt, den ihm eigenen Platz und läuft zum eigentümlichen Ort ... So eilt der (Strahl) des mit dem Wasser vermischten Lichtes ...'.

angesichts der in der Vorlage gefundenen Vergleiche für die Leser nochmals verdeutlichen wollen. Einen Hinweis, dass bereits seine Vorlage die Vergleiche geboten hat, gibt die an den folgenden Brunnenvergleich anschließende, als Aussage der Sethianer referierte Bemerkung, dieser Vergleich diene zum Erweis des Gesagten weit mehr als alles, was vorher gesagt wurde. Die Sethianer dürften sich damit wohl auch auf die naturkundlichen Vergleiche zuvor beziehen.⁷⁰ Im Übrigen bereitet die Annahme, dass der Magnetvergleich beim zweiten Mal auf einen Redaktor zurückgeht, noch größere Schwierigkeiten, weil ein Motiv für diesen zweiten Einschub nicht ersichtlich ist.

Der Basilidesbericht enthält zu Beginn in *Ref.* 7,25,5 ein einziges $\varphi\eta\sigma\iota$. Auffälligerweise kommt der Naphthavergleich sogar dreimal vor. Deswegen kann man beinahe ausschließen, dass sich ausschließlich der Autor der *Refutatio* zu Wort meldet. Warum sollte er dreimal kurz hintereinander den Naphthavergleich bemüht haben, wenn er in anderen Berichten ein größeres Vergleichsrepertoire vorliegen hatte bzw. selbst benutzt hat? Gerade vom Autorverhalten her ist schwer zu verstehen, warum er nicht—wie schon möglicherweise in den anderen Berichten zuvor—weiteres Illustrationsmaterial beige-steuert hat. Strittig ist in jedem Fall, wo der Autor zu Wort kommt. Möglicherweise hat er die erste Erwähnung als deiktischen Vorgriff auf den in der Quelle vorhandenen, im Kontext an zweiter Stelle stehenden Vergleich gemacht. Auch die dritte Erwähnung ‚Er ist gleichsam Naphtha‘ könnte nochmals Explikation des Autors der *Refutatio* sein. Es kann aber auch sein, dass die erste Erwähnung in der Quelle zu finden war und die zweite und dritte auf den Autor zurückgehen. Es spricht aber auch nichts dagegen, dass die dritte Nennung wieder zur Quelle gehört, ja es lässt sich noch nicht einmal ausschließen, dass alle drei Erwähnungen in der Quelle standen.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Schwierig ist einzuschätzen, ob der Autor der *Refutatio* im Zwischensatz ‚Dass dies so ist, heißt es, und alles Vermischte an den eigenen Orten gesondert wird, lerne‘ zu Wort kommt. Der Referatsgestus des $\varphi\eta\sigma\iota$ harmoniert mit der Urheberschaft der Sethianer für den Vergleich mit dem persischen Brunnen. Der Imperativ ‚lerne‘ dagegen könnte Ausdruck des Leserzuschnitts durch den Autor sein. Vielleicht hat er ein Sethianisches ‚lässt sich aus Folgendem lernen‘ imperativisch umgeformt.

⁷¹ Die von Löhr, *Basilides* (o. Anm. 7) 289 f. 301, ausgemachten Spannungen zwischen der ersten Naphthametapher (die Sohnschaft zieht die Kräfte empor) und der zweiten (der Sohn des großen Archonten der Ogdoas nimmt die Gedanken von der nach dem Grenz pneuma befindlichen Sohnschaft) wird man vielleicht für eine Aufteilung auf Quelle und Autor anführen können. Ob die Spannungen allerdings bestehen, sei dahingestellt: Gesagt werden soll anscheinend, dass der Sohn des Archonten der Ogdoas ebenfalls am soteriologischen Ertrag des Aufstiegs der aufgrund des Kommens des Evangeliums

e. *Folgerung*

Allein mit der Autorhypothese kann man also das Vorkommen der Vergleiche in den vier Berichten nicht vollständig erklären. Mehrere Anzeichen deuten mindestens in einem Fall (Basilides) auf eine Einbindung eines Vergleichs in den dem Autor vorliegenden Kontext hin. Aber die Beheimatung aller Vergleiche ausschließlich in der Primärebene ist ebenfalls unwahrscheinlich. Am naheliegendsten ist die Vermutung, dass der Autor einen oder mehrere in den Quellen vorgegebene Vergleiche zum Anlass genommen hat, seinerseits explikativ tätig zu werden und bei Gelegenheit aus seinem Wissen zu ergänzen. Wo genau das allerdings der Fall war, muss offen bleiben. Dass es sich beim Hieraxvergleich um eine gelehrte, nicht empirisch gewonnene Bemerkung handelt, könnte nur dann auf den Autor der *Refutatio* als Urheber weisen, wenn ihm κέντρον ohne genaues Wissen als bloße Variante von κερκίς absichtslos in die Feder geflossen ist.

3. EXEMPLARISCHE BIBELTEXTE

Ob sich mit der Annahme, Quellen seien durch Ergänzungen des Autors angereichert worden, zu denen ihn diese Texte selbst angeregt haben, weitere Ähnlichkeiten erklären lassen, soll kurz anhand zweier eigentümlich formulierter Schriftworte aus der großen, eine eigene Untersuchung erfordernden Zahl der in der *Refutatio* und ihren Quellen benutzten Zitate bzw. Anspielungen überprüft werden.⁷² Es ist weniger wichtig, ob sie als solche definitiv erkennbar und damit textkritisch von Bedeutung sind, vielmehr ist zu prüfen, ob sie charakteristische Eigenheiten aufweisen. Varianten im Umfeld der *Refutatio* sind stets mit zu berücksichtigen, um floskelhafte Züge zu erkennen. Die Kürze beider

auf dem Weg von unten nach oben befindlichen Gedanken der dritten Sohnschaft partizipiert und sich dieser Prozess ebenfalls nach Art des Naphthas vollzieht, das heißt, für glückselige Sohnschaft und Sohn des großen Archon ortsstabil funktioniert. Die Vermittlung wird auch nicht als Abstieg, sondern als Einhändigung (μεταδίδοσι) dargestellt.

⁷² Die Phrase *Ref.* 5,19,1 πάν ὁ τι νοήσει ἐπινοεῖς ἢ καὶ παραλείπεις μὴ νοηθέν (vgl. Marcovich [o. Anm. 1] 47) wird nicht gewählt, weil sie in der *Refutatio* in unterschiedlichen Fassungen vorkommt und deshalb nicht charakteristisch genug zu sein scheint; vgl. *Ref.* 6,9,7 (Simon), 7,22,1 (Basilides), 8,12,5 (Monoimos). Schon Salmon, *Cross-References* (o. Anm. 4) 392 f., ist bereit, ihr Sprichwortcharakter zuzubilligen. In *Ref.* 5,19,1 scheint es sich um ein Zitat eines Peratischen Textes zu handeln.

ausgewählter Texte lässt mit einer eingeschliffenen Sprache rechnen, die Übereinstimmungen brauchen also nicht mit schriftlicher Abhängigkeit erklärt zu werden.

a. *Eph.* 3,3–5

Als erstes Beispiel soll *Eph.* 3,3–5 dienen.⁷³ Die Stelle ist aus drei Gründen ‚problemscharf‘: Sie kommt sowohl innerhalb als auch außerhalb des ‚gnostischen Sondergutes‘ vor, sie wird jedes Mal nicht in der ‚Normalfassung‘, ... τὸ μυστήριον ... ὁ ἑτέραις γενεαῖς οὐκ ἐγνωρίσθη, sondern in der Variante, ... ταῖς προτέραις γενεαῖς οὐκ ἐγνωρίσθη geboten,⁷⁴ und sie wird bemerkenswerterweise von keinem anderen antiken Autor eben mit ... ταῖς προτέραις γενεαῖς ... zitiert.⁷⁵ Die textliche Übereinstimmung innerhalb der *Refutatio* ist somit auffällig und zeigt, dass eine Beschränkung jeder zukünftigen Untersuchung auf ein eng definiertes ‚Sondergut‘ hinfällig ist.

Im Naassenerbericht wird im Zusammenhang von *Ref.* 5,8,5 *Joh.* 1,3 f. in der Fassung ‚Denn alles ist durch ihn geworden, und ohne ihn ist nichts geworden. Was aber in ihm geworden ist, ist Leben‘ kommentiert. ‚Dieses Leben ist, heißt es, das unaussprechliche Geschlecht (γενεά) der vollkommenen Menschen, das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war‘ (*Eph.* 3,5).⁷⁶ Der Halbsatz aus *Eph.* 3,5 wird anscheinend aufgrund von Stichwortassoziation (γενεά) angeschlossen. Vielleicht waren die Naassener die Urheber der Zitatenverknüpfung; jedenfalls wird zu Beginn das typische Referatssignal φησὶν aufgeboten. Aber ebenso gut kann der Autor der *Refutatio* die Kombination aufgrund eigener Belesenheit hergestellt haben. Ein in *Eph.* 3,5 eingeschobenes nochmaliges φησὶν fehlt, was allerdings noch nichts besagen muss, da auch die anschließend referierte Kommentierung des οὐδέν aus *Joh.* 1,3 nicht mittels φησὶν geschieht.⁷⁷ Aber auf Eingriffe des Autors der *Refutatio* in seine Vorlage könnte die Reihenfolge hinweisen, in der erst die Erklärung des Begriffs

⁷³ Löhr, *Basilides* (o. Anm. 7) 297 Anm. 51, hat als erster auf den Fall hingewiesen.

⁷⁴ *Ref.* 5,8,5; 6,35,1 f.; 7,25,3; 7,26,7; vgl. Nestle-Aland, *Das Neue Testament Griechisch und Deutsch*, hg. v. B. u. K. Aland (Stuttgart 27 1986 = 2000) 507.

⁷⁵ Dies gilt nicht nur für Zeitgenossen wie Klemens Alex., *Strom.* 5,10,60; 5,87,1, und Origenes, *JohCom.* 6,4,26; 6,5,28; 13,46,305; 13,48,315, wie eine TLG-Recherche ergibt.

⁷⁶ *Ref.* 5,8,5: αὕτη, φήσιν, ἐστὶν „ἡ ζωὴ“ ἡ ἀρρητος γενεὰ τῶν τελείων ἀνθρώπων, ἢ προτέραις γενεαῖς οὐκ ἐγνω(ρί)σθη. Anschließend wird das οὐδέν aus *Joh.* 1,3 kommentiert. Zur ‚Normalfassung‘ dieser Textstelle vgl. Nestle-Aland (o. Anm. 74) 247.

⁷⁷ Deshalb konjiziert Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 155 φησὶν.

„Leben“ und dann die des Begriffs „Nichts“ vorgestellt wird, während im johanneischen Text das „Nichts“ dem „Leben“ voran steht und die Kommentierung dieser Ordnung gewöhnlich folgt.⁷⁸

Schwierig zu beurteilen ist der Passus *Ref.* 6,35,1 f. im Valentinianerbericht; er lautet: „Alle Propheten und das Gesetz haben vom (ἀπό) Demiurgen her, einem törichtem Gott, gesprochen, selbst Toren, die nichts wissen. Deswegen, heißt es, sagt der Erlöser: „Alle, die vor mir gekommen sind, sind Diebe und Räuber“ (*Joh.* 10,8), und der Apostel: „Das Geheimnis“, „das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war““ (vgl. *Eph.* 3,3.5). Für die Urheberschaft der Valentinianer wie die des Autors lassen sich Gründe nennen. Die exegetischen Usancen weisen auf die Valentinianer hin. Sie könnten mit zwei Zitaten aus einem zweigeteilten „Neuen Testament“, einem Jesuswort (Evangelien) und einem Apostelwort (Paulus), die Unzulänglichkeit von Tora und Propheten belegt haben. Dass der Autor der *Refutatio* ein zusätzliches biblisches Argument für die Abwertung des Alten Testaments geliefert haben soll, ist kaum vorstellbar. Er expliziert höchstens, unterstützt aber nicht häretische Anschauungen.

Freilich ist die Wendung „Das Geheimnis“, „das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war“, bereits eine Kombination reduktiver Art.⁷⁹ Möglicherweise fand der Autor der *Refutatio* nur die valentinianische Aussage vor, dass nach Paulus die Erlösung durch Christus dem Demiurgen und seinen Organen verborgen geblieben sei und somit die paulinische Bezeichnung „Mysterium“ verdiene, und hat dann zwecks Verdeutlichung das ihm schon geläufige „... das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war“ hinzugefügt.

Der Basilidesbericht enthält in *Ref.* 7,25,3 dieselbe reduktive Fassung von *Eph.* 3,3–5 („dies, heißt es, ist „das Geheimnis“, „das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war““). Die Wendung hat als ganze explikativen Charakter und dient als Beleg für den im Schweigen verharrenden, dem Archon der Ogdoas verborgen bleibenden Bereich oberhalb des Firmaments. Das anfänglich in den Satz eingeschobene φησὶν weist zwar auf Referatsabsichten des Autors hin, besagt aber nicht, dass der

⁷⁸ Irenaeus, *Adv.haer.* 1,8,5, präsentiert die valentinianische Johannesprologkommentierung anhand der Abfolge des Bibeltextes. Auch Theodot bei Klemens Alex., *Exc.Theod.* 6,4 (vgl. 45,3) und Herakleon bei Origenes, *Joh.Com.* 2,14 und 2,21, scheinen sich mit ihrer Kommentierung an die Abfolge der Bibelverse zu halten.

⁷⁹ Es könnten *Eph.* 3,3 und 3,5 verbunden worden sein, aber wohl nicht in Umformulierung *Eph.* 3,4 ἐν τῷ μυστηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ und *Eph.* 3,5.

entscheidende Passus wörtlich so in der Vorlage stand. Eine Urheber-schaft des Autors der *Refutatio* wenigstens in Bezug auf den Wortlaut ist nicht ausgeschlossen.

Eph. 3,5 wird im Basilidesbericht in *Ref.* 7,26,7 noch ein zweites Mal verwendet. Diesmal ist ‚das Geheimnis, das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war‘, gerade nicht ein mittels *φησί* präsentierte, scheinbar der Vorlage angehörendes explizierendes Zitat, sondern ein vollständig in den Satz eingebundener Passus, der sich auf die gestaltlos zurückgelassene Sohnschaft bezieht. Stattdessen wird unmittelbar anschließend die Offenbarung an diese Sohnschaft mit einem anderen, jetzt mit *φησὶν* vorgestellten Teilzitat aus *Eph.* 3,3 sowie *2 Kor.* 12,4 dokumentiert.⁸⁰ *μυστήριον* könnte also das Stichwort für eine unter der Hand erfolgte assoziative Autorergänzung (‚das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war‘) gewesen sein, während die folgenden Zitate anscheinend der Vorlage angehören. Eine redaktionelle Einfügung von *Eph.* 3,5 scheidet jedenfalls höchstwahrscheinlich aus. Denn Anzeichen einer bewussten Redaktions-tätigkeit fehlen. Beinahe ebenso sicher kann man eine direkte Abhängig-keit der Quellen voneinander ausschließen. Es lässt sich kein Grund angeben, weshalb die eine Vorlage von der anderen in einem nicht eigens hervorgehobenen Zusammenhang ein Zitat in einer sehr spezifischen Weise kopiert hätte. Zwar ist denkbar, dass alle Berichte in einem histo-rischen Kontext entstanden sind, in dem ein solcher Bibeltext benutzt wurde, doch wäre dieser gegenüber dem zeitgenössischen Feld völlig iso-liert und die Übereinstimmung der Vorlagen schon aus Gründen einer vermutlichen Ungleichzeitigkeit der Vorlagen schwierig. Daher liegt die Hypothese näher, dass eine einzige Person, nämlich der Autor, verant-wortlich für den Wortlaut an dieser Stelle ist. Seine Diktion kann er von einer seiner Vorlagen übernommen haben; ein floskelhaftes Versatz-stück einer Quelle, in diesem Fall kämen die Valentinianer, vielleicht gemeinsam mit Basilides, in Frage, könnte zur Nachahmung verleitet und sprachbildend gewirkt haben.

b. *Joh.* 4,10 und 4,14

Das zweite Beispiel, die Kontraktion von *Joh.* 4,10 und 4,14 zu der Wendung ζῶν ὕδωρ ἀλλόμενον, findet sich in antiken Texten nur im

⁸⁰ *Ref.* 7,26,7: ‚... sollte ... der Sohnschaft das Geheimnis geoffenbart werden, das den früheren Geschlechtern unbekannt war (*Eph.* 3,5), wie geschrieben steht, heißt es, ‚durch Offenbarung wurde mir das Geheimnis bekannt‘ (*Eph.* 3,3) und ‚ich hörte geheime Worte, die dem Menschen auszusprechen nicht zusteht‘ (*2 Kor.* 12,4)‘.

Naassener-, Peraten- und Justinreferat.⁸¹ Im Naassenerbericht *Ref.* 5,9,18 heißt es: ‚Das, heißt es, (sc. der Euphrat) ist das Wasser über dem Firmament, über das, heißt es, der Erlöser sagt: ‚Wenn du wüsstest, wer der Bittende ist, du würdest ihn bitten und er gäbe dir lebendiges, quellendes Wasser (ζῶν ὕδωρ ἀλλόμενον) zu trinken‘. Allem Anschein nach haben die Naassener Schriftzitate zusammengestellt, die allegorisch-typologisch *Gen.* 2,14 deuten. Das zweimalige φησί scheint darauf hinzuweisen, dass der Autor der *Refutatio* sie seiner Vorlage entnimmt, und es ist sehr gut möglich, dass er dort bereits die Kombination von *Joh.* 4,10 und 14 vorfand. Das lässt sich allerdings nicht endgültig beweisen, da er die Verkürzung auch selbst vorgenommen haben kann. Andererseits ist die Verbindung nicht so eingeschliffen, dass im Naassenerbericht nicht auch ein gewöhnliches ζῶν ὕδωρ benutzt werden konnte.⁸²

Im Sethianerbericht fehlen an der betreffenden Stelle *Ref.* 5,19,21 Hinweise auf eine wörtliche Wiedergabe. Der Satz ‚Nachdem er (sc. der Logos) in die scheußlichen Geheimnisse im Mutterschoß eingegangen war, wurde er abgewaschen und trank den Becher des lebendigen, sprudelnden Wassers, den unbedingt der trinken muss, der die Knechtsgehalt ablegen und das himmlische Gewand anziehen will‘ klingt sehr nach einer Formulierung aus der Perspektive des Autors (z. B. ‚scheußliche Mysterien‘; ‚der trinken muss‘), zumal er unmittelbar anschließend in *Ref.* 5,20,1 berichtet, er habe die Aussagen der Sethianer zusammengefasst. Daher dürfte ihm auch die johanneische Wendung zuzuschreiben sein.

Nicht eindeutig liegt der Fall im Justinbericht *Ref.* 5,27,2; dort heißt es: ‚Wenn einer diesen Eid geschworen hat, geht er zu dem Guten ein und sieht, was kein Auge gesehen und kein Ohr gehört und was in keines Menschen Herz gedrunken ist‘ (*1 Kor.* 2,9), und trinkt vom lebendigen Wasser, was Waschung für sie ist, wie sie meinen, ‚Quelle des lebendigen, sprudelnden Wassers‘. Zur Initiationspraxis Justins und seiner Anhänger gehörte offenbar eine Taufe in ‚lebendigem Wasser‘.⁸³ Gut biblisch

⁸¹ Dies ergibt eine TLG-Recherche und gilt auch für die von Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 169 im Apparat genannten koptischen Nag-Hammadi-Texte. Auf die Wendung ζῶν ὕδωρ ἀλλόμενον machen Staehelin, *Quellen* (o. Anm. 5) 58–60, und Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 47 aufmerksam.

⁸² *Ref.* 5,7,19. Leider gibt es auch an dieser Stelle keine Klarheit, ob die Naassener oder der Autor den Ausdruck ζῶν ὕδωρ gewählt haben.

⁸³ Unwahrscheinlich ist, dass das ‚Trinken des Wassers‘ wörtlich gemeint ist.

hätten sie das Geschehen als (Wieder)Beginn des beständigen Wirkens der übernatürlichen Kräfte im Getauften gedeutet.⁸⁴ Dass sie diese Meinung hegten, muss allerdings nicht heißen, dass sie Urheber der Wendung ‚Quelle des lebendigen, sprudelnden Wassers‘ waren; ein *φησί* wird an der Stelle nicht eingeschoben. Vielmehr könnte der Autor im ‚Trinken des lebendigen Wassers‘ einen Anknüpfungspunkt gesehen zu haben, das Gemeinte, das die Justinanhänger vielleicht wie in *Joh. 4,14* als *πηγή ὕδατος ἀλλόμενου* ausdrückten, als *πηγή ζώντος ὕδατος ἀλλόμενου* zu präzisieren. Erst anschließend geht der Verfasser wieder in den Referatsmodus mit *φησί* über.

‚Eine Hand [hat] in diesen Stellen gewaltet‘, faßt Staehelin seine Sicht des Gebrauchs von *Joh. 4,10.14* in der *Refutatio* zusammen,⁸⁵ und versteht darunter die des Redaktors. Dass eine einzige Person letztverantwortlich formuliert hat, ist sehr wahrscheinlich. Dann ist es jedoch die einfachere Lösung, den Autor der *Refutatio* selbst in dieser Rolle zu sehen. Nicht auszuschließen aber ist, dass der Anstoß wiederum von einer Quelle, in diesem Fall von den Naassenern, ausgegangen ist.

4. FAZIT

Auch die beiden Schriftzitate zeigen also, dass damit gerechnet werden muss, dass Wendungen in einer Quelle ein gleiches Sprechen des Autors in den anderen Vorlagen angeregt haben können, sollte er nicht ohnehin für die Übereinstimmungen allein verantwortlich sein. Die Vorlagen haben ihm inhaltliche und sprachliche Anregungen geliefert. Leserorientierte Ambitionen können mit in die Darstellung eingeflossen sein und würden zu seiner publikumsbezogenen Gesamtausrichtung passen. Ein Redaktor kommt als Erklärung kaum in Frage, weil die erwogenen häresiologischen oder weltanschaulichen Anliegen im Einzelfall nicht aufzuspielen sind und kein durchgängiges Motiv von Redaktion ermittelbar ist. Die sprachlichen Kongruenzen und Kopien fast identischer kurzer Wortfolgen gehen wahrscheinlich sehr häufig auf den Autor selbst zurück. Mit der Annahme von Einwirkungen der Quellen auf den Autor harmoniert die Beobachtung, dass er anscheinend sogar gelegentlich so weit gegangen ist, seine Aussagen über pagane Phänomene der zu bekämpfenden

⁸⁴ Vgl. Philo, *Post.* 129.

⁸⁵ Staehelin, *Quellen* (o. Anm. 5) 60.

Irrlehre zu entnehmen.⁸⁶ Ob sich die gewonnenen Erkenntnisse auf die *Refutatio* insgesamt übertragen lassen, ist zu untersuchen. Ein eng definiertes ‚gnostisches Sondergut‘ erweist sich in jedem Fall als Untersuchungsbasis zu schmal.

⁸⁶ Marcovich (o. Anm. 1) 21. 37 f.; als bestes Beispiel dient die Peratistische Kommentierung Arats *Ref.* 5,16,15 f. (vgl. *Ref.* 5,8,34), welche die Quelle der Aratpassagen *Ref.* 4,47,1 f. gewesen zu sein scheint.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

MOTIFS ET EXPRESSIONS MYSTIQUES DANS L'ÉVANGILE DE JUDAS

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L'*Évangile de Judas*,¹ troisième écrit du Codex dit Tchacos, nouvellement retrouvé en Moyenne-Égypte, est un texte polyphonique qui mérite d'être étudié selon plusieurs angles de vue. Dans nos recherches sur ce document, composé en grec au II^e siècle et traduit en copte au IV^e siècle, nous avons attiré l'attention sur l'intérêt qu'il représente pour l'étude à la fois de la mystique juive et gnostique et de l'angélogie. Dans deux précédents articles nous avons mis en lumière la réutilisation de thèmes propres au judaïsme apocalyptique et ésotérique opérée par l'auteur de l'*Évangile de Judas*.² Par ailleurs, dans d'autres travaux, nous avons plus largement considéré l'influence de la littérature juive mystique sur les textes de Nag Hammadi.³

¹ *The Gospel of Judas Together with the Letter of Peter to Philip, James, and a Book of Allogenes from Codex Tchacos*, Critical Edition, Coptic Text edited by R. Kasser and G. Wurst. Introductions, Translations and Notes by R. Kasser, M. Meyer, G. Wurst, and F. Gaudard, Washington, D.C., National Geographic, 2007. Voir aussi R. Kasser, M. Meyer, G. Wurst eds., *The Gospel of Judas*, With Additional Commentary by B.D. Ehrman, Washington, D.C., National Geographic, 2006.

² M. Scopello, «Traditions angélogiques et mystique juive dans l'Évangile de Judas», dans *The Gospel of Judas in Context*, Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas, Paris-Sorbonne, October 27th–28th 2006, M. Scopello éd., Leiden, Brill, 2008, pp. 123–134; Idem, «Les anges dans l'Évangile de Judas : aperçu préliminaire», dans *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient. Hommage à Michel Tardieu*, M.-A. Moezzi et J.-D. Dubois dir., Brepols, 2009, pp. 589–598.

³ M. Scopello, «L'Allogène (NH XI, 3) : traduction et annotation», dans *Écrits gnostiques, La bibliothèque de Nag Hammadi*, J.-P. Mahé et P.-H. Poirier dir., Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard, 2007, surtout pp. 1544–1546; Idem, «L'âme en fuite : le traité de l'Allogène et la mystique juive», dans *Gnose et philosophie*, J.-M. Narbonne, P.-H. Poirier eds., Québec/Paris, Les Presses de l'Université Laval/Vrin, pp. 97–119. Voir aussi C. Dogniez et M. Scopello, «Autour des anges : traditions juives et relectures gnostiques», dans *Mélanges Wolf-Peter Funk*, L. Painchaud, P.-H. Poirier eds., «Bibliothèque copte de

Nous allons porter notre attention, dans cet article en hommage à Johannes van Oort qui a consacré plusieurs publications importantes à l'*Évangile de Judas*,⁴ sur l'un des exposés de doctrine ésotérique faits par Jésus à Judas. Les motifs et les expressions retenus dans cet exposé assument une coloration plus précise si on les examine à la lumière de textes appartenant au judaïsme mystique où l'on a prêté une attention soutenue aux représentations du monde céleste, aux demeures de Dieu et à la cour de ses anges. Une lecture attentive de ce passage, à la lumière des corpus juifs ésotériques (écrits hébraïques du corpus de la Merkaba⁵ et des Hekhaloth;⁶ corpus des pseudépigraphes en langue grecque), permet en effet, nous semble-t-il, de dégager le sens technique des expressions et des termes qui y sont employés. C'est la valeur technique des termes que notre traduction essaie de mettre en évidence.

L'exposé doctrinal qui nous intéresse débute en *ÉvJudas* 47, 2 :

²[Viens] pour que je t'instruise ³sur les [arcanes] ⁴qu'aucun homme ne verra. ⁵Il existe en effet un Éon (αἰών) grand et ⁶sans limites ⁷dont aucune classe (γενεά) d'anges ⁸n'a pu voir la dimension, ⁹[dans lequel est le] grand [Esprit] (πνεῦμα) invisible ¹⁰qu'aucun œil d'ange (ἄγγελος) ¹¹n'a jamais vu, aucune pensée ¹²n'a jamais saisi et ¹³qui n'a jamais été appelé d'un nom. (47, 2-13)

Jésus revêt ici les traits de l'ange instructeur qui communique à un initié les secrets célestes. L'auteur de l'*Évangile de Judas*, comme bien d'autres maîtres gnostiques, s'approprie de ce thème, dont l'on trouvait déjà des traces dans la Bible,⁷ et qui est l'un des fondements de la littérature ésotérique juive, en l'adaptant au personnage de Jésus qui devient ainsi le transmetteur des mystères divins. Le récepteur de la révélation est

Nag Hammadi », Section « Études » 7, Québec-Louvain, PUL-Peeters, 2005, pp. 180-225. Nous renvoyons à notre ouvrage sur *L'angélologie dans l'Évangile de Judas* (à paraître).

⁴ Johannes van Oort, *Het Evangelie van Judas. Inleiding, vertaling, toelichting*, Kampen, Uitgeverij Ten Have 2007. Idem, *Het Evangelie van Judas. Kleine editie. Met een Nawoord van Prof. Dr. A.F.J. Klijn*, Kampen, Uitgeverij Ten Have, 2007. Idem, « Het Evangelie van Judas », dans J. Slavenburg éd., *Het Grote Boek der Apokriefen. Geheime vroeg-christelijke teksten*, Deventer, Uitgeverij Ankh-Hermes 2009, pp. 84-107. Idem, « Irenaeus on the Gospel of Judas: An Analysis of the Evidence in Context », dans A.D. DeConick éd., *Codex Judas Papers: Proceedings of the International Congress on Codex Tchacos held at Rice University, Houston, Texas, March 13-16, 2008*, « Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies » 72, Leiden/Boston, Brill, 2009, pp. 43-56.

⁵ On entend par Merkaba la littérature qui spéculé sur le Char et le Trône divins.

⁶ Il s'agit de la littérature des Palais célestes.

⁷ Par exemple chez Zacharie et Daniel.

un disciple privilégié, dans le cas présent, Judas. Le thème de l'ange instructeur trouve de nombreux exemples dans les textes du judaïsme mystique où un ange particulièrement haut placé est chargé par Dieu de révéler les ἀπόρρητα au voyageur céleste : que l'on pense à Michel dans le I *Hénoch*⁸ et dans le *Testament d'Abraham*,⁹ à Ouriel dans le IV *Esdras*¹⁰ ou encore à Yaoël dans l'*Apocalypse d'Abraham*¹¹ et à l'ange anonyme dans le *Testament de Job*.¹²

LES [ARCANES] QU'AUCUN HOMME NE VERRA

Le début du passage met en évidence l'extraordinaire privilège que Jésus octroie à Judas : les arcanes¹³ « qu'aucun homme ne verra » (*ÉvJudas* 47, 3–5). Dans les récits mystiques juifs, l'initié est le plus souvent représenté comme un voyageur céleste qui « voit » ce que l'ange lui montre. L'enseignement offert par l'ange découle de l'action de montrer : la littérature intertestamentaire a conservé plusieurs récits de cet instructif voyage au ciel, dont les protagonistes sont, parmi d'autres, Abraham, Hénoch ou Esdras. Dans l'exorde du I *Hénoch*,¹⁴ le patriarche ouvre ainsi les récits de ses visions :

[ms E : Voici ce que les saints anges m'ont fait voir, c'est d'eux que j'ai tout entendu] et, en contemplant, j'ai acquis le savoir.

Ce n'est qu'un exemple. Le terme de « voir » marque de façon constante d'abord les visions eues en rêve, puis les voyages d'Hénoch lors de son ascension à travers les cieux jusqu'aux palais de Dieu. Le chapitre LXXI en fournit un bel exemple :

⁸ I *Hénoch* ou *Hénoch* éthiopien ; nous suivons, pour ce texte que nous allons citer à plusieurs reprises, la traduction d'A. Caquot, publiée dans *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, sous la direction d'A. Dupont-Sommer et M. Philonenko, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, pp. 465–625.

⁹ Ch. X et *passim*.

¹⁰ Par ex., IV *Esdras* V, 31 (paroles de l'ange Ouriel à Esdras) : « Écoute-moi, instruis-toi, sois attentif, je vais te parler encore ».

¹¹ *Passim*.

¹² *Testament de Job* III, 1 : « Une grande voix vint à moi (...) et me dit : Lève-toi et je te montrerai qui est celui que tu veux connaître ».

¹³ R. Kasser, *The Gospel of Judas Together with the Letter of Peter to Philip, James, and a Book of Allogenes from Codex Tchacos*, p. 246, reconstruit par [choses secrètes] ; le terme est dans la lacune mais on peut facilement le déduire du contexte.

¹⁴ Traduction par A. Caquot, dans *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, p. 471.

Ensuite il arriva que mon âme fut enlevée et élevée dans les cieux. J'ai vu les saints êtres angéliques marcher sur des flammes de feu (...) j'ai vu deux fleuves de feu (...). Michel, l'un des saints anges, m'a pris la main droite, il m'a relevé et m'a conduit vers tous les mystères. Il m'a montré tous les mystères de miséricorde, il m'a montré tous les mystères de justice, Il m'a montré tous les mystères des extrémités du ciel.

Encore plus évidente est l'insistance sur le fait de « montrer » de la part de l'ange instructeur (ou des anges instructeurs) et de « voir » de la part de l'initié dans le *Livre des secrets d'Hénoch* (II *Hénoch*). Dans cet écrit conservé en slavon, traduit du grec,¹⁵ chaque étape de l'ascension du patriarche à travers les sept cieux est marquée par des expressions identiques, élaborées autour des actes de « montrer » et de « voir ».¹⁶

Si les textes gnostiques mettent plusieurs fois en scène un voyage dans les hauteurs comme cadre de la révélation des mystères—c'est le cas, par exemple, dans les traités de *Zostrien* (NH VIII, 1) ou d'*Allogène* (NH XI, 3)—il en va autrement dans l'*Évangile de Judas*: Judas, en effet, n'est pas transporté au ciel pour voir et entendre les divins secrets, néanmoins l'auteur de l'apocryphe garde dans son traité le langage typique des récits des voyages célestes.

L'expression « [les arcanes] qu'aucun homme ne verra », qui marque l'extrême faveur consentie au myste, est également un leitmotiv de la littérature ésotérique apocalyptique et mystique. Citons à nouveau le I *Hénoch* XIX, 3, où le patriarche s'exprime ainsi lors de sa première visite au ciel:

Moi, Hénoch, j'ai vu ces spectacles, moi seul j'ai vu les bornes de l'univers.
Pas un homme, pas un seul, ne pourra les voir comme moi.

¹⁵ Texte traduit, présenté et annoté par A. Vaillant et M. Philonenko, dans *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, pp. 1167-1223.

¹⁶ II *Hénoch* IV, 1: « Ils (les deux hommes, c'est-à-dire les deux anges) me montrèrent les mouvements des maîtres des étoiles »; IV, 2 « Ils me montrèrent deux cents anges ... »; IV, 3: « ils me montrèrent une mer très grande ... »; V, 1: « ils me montrèrent les dépôts des neiges et des glaces »; VI, 1: « Ils me montrèrent les réservoirs des nuages ... » (au premier ciel). Au deuxième ciel: VII, 1 « Ils me montrèrent des prisonniers (...) et là je vis des anges condamnés ». Au troisième ciel: X, 1: « ils me firent monter au nord du ciel et me montrèrent un lieu terrible ». Au quatrième ciel: XI, 1-2: « Ils me montrèrent tous les mouvements (...) et je (...) vis ... »; XIII, 1: « ils me montrèrent les portes »; cf. XIV, 1; XV, 1; XVI, 1; XVII, 1: « Je vis une milice ». Au cinquième ciel: XVIII, 1: « Je vis ». Au sixième ciel: XIX, 1: « Je vis ». Au septième ciel: XX, 1: « Je vis »; XX, 2: « Ils me montrèrent »; XXII, 1: « Je vis ».

Sans multiplier les exemples, rappelons encore deux passages du IV *Esdras*.¹⁷ Dans le premier, l'ange révélateur (Ouriel) rapporte les paroles du Très-Haut concernant Esdras :

Tel est mon jugement, ainsi l'ai-je établi. Mais je ne l'ai révélé qu'à toi seul.
(IV *Esdras* VII, 44)

Dans le second passage, en clôture de la cinquième vision octroyée à Esdras, on lit :

Tel est le songe que tu as vu et telle est son interprétation. Mais toi seul a été jugé digne de connaître les secrets du Très-Haut. (IV *Esdras* XII, 35–36)

LE GRAND ÉON

La définition de l'éon comme étant « grand » et « sans limites » (ⲁⲧⲁⲣⲏⲭⲁⲓ)¹⁸ et dont même les anges ne peuvent apprécier les « dimensions » (ϣⲓ),¹⁹ telle qu'on la lit en *ÉvJudas* 47,5–6, rappelle un élément de la vision de Judas, que celui-ci avait décrite à Jésus :

Je me suis rendu ensuite au lieu où [] après toi. J'ai vu [une maison] et mes yeux ne pouvaient en saisir les mesures (ϣⲓ). De grands hommes l'entouraient.²⁰
(*ÉvJudas* 45, 3–4)

Le thème de l'incommensurable grandeur et de la taille (ϣⲓ) extraordinaire de la maison²¹—entendons la demeure céleste—est aussi un motif propre aux textes mystiques juifs où l'initié, dans son ascension, est admis à contempler les palais célestes. Le I *Hénoch*, en relatant la vision des demeures divines que perçoit le visionnaire, insistait déjà sur la notion

¹⁷ Traduction par P. Geoltrain, dans *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, pp. 1395–1465.

¹⁸ Ce terme copte traduit le grec ἀνεξίχνιστος. On pourra nous objecter que ce terme issu de la théologie négative est propre à la philosophie post-platonicienne. Néanmoins le contexte où il se trouve ici est clairement judaïsant ; par ailleurs la terminologie grecque a été souvent reprise et réutilisée par certains auteurs de langue grecque du judaïsme hellénistique.

¹⁹ Le terme ϣⲓ traduit le grec μέτρον ou στάθμος. Le terme de « sans limites » ou « incommensurable » définit le Premier principe dans plusieurs textes gnostiques redevables de la théologie négative de tradition platonicienne. Cf. par ex., *Allogène* NH XI, 3 45, 15 : ⲁⲣⲧⲁⲓ.

²⁰ Nous rendons par « hommes » le terme traduit par « gens » (« great people ») par les éditeurs de l'*Évangile de Judas*. Les « hommes » sont un synonyme des « anges » : nous renvoyons à notre article « Traditions angélogiques et mystique juive dans l'Évangile de Judas », dans *The Gospel of Judas in Context*, pp. 131–132.

²¹ Nous avons traité du thème de la « maison », entendons la demeure de Dieu ou le Temple céleste, dans ce même article « Traditions angélogiques », p. 130.

de grandeur : le premier palais céleste où Hénoc parvient, porté sur les ailes des vents, est « grandiose, bâti en grêlons (...), ardent comme du feu, glacial comme de la neige » (XIV, 10). Le deuxième palais qui s'offre à sa contemplation est « plus vaste que le premier (...), tout bâti en langues de feu » (XIV, 15). C'est dans ce palais que se trouve le trône où siège la Gloire suprême (XIV, 20). À la grandeur des demeures divines font pendant les spéculations autour de l'envergure de Dieu, le *Chiour'qoma*,²² élaborées dans les cercles mystiques.

De ces spéculations l'on trouve déjà les premières traces dans II *Hénoc*²³ ainsi qu'un développement plus significatif dans le III *Hénoc* (ou *Sepher Hekhaloth*).²⁴ Dans ce traité d'angélologie qui a durablement influencé la mystique juive médiévale et que Charles Mopsik, éminent spécialiste du judaïsme ésotérique, a défini comme « un ouvrage se situant à un carrefour entre l'ancienne littérature apocalyptique et la littérature plus récente de la mystique de la Merkaba »,²⁵ on met d'abord en scène l'ascension au ciel de Rabbi Ismaël et sa rencontre avec l'ange Métatron (ch. 1-3), puis l'ascension d'Hénoc divinisé (ch. 3-16). Les chapitres 17-40 décrivent les mondes divins et leurs habitants, tandis

²² Sur la doctrine du *Chiour'qoma*, voir G. Scholem, *La mystique juive, les thèmes fondamentaux*, traduit par M. Hayoun, Paris, Cerf, 1985, pp. 37-72. M.S. Cohen, *The Shi'ur Qomah Texts and Recensions*, Tübingen, (TSAI 9), J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1985.

²³ II *Hénoc* XXXIX, 5-8, au sujet de la vision de Dieu sur son trône, surtout XXXIX, 8 : « Car vous voyez l'étendue de mon corps semblable au vôtre, moi j'ai vu l'étendue du Seigneur sans mesure et sans comparaison, qui n'a pas de fin ». Cf. aussi XII, 2 : « Qui suis-je, moi, pour dire l'étendue de l'essence du Seigneur ? ». Selon A. Vaillant et M. Philonenko qui ont traduit et présenté ce texte dans *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, note à la p. 1196, « ce chapitre du *Livre des secrets d'Hénoc* paraît fournir la plus ancienne attestation des spéculations juives sur la mesure du corps de Dieu ».

²⁴ *Sepher Hekhaloth* ou *Livre des Palais*. La datation du III *Hénoc*, parvenu en hébreu, est controversée. Porteur de traditions anciennes remontant à l'apocalyptique juive de l'époque maccabéenne, il est formé selon H. Odeberg (3 *Enoch or The Hebrew Book of Enoch*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1928, réédité : New York, Ktav, 1973) de strates composés déjà au I^{er} siècle de notre ère, tout en ayant été rédigé au III^e s. Selon G. Scholem (*Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition*, New York, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1960, p. 17), il fut rédigé entre le V^e et le VI^e siècle, position reprise par P. Alexander (*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, vol. I, Londres, 1983, p. 229). L'état de la question est présenté par C. Mopsik, *Le Livre hébreu d'Hénoc ou le Livre des Palais*, Lagrasse, Verdier, 1989, pp. 18-19 qui opte pour la prudence en ce qui concerne la datation. Ainsi que le rappelle Charles Mopsik, « c'est dans les cercles mystiques de la Mercaba de Babylonie que, selon Odeberg et Ph. Alexander, s'origine la rédaction finale de cet ouvrage ».

²⁵ C. Mopsik, *Le Livre hébreu d'Hénoc ou le Livre des Palais*, p. 9.

que les derniers (41–48) sont des exposés cosmologiques et eschatologiques.²⁶ Une attention particulière est prêtée dans ce traité à la taille cosmique de Dieu, par la description de sa main et de son bras dont la longueur « est comme la longueur de l'univers, allant d'un bout du monde à l'autre » et dont la largeur est « comme la largeur de l'univers.²⁷ La taille des anges est tout aussi bien cosmique. Parmi eux, c'est Métatron, porteur en son nom du Tétragramme, qui possède la stature la plus haute (*romé ha-qomot*):²⁸ « J'augmentai sa stature de 70,000 parasanges ». ²⁹ Hénoc lui-même assume dans ce texte des proportions gigantesques : « Le Saint béni soit-il posa sa main sur moi (...) Je fus exhaussé et allongé de la mesure de longueur et de largeur du monde ». ³⁰

Mais le III *Hénoc* s'attache tout aussi bien à la description des dimensions incalculables des palais célestes : les hekhaloth, les palais, qui sont dans le ciel Aravot, où Hénoc est introduit par la Chekhina, sont « grands » (ch. 7) ; le nombre des portails donnant accès aux trésors célestes se chiffre par centaines de milliers et laisse deviner leur taille cosmique ; des milliers de myriades de ponts, de fleuves et de réservoirs s'offrent à la vue de l'initié (ch. 22B), la distance entre l'un et l'autre est de myriades de parasanges (ch. 22C).

Dans les récits mystiques juifs, on se penche volontiers sur la cour angélique autour de Dieu. De l'*Apocalypse d'Abraham* aux *Hekhaloth*, les auteurs anonymes rivalisent dans de fastueuses descriptions d'anges. Dans les lignes qui suivent de l'*Évangile de Judas* nous retrouverons le motif de la cour angélique, rendu par petites touches et des allusions presque implicites, comme si l'auteur ne ressentait pas le besoin d'en dire trop : le public auquel il s'adressait était probablement un public averti, bon connaisseur des matières angélologiques. Il nous faut donc expliciter ces motifs pour rendre à l'*Évangile de Judas* toute sa coloration mystique.

²⁶ Les chapitres additionnels contiennent également des matériaux du plus haut intérêt : 15B, 22C, 48B–D.

²⁷ III *Hénoc* 48, 9.

²⁸ C. Mopsik, *Le Livre hébreu d'Hénoc ou le Livre des Palais*, pp. 356–357, propose plusieurs références tirées de la littérature mystique juive. Il existe dans ce traité, selon lui, « un transfert de l'envergure de Dieu à celle de Métatron qui devient par là-même une sorte de prolongement du Corps Mystique de la divinité » (p. 356).

²⁹ III *Hénoc*, chapitre additionnel, 48C, 5.

³⁰ III *Hénoc* IX.

LA ΓΕΝΕΑ D' ANGES ET L' ŒIL D' ANGE

Nous lisons également, dans le passage qui nous intéresse dans cet article, « qu'aucune γενεά d' anges n' est en mesure de voir » (47, 6–8) cet éon illimité. Les traducteurs de l'*Évangile de Judas*³¹ ont traduit le terme γενεά par « génération ».³² Cette traduction ne nous paraît pas adaptée aux anges pour lesquels il n'y a pas de génération. Nous suggérons de traduire γενεά par « classe », au sens de rang angélique. L'auteur insère ainsi le thème de l'ange dans ce passage, en le reprenant immédiatement par une autre expression : « l'œil d'ange ». Rappelons le texte de l'*ÉvJudas* 47, 19–12 : « Le grand [Esprit] (πνεῦμα) invisible qu'aucun œil d'ange (ἄγγελος) n'a jamais vu, aucune pensée n'a jamais saisi ». Il s'agit d'une citation remaniée de 1 Corinthiens 2, 9.³³ Cette référence néotestamentaire apparaît, avec quelques variantes, dans d'autres textes de Nag Hammadi.³⁴ Dans la *Prière de l'Apôtre Paul* A, 25–34 il faut remarquer qu'il est fait mention de « l'œil d'ange », en opposition à « l'oreille de l'archonte ». Quant au logion 17 de l'*Évangile de Thomas*, il n'est pas question de « l'œil d'ange » mais seulement de « l'œil ».

L'auteur de l'*Évangile de Judas*, se sert de cette citation remaniée de 1 Corinthiens pour étayer le concept de l'absolue transcendance de Dieu que même les êtres angéliques ne peuvent approcher. Cette idée est exprimée dans un des textes majeurs de la mystique juive ancienne, le I *Hénoch*. Néanmoins, dans les *mystica* juifs, en ligne générale, c'est davantage l'idée de royauté de Dieu plus que de transcendance qui est soulignée. Le chapitre XIV, 21 du I *Hénoch* rend compte, dans le récit sur la vision des palais célestes, de l'insoutenable vision que représente la Gloire divine pour les anges :

Nul ange ne pouvait approcher de ce palais, ni voir la Face à cause de sa splendeur et de sa gloire. Nulle chair ne pouvait la voir.

³¹ P. 213 de l'édition critique.

³² L'expression est également présente en *ÉvJudas* 54, 7 et 57, 13.

³³ Le texte de 1 Corinthiens 2, 9 (« ce que l'œil n'a pas vu, ce que l'oreille n'a pas entendu, et ce qui n'est pas monté au cœur de l'homme, tout ce que Dieu a préparé pour ceux qui l'aiment ») est un pastiche fait à partir de deux citations bibliques : Isaïe 64, 3 et Jérémie 3, 16.

³⁴ Sur la présence de 1 Corinthiens 2, 9 dans ce texte, voir C.M. Tuckett, « The Evidence of 1 Corinthians 2:9 and Gospel of Thomas 17 », dans *Paul and the Corinthians. Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall*, « Novum Testamentum », Suppl. 109 », Leiden, Brill, 2003, pp. 55–73 ; J.-D. Dubois, « L'utilisation gnostique du centon biblique cité en 1 Corinthiens 2, 9 », dans G. Dorival, O. Munnich éd., *Selon les Septante, Hommage à Marguerite Harl*, Paris, Cerf, 1995, pp. 371–379.

Nous trouvons dans le III *Hénoch* 48, 1–2 un passage qui reprend le même concept. La « bouche qui ne peut dire la louange » et « l'œil qui ne peut contempler la main droite du Lieu »—entendons la main de Dieu—appartiennent sans doute aux anges officiants qui prononcent sans discontinuer la Qedousha :

Rabbi Ismael dit : Métatron me dit : Viens et je te montrerai la Main droite du Lieu (...) même les séraphins et les ophanims n'ont pas la permission de la contempler, jusqu'à la venue du jour du salut. J'allais avec lui, il me prit par la main, il me hissa sur ses ailes et me la montra (...) : aucune bouche ne peut dire sa louange et aucun œil ne peut la contempler, à cause de l'excès de sa grandeur, de sa louange, de son prestige, de sa gloire et de sa beauté.

Mais le parallèle le plus intéressant est constitué par un texte appartenant aux *Hekhaloth Rabbati* (O1531) :³⁵

Quiconque entrevoit sa beauté disparaît immédiatement. Ceux qui le servent aujourd'hui ne pourront le servir demain, car leur force les abandonne et leur visage est brûlé, leur cœur chancelle et leurs yeux se voilent devant la splendeur rayonnante de la beauté de leur Roi. Aucun œil n'est capable de la percevoir, ni les yeux de chair et de sang ni les yeux de ses serviteurs.

Les serviteurs dont il est ici question sont encore une fois les anges que le service divin consume et replonge dans le néant s'ils osent apercevoir l'éclat de la divine splendeur.

On peut se demander si la référence à l'œil des anges ne contient pas une allusion implicite à une classe de créatures angéliques, les Ophanim (Ézéchiel 1, 18) ou les Chérubins (Ézéchiel 10, 12) caractérisés par leurs yeux multiples.³⁶ On lit en effet dans le II *Hénoch*, lors de l'élévation du patriarche au septième ciel :

Je vis le Seigneur, sa face puissante et très glorieuse et terrible. Qui suis-je, moi, pour dire l'étendue de l'essence du Seigneur (...) et le chœur des anges à beaucoup d'yeux et à beaucoup de voix ?

L'on notera enfin, pour en revenir à l'*Évangile de Judas*, que la notion d'« œil d'ange » de 47, 10–11 fait pendant à ce que l'auteur avait dit au début de cet exposé : « aucun humain ne verra » (47, 3–4).

³⁵ P. Schäfer, *Übersetzung der Hekhaloth-Literatur*, II, § 81–334, « Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum » 17, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987, p. 23.

³⁶ Voir la note des éditeurs du texte, dans *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, p. 1186.

QUI N' A JAMAIS ÉTÉ APPELÉ D' UN NOM

L'impossibilité d'appeler Dieu par un nom (*ÉvJudas* 47, 13), est également un concept qui a eu un grand essor dans les textes mystiques juifs où il a été souvent associé à l'interdiction de prononcer le Tétragramme. L'auteur de l'*Évangile de Judas* avait déjà abordé le thème du Nom à la page 35, 15–20 : Judas avait avoué qu'il n'était pas digne de prononcer le Nom de Celui qui avait envoyé Jésus. Une utilisation impropre et sacrilège du Nom, faite par les prêtres impies du Temple, est également mentionnée par l'*Évangile de Judas*.³⁷ Ces remarques autour du Nom nous renvoient encore une fois aux corpus ésotériques juifs où les spéculations autour du Nom constituent l'un des points essentiels de la connaissance cachée. De la littérature des Esséniens³⁸ à celle des Hékhalth, aux textes de la kabbale, le Nom divin, secret et imprononçable, est au cœur des préoccupations du mystique. Connaître le Nom ou les Noms de Dieu—à travers ceux de ses anges—constitue la partie la plus réservée de la connaissance mystique. Connaître le Nom protège à la fois des périls et a des effets miraculeux, mais la connaissance du Nom est, elle-même, génératrice de danger à cause de la puissance extrême qu'il possède.³⁹ Nous avons le plaisir de rappeler ici que Johannes van Oort s'est également penché sur la notion du Nom⁴⁰ dans ses recherches sur l'*Évangile de Judas*.

* * *

Dans la suite du texte de l'*Évangile de Judas* 47, 14–22 nous lisons ceci :

³⁷ *ÉvJudas* 38, 4–5 ; cf. 38, 26 ; 39, 11.16 ; 40, 4. Nous avons examiné cette thématique dans notre article « Traditions angélologiques et mystique juive dans l'Évangile de Judas », dans *The Gospel of Judas in Context*, p. 129.

³⁸ Par exemple, *Écrit de Damas* V, 7.

³⁹ G. Scholem, *Le Nom et les symboles de Dieu dans la mystique juive*, Paris, Cerf, 1988. P. Schäfer, *Le Dieu caché et révélé*, Paris, Cerf, 1993. Voir sur ces thématiques, P. Alexander, « 3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch », dans J.H. Charlesworth éd., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (The Anchor Bible Reference Library), New York/London/Toronto/Sydney/Auckland, Doubleday, vol. 1, 1983, pp. 223–315.

⁴⁰ J. van Oort, « Jésus comme le Nom et le Prophète. L'Évangile de Judas dans le dialogue entre juifs, chrétiens et musulmans », dans *Le Monde de la Bible* 174 (novembre-décembre 2006), pp. 36–37 et « Het evangelie van Judas. Inleidende notities over zijn inhoud en betekenis », *Hervormde Theologische Studies* 63 (2007), pp. 431–443.

¹⁴Une nuée de lumière ¹⁵apparut en ce lieu-là. ¹⁶Il (le grand invisible Esprit) dit alors : ¹⁷qu'un ange vienne à l'être, ¹⁸se tenant devant moi et pour mon service (παράστασις). ¹⁹Un grand ange, ²⁰l'autoengendré, le dieu ²¹de la lumière, ²²sortit alors de la nuée.

LA NUÉE DE LUMIÈRE

Examinons l'expression « une nuée de lumière » (κλο[ο]λε νουοιν) (47, 14-15). Ce motif est récurrent dans l'*Évangile de Judas*⁴¹ où la nuée est rendue à deux reprises par le terme copte κλο[ο]λε⁴² et dans les occurrences restantes par le terme σηπε.⁴³ C'est d'une nuée lumineuse que sortent les différents personnages divins et angéliques appelés à l'être par le grand invisible Esprit et c'est dans une nuée de lumière que le révélateur se retire à la fin de son discours.

La nuée (νεφέλη) est un motif typique des scènes bibliques et extra-bibliques⁴⁴ et elle symbolise la manifestation et la Présence divine.⁴⁵ On retrouve ce motif à plusieurs reprises dans l'Exode et les Nombres. La nuée dirige les pas des Israélites dans le désert⁴⁶ et c'est du milieu d'une nuée que le Seigneur se manifeste à Moïse.⁴⁷ On ne précise toutefois pas que cette nuée est lumineuse.⁴⁸ Si l'on regarde du côté des intertestamentaires—mis à part les reprises du récit de l'Exode (cf. *Jubilé*s I, 1 ; *Antiquités bibliques* XI, 15) où il est question de nuée sans plus de précision—on rencontre l'expression « nuée de lumière » dans le *Testament d'Abraham* IX, 8 :⁴⁹ c'est le moyen de locomotion qu'Abraham emprunte, sur l'ordre du Seigneur, pour réaliser son circuit céleste : (père du Père invisible à l'archistratège Michel) :

⁴¹ Cf. *Évangile de Judas* 47, 23 ; 48, 22 ; 50, 25-26 ; 51, 8 ; 52, 20 ; 57, 17. 22. 26.

⁴² W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1939, réédition, 1972, p. 104a.

⁴³ W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, p. 825b.

⁴⁴ Voir l'article d'A. Oepke, « νεφέλη », dans G. Kittel, *Grande Lessico del Nuovo Testamento*, vol. VII, Brescia, Paideia, 1971, pp. 905-927.

⁴⁵ Exode 14, 19-20.

⁴⁶ Exode 13, 20.

⁴⁷ Exode 16, 10 ; 34, 5 ; Nombres 11, 25 ; 17, 7.

⁴⁸ En Exode 14, 24 il y a peut-être une allusion à la luminosité de la nuée : colonne de feu et de nuée. De même en Ézéchiel 1, 4 : une grande nuée et un feu fulgurant, une clarté.

⁴⁹ Recension A. *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, p. 1669 (texte traduit, présenté et annoté par F. Schmidt). Cf. aussi *Testament d'Abraham* XV, 2. La recension B a seulement « nuée ».

Prends une nuée de lumière (νεφέλη φωτός) et les anges qui sont maîtres des chars, emmène Abraham le juste sur le char des chérubins et fais-le monter jusqu'à l'éther du ciel, pour qu'il voit toute la terre habitée.

Dans le Nouveau Testament, l'expression νεφέλη φωτεινή apparaît dans le récit de la transfiguration de Jésus selon Matthieu 17, 1-9.⁵⁰ Le quatrième traité du codex Tchacos, que l'on s'accorde, en l'absence de son titre, à dénommer *Allogène* du nom de son protagoniste, met aussi en scène une nuée de lumière en 62, 11-18. Celle-ci apparaît au moment où Allogène termine de prononcer une prière pour implorer son salut :

Au moment où je prononçais ces paroles, une nuée de lumière [m]'entoura. Je ne pouvais regarder la lumière qu'elle dégageait ni son éclat. J'entendis alors une voix provenant de la nuée et de la lumière, elle brilla sur moi et dit : « Allogène, le son de ta prière a été entendu, j'ai été envoyé à toi pour t'annoncer de bonnes nouvelles avant que tu ne quittes [ce lieu] ».

(62, 9-24)

Le terme copte utilisé pour la nuée de lumière est, dans ce traité, ⲟⲩⲏⲧⲉ (en 47, 11 : ⲟⲩⲟⲩⲏⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩⲏ et en 62, 17, ⲟⲩⲟⲩⲏⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩⲏ).

Plusieurs attestations du motif de la nuée lumineuse, chargé d'une palette de valeurs symboliques, se rencontrent non seulement dans la littérature gnostique⁵¹ mais aussi dans une autre forme de gnose tardive, le mandéisme. Ici la nuée de lumière est à la fois le lieu de la Vie primordiale,⁵² la demeure des puissances divines⁵³ et ce qui entoure l'âme participant de l'éclat divin.⁵⁴ Par ailleurs, la littérature mystique juive a également développé le thème de la nuée lumineuse : nous renvoyons à la riche étude de Charles Mopsik « Expérience et symbolique du nuage ».⁵⁵ Il est aussi intéressant de noter que les « nuages lumineux » sont, en langage kabbalistique, le synonyme des sephiroth.

⁵⁰ Matthieu 17, 5 : « Une nuée de lumière les (Jésus, Moïse et Élie) enveloppa dans son ombre et une voix sortit de la lumière en disant ».

⁵¹ *Apocryphon de Jean* BG 37, 6-13 et NH II, 1 10, 15 ; *Écrit sans titre* NH II, 5 106, 4 ; *Livre sacré du grand Esprit invisible* NH IV 61, 1 ; *Paraphrase de Shem* NH VII, 1 33, 31 ; *Zostrien* NH VIII, 1 4, 31.

⁵² *Liturgie* 73, 1 (M. Lidzbarski, *Mandaïsche Liturgien*, Berlin 1920, réimpression : Hildesheim, Olms, 1962).

⁵³ *Ginza de droite* J, 374 (M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza: Der Schatz, oder, das grosse Buch der Mandaëer*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1925).

⁵⁴ *Ginza de gauche* III, 21, 104 (Lidzbarski).

⁵⁵ Publié dans C. Mopsik, *Chemins de la cabale. Vingt-cinq études sur la mystique juive*, Éditions de l'éclat, Paris-Tel Aviv, 2004, pp. 105-124.

ΛΑ ΠΑΡΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ DE L' ANGE

Venons-en maintenant à considérer le terme *παράστασις* (*ÉvJudas* 47, 18). Ce terme doit être considéré par rapport au verbe *παριστάναι*⁵⁶ qui exprime la position subordonnée de l' inférieur se tenant devant le supérieur et qui est à son service. *Παριστάναι* indique, par exemple, la posture de soumission de celui qui se tient en la présence d' un roi,⁵⁷ mais aussi la dignité et l' honneur qui découlent du privilège de se tenir devant le roi. La notion honorifique de « ministre », qui s' adapte bien au cérémonial des cours orientales, se dessine dans ce terme. Le terme *παριστάναι* et ses équivalents hébraïques—principalement le verbe *md*⁵⁸ (« se tenir respectueusement debout pour servir »)—ont une connotation religieuse dans les *judaïca* là où ces termes sont appliqués aux anges et où l' on veut exprimer à la fois la soumission et la dignité des êtres célestes qui se tiennent devant le trône de Dieu. Dans la LXX, le livre de Tobit 12, 15 (cod S) utilise *παριστάναι* à propos de Raphaël :

Je suis Raphaël, l' un des sept anges qui se tiennent devant la Gloire du Seigneur et pénètrent en sa Présence (ὁὶ παρεστήκασιν καὶ εἰσπορεύονται ἐνώπιον τῆς δόξης κυρίου).

Le terme se trouve également en Job 1, 6 où il décrit la cour céleste qui se tient devant le Seigneur (*παραστήναι ἐνώπιον τοῦ κυρίου*)⁵⁹ de même, en Daniel 7, 10.13, il concerne les myriades angéliques se tenant (*παρεστήκεισαν*) devant l' Ancien des jours. Il est aussi retenu dans Luc 1, 19, où il est chargé d' un ton quasi officiel lors de la démarche que l' ange accomplit auprès de Marie: ἐγὼ εἰμι Γαβριὴλ ὁ παρεστηκὼς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ.⁶⁰

Dans les exposés angéologiques, les dérivés de *παριστάναι* désignent donc l' ange, ou les anges, qui se tiennent en la présence de Dieu et se consacrent à son service. Il y a dans ces contextes, à notre avis, des allusions à la liturgie céleste que les anges officiants offrent à Dieu en un

⁵⁶ *Παριστάναι*: servir; Kasser, *The Gospel of Judas*, p. 246 a en revanche traduit « parade », pensant au verbe *παρίστημι*.

⁵⁷ 3 Rois 10, 8; 2 Paralipomènes 9, 7. Voir B. Reiche, « *παρίστημι, παριστάνω* », dans G. Kittel, *Grande Lessico del Nuovo Testamento*, volume IX, pp. 781–794. Voir aussi Bauer-Aland, *Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, 6. Auflage, Berlin/New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1988, col. 1267–1269.

⁵⁸ Et d' autres verbes ayant la signification de « rester », voir B. Reiche, *art. cit.*, pp. 783–784.

⁵⁹ Cf. aussi Job 2, 1: *παραστήναι ἐναντι κυρίου*.

⁶⁰ Cf. Judith 4, 14 où le grand prêtre Joakim et les prêtres se tiennent devant le Seigneur.

service ininterrompu, un thème commun à plusieurs pseudépigraphes⁶¹ et courant dans les écrits de Qumran. C'est pourquoi nous traduisons le terme *παράστασις* (*ÉvJudas* 47, 18) par «se tenant devant moi et pour mon service». ⁶² Le thème du service liturgique des anges sera développé par l'auteur de l'*Évangile de Judas* à la page 48 du traité, où deux termes nous paraissent avoir aussi une valeur technique : en 48, 6, le service (*ϥⲙⲱⲉ*), équivalent du grec *λειτουργία*, et en 48, 15. 20 ainsi que l'*ὑπερεσία*, en 48, 20. Nous ne traitons pas de cet aspect dans le présent travail, renvoyant à notre livre à paraître sur l'angélologie de l'*Évangile de Judas*.

Le terme *παράστασις* retenu par le traducteur copte de l'*Évangile de Judas* est assez rare : il apparaît dans la littérature chrétienne dans le sens de service liturgique de la congrégation.⁶³ Quant à l'association entre l'action de *παριστάναι* et celle d'accomplir le service céleste (*λειτουργγεῖν*) de la part des anges, elle trouve un bel exemple dans la *Prima Clementis*, un texte parcouru par des thématiques judaïsantes : ἄγγελοι λειτουργοῦσιν παρεστῶτες ἐστῶτες αὐτῷ (34, 5). Le substantif *παράστατης* est généralement utilisé pour indiquer l'attendant, l'auxiliaire en milieu profane. Dans la littérature gnostique, le terme est souvent employé dans la *Pistis Sophia* et joue un rôle important dans les exposés angélologiques de ce traité⁶⁴ ainsi que dans le *Livre de Jeu* et le *Traité sans titre* du Codex Bruce.

LE GRAND ANGE

Cet ange dont nous venons d'examiner la portée dans sa *παράστασις* et qui sort de la nuée (lumineuse), est décrit comme «un grand ange, l'autoengendré, le dieu de la lumière» (*ÉvJudas* 47, 18–21). Encore une fois le recours à l'angélologie juive peut dégager le sens de ces expressions, notamment de celle de «Grand Ange» et de «dieu de la lumière», le terme d'autoengendré étant plus simplement un terme de facture gnostique. L'expression de «Grand Ange» est employée dans la littérature

⁶¹ Il *Hénoch*, par exemple.

⁶² Le terme de *παράστασις* est employé également en *ÉvJudas* 47, 24 ; 51, 19.

⁶³ Par ex., Cyrille d'Alexandrie, *De Adoratione et cultu* 13 (I, 476E), pour le service liturgique de la congrégation : *παράστασις καὶ λειτουργία*.

⁶⁴ Voir l'index au lemme dans C. Schmidt éd., V. MacDermot (translation and notes), *Pistis Sophia*, «Nag Hammadi Studies» IX, Leiden, Brill, 1978. Le terme est traduit, de façon imprécise, par «helper».

qumranienne et apparaît dans le *Règlement de la Guerre*⁶⁵ XVII, 5–8, dans un passage où l'on décrit l'affrontement entre les puissances de la lumière et celles des ténèbres. Voici ce qu'on lit :

Ce jour-ci est son heure pour courber et pour abaisser le prince de l'empire de l'impiété ; et au lot qu'Il a racheté il enverra un secours décisif grâce à la puissance du Grand Ange, au serviteur⁶⁶ de Michel grâce à la lumière éternelle, afin d'illuminer de joie l'Alliance d'Israël La justice se réjouira dans les hauteurs et tous ses fils de vérité exulteront dans la connaissance éternelle.

Notons ici non seulement l'identification entre Michel et le Grand Ange, mais aussi l'association de celui-ci à la lumière⁶⁷ (« grâce à la lumière éternelle »). Ainsi que l'a observé André Dupont-Sommer, le Grand Ange est probablement identique au Prince de la lumière, chef suprême des anges de lumière.⁶⁸ L'expression de « dieu de la lumière », accolée à celle de « Grand Ange » de notre passage de l'*Évangile de Judas* rappelle sans ambiguïté le Prince de la lumière⁶⁹ des écrits de la Mer Morte. Un autre exemple peut être versé au dossier. Le roman grec de *Joseph et Aséneth*, parcouru par des spéculations proches de l'essénisme,⁷⁰ associe également Michel à la lumière au chapitre XIV. À la fin de sa confession et après avoir rejeté les idoles païennes, Aséneth aperçoit, au bout d'une nuit de repentance et de pleurs, l'étoile du matin. C'est pour la jeune convertie « un messager et un héraut de lumière du grand jour » :

Et voici, près de l'étoile, le ciel fut déchiré et une lumière indicible apparut. Aséneth tomba le visage dans la cendre et un homme vint du ciel vers elle. Il se tint au dessus de sa tête et l'appela : « Aséneth ! ». (XIV, 3–4)

Aséneth questionne alors l'apparition céleste, en disant : « Me voici, Seigneur, fais-moi savoir qui tu es ». Et l'homme⁷¹ répondit : Je suis le

⁶⁵ *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, p. 18 (texte traduit, présenté et annoté par A. Dupont-Sommer).

⁶⁶ Le serviteur de Michel est Israël.

⁶⁷ Voir également le passage du *Testament d'Abraham* IX, 8 que nous avons déjà cité auparavant.

⁶⁸ Note au texte, *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, p. 22. A. Dupont-Sommer renvoie en parallèle au *Règlement de la Guerre* XIII, 10 : « Et le Prince de la lumière tu l'as commis jadis pour nous porter secours, et dans son lot sont tous les anges de justice et tous les esprits de vérité sont dans son empire » (en opposé aux anges de destruction).

⁶⁹ L'Esprit du Bien : appelé Prince de la lumière dans la *Règle de la communauté* III, 20 et l'*Écrit de Damas* V, 18.

⁷⁰ M. Philonenko, *Joseph et Aséneth*, Leiden, Brill, 1968 et, du même auteur, *Joseph et Aséneth*, dans *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, pp. 1565–1601.

⁷¹ Entendons l'ange.

commandant de la maison (στρατιάρχης) du Seigneur et le commandant en chef (ἀρχιστράτηγος) de toute l'armée du Très-Haut (XIV, 6–7). Le titre d'archistratege ne laisse pas de doute sur l'identité de l'ange: il s'agit de Michel, ainsi défini dans plusieurs écrits intertestamentaires et également dans la littérature magique.⁷² La description de l'ange est toute centrée sur l'éclat de la lumière:

Son visage était comme l'éclair, ses yeux comme l'éclat du soleil, les cheveux de sa tête comme une flamme ardente, et ses mains et ses pieds comme du fer en fusion. (XIV, 9)

Michel est appelé également le « Grand Ange » dans le traité mystique *Merkaba Rabba*,⁷³ il se tient dans le premier ciel, le plus élevé; dans le deuxième ciel se trouve Gabriel, « saint et juste », dans le troisième Souriel, dans le quatrième Akatriel, dans le cinquième Raphaël, dans le sixième Baradiel et enfin dans le septième Yomiel.

En conclusion de cette partie, on pourra affirmer que l'association entre le Grand ange et le Prince de la lumière des intertestamentaires juifs, titres octroyés à Michel, est devenue dans l'apocryphe de Judas celle entre le grand ange et le dieu de la lumière, Michel.

Mais le titre de Grand ange est aussi conféré à un autre personnage de la cour céleste: Ouriel. Dans I *Hénoch* LXXIX, 6,⁷⁴ lors du résumé que le patriarche fait des lois astrologiques, on lit: « Tels sont le spectacle et l'image de chaque luminaire. Ouriel, le grand ange qui les guide, me les a montrés ». Selon I *Hénoch* 9, 1 Ouriel est l'un des quatre anges de la Présence, avec Raphaël, Gabriel et Michel. Par ailleurs le nom même d'Ouriel (« lumière divine »)⁷⁵ porte en lui le sceau de la lumière et du feu.

S'agit-il donc de Michel ou d'Ouriel dans ce passage de l'*Évangile de Judas*? La page 53, 16–22 de cet apocryphe, où le personnage de Michel réapparaît, fournit un élément de réponse. Ici Judas questionne

⁷² Plusieurs références dans M. Philonenko, *op. cit.*, p. 178, note à JosAsen 14, 7, parmi lesquelles II *Hénoch* 33, 10, *Apocalypse d'Esdras* 4, 24, PGM XIII, 928.

⁷³ Texte cité par C. Mopsik, *Le Livre hébreu d'Hénoch*, p. 250.

⁷⁴ *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires*, p. 566 (texte traduit, présenté et annoté par A. Caquot).

⁷⁵ M. Schwab, *Vocabulaire de l'Angéologie d'après les manuscrits hébreux de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris 1897 (Mémoires présentés par divers savants de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres), p. 159. G. Davidson, *Dictionnaire des anges*, Le Jardin des Livres, 2005, pp. 494–497 (traduit de l'anglais, *A Dictionary of Angels, Including the Fallen Angels*, 1964).

Jésus: « Est-ce que l'esprit de l'homme meurt? ». Jésus répond: « Dieu a ordonné à Michael de donner aux hommes leurs esprits (πνεῦμα) comme un prêtre, de façon à ce qu'ils puissent accomplir le service liturgique (ψηφει) ».

En conclusion de ces trajets de recherche, que nous présentons en hommage à Johannes van Oort, nous aimerions souligner encore une fois l'intérêt de considérer en une seule et même étude les corpus gnostiques retrouvés en Égypte et les corpus juifs de tendance mystique car, au-delà des écrits et des littératures portant chacun une étiquette d'appartenance, nous entrevoyons des groupes de personnes qui partageaient les mêmes références culturelles et les mêmes exigences mystiques même si leurs croyances avaient pris des directions différentes.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS AND EARLY CHRISTIAN EUCHARIST

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Since the text of the Gospel of Judas has been made accessible by an edition of the Coptic text and translations into numerous languages, it has met with the same fate as several other spectacular discoveries related to the origins and early history of Christianity. The hype and the initial sensationalism aroused by the magical aura surrounding the person of Judas, the betrayer of Jesus, in combination with the almost unbelievable vicissitudes of the manuscript once it had been discovered, are over. The short-lived expectation, often fuelled by the media, that the discovery of the Gospel of Judas might revolutionize the study of Christian origins, almost immediately proved to be false. Contrary to the expectations sometimes created by the media, the Gospel of Judas does not shed new light on the historical person of Judas or the death of Jesus. More remarkably, even the less spectacular view that this source points to the existence of a group of second century Christians who considered Judas as a hero, i.e., as an image of the true, enlightened Gnostic liberating the human Jesus from his bodily life as a good friend,¹ is at this moment being questioned by an increasing number of highly-qualified scholars.² Actually, it

¹ See especially *The Gospel of Judas from Codex Tchacos*, edited by Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin Meyer, Gregor Wurst with additional commentary by Bart D. Ehrmann, National Geographic, Washington D.C., 2006; B. Ehrmann, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot. A New Look at Betrayer and Betrayed*, Oxford 2006, especially 121–139; E. Pagels and K. King, *Reading Judas. The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, Penguin Books 2007, esp. 77–98.

² See in particular L. Painchaud, 'Polemical Aspects of the *Gospel of Judas*', in: M. Scopello (ed.), *The Gospel of Judas in Context. Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaen Studies 62, Leiden – Boston 2008, 171–186; A. DeConick, 'The Mystery of Betrayal. What Does the *Gospel of Judas* Really Say?', idem, 239–266; E. Thomassen, 'Is Judas Really the Hero of the *Gospel of Judas*?', idem, 157–170; J. Turner, 'The Place of the Gospel of Judas in Sethian Tradition', idem, 187–237.

turns out that this interpretation is founded upon a rather small number of difficult and ambiguous passages in the Coptic texts and several scholars have argued that these passages, if correctly reconstructed and interpreted, present us with a totally different Judas, namely a tragic figure, a sort of lackey of the demiurge,³ the victim of astral fatality,⁴ exceeding the other disciples in evil.

Does this mean that the excitement about the discovery of the Gospel of Judas was nothing but a storm in a teacup? For those who were expecting a sort of revolution in early Christian studies the answer should be: yes. But it certainly does not hold for all those, scholars or otherwise, who are interested in obtaining a picture as objective and complete as possible of the diversity of communities, theological views and ritual practices of early Christianity. To them it is doubtless of great relevance. Clear evidence is provided by the scientific discussions which have been provoked by the Gospel of Judas since the Codex Tchacos has been published. They do not only relate to the question of the identity of Judas as presented by the Gospel,—which of course remains of primary importance and a matter of excitement anyway—, but also to several other less spectacular issues.

One of the intriguing questions which are raised by the text of the Gospel, is how it relates to the liturgical traditions of early Christianity and more specifically to the celebration of the Eucharist. Several scholars have argued that, according to the author, the Eucharist as celebrated by the orthodox or proto-orthodox Christian is closely connected with the notion of sacrifice which, for its part, is associated with the sacrificial death of Christ and, moreover, with the glorification of martyrdom. Since this entire sacrificial concept is strongly rejected by the Gospel of Judas, this source, so the argument goes, would contain a fierce attack on the early Christian Eucharist.⁵

This assertion should arouse both the curiosity and the suspicion of every scholar involved in the study of early Christian liturgy. In fact, if

³ Expression used by Marvin Meyer ('Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the *Gospel of Judas*, in: Scopello, *The Gospel of Judas in Context*, 41–55, here p. 47) who himself seems to remain faithful to the positive view on Judas.

⁴ Painchaud, 'Polemical Aspects', 184.

⁵ See especially E. Pagels and K. King, *Reading Judas*, esp. 51–52. Painchaud, 'Polemical Aspects', 174–177. 184–186; A. van den Kerchove, 'La maison, l'autel et les sacrifices: quelques remarques sur la polémique dans l'*Évangile de Judas*, in: Scopello, *The Gospel of Judas in Context*, 311–329; F. Williams, 'The Gospel of Judas: Its Polemic, its Exegesis, and its Place in Church History', *VigChr.* 62 (2008), 371–403.

it indeed could be substantiated by the text of the Gospel itself, it would have significant implications for the reconstruction of the liturgical traditions of early Christianity. However, if this hypothesis would turn out to be based upon arguments not derived from the text itself, we would have every reason to be very cautious. Actually, the relationship between the commemoration of the (sacrificial) death of Christ on the one hand and the Eucharist as celebrated in the first two or three centuries of the Common Era on the other hand, is much debated at this moment.⁶ Thus, recent research has convincingly demonstrated that there is no convincing evidence that, prior to the middle or the end of the third century, an institution narrative was recited during the Eucharistic meals of the early Christians. The earliest unambiguous evidence of this practice is provided by the so-called Apostolic Tradition ascribed to Hippolytus, but both the authorship and the early date of this source are now called into question by most of the scholars⁷ and we should even seriously reckon with the possibility that the famous anaphora included in this source dates to the end of the third or even of the fourth century.⁸ On the other hand, liturgical scholars have for long been puzzled by a series of second and third century sources which refer or allude to some sort of Eucharistic meals but do not mention a commemoration of the death of Christ or the Last Supper (for instance the *Didache*⁹ or the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles). Until recently, the relevance of these sources was played down: it was for instance argued that they referred to non-Eucharistic, so-called agape-meals, or to the liturgical traditions of marginal or heterodox Christians. They were considered as deviating from what was held to be the norm (a celebration of the Eucharist directly modelled upon the pattern of the institution narrative and featuring a Paulinian Eucharistic theology). Yet this whole approach is questioned now by an increasing number of scholars. It seems to become more and more likely that

⁶ See for the following especially G. Rouwhorst, 'The Roots of the Early Christian Eucharist: Jewish Blessings or Hellenistic Symposia?', in: A. Gerhards, C. Leonhard, *Jewish and Christian Liturgy and Worship. New Insights into its History and Interaction*, Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series 15, Leiden-Boston 2007, 295–308. See also P. Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins*, Oxford 2004; G. Rouwhorst, 'La célébration de l'Eucharistie dans l'Eglise primitive', in: *Questions liturgiques* 74 (1993), 89–112.

⁷ See for instance P. Bradshaw, M.E. Johnson, L.E. Philips, *The Apostolic Tradition*, Minneapolis 2002, 1–17.

⁸ Cf. Rouwhorst, 'The roots', 299.

⁹ Cf. G. Rouwhorst, 'Didache 9–10: A Litmus Test for the Research on Early Christian Liturgy', in: H. van de Sandt (ed.), *Matthew and the Didache. Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?*, Assen-Minneapolis 2005, 143–156.

what was considered to be the norm, was for a considerable part based upon fourth century evidence which was uncritically projected onto the diverse liturgical practices of second and third century Christian communities. If, as a matter of fact, sources dating to this earlier period do not seem to directly connect the Eucharist with the sacrificial death of Christ or at least do not prove to lay much emphasis upon this connection, this fact deserves to be taken very seriously. The admittedly scant and often allusive information they contain should not entice us to fill the gaps with data derived from later periods and thereby make them more conform to the norm with which we are familiar.

These considerations inspired me to offer Johannes (Hans) van Oort at the occasion of his sixtieth birthday a contribution about the role played by the Eucharist in the Gospel of Judas. Hans van Oort has, from the very start been particularly interested in this source. He has been the major 'promoter' of the Gospel of Judas in the Netherlands—both in the Dutch media and in scholarly circles—and he published a Dutch translation, even before an English translation appeared.¹⁰

While reading the Gospel of Judas and the major scientific publications which have been dealing with its critique of the Eucharist, one will soon discover that two passages are of decisive importance in this connection. On the one hand, there is a scene at the beginning of the Gospel in which the disciples are criticized by Jesus for saying thanks (r-eucharisti) over a bread (33,22–36,10). The other passage which is of crucial interest here, is the vision of the temple which is followed by a fierce attack on the sacrifices brought by Jesus' disciples, of course, with the exception of Judas (37,20–41,8)).

In this article I shall give an analysis and propose an interpretation of these two key units.¹¹ With regard to the methodology, I have chosen

¹⁰ J. van Oort, *Het evangelie van Judas. Inleiding, vertaling, toelichting*, Kampen 2006, 2007⁴. Idem, *Het evangelie van Judas. Nieuwe beknopte editie uit de Codex Tchacos. Met een nawoord door prof. dr. A.F.J. Klijn*, Kampen 2007.

¹¹ Editions of the Coptic text: R. Kasser and G. Wurst (*The Gospel of Judas together with the Letter of Peter to Philip, James and a Book of Allogenes from Codex Tchacos*, Critical Edition, National Geographic, Washington D.C 2007); J. Brankaer / H.-G. Bethge, *Codex Tchacos. Texte und Analysen*, TU 161, Berlin-New York 2007, 255–315. See for translations of the Coptic text the edition of Kasser and Wurst (English translation by M. Meyer and F. Gaudard) and that of Brankaer and Bethge (German translation). See further for English translations: R. Kasser, M. Meyer, G. Wurst and F. Gaudard, *The Gospel of Judas from Codex Tchacos*; J. Turner, 'The Place of the Gospel of Judas', 229–237; S. Gathercole, *The Gospel of Judas. Rewriting Early Christianity*, Oxford 2007. Translations in other modern languages have been produced by R. Kasser (*The Gospel of*

to use the following principles. I shall study each of the two passages separately, independently from each other. I shall start with a strictly text-centred reading of each of these text units, without drawing on arguments derived from their supposed early Christian context. It means that, in that first phase, I shall not appeal to other early Christian sources. I shall do so only after having established the meaning of the texts as it emerges from a first text-focused reading. As for the selection of the other early Christian sources, I shall strictly limit myself to those which are not later than the beginning of the third century (for instance, systematically leaving out of consideration the much debated, so-called *Apostolic Tradition*). By applying this somewhat minimalist approach—which naturally has its limitations—I hope to reduce to a minimum the risk of projecting preconceived ideas about the early Christian Eucharist or liturgy onto the Gospel of Judas.

1. THE CHRONOLOGICAL SETTING

Before studying the two passages mentioned, it will be helpful to first make some remarks about their chronological setting which is indicated at the beginning of the Gospel. Actually, at the beginning of his Gospel, the author remarks that the 'secret account of the revelation which Jesus spoke with Judas' took place 'during eight days, three days before he celebrated Passover'.¹²

This time-frame is rather enigmatic and gives rise to a number of questions. For instance, to what reality do the 'eight days' refer and how do they relate to the 'three days before he celebrated Passover'? In addition, taking into account the author's Gnostic (perhaps Sethian) background, it remains difficult to explain how he can portray Jesus as celebrating a Jewish festival of Passover (this is, however, at least what the verb *r-paschein* used in the Coptic text suggests).¹³ Fortunately, for

Judas together with the Letter of Philip etc., 237–252), the German translation by P. Nagel ('Das Evangelium des Judas', in: *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 98/2 (2007), 213–276) and the Dutch translation by Hans van Oort (*Het evangelie van Judas*, 2007).

¹² See e.g. Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas* (2006, 2007⁴), 88 f., with his commentary on 'during eight days [and] three days' and 'Pascha'.

¹³ In itself, one could imagine that 'celebrating' Passover is to be understood here as a metaphor for something else, for instance, the Passion, or that the Greek original

our purpose, it is not necessary to solve all these problems. It will suffice to make some brief observations about the 'three days' and, perhaps more importantly, to formulate some negative conclusions concerning the eight days, that is, to mention those interpretations which have to be rejected anyway.

As for the three days, they are possibly related to the three appearances of Jesus to his disciples described in the following parts of the Gospel: a) the thanksgiving scene (33,22–36,10) which I shall discuss further on; b) the discussion between Jesus and his disciples which was held on the 'next morning' (36,11–37,20) and the discussion about the vision of the temple (37,20–41,8) that I shall deal with further on.¹⁴ This might suggest that the thanksgiving passage is situated by the author three days before Passover and that the temple vision would have occurred according to him on the day immediately prior to that day. However, the text itself leaves open the possibility that the three days mentioned coincided with other days during the period of eight days (assuming that they actually fell during the period of eight days at all¹⁵).

Further, in my view, there is no reason to hypothesize some sort of historical connection between the three days mentioned in the Gospel of Judas and the mysterious chronology of the passion found in the Didascalia, which implies that Jesus and his disciples would have advanced their Passover meal with three days, so that it was held on a Tuesday, three days before His crucifixion.¹⁶ The context of the meal described in the Didascalia as well as the chronology as such are completely different from those encountered in the Gospel of Judas. In addition, the hypothesis proposed by Annie Jaubert who had argued that the chronology of the Didascalia would have very ancient roots,¹⁷ has proven to be purely speculative. This chronology may be best explained as an invention of

might have read 'paschein' instead of 'poiein pascha'). The text itself, however, does not provide evidence for these possibilities. This also holds for the (interesting and in itself more plausible) suggestion that the text might refer to an early Christian celebration of Passover (Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas*, 88; *Codex Tchacos*, 318–319).

¹⁴ See for this division also Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas*, 7–8 and 88–129.

¹⁵ The text itself seems to allow the possibility that the eight days preceded the three days (see J.D. Dubois, 'L'Évangile de Judas' et la tradition basilidienne, in: Scopello (ed.), *The Gospel of Judas*, 145–154 who on p. 147 refers to a translation and an interpretation proposed by P. Cherix).

¹⁶ This possibility is suggested by J.D. Dubois ('L'Évangile de Judas' et la tradition basilidienne, 147–148).

¹⁷ A. Jaubert, *La date de la Cène*, Paris 1957, esp. pp. 85–87.

one of the redactors of the Didascalia who, in the fourth century, tried to reconcile Holy Week which was introduced in that period, with the chronology of the Gospels.¹⁸

Finally, with regard to the eight days, it should be emphasized that they cannot have a liturgical background. They certainly neither refer to an Easter octave—which came into development only in the fourth century—nor to Holy Week preceding Easter (which was introduced from the end of the third century). Further, there is not the slightest indication that the eight days have something to do with the Jewish Week of the Unleavened Bread.¹⁹

2. THE DISCIPLES SAYING THANKS TO THE WRONG GOD

The reconstruction of the contents and the train of thought of this passage as such do not present serious difficulties. Apart from some details, the meaning of the words and the sentences is more or less clear at first sight. The disciples are assembled and are engaged in some sort of religious activity which may have been either a ritual practice²⁰ or prayers or perhaps a discussion about religious issues²¹ (the work *r-gymnaze*; Greek: *gymnadzein* seems to allow all of these interpretations). At the moment when the disciples perform a thanksgiving (*r-eucharisti*) over a bread, Jesus suddenly comes in and laughs. The disciples ask why Jesus is laughing at their thanksgiving (*eucharistia*). Jesus then answers them that he does not laugh at them. The reason why he laughs is that the thanksgiving will be received by the God of the disciples who is the wrong God. Next follows a rather long discussion between Jesus, Judas and the other disciples in which Judas proves to be the only disciple who understands who Jesus is and who knows where he comes from, namely from the immortal aeon of Barbelo. The interpretation of the rest of the passage is much debated and raises several difficulties, but is not directly relevant for our issue.

¹⁸ See G. Rouwhorst, *Les hymnes pascales d'Ephrem de Nisibe*, I, Leiden 1989, 165–171, esp. footnote 56.

¹⁹ In regard to the number of 'eight' days, also see the reference to 'ogdoades' in the 'Gospel of the Egyptians' and e.g. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* I, 18,3 in Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas*, 88.

²⁰ Cf. the translation proposed by the National Geographic Critical Edition: 'practicing their piety' (p. 185). See also Brankaer and Bethge, *Codex Tchacos*, (323), who leave open several possibilities (both cultic and ascetic) of translating the text.

²¹ Thus P. Nagel, 'Das Evangelium des Judas', p. 240, footnote 72.

Whereas the text as such is clear, serious difficulties arise as soon as one tries to situate it in a broader historical context. There can be no doubt that the attack on the thanksgiving by the disciples is directed against an existing early Christian practice. But what practice does the author precisely have in mind here? Does he really oppose a sacrificial type of Eucharist as several scholars are inclined to believe?²²

As far as I can see, the last-mentioned view is founded upon four different arguments or at least assumptions (which may be rather implicit). They can be summarized as follows: 1) The expression 'r-eucharisti' implies the notion of 'offering' and should thereby be rendered by *to offer* a thanksgiving.²³ 2) The sacrificial character of the Eucharist is attested by the passage dealing with the temple vision which includes a fierce attack upon the sacrificial practices of Christians, with the (sacrificial) Eucharist supposedly being an essential part of those practices. 3) The fact that the author knows one or more versions of the Last Supper tradition, but omits basic elements of it, such as the reference to the body of Christ,²⁴ and therefore to the sacrificial death of Christ, proves that he was opposed to them. 4) It is argued that the specific language used calls to mind the celebration of the Eucharist within Christianity²⁵ and, on this basis, it might be concluded that this celebration of the Eucharist had a sacrificial connotation.

In my view, none of these arguments is convincing:

1. It is very likely that the Coptic verb 'r-eucharisti' renders the Greek word 'eucharistein'. Its primary meaning is: 'to give thanks' or 'to say thanks'.²⁶ To translate it as 'offering a prayer of thanksgiving', as does the National Geographic translation,²⁷ might betray a Christian interpretation which was influenced by the later development of the Eucharist.

²² See especially L. Painchaud, 'Polemical Aspects', 174–175, Williams, 'Gospel of Judas', and, though less explicitly, Pagels and King, *The Gospel of Judas*, 61 and 128–130.

²³ Thus the translation of Meyer and Gaudard (p. 187).

²⁴ Thus J. Robinson, 'The Sources of the Gospel of Judas', in: M. Scopello, *The Gospel of Judas in Context*, 59–67, esp. 62–63; see also F. Williams, 'The Gospel of Judas', 378–379.

²⁵ See *The Gospel of Judas from Codex Tchacos*, 21, footnote 10.

²⁶ Cf. the translations of Gathercole ('giving thanks', p. 66), Turner ('giving thanks', p. 230), J. Brankaer and H.G. Bethge ('dankend über dem Brot', p. 263), P. Nagel ('die Danksagung über dem Brot sprachen', p. 240) and of Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas*, 99: 'hun dankgebed (eucharistie) uitspraken'; kleine editie, p. 39).

²⁷ See both the critical edition (p. 187) and *The Gospel of Judas from the Codex Tchacos* (p. 21).

For the rest, it should be emphasized that, unlike 'sacrifice', 'offering' does not necessarily have the connotation of 'slaughtering', 'killing'.

2. As I shall try to demonstrate in the next section in which I shall deal with the vision of the temple, the idea that this passage is directed against the Eucharist, is speculative and at least cannot be vindicated by cogent arguments drawn from this passage itself.²⁸

3. The suggestion that the author of the Gospel of Judas criticizes several aspects of the Last Supper tradition by omitting them, is at first sight tempting. Indeed, some of the elements which play a prominent role in the institution narratives of Paul and the Synoptic Gospels and are missing in the Gospel of Judas, are precisely those which must have appeared abhorrent to the author of the Gospel of Judas (Christ giving his body; describing Jesus' death in sacrificial terms). Still, the whole argument is one drawn from silence. In addition, one might ask why the author of the Gospel would attack the fact that the disciples gave thanks to the wrong God, but keep silent about other elements of the Last Supper tradition which he rejected?

4. In my view, this argument is the most cogent one. Indeed, it appears very likely that the author of the Gospel had in mind a liturgical practice which was particularly central to the life and identity of orthodox or proto-orthodox Christians, more precisely an early Christian communal meal. However, the question is: what type of liturgical practice did the author have in mind? Was it a 'classical', full-blown Eucharist as testified by third or fourth century sources, which more or less followed the pattern of the New Testament institution narratives and featured a sacrificial character? Actually, the (admittedly scarce) evidence concerning the early Christian Eucharist provided by sources dating to the second century, notably the *Didache* and the *First Apology* of Justin, strongly suggests a different solution. One of the most striking characteristics of the Eucharistic meals testified by these sources is the remarkable prominence which is given to prayers of thanksgiving (eucharistia). Especially chapters 9 and 10 of the *Didache* should be explicitly mentioned in this regard. The Eucharistic meal to which these texts refer basically consists of a meal preceded and followed by several prayers of thanksgiving which

²⁸ Cf. Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas*, 98, who primarily refers to the Jewish prayer of thanksgiving after the meal.

doubtless go back to Jewish meal traditions for that matter.²⁹ With regard to the Gospel of Judas, it is very noteworthy that one of those prayers is said over a bread (9, 3–4) and, moreover, that it seems to function as an important culmination point during the meal. It should be added that, in the Didache, any explicit allusion to an institution narrative or to the death of Christ is missing. As for Justin, he recites a version of the institution narrative (*Ap.* I, 66), which no doubt functions as the foundational narrative of the Eucharist as described by him. Still, there is nothing to indicate that it had already become part of the prayer of thanksgiving (which occupies a very central place in the entire celebration).

Could it be that the passage of the Gospel of Judas criticizing the disciples saying a prayer of thanksgiving over a bread presupposes a type of Eucharist as attested by the Didache? This seems to be a very plausible solution indeed. However, in that case it is very uncertain—to say the least—that the idea of Christ's sacrificial death played a prominent role in the Eucharist under attack. We should seriously reckon with the possibility that it did not.

3. THE TEMPLE VISION AND THE POLEMIC AGAINST THE SACRIFICES OFFERED BY THE DISCIPLES

At the beginning of this section, the disciples tell Jesus they have seen him in a vision during the night. After a short dialogue which has been preserved only fragmentarily, but from which it can at least be deduced that the disciples hid themselves, the disciples go on explaining that they had seen a great house, with a large altar, twelve men who were held to be the priests, and a name. A large crowd was waiting until the priests would come out to bring offerings (? lacuna in the text) for the service/worship.

Next, Jesus poses a question, the precise thrust of which unfortunately cannot be deduced from the lacuna in the Coptic text. While answering the question raised by Jesus, the disciples mention people who, on the one hand, appear to fast, but on the other hand commit all sorts of criminal activities: some are sacrificing their own children, others their wives and others are engaging in murder or sleeping with men (obviously males are intended here). Unfortunately the first part of the main clause,

²⁹ Cf. G. Rouwhorst, 'A Litmus-Test', 145–151; see also H. van de Sandt/D. Flusser, *The Didache. Its Jewish Sources and its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity*, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum, Assen – Minneapolis 2002, 296–329.

which must have contained its subject, has become illegible. We therefore have to guess to what people the disciples here refer. There are only two possibilities: either the priests or the crowd. Several scholars have opted for the former solution, which implies that the priests themselves are committing the criminal activities.³⁰ Anna van den Kerchove (p. 319), however, has given a series of forceful arguments in favour of the latter solution.³¹ I think this is indeed the most plausible one and results in a more logical flow of thought.

After having described the deeds of lawlessness which the crowd was supposed to commit, the disciples mention men standing in front of the altar and invoking the name of Jesus. In this case, there can be no doubt that the priests are meant.

Next, Jesus offers an explanation of their dream. At first he states that all the priests standing in front of the altar are invoking his Name, the Name of Jesus, but they do not realize that his Name has been written by the human generations on something—because of a lacuna in the text we cannot know what is precisely meant: perhaps it is the house (?)—which is part of the generations of the stars. Next follows a remark which must come as a shock to the disciples. Jesus says to them: ‘You are those you saw presenting the offering at the altar’. In their dream the disciples saw themselves! They are themselves the twelve men! Moreover, the animals brought for sacrifice are the multitude which is led astray by them. The sentence which follows is incomplete and cryptic. It mentions someone who is standing at the altar and makes use of the Name of Jesus and is loyally followed by the pious ones. The precise meaning of the rest of the passage is difficult to reconstruct. It is, however, clear that the sacrifices brought by the disciples are radically rejected and the entire passage ends with a strong appeal by Jesus to stop sacrificing.

The interpretation of this passage presents considerable difficulties which for a considerable part are due to the badly damaged state of the Coptic text. Nevertheless, with a relative degree of certainty at least the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The entire scene described clearly evokes the sacrificial cult as practiced in a temple. More specifically, it has clearly been inspired by

³⁰ See Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas*, 117–119. This possibility is at least also suggested by E. Pagels and K. King, *Reading Judas*, 136–137 and by J. Brankaer and H.G. Bethge (*Codex Tchacos*, 269, n. 13 and 333), although the last-mentioned authors leave open the possibility that the multitude is rather intended.

³¹ A. van den Kerchove, ‘La maison, l’autel et les sacrifices’, 319.

traditions concerning the sacrificial cult at Jerusalem (both in the Septuagint and in the New Testament, the temple of Jerusalem is regularly called a 'house'³²).

2. The sacrificial cult which is evoked and rejected, is used as a metaphor for contemporaneous Christian practices.
3. By the twelve men the twelve disciples are doubtlessly meant who, for their part, symbolize the leaders of the second-century orthodox or proto-orthodox church attacked by the author of the Gospel of Judas.
4. The major reason for the rejection of the sacrificial cult is given in the passage which mentions the priests standing in front of the altar and invoking the Name of Jesus. The text has been damaged and is somewhat cryptic. Still, there can be no doubt that the Name invoked is under the dominion of the stars, belonging to the lower world. While invoking it, one does not get access to the divine realm, to the superior and holy generation of Barbelo where Jesus comes from (see also pp. 36–37 of the edition).

Having established these facts, the question arises as to what Christian practices, abhorrent in his eyes, the author of the Gospel has precisely in mind. Furthermore, to what extent are they connected with the celebration of early Christian liturgy, more in particular the Eucharist.

Before further entering into details, a more general remark is in order concerning the place occupied by the Temple of Jerusalem and its sacrificial cult in early Christianity. It should be emphasized that, when early Christians, use the word to indicate a Christian practice, they always use it in a metaphorical way. None of the early Christians, whether Gnostic or belonging to what is sometimes called 'mainstream Christianity', continued offering (animal) sacrifices in the literal sense of the word, that is to say, they did not slaughter animals. Moreover, the word 'sacrifice' could be used as a metaphor referring to liturgical practices of Christians, but this was not necessarily the case. It could, for instance, denote various things such as prayer, human love, devoting one's entire life to God and also martyrdom. An interesting example of the multiple interpretations which could be evoked by the concept is found in our passage where the animals brought for sacrifice are associated with the multitudes that are led astray by the priests (in a rather general sense). Moreover, if the term

³² Ibidem, 315. And see also Van Oort, *Evangelie van Judas*, 116 who refers to the Jewish idea of the heavenly temple and refers to the Apocalypse of John (= *Apoc.* 3:7 etc.).

was associated with rituals, for instance with the Eucharist, it should be emphasized that Christian forms of liturgy had an essentially different character than the sacrifices offered in the temple of Jerusalem, as well as in pagan temples for that matter.

Apart from this more general remark, it seems appropriate to mention some arguments which have been—or could be—adduced in favour of a liturgical or Eucharistic interpretation of the entire passage but have to be discarded beforehand as being unconvincing or simply flawed. It may first of all be recalled that it is problematic to base oneself for this interpretation upon Christian sources which presuppose a sacrificial interpretation of the Eucharist, but date to a later period. Nor can convincing arguments be drawn in favour of this interpretation from the passage of the Gospel of Judas, that we have discussed in the preceding section,³³ Furthermore, it has been argued by some scholars that the passage dealing with the sacrifices of the wives and the children should be understood as a critique upon the supposed glorification of martyrdom by the early Christian leaders and, so the argument goes, this idea would fit in very well with a strong emphasis laid by them upon the sacrificial death of Jesus which, for its part, would be at the centre of the early Christian Eucharist. However, the entire argumentation is based on the supposition that the twelve men, and not the multitude, are the subject of the sentence in question and this supposition has proven to be rather problematic.

There is another argument which has recently been advanced and certainly deserves serious consideration. Anna van den Kerchove has pointed to a striking parallel which exists between the passage in which the priests are depicted as standing in front of the altar, and Ignatius of Antioch's letter to the Philadelphians (ch. 4).³⁴ Ignatius strongly exhorts the Christians to participate in one sole Eucharist, while arguing that there is 'one sole altar' and 'one sole bishop with the presbyters and the deacons'. The relevance of this passage of a well-known second century source lies in the fact that the Eucharist is clearly associated with an altar (*thysiastèrion*). This suggests at least the possibility that the priests standing in front of the altar evoked by the Gospel of Judas refer to the bishop presiding at the early Christian Eucharist (standing in front of a table?). Still, the mere occurrence of the word 'altar' in both sources and the parallelism existing between the priests and the bishop form a

³³ As is for instance done by F. Williams, 'The Gospel of Judas', 380–381.

³⁴ A. Van den Kerchove, 'La maison, l'autel et les sacrifices', 317.

rather weak foundation for an Eucharistic interpretation of the passage under consideration of the Gospel of Judas, let alone of the entire section. It remains at least rather hypothetical.

However, in my view, a more convincing argument may be advanced in favour of the hypothesis that the section under consideration is directed against a liturgical tradition, more specifically against the Eucharist. Actually, the idea of the invocation of the Name which is criticized, played a prominent role in early Christianity. The whole idea of the Eucharistic epiclesis, either addressed to the Holy Ghost, the Logos or the Trinity,—which is encountered in a great number of early Christian sources, especially in those derived from the Syro-Antiochene region—, has its roots precisely in the invocation of (a) divine Name(s), which occurred notably during the administration of baptism.³⁵ Traces of a direct relationship between the (invocation of the) Name and the Eucharist can still be discerned in some of the earliest sources dealing with this early Christian ritual meal. Here again mention should be made of the *Didache*. One of the prayers transmitted by this document, which is intended to be said after the Eucharistic meal, goes back to an early (probably oral) form of the so-called *birkat-yerushalayim*, in which God is asked to have compassion with the Jewish people, Jerusalem, the Temple ... and the sanctuary upon which God's Name has been invoked.³⁶ In the *Didache*, this supplication has been transformed into a prayer for the church which is characterized as being 'perfected in God's love and sanctified'. More strikingly, in another prayer preceding the one quoted, God is thanked for the fact that the holy Name dwells in the hearts of the Christian celebrating the Eucharist (10, 2).

Could it be that the critique of the author of the Gospel of Judas is directed against Eucharistic celebrations of Christians who claim to invoke the divine Name?

CONCLUSION

There is strong evidence that the Gospel of Judas contains a fierce and bitter attack on the liturgical traditions of early Christianity and, in par-

³⁵ See for instance G. Rouwhorst, 'Die Rolle des heiligen Geistes in der Eucharistie und der Taufe im frühsyrischen Christentum', in: B. Groen/B. Kranemann (Hg.), *Liturgie und Trinität*, Quaestiones disputatae 229, Freiburg 2008, 161–184.

³⁶ Cf. for a comparison between *Didache* 10 and the *birkah ha-mazon*, in particular the *birkat yerushalayim* for instance P. Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins*, 32–35.

ticular, the Eucharist. However, the liturgical practices that were criticized by the author of this text must have considerably differed from those attested by third- and fourth-century sources. This has far-reaching implications for the character of the critique formulated by the author. One may rightly conjecture that he would have criticized the sacrificial character of early Christian Eucharistic celebrations if this aspect would have played a prominent role in them. But it is very doubtful whether it did. Is it a coincidence that the author directs his attack on another aspect of the early Christian Eucharist, while blaming the apostles celebrating it for giving thanks to a wrong God and invoking a fake divine Name?

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

AFTER THE *GOSPEL OF JUDAS*: REASSESSING WHAT WE HAVE KNOWN TO BE TRUE ABOUT CAIN AND JUDAS

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The discovery of the *Gospel of Judas* after almost two thousand years is nothing less than miraculous. To finally have this notorious gospel and to read it for ourselves allows us a unique opportunity in history—to re-evaluate what we have known about the *Gospel of Judas* and Gnosticism, to weigh the testimony of this text against that of the heresiologists, to appraise its Gnosis against other witnesses from Nag Hammadi, the Berlin Codex, and similar manuscripts. It provides us with a moment to pause and ask ourselves, ‘Have we got it right?’

So far, this has not been our main response to this text. So far, we have concentrated on trying to see how to fit this text into our existing schema, to discover from it what we already know to be true about Judas and ancient Gnosticism. The initial transcription (which was provisional), English translation, and interpretation published by the National Geographic Society provide a good example. Judas emerged in the National Geographic translation and interpretation as a hero of the Gnostics, a favorite disciple of Jesus who would ascend out of this world to join the holy Gnostic race.¹ The original release of the gospel by the Society advanced the opinion that Judas was considered by some Gnostics to be a Gnostic himself who possessed the ‘truth.’ This opinion complied with our long-held understanding of Irenaeus’ testimony about the *Gospel of Judas*, an understanding of Irenaeus’ words that has been most recently rearticulated by Johannes van Oort in his valuable close rereading of Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 1.31.1.²

Following the initial release by the National Geographic Society of the *Gospel of Judas*, corrections to the transcription and translation of the

¹ Kasser et al. 2006.

² Van Oort 2009, 43–56.

gospel were made, and a different Judas has emerged from the gospel, a Judas that is no Gnostic.³ In my opinion, Judas differs little in this gospel from his portrayal in the New Testament gospels. He is a demon who brings about Jesus' death. In the gospel of Luke, 'Satan entered Judas Iscariot' before he betrayed him to the chief priests.⁴ Even more fascinating is John's account where Jesus states early in the narrative of his mission, 'Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?' with reference to Judas Iscariot.⁵ At the final supper, Judas is presented as one whom the devil is using to betray Jesus.⁶ During the farewell discourses, Jesus refers to Judas and his betrayal as the coming of Satan, the chief archon or ruler of this world: 'I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world (ὁ τοῦ κόσμου ἄρχων) is coming. He has no power over me, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go hence.'⁷ These biblical texts are the seeds for the portrayal of Judas in the *Gospel of Judas* where he corresponds with the thirteenth demon, Ialdabaoth, the archon who rules the universe from his realm, the thirteenth aeon. Judas will never ascend further than Ialdabaoth's realm where his fate as an evil and doomed world-ruler lies.⁸

If this were not enough of a surprise, we also have found ourselves face-to-face with a Sethian gospel rather than a Cainite one. We had assumed Cainite provenance of the *Gospel of Judas* based on our former reading of the patristic evidence.⁹ In the past, we have read Irenaeus' testimony as a straightforward presentation of facts, although our understanding of his words have been shaped by our knowledge of the testimonies of Pseudo-Tertullian (ca. 220 CE) and Epiphanius (ca. 375 CE).¹⁰ While Epiphanius and Pseudo-Tertullian appear to be mutually dependent on a common source, probably Hippolytus' lost *Syntagma* (ca. 200 CE), Epiphanius,

³ DeConick 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009. See also, Painchaud 2006; Brankaer-Bethge, 2007; Schenke Robinson 2008; Thomassen 2008; Turner 2008.

⁴ Luke 22:3.

⁵ John 6:70–71.

⁶ John 13:2.

⁷ John 14:30–31.

⁸ On Satan possessing Judas, see Luke 22:3; John 14:27. On Satan as the ruler of this world, see John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 John 5:19. For more details, see DeConick 2007, 2009.

⁹ For an overview see Gathercole 2007, 114–131.

¹⁰ Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 1,31,1 (Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b, 386); Ps.-Tert., *Haer.* 2.5–6 (*Adv. haer.* 2.5–6

Kroyman 1954, 1404); Epiph., *Pan.* 38 (Holl 1980:62–71).

at least, also represents an early interpretation of Irenaeus.¹¹ The late fifth-century testimony of Theodoret, preserved in Greek, appears to be transmitting an abstract of Irenaeus based on Irenaeus' original Greek.¹² Irenaeus is our primary witness, although he himself may be dependent upon Justin's own lost *Syntagma* (ca. 150 CE).¹³ Irenaeus never says that the *Gospel of Judas* was produced by Cainites, but he does say that people who traced themselves back to Cain and other biblical villains produced (*adferô*) this fictitious (*confinctiô*) gospel.¹⁴ It is Epiphanius who tells us that the authors were Cainites.¹⁵ The trouble is that Cain or Esau or Korah or the Sodomites are not mentioned in the *Gospel of Judas* we possess. Rather this gospel preserves a Sethian genealogy and outlook.

What are we to make of this? Perhaps the Cainites were not an authentic social group after all, but a fiction created in the heresiological battles of the second century?¹⁶ Or perhaps the Cainite mythology was dependent on Sethian mythology in some fashion.¹⁷ Or maybe Irenaeus had a different edition of this gospel or an older version that was rewritten later by Sethians?¹⁸ Might this older gospel have had a kinder view of Judas, and have lacked overtly Sethian references or had Cainite ones instead?¹⁹ This is the kind of reasoning that I see beginning to emerge already in the scholarly literature as we put the *Gospel of Judas* through the traditional historical-critical and literary-critical paces. But as we go about doing that which we have been trained to do as biblical scholars, I wish to raise a troubling question. In so doing are we trying to make the *Gospel of Judas* conform to what we already know to be true about it?

Consider how dangerous it is to begin to remove what we identify as Sethian references in order to create a non-Sethian primary document so that we can have a *Gospel of Judas* that supports more closely the patristic evidence? When we start pulling out the so-called Sethian

¹¹ Eusebius, *HE* 4,22.

¹² Theodoret, *Haer. Fab.* 1.15 (PG 83, 368B). See Van Oort 2009, p. 45.

¹³ For a discussion, see Wisse 1971, 205–223.

¹⁴ Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b: 386. Translation mine.

¹⁵ Epiph., *Pan.* 38.1.1.

¹⁶ Birger Pearson has been an advocate for this opinion for a long time and sees the discovery of the Sethian Gospel of Judas as demonstrative of this. See now Pearson 2007, 48–50. Bart Ehrman (2006, 64–65) makes a similar argument.

¹⁷ Van Oort 2009, p. 56.

¹⁸ Wurst in Kasser et al. 2006, 126–128; Gathercole 2007, 119–123.

¹⁹ On an argument for an early version lacking Sethian references, see Schenke Robinson 2008, 63–98.

references, where do we stop? The mythological section?²⁰ The reference to Barbelo?²¹ The thirteenth demon?²² The thirteenth aeon?²³ Judas ruling over the twelve?²⁴ The befuddled disciples performing a botched eucharist?²⁵ The nightmare of the twelve as priests of Ialdabaoth, the Deacon of Error?²⁶ Jesus' laughter which mocks Judas and the disciples?²⁷ Jesus' interpretation of Judas' temple dream where he explains that Judas is separated from the holy generation?²⁸ The Sethian reading of the Genesis story?²⁹ Jesus' insistence that Judas will offer to Saklas the worst sacrifice possible by killing him?³⁰ What stays and what goes? When you begin pulling the thread, will the whole gospel unravel? Will any Judas be left, good, bad or ugly?

I am afraid of this approach because our results are predetermined to reinforce our previous theories and because it severely compromises the integrity of the text we possess. As Gregor Wurst has duly noted from the beginning of his work on the *Gospel of Judas*, 'This kind of literary criticism would obviously destroy the original text.'³¹ So I offer this suggestion—before we get carried away making this gospel conform to what we already know to be true, why not investigate this gospel as a holistic text from which we might learn something new about the *Gospel of Judas* and ancient Gnosticism or, at the very least, reassess what we already know to be true from the patristic evidence?

Since there appears to be such a disjuncture between the *Gospel of Judas* we now possess and our understanding of the patristic testimonies, it is crucial that the patristic evidence be reassessed. As I have re-examined the patristic testimonies, several questions have dominated my analysis. First, how much from the testimonies of Irenaeus and Epiphanius can be considered straight factual evidence about the *Gospel of Judas*? Second, what information about the *Gospel of Judas* did Irenaeus actually

²⁰ *Gos. Jud.* 47.1–53.7.

²¹ *Gos. Jud.* 35.14–18.

²² *Gos. Jud.* 44.21.

²³ *Gos. Jud.* 55.10–11.

²⁴ *Gos. Jud.* 46.19–24.

²⁵ *Gos. Jud.* 33.22–34.10.

²⁶ *Gos. Jud.* 37.10–40.26.

²⁷ *Gos. Jud.* 34.2–5; 36.22–23; 44.18–19; 55.12–20.

²⁸ *Gos. Jud.* 45.12–47.1.

²⁹ *Gos. Jud.* 52.14–54.12.

³⁰ *Gos. Jud.* 56.11–24.

³¹ Kasser et al. 2006, 135.

receive?³² Third, how did Irenaeus frame and pass on the traditions he had received? Fourth, how much have our own long-held modern readings of Irenaeus' words been affected by the way in which Epiphanius received and interpreted Irenaeus' testimony?

1. THE SOVEREIGN POWER

The primary patristic text is found in Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses*. Greek fragments of this passage do not exist, although it has been reconstructed based on Theodoret's synopsis.³³ The later Latin translation survives.³⁴

Alii autem rursus Cain a superiore Principalitate dicunt et Esau et Core et Sodomitas et omnes tales cognatos suos confitentur: et propter hoc a Factore impugnatos, neminem ex eis malum accepisse. Sophia enim illud quod proprium ex ea erat abripiebat ex eis ad semetipsam. Et haec Iudam proditorem diligenter cognovisse dicunt, et solum prae caeteris cognoscentem ueritatem, perfecisse proditiōis mysterium: per quem et terrena et caelestia omnia dissoluta dicunt. Et confinctionem adferunt huiusmodi, Iudae Euangelium illud uocantes.

Yet others say that Cain is from the sovereign Power above, and they acknowledge that Esau, Korah, the Sodomites, and all such persons, are their relatives, and because of this, they also acknowledge that they have been attacked by the Creator, yet none of them has been harmed. For Sophia seized what belonged to her from them. They say that Judas the traitor was thoroughly acquainted with these things, and that he alone, knowing the truth as none of the others did, accomplished the mystery of the betrayal. By him all things, both earthly and heavenly, were thus destroyed. They produce a fictitious history of this kind, which they entitle the Gospel of Judas.

Irenaeus begins to describe the group that produced the *Gospel of Judas* with these words: 'Yet others say that Cain is from the sovereign Power above (*Alii autem rursus Cain a superiore Principalitate dicunt*).'³⁵ Much hinges on the words *superiore Principalitate*, 'superior Principle' which appears to be an awkward translation of the Greek expression ἡ ἄνωθεν Αὐθεντία preserved by both Epiphanius and Theodoret.³⁶ In my own

³² Cf. Justin, *Apol.* 1,26,8.

³³ Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979a, 312.

³⁴ Iren., *Adv. haer.* 1.31.1 (Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b, 386). Translation mine.

³⁵ Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 1.31.1. (Rousseau and Doutreleau, 1979b, 386). *Principalitate* was likely αὐθεντία (whose equivalent is ἐξουσία) in the Greek original. See Van Oort 2009, p. 45. Translation mine.

³⁶ For a reconstruction of the original Greek, see Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979a, 312.

English translation of this expression, 'the sovereign Power above,' I have attempted to be faithful to the Greek, since it is quite evident this was what Epiphanius and Theodoret independently knew. It is also the case that Irenaeus uses Αὐθεντία twice in the Greek fragment of 1.26.1, which similarly has been translated into Latin as *Principalitate*.³⁷ The phrase ἄνωθεν ἡ Αὐθεντία appears in the Greek fragments of Irenaeus' account of Saturnil, but it is translated into Latin, *summa Potestas*, with the meaning: supreme Power.³⁸

Αὐθεντία is an abstract noun related to αὐθέντης, which references anyone who does something with his own hand, especially murder. It came to indicate the absolute ruler as an autocrat or despot.³⁹ The abstract noun indicates the power to act independently on one's own initiative, as well as the absolute power welded by the sovereign. It was used to describe both divine power and human power, the authority of God and the bishop. In a bad sense, it meant unauthorized license and the tyranny of rulers and evil powers.⁴⁰

It is a word that has some history in Hermetic and magical literature, taking on a more technical meaning indicating the 'supreme authority' in the spiritual world. Poimandres is called 'the mind of the sovereign Power' (ὁ Ποιμάνδρης ὁ τῆς αὐθεντίας νοῦς) and 'the Logos of the sovereign Power' (ὁ Ποιμάνδρης ὁ τῆς αὐθεντίας λόγος).⁴¹ Arguably this expression is related to the name Poimandres which appears to be a Greek translation of the Coptic expression 'the knowledge of Rê' or 'the understanding of Rê'.⁴² This means that the Greek αὐθεντία was translating the old Egyptian title for Rê the sun god, the all sovereign lord and supreme authority: *nb-r-dr*.⁴³ Not surprisingly, in the magical literature associated with the Hermetics, it is applied to Helios who is called 'Sovereign Helios!' (αὐθέντα Ἥλιε), the god entrusted with sovereignty (τὰ αὐθεντικά).⁴⁴

³⁷ Rousseau-Doutreleau, 1979b, 344.

³⁸ Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b, 322.

³⁹ Liddell-Scott 1968, 275b.

⁴⁰ Lampe 1961, 262a–263b. See also a literature overview in Büchli 1987, 22–25.

⁴¹ C.H. 1.2, 13.15; Nock-Festugière 1945, 7; Festugière 1945, 206. C.H. 1.30: Nock-Festugière 1945, 17.

⁴² See the most recent treatment of this argument by Kingsley 2000, 41–76. For the earliest formulation of this theory, see Scott 1925, 2:16–17, who consulted F. Ll. Griffith on the subject.

⁴³ Kingsley 2000, 49–50; Westendorf 1975, 1: cols. 136–137.

⁴⁴ PGM 13.258; 13.138–141; Preisendanz 1973, 2:100, 93–94. See also Nilsson 1960, 3:150–151.

The Gnostics know the term *authentia* and use it. It appears to have several applications. In Irenaeus' description of the teachings of Cerinthus, the phrase ὁ ὑπὲρ τὰ ὅλα Αὐθεντία, 'the sovereign Power over all things' is contrasted with the demiurgic 'Power' (Δυνάμεις) that exists separately. *Authentia* is equivalent in this passage with 'the first God' (ὁ πρῶτος θεός) and 'the God over all' (ὁ ὑπὲρ πάντα θεός). In addition, this sovereign Power sent the Christ-dove upon Jesus at his baptism. So in this instance, the term appears to be used as a reference to the supreme Pleromic God.

In Gnostic literature, the term sometimes is associated with a *heavenly* power of light that exists immediately above the demiurge and provides revelation (ΤΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΙΑ Ν ΤΠΕ: 'the sovereign power of heaven'; ΤΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΙΑ Η ΠΙΧΙΕ: 'the sovereign Power above').⁴⁵ Is this the tradition that Irenaeus knows with reference to Satronil who taught that a luminous image of the human being was revealed to the Creator angels by the sovereign power above them? This ἡ ἄνωθεν Αὐθεντία is referred to as ἡ ἄνω Δύναμις later in the same passage, meaning that *authentia* and *dynamis* were perceived to be synonyms.⁴⁶

Some Gnostics applied *authentia* to the demiurge himself, understanding him to be the sovereign or tyrannical Power over the universe. This is twice done by the author of the *Hypostasis of the Archons*. In one instance, a voice says 'You are mistaken, Samael!' from the area above Ialdabaoth who is referred to here as 'the sovereign Power': ΟΥΓΜΗ ΔΕ ΛΕΓΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΜΠΣΑ Ν ΖΡΕ ΝΤΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΙΑ.⁴⁷ In another passage, Ialdabaoth is referred to as "the sovereign Power of that part of heaven" (ΤΗΝΤΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΙΣ Η ΠΙΣΑ Ν ΤΠΕ) who became the tyrannical pattern for injustice or wrongdoing (ΑΔΙΚΙΑ).⁴⁸

Did Irenaeus intend his reference to *authentia* to indicate the sovereign Power in the Pleroma or the tyrannical one ruling in the highest heaven or a power in-between? Since he used the word previously in his narrative as a reference to a power associated with the Pleroma, it may be that this was the way in which he hoped or expected his readers would understand it with reference to Cain.

⁴⁵ *Ap. John* NHC II 23.25; BG 60.17: Waldstein-Wisse 1995, 134–135.

⁴⁶ Rousseau-Doutreleau, 1979b, 322.

⁴⁷ *Hypo. Arch.* 96.24: Layton 1989, 252.

⁴⁸ *Hypo. Arch.* 96.2; Layton 1989, 256.

But Irenaeus' framing of the word in his narrative says nothing about the actual Gnostic tradition that he had received about it. He could easily have received a Gnostic teaching that Cain was from the *Authentia* above, a teaching that left open the actual identification of the *Authentia*, whether it was a pleromic or cosmic being. How do we know what type of teaching Irenaeus received? An examination the Gnostic literature itself shows that the Sethians left a rich tradition about Cain's relationship to a higher Power, but a power distant from the Pleroma.

2. CAIN'S FATHER

It is quite likely that Irenaeus had received an old Jewish teaching familiar to the Sethians, that recognized the ambiguity of the Hebrew text of Genesis 4:1 in relation to Cain's paternity?⁴⁹ According to this scriptural passage, 'Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying 'I have gotten a man יְהוָה אֵת.' Because אֵת can mark the accusative or be read as the preposition 'with,' the sentence has a double meaning: either Yahweh was responsible for Eve's pregnancy or the child Cain, whom Eve bore, was actually Yahweh. When אֵת is read as a preposition, the sentence means: 'I have gotten a man with the help of Yahweh.' However, when אֵת is read as an accusative, the sentence rendered is entirely different: 'I have gotten a man, that is Yahweh.'

The rabbinic tradition is aware of this ambiguity and so offers examples to settle things, revealing a particular rabbinic concern to dissociate Cain's paternity from Yahweh. Among some of the rabbis, Cain is known as the son of Samael, the fallen angel who guards Eden. This tradition appears to be old since a version is preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls in a poem that alludes to the 'one who is pregnant of the serpent.'⁵⁰ The author of 1 John 3:12 also appears to assume this old tradition when he remarks that Cain 'is from the evil one and murdered his brother.'⁵¹ In the rabbinic tradition, in order to make clear that Cain was not Yahweh nor related to him, the phrase, 'I have gotten a man, that is Yahweh,' is interpreted to mean that Eve conceived by *an angel* of Yahweh, albeit Samael, the Angel

⁴⁹ Ginzberg 1913, 105–107; Ginzberg 1955, 132–135; Klijn 1977, 7–10, 16, 21, 28–30; Stroumsa 1984, 47–49; Pearson 1990, 95–107; Bassler 1986, 56–64; Martinez 2003, 27–45.

⁵⁰ 1QH^a XI 6–18. For a full bibliography of this poem, see Schuller-DiTomasso 1997, 70–72. For later references, i.e., BT *Abodah Zarah* 22b; Zohar Gen 54b, Lev 76b.

⁵¹ Brown 1982, 442–443.

of Death. Along these lines, the famous passage on the subject in the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Genesis 4:1 reads, 'And Adam knew his wife Eve, who desired the angel, and she conceived from Samael, the angel of the Lord, and bore Cain; and she said, "I have acquired as man, the angel of the Lord".'⁵²

We find in the Sethian literature an affinity with these same hermeneutics.⁵³ In the *Apocryphon of John*, Cain is begotten from Ialdabaoth's rape of Eve. Ialdabaoth is also known in this text by the names of Samael and Saklas.⁵⁴ From this union, Eve bears two archons, Yave (i.e., Yahweh) and Eloim (i.e., Elohim) who are also called Cain and Abel.⁵⁵ These Archons are associated with certain constellations, which are described as the 'bear-face' and the 'cat-face.' As such, they are believed to control the four elements, the fire, wind, water, and earth.⁵⁶ In the *Hypostasis of the Archons*, Cain's archonic paternity ('she bore Cain, *their* son') is assumed and contrasted with Abel's who was Adam's son from conjugal relations.⁵⁷ This assumption also undergirds the myth in the *Apocalypse of Adam* where Sakla(s) creates a son for himself through forced adulterous relations with Eve.⁵⁸ This hermeneutic must have rested, to some extent, also upon Genesis 6:1–5, where angels rape human women, who then bear giants, a tradition further elaborated in the Enochic corpus.

So Sethian interpretation of Genesis 4:1 makes the sovereign archon, Ialdabaoth, the father of Cain who himself corresponds to the unjust Archon Yahweh, Lord of water and earth. Other Sethian references to Cain recognize him as one of the twelve archons who correspond with the Zodiac constellations, while Yao (i.e., Yahweh), his alternate persona, is one of the seven archons associated with the planets.⁵⁹ In all these references, Cain is an archonic offspring who joins his father's evil forces as an archon himself, helping to rule the world. He is a 'lord' in Ialdabaoth's court.

⁵² For this reconstruction and translation of the passage, see Martínez 2003, 30–31.

⁵³ Epiphanius says that the Archonites taught that Eve was raped by the devil and therefore her children Cain and Abel were sons of the devil, bringing murder and falsehood into the world (*Pan.* 40.5.3–7).

⁵⁴ *Apoc. John* NHC II 11,15–18. On Yahweh as Satan, see Grant 1966, 56–61.

⁵⁵ *Apoc. John* 24,15–26. For more discussion, see Stroumsa 1984, 38–53.

⁵⁶ *Apoc. John* 24,15–26.

⁵⁷ *Hypo. Arch.* NHC II 91,11–14.

⁵⁸ *Apoc. Adam* NHC V 66,25–28.

⁵⁹ *Apoc. John* NHC II 11,26–35; 12,14–25; 10,28–11,4//BG 40,5–18//NHC 16,20–17,7; *Gos. Eryp.* NHC III 58,6–23.

Had Irenaeus received the Sethian teaching that the father of Cain was the chief Archon, Ialdabaoth? Is this reflected in Irenaeus' statement that Cain was from the sovereign Power above? I think it quite likely, although he has reframed the teaching in such a way that Cain's father is in opposition to the Creator. Epiphanius is concerned about the ambiguity and rewrites Irenaeus so that it explicitly states that Cain is from the Pleroma. So Epiphanius writes, 'They say that Cain is from the stronger Power (*dynamis*) and the sovereign Power (*authentia*) above (Οὔτοί φασι τὸν Κάϊν ἐκ τῆς ἰσχυροντέρας δυνάμεως ὑπάρχειν καὶ τῆς ἀνωθεν αὐθεντίας).'⁶⁰ With the expansion of Irenaeus' phrase 'from the sovereign Power,' Epiphanius makes explicit how he wishes these words to be read: that Cain's lineage is connected to a sovereign Power from the *upper* aeons. He drives home this point later in this same passage when he writes that the Gnostics were hidden from the Creator because they had been 'transported to the *upper Aeon whence the stronger Power is*.' None of these qualifications are in Irenaeus' testimony, but they dominate Epiphanius'.

I find it very compelling that Epiphanius knows that Cain and Abel were sired by the archonic powers. In fact, when he states that Cain is the offspring of the stronger power, while Abel, the weaker one, he explains its meaning by referring to the Gnostic story of the rape of Eve by the archons: 'As I said, Cain is from the stronger Power and Abel from the weaker. These Powers had intercourse with Eve and sired Cain and Abel. Cain was from one, Abel from the other . . . And the children they had begotten—I mean Cain and Abel—quarreled, and the offspring of the stronger Power murdered the offspring of the lesser and weaker.'⁶¹ This is explicit evidence that Epiphanius was concerned that Irenaeus' words might be reflecting the Gnostic myth that Cain was sired by Ialdabaoth, the sovereign Power in the heavens. He does not like this because it does not fit what he wishes to relate about the Cainites (that Cain is from the supreme Pleromic God), and so he goes on in the next paragraph to complicate matters by forcing his own interpretation of Irenaeus' words ('Cain is from the sovereign power above') by arguing that the Cainites choose to serve the higher Power from whom Christ and Cain came, and separate themselves from the lower Power who is the Creator of this world and associated with Abel.⁶²

⁶⁰ Epiph., *Pan.* 38.1.2. (Holl 1980, 62–63). Translation mine.

⁶¹ Epiph., *Pan.* 38.2.6–7. Trans. mine.

⁶² Epiph., *Pan.* 38.2.6–3.1.

So what do we have here? Irenaeus transmits a teaching that Cain is from the sovereign Power above without indicating whether that ruler is a cosmic or pleromic one, although he intends for his reader to identify it as a power in opposition to the Creator. Epiphanius is concerned with this ambiguity, especially since he knows the Gnostic tradition that the cosmic powers raped Eve and sired Cain and Abel. So he attempts to fix it by reframing Irenaeus' words with direct reference to the Pleroma. From this evidence, it appears to me that the older Gnostic teaching that the sovereign Power ruling this world was the chief Archon and Cain's father was known by Irenaeus and Epiphanius who both reframe it to refer to a higher power in opposition to the Creator.

In fact, in the extant Gnostic texts, Cain is entirely a negative figure. This is even the case with the reference to Genesis 4:1 found in another Gnostic text *On the Origin of the World* which is related to the *Hypostasis of the Archons*. In the past, it has been read as the sole example from the Gnostic literature of a positive evaluation of Cain because it attaches Genesis 4:1 to the serpent who reveals gnosis.⁶³ Although it is true that Genesis 4:1 is connected to the generation of the serpent, the connection to Cain can only be made through inference. The passage itself appears to me to be peculiar in that it does *not* reference Cain explicitly, although it uses exegetical traditions associated with Genesis 4:1 to teach about the origin of the wise serpent, the 'instructor.'

Now the birth of the instructor happened like this. Sophia cast a droplet of light. It flowed upon the water and immediately an androgynous human being appeared. That droplet she molded first as a female body. Afterwards, she molded it as the body of the likeness of the mother, which had appeared. She finished it in twelve months. An androgynous human being was birthed, whom the Greeks call 'Hermaphrodites.' Its mother the Hebrews call 'Eve Zoe,' who is the female instructor of life. Her child is the creature who is lord. Afterwards, the authorities called it 'the beast' so that it might lead astray their imitations (ΠΑΛΑΜΑ). The meaning of 'the beast' is 'the instructor.' For it was found to be the wisest of all beings. Now Eve is the first virgin. Without a husband she gave birth to her first child. She was her own doctor. For this reason she is held to have said, '... I have borne a man as lord.'⁶⁴

⁶³ Pearson 1990, 101–103.

⁶⁴ *Orig. World* NHC II 113,21–114,15. Translation mine.

Eve's statement in Genesis 4:1b, 'I have borne a man as lord,' seems to me to be retooled so that it does not refer to Eve's production of Cain. Rather it is appropriated and associated with the production of an unnamed offspring of the androgynous psychic human being who had been created in a female form by Sophia Zoe. The name of this psychic being is 'Eve Zoe.' She is the 'instructor of life' and, here, the *virgin* mother of the 'man as lord.' Accordingly, she bears this child 'without a husband.' Her child is identified with the serpent, the wisest of all creatures, who later in the narrative will share gnosis with the carnal Adam and Eve as the Gnostic revealer.

The ability to argue that Eve's first child is a heavenly being is dependent upon knowledge of Jewish exegesis which played with the ambiguity of the word *אִישׁ*, 'man' in this same Genesis passage. This was an unusual designation for an infant in the literature, so speculation about its meaning led to the possibility that Eve had borne a heavenly being or an angel of sorts.⁶⁵ Her child is, in fact, a mixed race entity, both a 'man' and an 'angel of the Lord,' similar to the giants conceived from the ravishing of the 'daughters of men' by the fallen angels in Genesis 6.⁶⁶ According to the *Life of Adam and Eve*, this son, Cain, was lustrous and able to run immediately upon birth.⁶⁷ In rabbinic literature, Eve sees that her first-born has the likeness of heavenly beings rather than earthly beings.⁶⁸ This exegetical tendency was further bolstered by Genesis 5:3 which states that Seth was conceived in the likeness and image of Adam. Because the same was not said about Cain, it was easily deduced that Cain was not Adam's offspring, but the son of a fallen angel.⁶⁹

In *On the Origin of the World*, the author plays with these well-known traditions about Eve's first child. The author understands this child to be a 'man as lord,' a heavenly being, but he does not call him Cain. And unlike the Jewish traditions, he has no father—Adam, Ialdabaoth, Samael or otherwise—but is generated solely by his mother, the psychic Eve. To give credence to the opinion, Eve's words in the last segment, Genesis 4:1b ('I have gotten a man, that is the lord'), have been commandeered and completely separated from the first segment, Genesis 4:1a ('Adam knew

⁶⁵ Martínez 2003, 28–29.

⁶⁶ Martínez 2003, 33.

⁶⁷ *Life of Adam and Eve* 21.3. For additional commentary, see Tromp 2000, 277–296.

⁶⁸ *Pirke of Rabbi Eliezer* 21. For this interpretation of the Pirke passage, see Kugel 1998, 157. See also Martínez 2003, 33 n. 17, where *Pseudo-Jonathan* is interpreted to allude to Cain's angelic origin.

⁶⁹ Martínez 2003, 33–35; cf. Stroumsa 1984, 49–53.

Eve his wife and she conceived and bore Cain') so that each refers to a separate event rather than the same event. This means that her words are taken very literally to refer to the fact that before the birth of her human children, she first had conceived on her own volition ('I have gotten') some type of heavenly being. This fatherless child is an entity other than Cain.

It is only later in the narrative, that Genesis 4:1a ('And Adam knew Eve and she conceived and bore Cain') and 4:2 ('And again, she bore his brother Abel') is invoked to discuss the birth of Eve's physical children. Again, the verse is invoked as was done by Jewish exegetes who noticed that the words 'And Adam knew Eve' were not repeated after the birth of Cain in Genesis 4:2. The scripture simply reads that 'she bore his brother Abel.' So Eve's first pregnancy in Genesis 4:1a was associated with Abel's too even though he is not mentioned there.⁷⁰ Thus, in *On the Origin of the World*, Abel is produced from the carnal Eve's 'first' pregnancy. This pregnancy was the result of the rape of the carnal Eve, the fleshly counterpart of Eve Zoe, by Ialdabaoth. It is the carnal Eve who produces Abel and all her 'other children' out of sexual relations with the archons.⁷¹ There is a rich Jewish tradition identifying a number of children as Eve's, including Cain and Abel's twin sisters ('Awan and Azura') who become their wives.⁷² I presume that, in *On the Origin of the World*, Cain was understood to be one of these children since it is out of these rapes by the archons that various human races with various fates are produced. The three races mentioned in *On the Origin of the World*—the *pneumatikos*, the *psykhikos*, and the *khoikos*—are usually associated in Gnostic literature with Eve's three sons Seth, Abel and Cain, although only Abel is named in our text.⁷³

It appears to me that the author of this text is aware of the Gnostic teaching about the origin of Cain the Archon based on a common reading of Genesis 4:1. But the author of *On the Origin of the World* chooses to refocus this teaching by severing the two segments of Genesis 4:1 from each other, so that Eve's words in Genesis 4:1b are disassociated from the production of Eve's child Cain. Genesis 4:1b is then reappropriated to describe the generation of an unnamed fatherless child, the 'beast' or

⁷⁰ This even led to some speculation that the brothers were twins from the same pregnancy. See *Gen. Rab.* 22:3; *Pirke of Rabbi Eliezer* 152.

⁷¹ *Orig. World* NHC 2 117,15–18.

⁷² Teugels 2003, 47–56.

⁷³ *Orig. World* NHC II 117,19–37; cf. Luttikhuisen 2006, 83–96.

serpent. In order to highlight the creation of various races of humans later in the narrative, this 'beast' is distinguished from Eve's 'other' children, human children who are conceived by Ialdabaoth's act of violence.

There is one further testimony, this from Hippolytus, that shows that there may have been some Gnostics (Hippolytus calls them 'Peratics') who thought that Cain was marked with the sign of the universal serpent, since Cain's sacrifice was not acceptable to the biblical god, while Abel's bloody one was.⁷⁴ It would be preferable to be able to collaborate this testimony with an ancient Gnostic writing, especially when the Gnostic writings we do possess perceive Cain as a negative figure associated with demons.⁷⁵ I am reminded, however, of Irenaeus' discussion of the serpent in his overview of the Sethians and Ophites.⁷⁶ Sophia enters into a serpent, possessing it so that she might instruct Adam and Eve with knowledge. This serpent is known as 'wiser' than all creatures.⁷⁷ But Irenaeus also mentions that after Adam and Eve are cast out of Paradise, so is the serpent who then generates six sons of his own. As their own hebdomad mirrored after Ialdabaoth's hebdomad, they become known as the seven demons who oppose humankind. This serpent is called by two names—Samael and Michael. After Adam and Eve have sex for the first time, the Samael serpent takes control of Cain and fills him with ignorance so that Cain murders his brother, bringing envy and death into the human experience.

What could be going on here? When we turn to the Gnostic literature we find two options. Either the serpent has numinous origins, the child of the virgin Eve Zoe as we saw in *On the Origin of the World*, or he is a creature from the archons whom a female spiritual principle possesses temporarily as is the case in the Sethian *Hypostasis of the Archons*.⁷⁸ This second option appears to be the story that Irenaeus knows and writes about, a story about a serpent generated by Ialdabaoth, temporarily possessed by Eve Zoe, and afterward thrown into the abyss as the leader of the league of demons who torment humankind. His first victim was Cain. Could it be that Hippolytus has confused the story of the snake when

⁷⁴ *Hipp.*, Ref. 5.16.8–9.

⁷⁵ This is also the case for Valentinian texts. See *Gos. Phil.* NHC II 61,5–10; *Val. Exp.* NHC XI 38,24–27. Cf. patristic evidence on Valentinians: *Iren.*, *Adv. Haer.* 1.7.5; *Clem. Alex.*, *Exc. Theo.* 54. Patristic evidence on the Sethians: *Hipp.*, Ref. 5.20.2; *Epiph.*, *Pan.* 39. On the Archontics: *Epiph.*, *Pan.* 40.

⁷⁶ *Iren.*, *Adv. Haer.* 1.30.

⁷⁷ *Iren.*, *Adv. Haer.* 1.30.15.

⁷⁸ *Hypo. Arch.* NHC II 89,31–90,34.

he became a demonic cast-off with his earlier glorious moment when he was temporarily possessed by Eve Zoe? Or did the Peratics consider Cain superior to Abel, persecuted by the chief Archon?

Whatever the case may be with Hippolytus' testimony about the Peratics, the evidence from the Sethian literature is straightforward and powerful. Cain is produced from the highest Power, but this Power is the highest of the Archons in the heavens (rather than the Pleroma). He is the Ialdabaoth god who sires him by raping Eve. It is this tradition that Irenaeus likely received, although it is subverted to serve Irenaeus' polemic. Irenaeus' misunderstanding or intentional misuse of his sources, combined with partial transmission of the traditions, allows his readers to conclude the worst—that the wicked Cain was praiseworthy among the Gnostics because he was generated by the highest Power, whom the non-Gnostic readers associated with the supreme Father-God rather than the chief Archon, Ialdabaoth.

3. SODOMITE ANCESTRY

The second thing that Irenaeus tells us is that the authors of the *Gospel of Judas* think that they are related to Esau, Korah, and the Sodomites (and by implication, Cain), and that because of this they have suffered persecution at the hands of the Demiurge, while Sophia helped them out. Here again the Sethian literature provides some precedent for Irenaeus' comment in terms of what sort of Gnostic tradition Irenaeus likely received, although Irenaeus' presentation of these facts is distorted to serve his polemic. Irenaeus leaves his readers believing that these Gnostics thought that their ancestors were all the wicked people of the bible, identifying themselves with the wicked Sodomites who were rebelling against the biblical god.

But what do the Gnostics say about this? Their teaching on this subject is very specific and is located almost exclusively in texts that we identify as Sethian.⁷⁹ The most detailed Sethian account is found in the *Gospel of the Egyptians* where Seth praises the gods above him and requests that 'his seed' be created. This 'seed' is the pre-incarnate community of Gnostics who will live on earth eventually. In response to Seth's plea, Plêsithea ('the nearby goddess') births his seed from a pre-historical mythic place, from

⁷⁹ This tradition was known to the author of the *Paraphrase of Shem* too, a text that advances a wombic mythology.

Gomorrah. The seed comes forth as fruit from the spring of Gomorrah. Seth takes this seed and stores it in the great light aeon, Davithe.⁸⁰ Later the angel Hormos places the seed of Seth into virgin mothers, and 'the great Seth came and brought his seed.'⁸¹ In this way Seth's seed is distributed in the created world, 'their number being as many as were (in) Sodom.'⁸² Sodom is known as 'the place of pasture' for the seed of the Great Seth.⁸³ Seth transplanted his seed from Gomorrah's spring to Sodom's pasture.⁸⁴ What appears to be at work is the belief that, when this seed was incarnated, it left Gomorrah's spring in the light aeon Davithe and came to exist in Sodom's pasture on earth. Is this text suggesting that the Sethians understood their ancestors to be the wicked Sodomites, as Irenaeus concluded?

Perhaps another Sethian text can help clarify this point. In the *Apocalypse of Adam*, the seed of Seth is protected from the biblical god's wrath at Sodom when he cast fire, sulphur and asphalt onto the city. Three great angels, Abrasax, Sablo, and Gamaliel descended in light clouds to transport the seed of Seth to the holy angels and aeons above so that they would not be destroyed. Without doubt, this reading of the Sodom story keys several biblical passages, including the reference to the three angels whom Abraham fed and sent to Sodom.⁸⁵ How was the rescue operation explained exegetically? According to the author of the *Apocalypse of Adam*, the fire and cloud of the conflagration darkened the skies, hiding this apocalyptic harvest of the seed of Seth from the eyes of the archons.⁸⁶ This explanation fits the report in Genesis that, when Abraham looked down upon the valley where the burning cities lay, he saw that 'the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.'⁸⁷ This is the smoke that blinded the archons and shielded the covert operation.

Who are these rescued and transported people? They are the people who have been kept away from unclean desire and evil-doing.⁸⁸ The author of the *Apocalypse of Adam* calls them the 'great people' who have not been corrupted by desire.⁸⁹ How was this meaning derived, especially

⁸⁰ *Gos. Egypt.* NHC III 55,16–56,22.

⁸¹ For a discussion of the meaning of 'virgins', see Williams 1985, 145, 161–163.

⁸² *Gos. Egypt.* NHC III 60,11–12.

⁸³ *Gos. Egypt.* NHC III 60,9–18.

⁸⁴ *Gos. Egypt.* NHC IV 71,18–30.

⁸⁵ Gen 18:16.

⁸⁶ *Apoc. Adam* NHC V 75,10–76,7.

⁸⁷ Gen 19:28.

⁸⁸ *Apoc. Adam* NHC V 73,24–25.

⁸⁹ *Apoc. Adam* NHC V 75,2–4.

when the Sodom story is best known because the inhabitants of Sodom are wicked and sexually promiscuous? This reading of the Sodom story is exegetical too, relying on the implications of Genesis 18:23, when Abraham begins his long interrogation of the biblical god about the god's intentions. 'Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked?' Abraham demands to know. So the Sethians rely on this question and subsequent interchange between Abraham and the biblical god as evidence that there were righteous people living in Sodom, that Ialdabaoth-Saklas did intend to destroy them, and that they themselves were those people.

So the Sethians, far from thinking that their ancestors were the wicked Sodomites, believed that their ancestors, the seed of Seth, were the righteous people who had been saved from the wrath of the biblical god at Sodom, as well as from his flood, famines, and plagues.⁹⁰ All of the biblical god's persecutions, they had survived, with the help of redeemers like the Great Seth himself or Jesus, but also great angels like Eleleth.⁹¹ Sophia is the ultimate helper, tricking Ialdabaoth on several occasions, making sure that her stolen power, the spirit, could be redeemed from Ialdabaoth by being distributed into the souls of those who were from the seed of Seth.

It is likely that Irenaeus received similar Gnostic teachings about Sodom, although his presentation of this material (whether intentional or not) is misleading. Instead of presenting the Gnostic teaching evenhandedly—that the Gnostics understood themselves to be the righteous people saved from the wrath of the biblical god at Sodom—Irenaeus implies that the Gnostics trace their lineage to the evil Sodomites and, to bolster his point, he includes a reference to other anti-heroes mentioned in the scripture, including Judas Iscariot.

Whether Irenaeus simply has misunderstood the Sethian position or intentionally wishes to show his prejudice by shifting the point of their Sodom exegesis, his implication is clear enough that Epiphanius picks it up and carries it to its extreme. He sews together tightly Irenaeus' statements about Cain and Sodom:

⁹⁰ See also *Apoc. John* NHC II 28,34–29.15//BG 72,14–18; *Gos. Egypt.* NHC III 60,30–61,22; *Apoc. Adam* NHC V 69, 3–73,30; *Hyp. Arch.* NHC II 92,5–26. On Sethian interpretations of Noah's flood, see Luttikhuisen 2006, 97–107.

⁹¹ *Gos. Egypt.* NHC III 60,30–61,22; 63,5–64,10; *Apoc. Adam* NHC V 73,1–14; *Hyp. Arch.* NHC II 93,7–32.

Certain persons are called Cainites because they take the name of their sect from 'Cain.' For they praise Cain and count him as their father ... They say that Cain is from the stronger Power (*dynamis*) and the sovereign Power (*authentia*) above as are also Esau, the company of Korah, and the Sodomites while Abel is of the weaker power. All of them are praiseworthy and their relatives. They boast of being related to Cain, the Sodomites, Esau and Korah. These, they say, are from the perfect knowledge on high. For this reason, they say, although the Creator of this world devoted himself to their annihilation, he could in no way harm them. For they were hidden from him and transported to the upper Aeon whence the stronger Power is. Sophia let them approach her, for they belonged to her. For this reason they say that Judas knew quite well all about these matters. They consider him their kinsman and count him among those possessing the highest knowledge, so that they also carry around a short writing in his name which they call the Gospel of Judas ...⁹²

In Epiphanius, Cain is counted as the father of the Gnostics, and Esau, Korah, and the Sodomites are said to be Cain's relatives. The Gnostics are proud of being related to Cain, the Sodomites, Esau, and Korah who are from the perfect gnosis on high. Judas too is their kinsman. The biblical god tried to annihilate them, but could do them no harm because they were hidden from him and transported to the upper Aeon where the stronger Power exists. Since they belonged to Sophia, she took care of them.

It appears to me that Irenaeus knew that the authors of the *Gospel of Judas* were some kind of Sethian gnostics. They considered themselves to be the righteous seed among the Sodomites who had been redeemed by the angels from the city's conflagration. But in Irenaeus' presentation of this information, part of the evidence is suppressed and the material is shifted so that it implies instead a wicked ancestry. Epiphanius develops this implication, making it explicit by shifting the material further. Through these subtle shifts in the presentation of the material, the authors of the *Gospel of Judas* have become the descendents of the evil Cain and the wicked Sodomites rather than the righteous race of Seth saved from the wicked actions of a jealous god. What Irenaeus received as standard Sethian tradition, has become something else. Whether or not Irenaeus intended to be disingenuous with his subject or simply misunderstood the materials he knew, his presentation of the traditions tarnishes the *Gospel of Judas* in the way that the truth could not.

⁹² Epiph., *Pan.* 38.1.1–5.

4. THE CAINITES

Irenaeus' testimony does *not* associate the *Gospel of Judas* with the Gnostic Cainites mentioned by various patristic authors.⁹³ As we have seen, Irenaeus calls the authors 'other' Gnostics. The traditions that he seems to know about the authors are found in texts that we have labeled 'Sethian,' what Irenaeus describes as Barbeloite Gnosis. It is significant that he speaks of these Gnostics in a set of coherent chapters (*Adv. Haer.* 1.29–31) devoted to the discussion of 'a multitude of Gnostics, appearing like mushrooms from the ground.'⁹⁴ In chapter 29, Irenaeus shares information that we find in the *Apocryphon of John*, the quintessential Sethian narrative. In chapter 30, we find material related to the *Apocryphon of John* and other Sethian texts from Nag Hammadi which focus on Eden such as the *Apocalypse of Adam* and the *Hypostasis of the Archons*. In Theodoret, this chapter is understood to refer to the 'Sethians, whom some call Ophians or Ophites.'⁹⁵ Then in chapter 31 we have Irenaeus' mention of the *Gospel of Judas* and the Gnostic literature he associates with a wombic Gnosis, neither of which are stated by Irenaeus to have any affinity to the Cainites.⁹⁶ Rather Irenaeus appears to me to have categorized the authors of the *Gospel of Judas* and the wombic Gnostics as special types of Barbeloite or Sethian Gnosticism.

Why did Irenaeus associate the *Gospel of Judas* with the Sethian tradition? He must have known that the *Gospel of Judas* contained references to Barbelo and Sethian mythology and so thought it sensible to discuss it after the Sethian texts he had just catalogued. Since he had made this association, he also likely assumed that the authors of the *Gospel of Judas* would have taken for granted the larger mythological complex found in the other Sethian texts he had just discussed. So he used his knowledge of Cain and Sodom from those other Sethian texts and attributed them to the authors of the *Gospel of Judas* as well.

So why have we thought for centuries that the *Gospel of Judas* was a Cainite gospel? The simple answer is that we relied on the later testimony of Epiphanius as factual knowledge. Epiphanius, however, does not

⁹³ Several scholars writing on the *Gospel of Judas* have erred on this point, assuming that Irenaeus does mention the Cainites: Ehrman 2006, 62–65; Porter-Heath 2007, 41–42. Patristic evidence for Cainites: Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 8.17; Tert., *Presc.* 33; *De Bapt.* 1; Hipp., *Ref.* 8; Origen, c. *Cels.* 3.13; Ps.-Tert., *Haer.* 2; Epiph., *Pan.* 38.

⁹⁴ Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 1.29.

⁹⁵ Theod., *Haer.* 1.14.

⁹⁶ Cf. van Oort 2009 44 n. 4.

appear to be preserving factual knowledge as much as he appears to be conflating Irenaeus' testimony about the *Gospel of Judas* with some passage from Hippolytus' lost *Syntagma*, which likely discussed the Cainites and Judas Iscariot (after the fashion preserved by Pseudo-Tertullian) with no reference to the *Gospel of Judas* at all. This has been compounded by the fact that later scribes created and inserted chapter headings into Irenaeus' work, including the heading 'On the Cainites' which introduces chapter 31.⁹⁷

The patristic testimony about the Cainites tells us a few things. The Cainites were considered an actual social group of Gnostics by a number of church fathers living in different times and locales. Several witnesses include references to them alongside the Ophites.⁹⁸ Tertullian seems to view them as a renewal of the Nicolaitan movement mentioned in Revelation 2:6 and 2:15.⁹⁹ Additional evidence from his treatise *On Baptism* is difficult to assess because there exist variant readings of the name mentioned, leaving it uncertain whether the group described were actually Cainites.¹⁰⁰ Tertullian says he knows a prominent female member of this group personally, complaining that she was a successful preacher in his area, and that her teaching was threatening to destroy apostolic baptism. In fact, he appears to be writing his treatise on apostolic baptism in response to her teaching against it.¹⁰¹

What do we learn about his opponent's opinions about baptism? Tertullian stresses in his treatise that the Holy Spirit is not 'in' the water itself, but only prepares the initiate for receiving the Holy Spirit by cleansing the initiate of his or her sins.¹⁰² He also emphasizes that death is washed away by bathing and that a material substance like water, because it has been sanctified, can affect what is happening in the spiritual realm.¹⁰³ This suggests that his opponents taught that the Holy Spirit did not enter the baptismal waters and, therefore, could not be attained by the initiate through this ritual. According to Tertullian, water baptism is being questioned by his opponents because it has been associated with the inferior baptism of John, which they say could not convey the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁴ They add

⁹⁷ On this, see Gathercole 2007, 117–118; van Oort 2009, 44 n. 4.

⁹⁸ Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 8.17; Hipp., *Ref.* 8; Origen, c. *Cels.* 3.13.

⁹⁹ Cf. Acts 6:5.

¹⁰⁰ Cosentino 2007, 214–216. I want to thank Birger Pearson for this reference.

¹⁰¹ Tert., *De Bapt.* 1; 13.

¹⁰² Tert., *De Bapt.* 3.

¹⁰³ Tert., *De Bapt.* 2–4.

¹⁰⁴ Acts 19:1–7; John 7:39. Tert., *De Bapt.* 10.

that Jesus himself never baptized with water, but only with fire and the spirit.¹⁰⁵ Nor was Paul sent by Christ to baptize.¹⁰⁶ Abraham's faith was sufficient. He did not need to be immersed in water to be redeemed, nor do we, they conclude.¹⁰⁷

Because Tertullian addresses their baptismal views and appears to know at least one of their female leaders personally, I tend to think that the group he is addressing was an actual historical group. *If* the treatise is referencing Cainites and not some other named group, then the Cainites were more than a fiction of the fathers. But this deduction is based on the assumption that Tertullian did not make a mistake in the identification of the group which opposed him on baptism as 'Cainite' and that he was not using the term as a general designation for 'heretics,' but as a reference to a specific group.¹⁰⁸

Pseudo-Tertullian, presumably dependent on the lost *Syntagma* of Hippolytus (which Epiphanius also shared), is the earliest author to provide any substantial details about the Cainites.¹⁰⁹ Pseudo-Tertullian traces their name back to Cain whom he said they praised, because they believed that he was conceived by a stronger Power (*potenti uirtute*) than Abel. They also admire Judas Iscariot. Some of the Cainites said that Judas carried out God's plan for salvation because, when Christ 'wished to subvert the truth,' Judas betrayed him 'that the truth might not be overthrown.' Other Cainites disagree. In their opinion, the archons opposed Christ's suffering and tried to stop his crucifixion in order to prevent the human race from being redeemed. So Judas brought about Jesus' suffering against the wishes of the archons. By betraying Christ, Judas made sure that the human race would be saved. It is difficult to substantiate these as Cainite views because we have *no* Gnostic literature that even comes close to the theological views he attributes to the Cainites here. Nor does the author claim personal knowledge of them.

How did the *Gospel of Judas* become a Cainite gospel? By a combination of sources in Epiphanius' *Panarion*. Chapter 38 of Epiphanius' *Panarion* appears to me to be mainly a compilation of Irenaeus' discussion of the *Gospel of Judas* and Hippolytus' lost passage on the Cainites (preserved also by Pseudo-Tertullian). When our passages are

¹⁰⁵ Matt 3:11; John 4:2. Tert., *De Bapt.* 11.

¹⁰⁶ 1 Cor 1:7. Tert., *De Bapt.* 14.

¹⁰⁷ Tert., *De Bapt.* 13.

¹⁰⁸ Birger Pearson has shown that the expression 'Cainite' was used in some contexts to designate the 'heretic' in early Judaism and Christianity. See Pearson 1990, 103–105.

¹⁰⁹ Kroyman 1954, 1404.

laid side-by-side in a synopsis, it is clear that Epiphanius is combining Irenaeus (= I) and a source held in common with Pseudo-Tertullian (= C) by stitching them together in his own paraphrastic words. They are brought together by Epiphanius because of mutual references to Cain and to Judas in source-I and -C.

In PERICOPE A, it is shown that Epiphanius begins with material from C, which identifies the group as ‘Cainite’ because they praise Cain. After a few words unrelated to either of his sources, he welds together the opening statement from the I-source (that Cain is from the sovereign Power above) with source-C’s reference to Cain’s derivation from a strong Power and Abel’s from a weaker one.

Pericope A

Italic = Dependence on Irenaeus (I-source)

Bold = Dependence on source common to Pseudo-Tertullian and Epiphanius (C-source)

IRENÆUS	PS-TERTULLIAN	EPIPHANIUS
<i>Adv. haer.</i> 1.3.1.1 Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b, 386	<i>Adv. haer.</i> 2.5–6 Kroyman 1954, 1404	<i>Pan.</i> 38.1.1–1.2 Holl 1980, 62–63
	[5] There has burst out another heresy called Cainites (Nec non etiam erupit alia quoque haeresis, quae dicitur Cainaeorum).	[1.1] Certain persons are called Cainites because they take the name of their sect from ‘Cain’ (Καϊανοί τινες ὀνομάζονται ἀπὸ τοῦ Κάϊν εἰληφότες τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν τῆς αἰρέσεως).
	For they praise Cain (Et ipsi enim magnificent Cain)	For they praise Cain and count him as their father (οὗτοι γὰρ τὸν Κάϊν ἐπαινοῦσι καὶ πατέρα ἑαυτῶν τοῦτον τάττουσι) ...

IRENÆUS <i>Adv. haer.</i> 1.31.1 Rousseau- Doutreleau 1979b, 386	PS-TERTULLIAN <i>Adv. haer.</i> 2.5–6 Kroyman 1954, 1404	EPIPHANIUS <i>Pan.</i> 38.1.1–1.2 Holl 1980, 62–63
[1] Yet others say that Cain is from the sovereign Power above (Alii autem rursus Cain a superiore Principalitate dicunt)	as if he had been conceived from some mighty Power which operated in him (quasi ex quadam potenti uirtute conceptum, quae operata sit in ipso).	[1.2] <i>They say that Cain came into existence from the stronger Power and the sovereign Power above</i> as are also Esau, the company of Korah, and the Sodomites (Οὗτοί φασι τὸν Κάϊν ἐκ τῆς ἰσχυροτέρας δυνάμεως ὑπάρχειν καὶ τῆς ἁνωθεν αὐθεντίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἡσαῦ καὶ τοὺς περὶ Κορὲ καὶ τοὺς Σοδομίτας),
	For Abel was conceived, procreated from a weaker Power, and thus had been found weak (Nam Abel ex inferiore uirtute conceptum, procreatum et ideo inferiorem repertum).	while Abel is from the weaker Power (τὸν δὲ Ἄβελ ἐκ τῆς ἀσθενεστέρας δυνάμεως εἶναι).

In PERICOPÉ B, Epiphanius focuses on the I-source exclusively, making clear what was ambiguous in Irenaeus, that the stronger Power is the Power in the *upper* Aeons. He drives home this point by stating that the biblical villains, persecuted by the Creator of this world, were transported to *the upper Aeons where the stronger Power lived*. Judas is one of these special biblical villains who had the highest knowledge, Epiphanius deduces and thus the group had a gospel in his name.

Pericope B

Italic = Dependence on Irenaeus (I-source)
Bold = Dependence on source common to Pseudo-Tertullian and Epiphanius (C-source)

IRENAEUS	PS-TERT	EPIPHANIUS
<i>Adv. haer.</i> 1.31.1 Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b, 386	<i>Adv. haer.</i> 2.5–6 Kroyman 1954, 1404	<i>Pan.</i> 38.1.3–1.5 Holl 1980, 62–63
and they acknowledge that Esau, Korah, the Sodomites, and all such persons, are their relatives (et Esau et Core et Sodomitas et omnes tales cognatos suos confitentur):		[1.3] All of them and their relatives are praiseworthy (δὲ τούτους πάντας παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἐπαινετοὺς καὶ τῆς αὐτῶν ¹¹⁰ συγγενείας). <i>They boast of being related to Cain, the Sodomites, Esau and Korah</i> (σεμνύνονται γὰρ συγγενεῖς εἶναι τοῦ Κάιν καὶ τῶν Σοδομιτῶν καὶ Ἡσαῦ καὶ Κορέ). These, they say, are from the perfect knowledge on high (καὶ οὗτοι, φασίν, εἰσὶ τῆς τελείας καὶ ἄνωθεν γνώσεως).
and because of this, they also acknowledge that they have been attacked by the Creator, yet none of them has been harmed (et propter hoc a Factore impugnatos, neminem ex eis malum accepisse).		[1.4] <i>For this reason, they say, although the Creator of this world devoted himself to their annihilation, he could in no way harm them</i> (διὸ καὶ τὸν ποιητὴν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου φασὶ περὶ τὴν τούτων ἀνάλωσιν ἐσχολακότα μηδὲν δεδυνῆσθαι αὐτοὺς βλάψαι).
For Sophia seized what belonged to her from them (Sophia enim illud quod proprium ex ea erat abripiebat ex eis ad semetipsam).		For they were hidden from him and transported to the upper Aeon whence the stronger Power is (ἐκρύβησαν γὰρ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ μετεβλήθησαν εἰς τὸν ἄνω αἰῶνα, ὅθεν ἡ ἰσχυρὰ δύναμις ἐστὶ). <i>Sophia let them approach her, for they belonged to her</i> (πρὸς ἐαυτὴν γὰρ ἡ Σοφία αὐτοὺς προσήκατο, ἰδίους αὐτῆς ὄντας).

¹¹⁰ Holl 1980, 63 prints αὐτῶν

IRENÆUS <i>Adv. haer.</i> 1.31.1 Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b, 386	PS-TERT <i>Adv. haer.</i> 2.5–6 Kroyman 1954, 1404	EPIPHANIUS <i>Pan.</i> 38.1.3–1.5 Holl 1980, 62–63
They say that Judas the traitor was thoroughly acquainted with these things (Et haec Iudam proditorem diligenter cognovisse dicunt),		[1.5] <i>For this reason they say that Judas knew quite well all about these matters</i> (καὶ τοῦτου ἕνεκεν τὸν Ἰούδαν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τούτων ἐπεγινώκεναι λέγουσι).
and that he alone, knowing the truth as none of the others did, accomplished the mystery of the betrayal (et solum prae caeteris cognoscentem ueritatem, perfecisse proditiōnis mysterium):		They consider him their kinsman and count him among those possessing the highest knowledge (καὶ τοῦτου γὰρ θέλουσιν εἶναι συγγενῇ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐν γνώσεως ὑπερβολῇ τὸν αὐτὸν καταριθμοῦσιν),
By him all things, both earthly and heavenly, were thus destroyed (per quem et terrena et caelestia omnia dissoluta dicunt).		
They produce a fictitious history of this kind, which they entitle the Gospel of Judas (Et confinctionem adferunt huiusmodi, Iudae Euangelium illud uocantes).		so that <i>they also carry around a short writing in his name which they call the Gospel of Judas</i> (ὥστε καὶ συνταγμάτιόν τι φέρειν ἐξ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ, ὃ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Ἰούδα καλοῦσι) ...

Following Irenaeus' statement that they produce a book called the 'Gospel of Judas,' Epiphanius inserts other material (PERICOPÉ C), including his excursion into the Gnostic views of Cain's paternity, but when he returns to the subject of Judas in 38.3.1, he creates a paragraph to seamlessly make a smooth transition back to source-C. In it, he returns to the stronger and weaker Power images from the opening sentences of source-C, suggesting that Judas was from the stronger Power and was able to carry out the crucifixion when Jesus, in his weakness was unable to hand over his body to be crucified.

Pericope C

Italic = Dependence on Irenaeus (I-source)
Bold = Dependence on source common to Pseudo-Tertullian and Epiphanius
(C-source)

IRENÆUS	PS-TERTULLIAN	EPIPHANIUS
<i>Adv. haer.</i> 1.3.1.1	<i>Adv. haer.</i> 2.5–6	<i>Pan.</i> 38.3.1–3.2
Rousseau-Doutreleau 1979b, 386	Kroyman 1954, 1404	Holl 1980, 65
	They who assert this likewise defend the traitor Judas, mentioning to us that he is admirable and great, because of the advantages he is considered to have conveyed to humankind (Hi qui hoc adserunt, etiam Iudam proditorem defendunt, admirabilem illum et magnum esse memorantes propter utilitates, quas humano generi contulisse iactatur).	
	[3.1] These same myths they mix with the mischievous ignorance they teach, advising their disciples that every person must choose for himself the stronger power and separate himself from the inferior and feebler, namely the one which made heaven, the flesh, and the world, and pass above to the highest regions through Christ's crucifixion (τὰ δὲ αὐτὰ μυθώδη καὶ οὗτοι παραπλέκουσι τῇ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν δηλητηρίων τῆς ἀγνοσίας δόσει, τοῖς πειθομένοις ἐπιβουλεύοντες ὅτι δεῖ πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἑαυτῷ ἐλέσθαι τὴν ἰσχυροτέραν δύναμιν καὶ τῆς ἥττονος καὶ ἀτόνου ἀποχωρίζεσθαι, τουτέστιν τῆς τὸν οὐρανὸν ποιησάσης καὶ τὴν σάρκα καὶ τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ὑπερβαίνειν εἰς τὰ ἀνώτατα διὰ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ σταυρώσεως).	

IRENÆUS
Adv. haer. 1.31.1
 Rousseau-
 Doutreleau 1979b,
 386

PS-TERTULLIAN
Adv. haer. 2.5–6
 Kroyman 1954, 1404

EPIPHANIUS
Pan. 38.3.1–3.2
 Holl 1980, 65

[3.2] For this reason, they say, that he came from above, that a strong power might be made active in him which would triumph over the weaker power and hand over the body. Now some of them teach this, but others say something else (διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο, φασίν, ἦλθεν ἄνωθεν, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνεργηθῇ δύναμις ἰσχυρά, κατὰ τῆς ἀσθενεστέρας δυνάμεως τὸ τρόπαιον λαβοῦσα καὶ τὸ σῶμα παραδοῦσα. καὶ οἱ μὲν αὐτῶν τοῦτο λέγουσιν, ἄλλοι δὲ ἄλλα).

In PERICOPE D, Epiphanius rewrites source-C to emphasize that the Cainites thought that Judas betrayed Jesus because Jesus wanted to destroy sound teachings or because the archons opposed the crucifixion since they knew that their power would be drained and salvation effected. Therefore Judas brought about the salvation of humankind.

Pericope D

Italic = Dependence on Irenaeus (I-source)

Bold = Dependence on source common to Pseudo-Tertullian and Epiphanius (C-source)

IRENAEUS

Adv. haer. 1.31.1

Rousseau-

Doutreleau 1979b,

386

PS-TERTULLIAN

Adv. haer. 2.5–6

Kroyman 1954, 1404

EPIPHANIUS

Pan. 38.3.3–3.4

Holl 1980, 65–66

[6] For some think that gratitude is to be given to Judas because, **they say, 'When Judas observed that Christ wanted to subvert the truth, he betrayed him so that there would not be any possibility that the truth would be subverted'** (Quidam enim ipsorum gratiarum actionem Iudae propter hanc causam reddendam putant. 'Animaduertens enim,' inquiunt, 'Iudas, quod Christus uellet ueritatem subuertere, tradidit illum, ne subuerti ueritas posset').

[3.3] Some say that it was because Christ was wicked that he was betrayed by Judas, because he, Christ, wanted to distort what pertains to the law (οἱ μὲν γὰρ λέγουσι διὰ τὸ πονηρὸν εἶναι τὸν Χριστὸν παραδοθῆναι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰούδα, βουλόμενον διαστρέφειν τὰ κατὰ τὸν νόμον). They admire Cain and Judas, as I said, and **they say, 'For this reason he betrayed him, because he wanted to destroy sound teachings'** (ἐπαινοῦσι γὰρ τὸν Κάϊν καὶ τὸν Ἰούδαν, ὡς ἔφην, καὶ λέγουσι· τοῦτου ἕνεκεν παραδέδωκεν αὐτόν, ἐπειδὴ ἠβούλετο καταλύειν τὰ καλῶς δεδιδαγμένα).

IRENÆUS

Adv. haer. 1.31.1

Rousseau-

Doutreleau 1979b,

386

PS-TERTULLIAN

Adv. haer. 2.5–6

Kroyman 1954, 1404

EPIPHANIUS

Pan. 38.3.3–3.4

Holl 1980, 65–66

And other people dispute countering them, and say, 'Because the Powers of this world did not want Christ to suffer, lest through his death salvation should be prepared for humankind, he (Judas) was concerned about the salvation of humankind. He betrayed Christ so that there might not be any possibility at all for salvation to be impeded, which was being impeded by the Powers that were opposing Christ's passion. And thus, through the passion of Christ, there might not be any possibility of the salvation of humankind being delayed' (Et alii sic contra disputant et dicunt: 'quia potestates huius mundi nolebant pati Christum, ne humano generi per mortem ipsius salus pararetur, saluti consulens generis humani tradidit Christum, ut salus, quae impediabatur per uirtutes, quae obsistebant, ne pateretur Christus, impediri omnino non posset et ideo per passionem Christi non posset salus humani generis retardari').

[3.4] But others among them say, 'Not at all. He betrayed him, although he was good, because of his (Judas') knowledge of heavenly things. For,' they say, 'the Archons knew that if Christ were given over to the cross, their feeble power would be drained. Judas, knowing this, made every effort to betray him, thereby accomplishing a good work for salvation' (ἄλλοι δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν, οὐχί, φασίν, ἀλλὰ ἀγαθὸν αὐτὸν ὄντα παρέδωκεν κατὰ τὴν ἐπουράνιον γνώσιν. ἔγνωσαν γάρ, φασίν, οἱ ἀρχοντες ὅτι ἐὰν ὁ Χριστὸς παραδοθῇ σταυρῷ κενοῦται αὐτῶν ἡ ἀσθενὴς δύναμις. καὶ τοῦτο, φησί, γνοῦς ὁ Ἰούδας ἔσπευσεν καὶ πάντα ἐκίνησεν ὥστε παραδοῦναι αὐτὸν ἀγαθὸν ἔργον ποιήσας ἡμῖν εἰς σωτηρίαν). We should admire and praise him because through him the salvation of the cross was prepared for us and the revelation of things above occasioned by it (καὶ δεῖ ἡμᾶς ἐπαινεῖν καὶ ἀποδιδόναι αὐτῷ τὸν ἔπαινον, ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ κατεσκευάσθη ἡμῖν ἡ τοῦ σταυροῦ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ διὰ τῆς τοιαύτης ὑποθέσεως τῶν ἄνω ἀποκάλυψις).

Now that we possess the *Gospel of Judas*, it is quite clear that its authors do not hold any of these positions. The archons do not oppose the crucifixion, Jesus is not trying to destroy sound teachings nor is he weak in body, and Judas is not the gospel's hero. The association of these teachings with the *Gospel of Judas* only came about because Epiphanius wove together two sources that were commenting on independent subjects. The I-source discussed the *Gospel of Judas*, while the C-source spoke about the Cainites. Because these two sources had in common references to Cain and Judas, Epiphanius threaded them together to create a more expansive and informative narrative. But when he did this, the originally separate narratives (on very different subjects) came together as one. This served to detach the *Gospel of Judas* from its Sethian connections, and invert its actual opinion of Judas, making it a gospel of the Cainites who were said to praise Cain and other villains in the scriptures. The implications are clear. Epiphanius did not have a copy of the *Gospel of Judas*, nor had he ever read it.

It is hard to say whether or not the Cainites held the opinions about Cain or Judas outlined in source-C. But if they did so these opinions were not the ones located in the *Gospel of Judas*—at least the *Gospel of Judas* that we have and the one that Irenaeus knew about. Did the Cainites have another *Gospel of Judas*? I doubt it, since source-C makes no mention of it. The *Gospel of Judas* only becomes the possession of the Cainites when Epiphanius gives it to them in his *Panarion*.

5. SETHIAN CHRISTIANITY

So have we got it right? Before the discovery of the *Gospel of Judas*, when all we had were the testimonies of the heresiologists, we thought that the authors of this text were Cainites who traced their ancestry to Cain and all the villains in the bible. Cain, Korah, the Sodomites, and Judas were their heroes. We believed that these Gnostics thought that Cain and the other biblical villains were actually clandestine agents of the supreme God working to undermine Ialdabaoth. The creator god recognized this and so sought to destroy them at every turn.

After the *Gospel of Judas* turned up, it has become clear that this previously-held opinion is not only inadequate, but wrong. It was immediately recognized that the *Gospel of Judas* is some type of Sethian Christian gospel, not a Cainite one. Far from honoring Judas as an ancestral hero, the author of the *Gospel of Judas* perceives Judas as a demon, an

opinion quite cogent with the New Testament gospels. Furthermore, he identifies Judas with a particular demon—the Thirteenth—a nickname for Ialdabaoth-Saklas in the Sethian tradition. The point of the gospel is to critique apostolic Christianity by suggesting that the leader of the apostolic church and the twelve disciples is none-other-than the wicked Judas, the one who was responsible for bringing about Jesus' death and achieving the atonement.

This has taken me back to the patristic testimonies with the question, 'What is going on?' After careful investigation of the patristic material, several points have emerged:

- (1) Irenaeus knew that the Gnostics who produced the *Gospel of Judas* traced Cain's origin to the sovereign Power above. According to the Sethian Gnostics, this tyrant was the demiurge Ialdabaoth. Irenaeus' manner of presentation of this teaching, whether intentional or not, allowed for readers like Epiphanius to think that this sovereign Power was from the upper Aeon and that the wicked Cain was their praiseworthy ancestor.
- (2) Irenaeus was familiar with a Sethian teaching that the seed of Seth had been saved from Sodom's destruction, but he mistakes or distorts this teaching. His readers are left to believe that the Gnostics who produced the *Gospel of Judas* thought that their ancestors were all the wicked people in the scripture.
- (3) Irenaeus does not say that the *Gospel of Judas* was associated with the Cainites. Rather he catalogues it with other Barbeloite or Sethian materials.
- (4) It is difficult to ascertain what the Cainites thought, if indeed they were a historical group. On the one hand, *if Tertullian's opponents in Carthage were Cainites*, then we have a fairly detailed description of their objections to apostolic baptism, and we know that one of their leaders at the end of the second century was a woman. From his description, it appears that his opponents were anti-baptismal because they associated water with the material world and John's inferior baptism, which could not convey the Spirit. This critique of apostolic baptism appears to have been common among several Gnostic groups since it is preserved also in the *Testimony of Truth* and in the *Paraphrase of Shem*. On the other hand, *if the testimony in Pseudo-Tertullian presents us with sound historical information about the Cainites*, it suggests that the Cainites were a group of Gnostics that lauded Judas and other biblical characters, including

Cain, whom they perceived to be persecuted by the biblical god. But these people were not the authors of the newly restored *Gospel of Judas*, a gospel that the author of Pseudo-Tertullian knows nothing about.

- (5) The *Gospel of Judas* becomes a Cainite gospel only when Epiphanius makes it so. Epiphanius did not have a copy of the *Gospel of Judas*, nor had he ever read it. His opinion about the text is dependent upon Irenaeus' testimony, which he interprets and expands by combining it with source-C's description of the Cainites. When he does this, the once-separate subjects come together as one, and the Cainites become the authors of *Judas*, and Judas of the *Gospel of Judas* becomes a lauded hero. About Judas, Irenaeus only says that Judas the traitor knew more than the other disciples and betrayed Jesus, bringing about the destruction of the world, an opinion which is quite cogent with what the *Gospel of Judas* actually says.

Being able to read the 'real' *Gospel of Judas* has given us a tremendous advantage. We can assess its first-hand testimony and weigh it against the second-hand testimonies of the heresiologists. When this is done, we find that our previous knowledge about Cain and Judas require drastic revision, as do many details about Gnostic exegesis and teaching. We took for granted that the heresiologists were transmitting Gnostic materials fairly when, in fact, they either misunderstood or misconstrued Gnostic instruction in their battle against it. Careful comparison of Irenaeus and the Gnostic testimonies shows that partial information about the Sethians was transmitted, which left readers to draw the worst conclusions about the *Gospel of Judas*. In the case of Epiphanius, separate-subject sources were conflated, which left the *Gospel of Judas* in the hands of the Cainites.

As for the whole subject of Sethianism, I think that the discovery of the *Gospel of Judas* further challenges us, since we are faced with a gospel that has integral Sethian features, but which is entirely focused on Jesus and matters-Christian. The *Gospel of Judas* is not a Sethian text with marginal interest in Christianity. This is a Sethian text that comports its view as the only true form of Christianity. It is engaged in an all-out war against the leaders, doctrines and practices of the Apostolic church, a church whose leaders it portrays as wicked, ignorant and useless, except to serve Ialdabaoth-Saklas.

Have we missed an entire chapter in our Sethian histories, a chapter that reveals the reconfiguration of Sethianism within the Christian

context as a thoroughly Christian expression of Gnosis that competed with Apostolic Christianity for the orthodox claim? If so, this would mean that the Sethian tradition was more diverse and became more Christian than we have recognized previously, and Irenaeus had a real reason to be very concerned about it. If our understanding of the *Apocryphon of John* is correct, the assimilation of Sethianism with Christian tradition had to have started at least as early as the end of the first century. What the *Gospel of Judas* reveals is that, by the mid-second century, Sethian Christianity had emerged as a separatist movement and was in full frontal combat with Apostolic Christianity over what it meant to be a true Christian.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

THE SONG OF THE COMMONER: THE Gnostic CALL IN YEZIDI ORAL TRADITION*

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The Yezidis are a little-known Kurdish-speaking religious minority, with a religion based exclusively on oral tradition. The majority of Yezidis live in Northern Iraq, while smaller groups may be found in Syria, Turkey and the Transcaucasian states.¹ The religion of the Yezidis shows a strong syncretism. While Sufi Islam has undoubtedly exerted a strong influence on it,² traces of other religious traditions once flourishing in the region can also be detected.³ Such pre-Islamic influences include Gnosticism and Manichaeism. Due to the many-sided connection between these two systems of religious thought, it is not always easy to tell whether a motif has reached the Yezidis (or rather their ancestors)⁴ from Gnosticism or

* In honor of Johannes van Oort, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.

¹ Today there is a sizeable diaspora in the West, primarily in Germany. For lack of census, the exact number of Yezidis is not known, though the Iraqi community is estimated at a few hundred thousands.

² In today's Western scholarship it is generally assumed that it was a Sufi order, the al-Adawiya founded by Sheikh 'Adi b. Musāfir (the central figure of Yezidi mythology) in the 12th c. in the Kurdish mountains, which made possible the beginnings of the Yezidis as an organized religious community with a conscious sense of identity.

³ On the presence of Zoroastrian, and especially pre-Zoroastrian, Western Iranian motifs in Yezidi mythology and rituals, see P. Kreyenbroek, *Yezidism, its Background, Observances and Textual Tradition* (Lewiston, NY, 1995); 'Mithra and Ahreman, Binyāmīn and Malak Tāwūs: Traces of an Ancient Myth in the Cosmogonies of Two Modern Sects', in *Recurrent Patterns in Iranian Religions: From Mazdaism to Sufism*, ed. P. Gignoux, 57–79 (Paris, 1992); 'On the Study of Some Heterodox Sects in Kurdistan', *Les Annales de l'Autre Islam* INALCO-ERISM 5 (1998) 163–184.

⁴ The emergence of the Yezidi community and the gradual formation of its peculiar religious system cannot have started before the 12th century or later, thus direct contact between Yezidis and the dualistic groups of late antiquity is unlikely. However, the followers of this Sufi order fast developing heterodox tendencies must have drawn many of their ideas from a cultural substratum shared by many peoples of the region. That this common cultural substratum contained motifs of a Gnostic/Manichaean origin is

Manichaeism, but there can be little doubt that Yezidi religion contains myths and motifs that ultimately derived from these dualist movements.⁵

An eloquent example of such Gnostic/Manichaean themes permeating certain aspects of Yezidi religious language is the *Song of the Commoner* (*Beyta*⁶ *Cindî*), one of the most sacred and respected oral texts of the Yezidis.⁷ The *Song of the Commoner*, calling on the believers to awaken, has to be sung every morning by men of religion just before sunrise.⁸ Translating the word *cindî*⁹ poses some difficulties of interpretation. *Cindî* literally means 'soldier' in Kurdish¹⁰—however, as Yezidi hymns apply this word to 'ordinary, hard-working people of no particular distinction',¹¹ or to 'a godfearing Yezidi, with a connotation of poverty, discipline and simplicity',¹² Kreyenbroek, who translated the *beyt* into English, opted for translating it as 'commoner'.¹³ Notwithstanding, *cindî* as a general rule appears in sacred texts where there is a reference to the need to fight for the faith, and especially to the final, eschatological battle between

demonstrated by the fact that other heterodox religions of the region, like the Kurdish Ahl-i Haqq, the Arabic Nusayrî, and even the 'popular' (i.e. not Quranic) legends of Muslim Kurds are familiar with such motifs.

⁵ For a comparison of the Yezidi and Gnostic/Manichaean myth of Adam's creation and his 'fall,' see E. Spät, 'Late Antique Literary Motifs in Yezidi Oral Tradition: The Yezidi Myth of Adam,' *Journal of American Oriental Society* 128.4 (2008) 663–679; for a comparison of the Yezidi myth of Shehid bin Jar, miraculously conceived ancestor of the Yezidis, and the myth of the Gnostic Seth, see E. Spät, 'Shehid bin Jerr, Forefather of the Yezidis and the Gnostic Seed of Seth,' *Iran and the Caucasus* 6 (2002) 27–56, and, 'Religion and Oral History: The Origin Myth of the Yezidis,' In *Discourses of Memory in Iranian Languages*, ed. P. Kreyenbroek, forthcoming.

⁶ *Beyt* is originally an Arabic literary genre, adopted by the Yezidis.

⁷ The text of the *Song of the Commoner* and its English translation can be found in Kreyenbroek, *Yezidism*, 231–239.

⁸ I heard the *Song of the Commoner* only once, at the great, week-long Festival of Sheikh Adi in October in the holy valley of Lalish, just west of Niniveh/Mosul. It was being performed by religious dignitaries in the courtyard in front of the Central Shrine before dawn.

⁹ English pron. 'jindy.'

¹⁰ It is a word of Arabic origin.

¹¹ Kreyenbroek, *Yezidism*, 241, note 1.

¹² P. Kreyenbroek, *God and Sheikh Adi are Perfect: Sacred Poems and Religious Narratives from the Yezidi Tradition* (Wiesbaden, 2005) 369, Note 29. According to Dr. Khalil Jindî Rashow (oral information) it means the 'soldier of God.'

¹³ Commoner here corresponds to the English translation of *mirîd*, a Yezidi layman. *Mirîd* originally denoted the followers or disciplines of a Sufi order. Today among Yezidis it refers to 'commoners' (those who do not belong to the higher, religious casts, like that of the *sheikhs* and *pîrs*.)

the powers of good and evil.¹⁴ As this connotation of fighting for the faith is very much present in the *Beyta Cindî*, which calls on the faithful to wake up from sleep, 'confront the harsh world head-on,' and go to war, I shall prefer using the more evocative 'soldier' instead of the more neutral 'commoner' in this paper.

The song begins with an exhortation addressed at the soldiers to wake up,¹⁵ and throw off sleep which leads to 'severe punishment and hell' (stanzas 1–4.) It condemns 'dark sleep' as 'unlawful' for 'soldiers,' for 'good men,' for 'discerning people,' and for all those who follow the path of religion (4–8). Next, the song describes how in the middle of the night, 'a voice from high is coming' (9)—evidently the wake up call belongs to this voice, which reminds the believers of the job waiting for them (10). The 'owner' of the voice is then referred to as a cockerel of many colors, calling from the High Throne, where it is in the company of the pre-eternal, Greatest Angel (13–19). The wake up call is repeated again (21–27), declaring that nights are not for sleeping (11), rather they are a time for the soldiers to go and confront the world head-on and prepare for war (11–12). Further expanding on the theme of sleep, the song declares that the soldier who was asleep was slack in his service, not willing, and was therefore dismissed by his master from his job (24–25). The injunction against sleep ('do not eat by day, and do not sleep by night') is repeated twice (26, 27), instead the soldier should look heavenward, to the Eternal Paradise (27). The next verses (28–32) leave the subject of sleep, and sing about drinking wine from deep, strong cups.¹⁶ At the thirty-second verse, there is a break in the text. The first part of the *beyt*, the wake up call, ends, and the second begins. This second part (33–46), also referred to as the *Hymn of the Headdress*, is said to constitute a separate hymn, though it is

¹⁴ Thus, for example, *The Hymn of Sherfedin*, an eschatological hymn on the end of the world and the last battle between good and bad, repeatedly employs *cindî* to talk about those who will fight on Sherfedin's (the Yezidi equivalent of the Muslim Mahdi) side. The term also appears in the *Hymn of Sheikh Obekr*, in connection with the Last Day, God as the leader of a vast army, and his soldiers who will be rewarded with the keys to the final mystery.

¹⁵ 'Oh commoner, get up, it is day! Enough, throw off this sleep, Sleeping (until just) before morning (leads to) severe punishment and hell. Oh commoner, get up, get up! Enough, be content with this (much) sleep, Sleeping (until just) before morning (leads to) severe punishment.' *Song of the Commoner* 1–2.

¹⁶ This part of the poem shows the strong influence of Sufism on Yezidi sacred poetry. Drinking wine is the traditional Sufi symbol of becoming drunk with divine love and ecstasy. Wine and intoxication, as metaphors of divine enlightenment are recurrent themes of Yezidi hymns.

recited together with the first part of the *Song of the Commoner*.¹⁷ There is no more mention of sleep, awakening and fight or divine intoxication, instead the text concentrates on the luminous, heavenly headdress, or crown (*kof*), of a divine figure (Pîrê Libnan). This crown is described as the ornament of diverse divine figures,¹⁸ and also as something around which all the believers and discerning ones have gathered. The song ends with a description of the holy places in Lalish (44–46).

SLEEP AND THE 'GNOSTIC CALL'

The metaphors of sleep and awakening were part of late antique religious language, especially among movements with a dualistic outlook on the opposition of spirit and matter. The image of sleep, being asleep (together with death, oblivion and drunkenness) was understood to symbolize religious ignorance, spiritual unawareness. It expressed 'a fundamental feature of existence in the world'¹⁹ namely man's total entanglement in the material world, a complete losing of one's consciousness and awareness of higher things: 'The soul slumbers in Matter.'²⁰ Awakening, on the other hand (or coming back to life, remembering, becoming sober) was a metaphor of conversion, acquiring gnosis, or spiritual consciousness. The link between sleep and awakening is the 'Call from without' intended to break the spell of sleep in this world. It represents the transmundane which 'penetrates the enclosure of the word and makes itself heard therein.'²¹ Many literary works are in effect appeals of awakening themselves, thus constituting a peculiar genre. Homiletic appeals for religious conversion coached in the traditional language of sleep and awakening are often loosely termed the 'Gnostic Call' in scholarly literature.

In fact, the Gnostic message itself is nothing else but a Call of Awakening, intended to wake up those slumbering in ignorance, hence its modern appellation, 'the Gnostic Call.' The Call usually connects the command to awaken with three doctrinal elements: reminding the soul of its

¹⁷ Kreyenbroek, *Yezidism*, 242, Note 31. *The Hymn of the Headdress* is also included in the *Hymn of Sheikh Heseni Sultan* with minor variations.

¹⁸ The *khas*, the 'good beings' of Yezidi mythology are considered angels incarnated as humans. Angels, in their turn, are the emanations of the Godhead, springing from His light or divine essence, His *sur*.

¹⁹ H. Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion* (Boston, 1958), 69.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

‘root’ or origin, a promise of salvation or spiritual reward,²² and a moral instruction to stay awake, that is, to live in conformity with the newly won ‘knowledge.’²³ One of the best example of such a Call of Awakening, complete with all the three doctrinal elements can be found in the *Apocryphon of John*, where the motif of sleep and awakening stretches through the entire work. Here sleep symbolizes the power of the Evil Ruler over Adam (and man), and Adam’s (man’s) lack of gnosis, while the Call comes from the perfect *Epinoia*,²⁴ a revealer and saviour figure, who repeatedly descends into the lower world to awaken Adam, and later mankind, from his deep sleep. After the creation of Adam the powers of darkness realize that—due to the presence of the light spirit (referred to as ‘luminous afterthought’) in Adam—he is superior to them, so they decide to enclose Adam in a material body.²⁵ At the same time the Evil Ruler, so that he can rob Adam of his luminous or spiritual ‘power’, puts him into a ‘trance’, that is to sleep, extracting not his rib (Genesis 2.21), but rather the aforementioned power.²⁶ Adam is put to sleep, but deliverance is at hand in the person of *Epinoia*, who appears in the form of an eagle on the tree of knowledge, awakening Adam ‘out of the depth of sleep.’²⁷ The Evil Ruler, realizing that Adam and Eve have transgressed his commandment, eaten from the tree of knowledge, and have once again become possessor of Gnosis, becomes enraged, clothing Adam (and Eve) in the ‘gloomy darkness’ of forgetfulness.²⁸ With this begins the unrelenting war between the powers of Darkness attempting to keep Adam’s descendants in the sleep of oblivion, and the powers of Light, attempting to awaken mankind to its origin and condition. The means of this awakening is, of course, the Call from without (from the *Pleroma*), personified by the *Epinoia*. Her message is delivered in a first-person speech at the very end of the *Apocryphon of John* in a typical ‘Call of Awakening.’²⁹ *Epinoia*, entering the

²² This may be constituted by a mere reference to either ascension to heaven or baptism.

²³ Jonas, *Gnostic Religion*, 81.

²⁴ Afterthought or Reflection, also referred to as *Pronoia*, Providence.

²⁵ *Apocryphon of John* II.21.10–13.

²⁶ *Apocryphon of John* II. 22.15–23,4; see also *Hypostasis of the Archons* 89.4–19.

²⁷ *Apocryphon of John* II. 23.26–35, in *Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices*, 135–137.

²⁸ *Apocryphon of John* II. 24.8, *ibid.*, 137.

²⁹ G. MacRae argues that this poem must have originally been a Gnostic liturgical hymn, probably recited at a ceremony of initiation or Gnostic baptism. G. MacRae, ‘Sleep and Awakening in Gnostic Texts’, in *Le Origini dello Gnosticismo*, ed. U. Bianchi (Leiden, 1967), 502.

material world, calls out at the sleeping souls 'He who hears, let him get up from the deep sleep ... Arise ... and beware of the deep sleep and the enclosure of the inside of Hades.'³⁰

Calls of Awakening, addressed at Adam³¹ or at man in general³² abound in Gnostic texts, and the Saviour is often described as a figure who awakens those who are asleep.³³ Gnosis is awakening, (or rather awakening is gnosis.) The *Gospel of Truth* even gives what could be termed an 'exegesis' of the Gnostic use of the sleep-awakening metaphor. Sleep here is described as a void, lacking reality by comparison to truth. It originates in error, the 'evil actor' of the *Gospel of Truth*. Awakening is the turn from ignorance to Gnosis, the very opposite of sleep.³⁴

The examples quoted above come from the tradition of Egyptian Gnosis, but the Call of Awakening was just as popular, if not even more popular in the Syriac speaking East. One of the most eloquent literary adaptation of the metaphor of sleep and awakening is provided by the *Hymn of the Pearl*.³⁵ In fact, the whole work itself is probably nothing else but a literary Call of Awakening. When the young prince, in search of the pearl, is lured by the natives into falling asleep, he is only reawakened by the letter sent from his kingdom. This letter (the Call from Without) comprises all the three elements that make up the Gnostic Call in Jonas' definition: it reminds the prince of its origins, calls attention to the task awaiting him, which he had forgotten about, and finally promises redemption, when it talks of the prince regaining his glorious garment, and of becoming viceroy along with his brother in the heavenly kingdom.

The tradition of the Call of Awakening was then adopted and carried on by Manichaeism from the late third century on. Hans Jonas even designates Manichaeism (and Mandaism) as 'religions of the call'³⁶ The

³⁰ *Apocryphon of John* II.31.1–24, *Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices*, 171–175. See MacRae ('Sleep and Awakening,' 497) on the presence of the three doctrinal elements in the Call of Epinoia/Pronoia.

³¹ E.g. *Apocalypse of Adam* 65,22–66,8; *Apocryphon of John* (see above).

³² E.g. *The Teachings of Silvanus* 88.22–89.4 and 113.31–114.17; *Paraphrase of Shem* 41.22–23, and 47.11 (describing the awakening of Shem, receiver of the divine message.)

³³ E.g. *Trimorphic Protennoia* 35.12–22; *Second Treatise of the Great Seth* 58.24–59.9.

³⁴ *Gospel of Truth* 29.32–30.16. See also A. McGuire, 'Conversion and Gnosis in the "Gospel of Truth,"' *Novum Testamentum* 28.4 (1986) 345.

³⁵ Of uncertain provenance, but probably first composed in Syriac, see J. Ferreira, *The Hymn of the Pearl* (Sydney, 2002), 9–25.

³⁶ Jonas, *Gnostic Religion*, 74. Jonas adds (note 27) that "Caller of the Call" is the title of the Manichaean missionary; and as late as in Islam the word for mission is "call," for missionary, "caller."

primordial archetype of the Call of Awakening is provided by one of the central events of Manichaeism mythology. The Primal Man, overcome and eaten by Darkness, falls into a deep sleep. The Living Spirit, sent to his rescue, calls out to the unconscious Primal Man awakening him. Manichaeism went so far as to hypostatize 'Call' and 'Answer', who became two separate divinities in the Manichaean pantheon.

The Call and the Answer is then repeated again and again in the Manichaean history of mankind. Thus, for example, the awakening of the Primal Man by the Living Spirit is echoed later on in the awakening of Adam by Jesus the luminous. In this archetypal episode Jesus the Splendour approaches Adam, unconscious after his creation, with the divine light, his soul, trapped inside his body. Jesus awakens the sleeping Adam to the saving knowledge of his own condition:

Jesus the Splendour approached the innocent Adam, and awoke him from the sleep of death, so that he might be saved from an excessive nature ... Thus was Adam also, when the beloved found him in a profound sleep, roused him, and shook him and awakened him ... And then Adam looked closely at himself and he knew who (he was). And (Jesus) showed him the Father on high, and his own self ... mingled and imprisoned in everything that exists, shackled in the corruption of darkness. (Mani) says that he made him arise and taste the tree of life.³⁷

Just as the drama of Primal Man's awakening by the Call from the Light World is repeated in the myth of Adam, so again it is repeated in the awakening of the individual soul, a particle of light from Primal Man's armor. The Call addressed to the individual human soul, imprisoned in the fetters of matter, is a frequently recurrent theme of Manichaean texts:

Let us not slumber and sleep until our Lord takes us across, his garland upon his head, his palm in his hand, wearing the robe of Glory, and we go within the bride-chamber and reign with him, all of us together.³⁸

Awake, dear soul, from the sleep of drunkenness into which you have fallen! ... reach (your) home, the (heavenly) earth created by the Word, where you were in the beginning.³⁹

As has been said above, the Call of Awakening often contains a moral instruction as to the duties of the believer, the spiritual task awaiting him.

³⁷ Theodore bar Khoni, *Liber Scholiorum* XI. CSCO 69, pp. 317,14-318,4, trans. in I. Gardner and S. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 2004) 17.

³⁸ *Psalm of Herakleides*, in *Manichaean Psalm-Book: Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection*, ed. and trans. C.R.C. Allberry (Stuttgart, 1938) vol. II, 193.10.

³⁹ Parthian liturgical hymn, in H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia* (San Francisco, 1993), 147.

Exhortations against being slack in their service—that is, in doing their religious duties, and constantly committing everything to promote the liberation of the imprisoned light—and a fear of having failed their duty are recurrent motifs of Manichaean hymns. Just like Yezidi *Song of the Commoner* warns the soldier against being slack in his Master's service,⁴⁰ neglecting one's (religious) duties leads to dire consequence according to the Manichaean teaching. Those, who fail their duties, that is fail to heed the Call or Cry, lose the promise of salvation, will be 'dismissed' from the group of those who are to reach the World of Light again. *The Psalm of Thomas*, describing the Cry of the physician (Mani),⁴¹ says of them: 'He into whose ears they shall call, if he hears not, shall be divided in all the worlds. He shall suffer, for the called into his ears, he did not hear.'⁴² A Manichaean parable even tells the story of such a faithful, who grows slack in his service, with near tragic consequences: A man gave a banquet for his king and his entourage, lavishing them with presents. The king and his men enjoy the banquet, but when dusk comes, the host forgets to light the lamps, arousing the suspicious ire of his master. Luckily for the negligent host, his servants bring the lamps, and the king realizes that his negligence arouse of mere forgetfulness, it was not a deliberate act. As is the habit of Manichaean parables, an interpretation is offered at the end, stating that the parable refers to the auditors:

From time to time they become slack and forgetful in their works. (They) are (then) called to account (for their negligence.) They gain victory (salvation) thereupon and are redeemed.⁴³

THE SONG OF THE COMMONER AND THE CALL OF AWAKENING

The *Song of the Commoner*, with its central theme of sleep and awakening, seems to fit eminently into the tradition of the Call of Awakening. If this Yezidi hymn is thought of in terms of a latter-day 'Call,' it becomes much easier to understand why sleep is characterized as 'dark,' 'unlawful for

⁴⁰ 'Oh commoner, you were asleep, You are slack in your service, that is why the Great Master has dismissed you from your job.' *Song of the Commoner* 1–2.

⁴¹ Even Mani's message is described as a Cry or Call.

⁴² *Psalms of Thomas* XIV, Allberry, *Manichaean Psalm-Book* II, 220.27–30.

⁴³ 'Parable of the lowly born rich man' (Persian), in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 192.

soldiers'⁴⁴ and for 'men wearing the *khirqe*,'⁴⁵ something that 'leads to ... severe punishment and hell.' Sleep, after all, is nothing else but the state of spiritual unconsciousness, irreligiosity, and idea also hinted at in other Yezidi hymns.⁴⁶

It also becomes clear why it is 'in the middle of the night' that 'a voice from on high is coming,' despite the fact that the song is not sang in the middle of the night, rather at the very end of it, just before dawn, and other lines speak about 'early dawn.' But if one thinks of all the negative spiritual qualities attributed to darkness and night, making it a personification of evil, or at least of a lack of spirituality in the religious-literary traditions that utilized the metaphor of sleep, it becomes evident that the sleep referred to in the *Song*, which is cut into half by the Call, is nothing else than an immersion in, a total abandonment to this spiritual darkness. The Call pierces through this total darkness, bringing it to an end, bringing morning. Just as the Manichaean hymn containing a Call of Awakening says 'Awake, morning has come ... morning is the Truth, the truth is the commandments [i.e., of the religion].'⁴⁷

The same interpretation can be used to elucidate the rather mysterious statement 'these nights are not for sleeping.'⁴⁸ Clearly, nights are meant by nature for sleeping, unless far more is understood by sleep than the mere physical rest of mind and body. Besides the injunction against sleep as a metaphor of spiritual coma, the text seems to retain here a trace

⁴⁴ I find the word 'soldier' more apt here than 'commoner,' for it expresses the idea of spiritual fight for faith, much better.

⁴⁵ I.e. the faithful. On the *khirqe* see more below.

⁴⁶ Sleep, as a metaphor of spiritual slackness, ignorance can also be found in a number of other Yezidi hymns, even if there it does not take such a central place as in the *Song of the Commoner*. It is used in *The Hymn of the Mill of Love*. This hymn accuses the Shariya (orthodox, non-Sufi Muslims, who follow the Islamic law blindly) of only caring for material things, and being incapable of perceiving the mystical truth: 'People of the Shari'a are lovers of possessions ... Their hearts are preoccupied with commerce; The chests and heads ... are asleep.' (*The Hymn of the Mill of Love* 5–6, Kreyenbroek, *God and Sheikh Adi*, 380.) The traditional interpretation of sleep as a metaphor of ignorance, of religious unawareness may also help shed light on the mysterious statement in some Yezidi hymns on the connection between baptism and angels preventing the faithful from sleeping. After all, baptism may be seen as one of the means to help awaken man from spiritual ignorance: 'The baptism of [angel] Sheyk Shems falls on one, The holy men and the angels, because they are actively busy, They do not allow one to sleep.' (*They Hymn of Sheikh Shems Tabriz* 11, Kreyenbroek, *Yezidism*, 259.) 'The baptism of Sheyk Shems falls on one, The Great Ones are (actively) busy, they do not allow you to sleep.' (*The Morning Prayer* 7, Kreyenbroek, *Yezidism*, 217.)

⁴⁷ *Psalmoi Sarakotôn*, Allberry, *Manichaean Psalm-Book* II, 146.20.

⁴⁸ *Song of the Commoner* 11.

of dualistic anti-cosmic tendency, where nature and the natural order is seen as alien, even contrary to God and everything divine. The same anti-cosmic attitude may also explain the even more mysterious lines: 'Oh commoner, do not eat by day, and do not sleep by night,'⁴⁹ as eating, as well as sleeping, are signs of men's subjection to the laws of nature, that is the laws of matter.

As for the voice coming from high in the middle of the night⁵⁰ it is clearly the voice of the beyond. The text writes a 'cockerel,' which is of course the bird singing, or rather crowing, before dawn. But the detailed description of the cockerel 'calling from the High Throne,'⁵¹ in the company of the 'pre-eternal Angel ... the Greatest Angel,'⁵² leads to the conclusion that the text refers not so much to the alert king of the poultry-yard, but rather to the mysterious voice of the transmundane, whose message is penetrating into our world and being heard here. The references to the Throne on High, and the Greatest, pre-eternal Angel (God) make it obvious that the owner of the voice is a divine being, a companion of God himself, one of His angels. Possibly, the cockerel calling from the Throne of God is the Peacock Angel, the angel most revered by Yezidis, God's vicegerent on earth, who acts as a bringer of gnosis in the creation myth of Adam.⁵³

The *Song of the Commoner* also contains at least two of the tree doctrinal elements associated with the Gnostic Call: The moral instruction and the promise of salvation—or heavenly reward in the case of Yezidis. As concerns the third element, the reminder of the soul's origin, it must be emphasized that (known) Yezidi hymns do not speculate on the origins of the individual human soul.⁵⁴ The same seems to be true of the present *Song*, though there is a most intriguing sentence toward the end of the hymn, which, if the present analysis of the text is not mistaken, may after all be a reference to the divine origin of the soul.

⁴⁹ *Song of the Commoner* 26, repeated 27.

⁵⁰ 'My dear, in the middle of the night. A voice from on high is coming,' *Song of the Commoner* 9.

⁵¹ *Song of the Commoner* 13.

⁵² *Ibid.* and 15.

⁵³ In the Yezidi myth of Adam it is the Peacock Angel who tricks Adam into tasting the forbidden fruit. But rather than seeing this as a transgression of the divine command, Yezidis argue that this was a part of the divine plan. See Spät, 'Late Antique Literary Motifs in Yezidi Oral Tradition.'

⁵⁴ Yezidi mythology speculates on the origin of Adam's soul and that of his son, Shehid, forefather of the Yezidis (not of individual human soul, though), but hymns are not concerned with this question.

The moral instruction is clearly present in the text. The believer must get up from 'unlawful sleep' because of his 'obligation to give praise'⁵⁵ (that is, to fulfill his religious duties⁵⁶) and to perform the 'jobs waiting' for them 'in the service of the Lord.'⁵⁷ Those who fail to heed the call, prefer to abandon themselves to sleep, and prove negligent will be dismissed from the service of their Master, just like the negligent dinner-host of the Manichaean parable.

Oh commoner, you were asleep.
You are slack in your service,
That is why the great Master has dismissed you from your job.⁵⁸

The second doctrinal element of the Call (i.e., the moral instruction), referring to the duties awaiting the believer who awakens, can also explain frequent allusions to war and fighting, beginning with the fact that the wake up call is addressed at 'soldiers' (*cindî*).

My dear, the cockerels call you.
These nights are not for sleeping.
The commoners [soldiers] go out into the world.

Commoners [soldiers] do not go to sleep again.
They will go to confront the harsh world head-on ...⁵⁹

A voice comes from the Throne,
All who are awake are preparing themselves for [lit. coming to] war!⁶⁰

Mentions of the struggle and war against the world and its elements of Darkness are abundant in texts of dualistic origin. After all, their very cosmology and anthropology is based on the notion of a non-ceasing war between the powers of light and darkness.⁶¹ Only those who have faced this fight against the world bravely can hope to reach (return to) heaven,

⁵⁵ *Song of the Commoner* 5.

⁵⁶ Manichaean (as well as Mandaean) texts utilize the notion of the duty of giving praise to God in their Calls of Awakening as a means to remind the faithful of their religious obligations. E.g., 'The Light is come and near the dawn! Arise, brethren, give praise,' M 30, Parthian, in J.P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings* (Delmar NY, 1975), 142.

⁵⁷ *Song of the Commoner* 10, see also stanzas 4, 10, 16, 20, 26 on the livelihood (*maş*). Yezidi *maş*, literally salary, simultaneously means 'miraculous power' (bestowed on the companions of Sheikh Adi, and their descendants), and 'duty, religious work' with the two meanings overlapping. (On the *maş*, see E. Spät, *Yezidis* [London, 2005], 44.)

⁵⁸ *Song of the Commoner* 24.

⁵⁹ *Song of the Commoner* 11–12.

⁶⁰ *Song of the Commoner* 19.

⁶¹ Christian literature, beginning with the *Epistles* (see e.g. 1 Thess. 5: 5–8, which combines the metaphor of sleep with that of preparing for a fight), also frequently

the World of Light. 'Fight, o sons of Light, yet a little while and you will be victorious. He that shirks his burden will forfeit his bride-chamber.'⁶²

In Gnostic and Manichaean texts the return to the World of Light, constitutes the third doctrinal element of the Call of Awakening, that is, the promise of a spiritual reward. Nor is it extant from the Yezidi *Song of the Commoner*. The text clearly promises those ready to heed the wake up call that they will attain the gardens of Eternal Paradise, the Realm of Sultan Êzid (God):

Oh commoner, do not eat in the daytime,
And do not sleep at night.
Lift your head, look at the properties and gardens (above):
Eternal Paradise is the realm of Sultan Êzid, peace be upon him.⁶³

The real promise of a heavenly reward, however, is hidden in the second part of the song, once its obscure references are interpreted. In fact this second, seemingly independent part of the *Song*, the *Hymn of the Headdress*, is nothing else but a literary expression of the third element of the Call of Awakening, the promise of a heavenly reward.

THE HYMN OF THE HEADDRESS

The *Hymn of the Headdress* (33–46) is almost exclusively devoted to the headdress or crown (*kof*) of Pirê Libnan.⁶⁴ This headdress (crown) is described as 'pristine,' 'strong,' 'great,' 'commemorated in the world,' 'precious,' and most relevantly 'luminous.' What is more, 'saints,' '*mirîds*,'⁶⁵ 'believers,' 'discerning ones' have gathered around this headdress, 'good men have taken their share of it.'

The significance of the *kof* in the *Hymn of the Headdress* cannot be understood without surveying its role in Yezidi mythology and in the

applied the metaphors of war and contest to describe the inner spiritual fight against the temptations of the external world as well as one's own demons.

⁶² *Psalms to Jesus* CCXLIX, in Allberry, *Manichaean Psalm-Book II*, 58.24–26.

⁶³ *Song of the Commoner* 27.

⁶⁴ Pirê Libnan ('Lord of the Bricks' and a patron saint of marriage) is a rather elusive figure. Extant oral tradition cannot explain why this special crown or headdress is associated with him. Possibly some crucial aspect of his figure became lost to tradition over time.

⁶⁵ Though these days *mirîd* refers to 'commoners' (i.e. who do not belong to the higher, religious casts), the *Song* possibly still uses it in its original, Sufi sense, referring to the disciples or followers of a mystical, spiritual path or its teacher.

sacred hymns.⁶⁶ According to the Yezidi myth of creation,⁶⁷ when God created Adam's lifeless body, it came to be animated by the *sur*, that is, the divine power, light or essence of one of the Great Angels. While Adam lived in Paradise, with the divine *sur* in his forehead, he was like an angel, and he wore the clothing of angels, including a robe (*khirqe*) and headdress. Other versions of the myth compare Adam's clothing to that of the *feqirs*.⁶⁸ After some time passed, The Peacock Angel, at God's wishes tricked Adam into tasting the forbidden fruit, and Adam had to leave Paradise.⁶⁹ At the same time he lost his angelic *sur*,⁷⁰ became like a mere human, and had to give up his angelic clothing as well, a motif strongly reminiscent of the loss of Adam's garment of light in certain interpretations of *Genesis* 3.21.⁷¹

However, there is more to the crown/headdress⁷² (and the *khirqe*—both simultaneously called black and luminous) in Yezidi tradition than merely being the angelic clothing of Adam. According to Yezidi sacred hymns these items were created by God at the beginning of creation and worn by him. Later they became the garments of the Great Angels,⁷³ symbolizing their essential unity with the Godhead. Then they were worn by the Angels incarnated as human beings and leaders of the Yezidis. The most important of these was Sheikh Adi, the central figure of Yezidi

⁶⁶ The content of Yezidi myths (told in prose form), and of the sacred hymns overlap only partially, so the two have to be mentioned separately.

⁶⁷ This short summary is based on my own field work, as well as reports by M.N. Siouffi, 'Notice sur des Yézidis,' *Journal Asiatique* ser. 7. vol. 20 (1882) 256–257; and Jasim Murad, *The Sacred Poems of the Yezidis: An Anthropological Approach* (PhD thesis, UCLA, 1993) 290–291.

⁶⁸ *Feqirs* are Yezidi holy men or ascetics, they wear a special black shirt or robe, the *khirqe*, and a black turban. Both garments are considered as holy, and however great the provocation, not Yezidi can attack someone wearing them. The fact that Adam's clothing in Paradise are compared to both that of the *feqirs* and of the angels, implies that the *khirqe* and the headdress of the former is seen as the earthly copy of the robe and crown of the latter.

⁶⁹ Yezidis interpret this event, and the role of the Peacock Angel, as positive, as God's plan was to populate the earth with mankind, but in Paradise there was no marriage.

⁷⁰ From this *sur* lost by Adam then Shehid bin Jar, the forefather of the Yezidis was created in a miraculous way, thus making the Yezidis the 'people of the *sur*' (*milletê surê*). See Spät, 'Shehid bin Jerr, Forefather of the Yezidis and the Gnostic Seed of Seth,' and 'Religion and Oral History: The Origin Myth of the Yezidis.'

⁷¹ For a comparison of the Yezidi myth and the myth of Adam's lost angelic clothing in Paradise in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic texts see Spät, 'Late Antique Literary Motifs in Yezidi Oral Tradition.'

⁷² Referred to as *kof* or *tac/tanc*. Both may be translated as crown or headdress.

⁷³ The seven emanations of the Godhead.

mythology, whose *khirqe* and *kof* are still being guarded in the holy valley of Lalish. According to tradition, while Sheikh Adi was wearing them, light emanated from the *khirqe* and *kof*.

As the clothing of angels who became incarnate in order to bring religion to mankind (i.e. Yezidis), the *kof* and *khirqe* also became symbols of Yezidi faith and religious enlightenment, accruing to the truly faithful. Though in the physical world only *feqirs*, religious ascetics, actually wear these garments, eschatological hymns promise them to all those who choose to fight for the true faith and strive to reach spiritual perfection.⁷⁴ This last idea is, as I believe, the message of the *Hymn of the Headdress*. The promise of a heavenly reward is part of the Gnostic Call, and the headdress (or crown) constitutes a part of this reward, conforming to the traditions of the Call.

References to a crown and crowning abound in Gnostic and Manichaean, as well as Jewish and early Christian⁷⁵ texts with an eschatological message. The crown is often mentioned in connection with the 'war' or 'contest' that had to be fought on account of faith. For example, Syriac literature on the life of the martyrs also speaks of martyrdom as 'crowning,' being killed for the sake of faith is being 'crowned with the crown of victory.'⁷⁶ The crown appears as a sort of reward, symbolizing the promise of salvation, for those who fight valiantly: 'An everlasting crown is Truth; blessed are they who set it on their head. It is a precious stone, for the wars were on account of the crown.'⁷⁷ The hymns of Ephrem in his *Epiphany Hymn Cycle* also echo this theme, with references to the war made by the Evil One on the house of Adam, the compulsory warning against neglecting one's religious duties, the armour of victory, entering Eden and being crowned by 'crowns that fade not away.'⁷⁸ Together with

⁷⁴ See, for example the *Hymn of Sherfedin*, which talks about the coming of the Mahdi and the final battle between the faithful and their enemy, when the 'soldiers' will be invested with 'spiritual clothes,' and 'adorned like brides' with 'elegant black *khirqes*.' (*The Hymn of Sherfedin* 2–4 and 6–9, in Kreyenbroek, *God and Sheikh Adi*, 368–370.) Yezidis also talk about spiritually superior people (like *kocheks*, a sort of seers or *vates*) as possessors of the *khirqe*, despite the fact that these people do not wear a *khirqe* in the physical sense.

⁷⁵ Reference to a Crown of Life is already made by the Book of Revelations 2:10.

⁷⁶ See for example, J.T. Walker, *The Legend of Mar Qardagh: Narrative and Christian Heroism in Late Antique Iraq* (Berkeley, 2006), 68 and passim.

⁷⁷ *Odes of Solomon* 9. 8–9, in J.H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City, NY, 1985) vol. 2, 743.

⁷⁸ See for example *Hymn for the Feast of the Epiphany* 13 (*Hymn for the Baptized*) and *Hymn for the Feat of the Epiphany*.

the crown the catechumen is also promised the shining garments lost by Adam when he broke the divine commandment, but restored to mankind through the sacrifice of Christ.⁷⁹

In Gnostic texts one often finds the image of the soul returning to the realm of light being crowned.⁸⁰ Thus, for example, the work *Zostrianos* describes the mystical ascent of the soul toward acquaintance or gnosis, and at the end of this spiritual journey concludes: 'I united with them all⁸¹ ... I became all perfect and received power. I was written in glory and sealed. I received there a perfect crown.'⁸² The *Untitled Text of the Bruce Codex* also makes frequent mention of the ray-emitting crowns⁸³ of the holy beings of light, which those closed in the body strive to attain.⁸⁴ The theme of fighting is coupled with that of being crowned in the *Teachings of Silvanus*, where those who contend well will be crowned by Christ:

And the Life of Heaven wishes to renew all, that he may cast out that which is weak, and every black form, that everyone may shine forth with great brilliance in heavenly garments in order to make manifest the command of the Father, and that he may crown those wishing to contend well. Christ, being judge of the contest, is he who crowned every one, teaching every one to contend. This one who contended first received the crown, gained dominion, and appeared, giving light to everyone.⁸⁵

Manichaean tradition is of special relevance, for hymns which can be defined as literary Calls of Awakening often include the promise of a crown as a reward for those who awaken, symbolizing the promise of salvation inherent in the Gnostic Call. (The crown of light may also

⁷⁹ For a description of Adam's garment and crown, their loss and restoration, see, for example the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*. For a scholarly analysis of the loss of Adam's angelic clothing and crown (symbols of his angelic status while in Paradise) and the eventual regaining of these garments in Christian literature see S. Brock, *Studies in Syriac Christianity History, Literature and Theology* (Hampshire, 1992) especially chapters 'XI. Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition,' 11–35 and 'IV. Jewish Tradition in Syriac Sources,' 212–232; and *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* (London, 1984), chapter 'Some Aspects of Greek Words in Syriac,' 80–108.

⁸⁰ Along with the metaphor of being invested with a garment of light. See, for example, John D. Turner, 'Ritual in Gnosticism,' *SBLSP* 33 (1994): 136–181, <http://jdt.unl.edu/ritual.htm#fnB33>, last accessed 12 October 2009.

⁸¹ I.e., with the powers of Light.

⁸² *Zostrianos*, 129,12–16 (cf. 57,13–24), ed. B. Layton, trans. J.H. Sieber, in *Nag Hammadi Codex VIII*, NHS 31 (Leiden, 1991), 221.

⁸³ *Untitled Text of the Bruce Codex* ch. 11.

⁸⁴ For example, see chapters 9, 11–12.

⁸⁵ *Teachings of Silvanus* 112,10–27, trans. M. Peel and J. Zandee, in *Nag Hammadi Codex VII* (Leiden, 1996), 353.

appear instead as a diadem or a wreath.) Already some versions of the Call of the Living Spirit to the unconscious Primal Man contain allusions to the crown of light:

[Call:] Shake off the drunkenness in which thou hast slumbered,
Awake and behold me!
Good tidings to thee from the world of joy
From which I am sent for thy sake ...

[Call:] Power and prosperity of the Living
unto thee from thy home!
Follow me, son of mildness,
Set upon thy head the crown of light.⁸⁶

Modeled on the fate of the Primal Man, the same crown awaits those souls who manage wake up and break free of the matter:

Deep is the drunken stupor in which you sleep, awake and look at me.
From the World of Peace, from which I have been sent for your sake: Hail
... Follow me, son of mildness, and set the wreath of Light upon your
head.⁸⁷

O Soul ... thou sleeping,
They that sleep (lacuna ...) they that slumber
Awake. Lo, the morning has come, lo, the sun rises on [thee].
The morning is the Truth, the Truth is the commandments ...⁸⁸
O Noble one despired. Thy king searches for thee. Where are thy angelic
garments, thy robes that grow not old? Where are thy gay garlands, the
crowns that fall not?⁸⁹

Just like the Yezidi *Song of the Commoner* this Manichaean Call is embedded in a naturalistic scene of the morning coming and the sun rising. The call to awaken is then followed by a moral instruction (reminder of Truth and the commandments, that is, faith and the religious precepts which a Manichaean has to follow, if he wishes to serve his Lord) and the promise of salvation, symbolized by the angelic garment, the garland and the crown, which await the true believer. Other hymns put the emphasis on the cry or the voice calling from the beyond (like the voice of the cockerel calling from the Throne of God) and add the prospect of returning to heaven to the promise of a robe of light and the crown:

⁸⁶ Turfan fragment M 7, quoted in Jonas, *Gnostic Religion*, 83.

⁸⁷ *Zarahustra-fragment* (Parthian), in H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 47–48. Zarahustra (Zoroaster) was considered one of the prophets preceding him by Mani, whose message aimed at freeing the Living Soul from the matter.

⁸⁸ *Psalmoi Sarakotôn*, Allberry, *Manichaean Psalm-Book II*, 146.14–20.

⁸⁹ *Psalmoi Sarakotôn*, *ibid.*, 146.38–44.

When I heard the cry of my saviour, a power clothed all my limbs, their bitter walls I destroyed, their doors I broke down, I ran to my Judge. The garland of glory he set upon my head, the prize of victory he set in my hand, he clothed me in the robe of light.⁹⁰

THE HEADDRESS AND THE PROMISE OF
HEAVEN IN THE SONG OF THE COMMONER

I argue that the repeated references to the luminous and precious headdress (or crown) in the *Song of the Commoner* imply that the black luminous crown (created by God, worn by His incarnated angels as well as by the still angelic Adam in Paradise, symbol of religious gnosis and eschatological garment) will be invested as a reward on those who heed the Call of Awakening. Admittedly, the Yezidi text, in its present form, does not openly state that such a 'luminous headdress' will accrue to those who harken to the voice of the cockerel. However, it is possible to conclude that as much is suggested by the text. The *Song's* claim that saints, believers, *mirîds* (followers) and discerning ones have gathered around the headdress suggest that believers (will) have access to this precious item of divine clothing. This interpretation is reinforced by the sentence 'Your headdress is in order, the good men have taken their share of it.'⁹¹ The next few verses further illuminate the circumstances of taking share in the crown:

Your headdress is precious,
It flew, it went away, it was in Heaven,
It circled around the Throne ...

I went towards that light.
One cries out in deep emotion ...

I went towards heaven.
That sight pleases me,
The commoner has become a Prince dressed in Black.⁹²

The headdress or crown seems to lead the way to heaven, to the throne of God, or in any case is to be found there. And this is where the faithful soldier (commoner) himself will follow, whose reward of the fight will be

⁹⁰ *Psalm to Jesus* CCXLIII, Allberry, *Manichaean Psalm-Book II*, 50.21.

⁹¹ *Song of the Commoner* 39.

⁹² *Song of the Commoner* 40, 42–43.

to reach heaven and the divine light.⁹³ The slightly different version of the headdress hymn found in the *Hymn of Sheikh Heseni Siltan*⁹⁴ alternatively mentions 'heaven' and the 'realm of headdress' in the same stanzas. This usage makes it clear that the realm of heaven and the realm of the headdress, where the believer aims to arrive, are ultimately the same. And if heaven is no other than the realm of headdress, it is probably not too far-fetched to conclude that reaching heaven will mean attaining the headdress, or 'taking a share of it' as the hymn says. This interpretation is reinforced by the last line, on the soldier being dressed in 'Black' upon his arrival in heaven. This 'Black' stands to symbolize the clothing of the *feqirs*, who wear the sacred black shirt with a black turban, believed to be fashioned after the luminous black *khirqe* and crown worn by God and Angels of the Yezidi hymns.⁹⁵ A commoner (soldier) becoming dressed in black refers to his winning these sacred items of clothing. In other words, the soldier who has heeded the call of awakening and fought the fight for his Master, will as his reward reach heaven, become like a *feqir*, that is a true man of religion, and put on the sacred clothing, *khirqe* and crown.⁹⁶ The reference to the soldier becoming a *Prince* (dressed in Black) is somewhat harder to interpret. *Feqirs* are never referred to as Prince (*mîr*), an expression which as a rule refers to God in Yezidi sacred hymns. Thus, the statement that the soldier of faith becomes a Prince upon reaching Heaven would seem to imply a sort of apotheosis of the soldier, probably in the sense that the soul of the true believer would eventually unite, become one with the Divine.

As has been said above, Adam, while in Paradise, was an angelic being, as he had the *sur*, or divine power, of an angel in him. As the symbols of his angelic status, he wore a black (and luminous) *khirqe* and headdress (*kof*), (alternatively referred to as angelic clothing and the garments of the *feqirs*.) The (Yezidi) soldier of faith heeding the Call to awaken would then be dressed in the same angelic clothing as that lost by Adam (of which the garments of the *feqirs* are mere earthly reminders.) At the same

⁹³ In the Gnostic Calls light (receiving light, being illuminated by light, or ascending back to the world of light) was often associated with awakening.

⁹⁴ *Hymn of Sheikh Heseni Siltan* 16–19 (Kreyenbroek, *God and Sheikh Adi*, 359–360.)

⁹⁵ Among Yezidis only *feqirs* wear black items of clothing. The traditional color of the others is white, still worn by religious leaders and traditional men from the Sinjar today.

⁹⁶ The same line is repeated in the hymn of the headdress contained in the *Hymn of Sheikh Heseni Siltan* 19: 'I went to the realm of heaven, That sight pleases me, The commoner had been dressed in black' (Kreyenbroek, *God and Sheikh Adi*, 360.) In his footnote Kreyenbroek explains: 'In heaven the pious commoner was recognized as the equal of a Feqir.' (Kreyenbroek, *Sheikh Adi*, 360, note 111).

time he would also regain the angelic/divine status lost by Adam (become like a Prince), since being an angel (possessor of the *sur*, or divine essence, power) amounts to being a divine being in Yezidi religious thought, that is, being ultimately one with the Prince (*mîr*), or the godhead.⁹⁷ If this interpretation is correct, this single sentence would contain not only a promise of heavenly reward, but also the ‘missing’ reminder of the soul’s origin, one of the doctrinal elements of the Gnostic Call.

Being invested on the eschatological plain with garments of light, much like that lost by Adam at the time of his ‘fall’ is yet another frequent motif found in late antique texts, whether of Jewish, Christian, Gnostic or Manichaean origin.⁹⁸ However, the possible reference to the soldier (or his soul) uniting with the Prince/God, and of the (Yezidi) soul’s divine origin (from the *sur*), would be specifically Gnostic/Manichaean, as it was these dualistic spiritual movements which saw ‘the soul as being *pars Dei*, or a part of God’⁹⁹ with the soul and God being of the same substance. Furthermore, in Gnostic and Manichaean texts the garment of light is the symbol of the soul escaping from the material world and returning to the realm of light, to unite with the Divine again, just as in the *Song of the Commoner* donning the black garments (*khirqe* and headdress) and ‘becoming a Prince’ is mentioned in one breath.

The *Song of the Commoner* finally ends with a brief enumeration of the sacred spots in Lalish, the holy valley. Keeping in mind that in Yezidi tradition Lalish is nothing else but the earthly reflection of heavenly Lalish, the Throne of God,¹⁰⁰ it would not be too daring a supposition to assume that the text refers to heavenly Lalish (representing the *batini* or

⁹⁷ On the emanation of the Yezidi angels from the light or *sur* of God, see note 18 above.

⁹⁸ Gnostic texts usually reinterpret the tradition of Adam’s garment of lights as a kind of divine luminosity or glory covering Adam’s body, which refers to gnosis, or self-knowledge, eventually lost by (or robbed from) Adam (see, for example, *Apocryphon of John* II.19,15–20,7; or *Apocalypse of Adam* 64,6–19.) Regaining the luminous robe is both the means and the symbol of regaining the lost gnosis (and salvation from the fetters of matter.) See, for example, *Trimorphic Protennoia* 1.48.10–7, 1.49.26–32; *Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex* 16; *Paraphrase of Shem* 42.24–45.12; *Pistis Sophia* I.6–7, I.9–10, I.11. While Manichaean tradition makes no mention of Adam’s loss of a robe of glory, it plays all the more important role in Manichaean hymns, where—along with the crown—it appears as the reward of those who follow the true religion and thereby manage to break the bonds of matter and escape from the material world. See, for example, An-Nadim, *Fihrist* II, 795; Kephalaia 36.12–21; Psalms to Jesus CCXLV; Psalm of Thomas 18; Huwīdagmān VI c.4–13.

⁹⁹ J. van Oort, ‘New Light on Christian Gnosis,’ *Louvain Studies* 24 (1999) 23.

¹⁰⁰ Oral tradition relates how the earth at the time of creation settled only when

spiritual, esoteric world), and not the earthly Lalish, its *zahiri* (material, exoteric) counterpart. The mention of the 'eternal place, at the eternal foundation' supports his assumption. Earthly Lalish could hardly be called 'eternal foundation' unlike heavenly Lalish, the Throne of God. It is heavenly Lalish where the soldier eventually arrives, following the flight of the headdress. Thus, the third element of the classical Call of Awakening, the promise of heaven, is fulfilled in the hymn of the headdress, where the faithful soldier is rewarded with access to heaven and 'investiture' with the headdress, and possibly the black *khirqe* as well, so that the commoner/soldier will become 'black,' (dressed as in the luminous black *khirqe* and *kof*) in heaven, becoming once again like Adam was before his expulsion.

* * *

Summing up, there can be little doubt that the *Song of the Commoner* is a Yezidi version of the late antique literary genre of the Call of Awakening (also referred to as the Gnostic Call). It calls on the faithful to wake up, designating sleep as something dark, unlawful and leading to punishment. In other words, sleep is a metaphor for the state of spiritual ignorance, where the individual inevitably transgresses the divine precepts and commandments due to his lack of religious awareness. Awakening, on the other hand, is nothing else than spiritual conversion, a turning toward religion and accepting its demands. The classical image of awakening is here complemented by the Sufi image of wine, divine intoxication, which leads to a mystical state of gnosis, also a form of awakening and enlightenment. The call itself, a voice calling for awakening in the middle of the night, comes from the word of the beyond, from heaven or the Throne of God, in keeping with the late antique tradition of the Call being the voice of the transmundane penetrating this world. Beside the exhortation to awaken and spurn sleep, the *Song* also contains at least two of the three doctrinal elements of the Gnostic Call. It contains a moral instruction, instructing the awakened believer of his duties toward God and the righteous conduct expected of him. It also calls on the believer, consistently referred to throughout the song as soldier, to fight the war for his faith, yet another common Late Antique motif. Punishment meted

Lalish, the Throne of God 'came down' on it. According to Yezidis the relationship between earthly and heavenly Lalish should be compared to that between God and the human soul.

out to those who prove to be slack in their service constitutes a part of this moral instruction. As a counterpart to the moral instruction we find the promise of salvation or, in a Yezidi context, the promise of a heavenly reward: ascension to heaven, to the eternal Paradise and the Throne of God (fleetinglly mentioned in the first, and elaborated in the last part of the hymn), and being invested with the luminous black headdress (crown) and perhaps with the black *khirqe* as well. Possibly, the third element, reminder of the soul's divine origin, is also present. If so, the *Song* promises not only investiture with the luminous black garments and ascension to heaven, but also a return to the soul's original state, that is becoming one with the Divine again, the key message of the Gnostic Call.

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THE 'FIVE ELEMENTS' IN MANICHAEAN ART

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Fig. 1

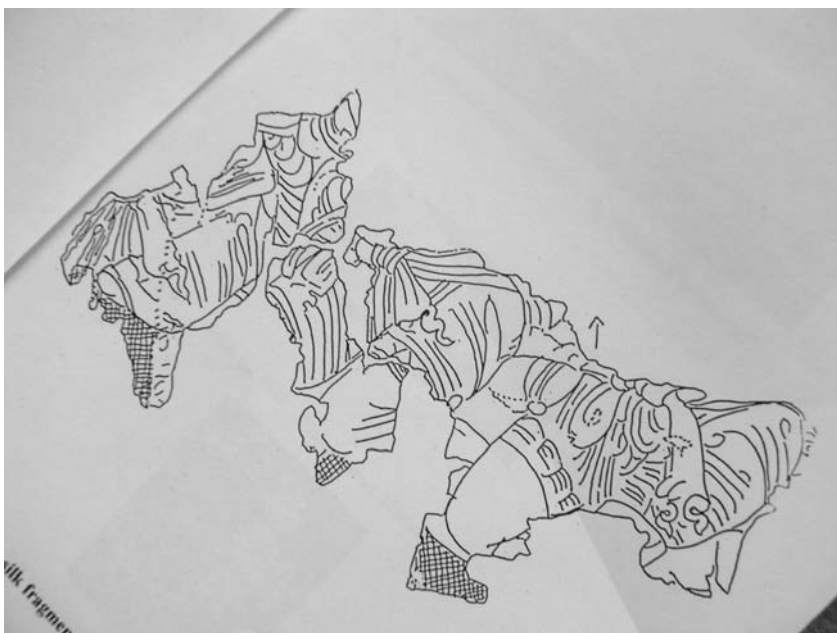


Fig. 2

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Fig. 3

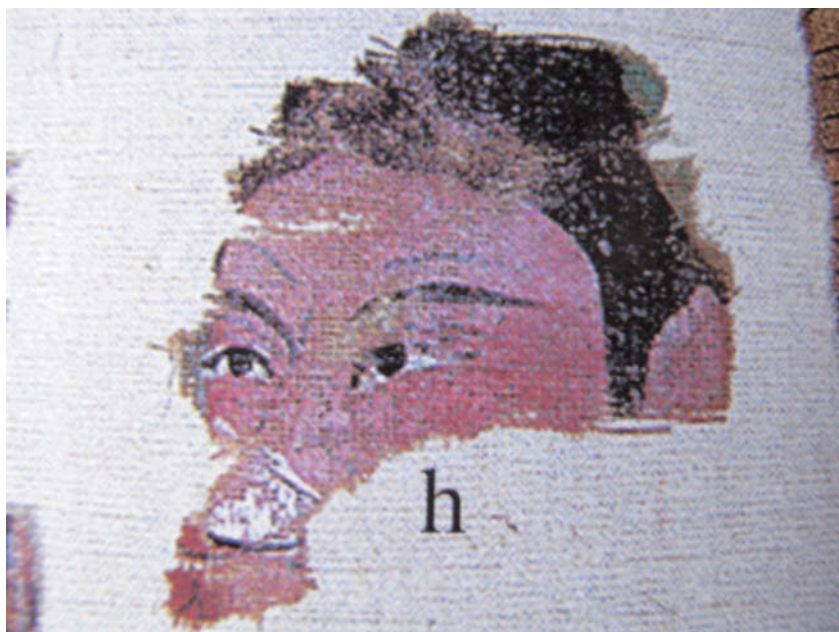


Fig. 4

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Fig. 5



Fig. 5a (detail of Fig. 5)

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Fig. 6



Fig. 7

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Fig. 8



Fig. 9

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Fig. 10

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Fig. 11



Fig. 12

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Fig. 13

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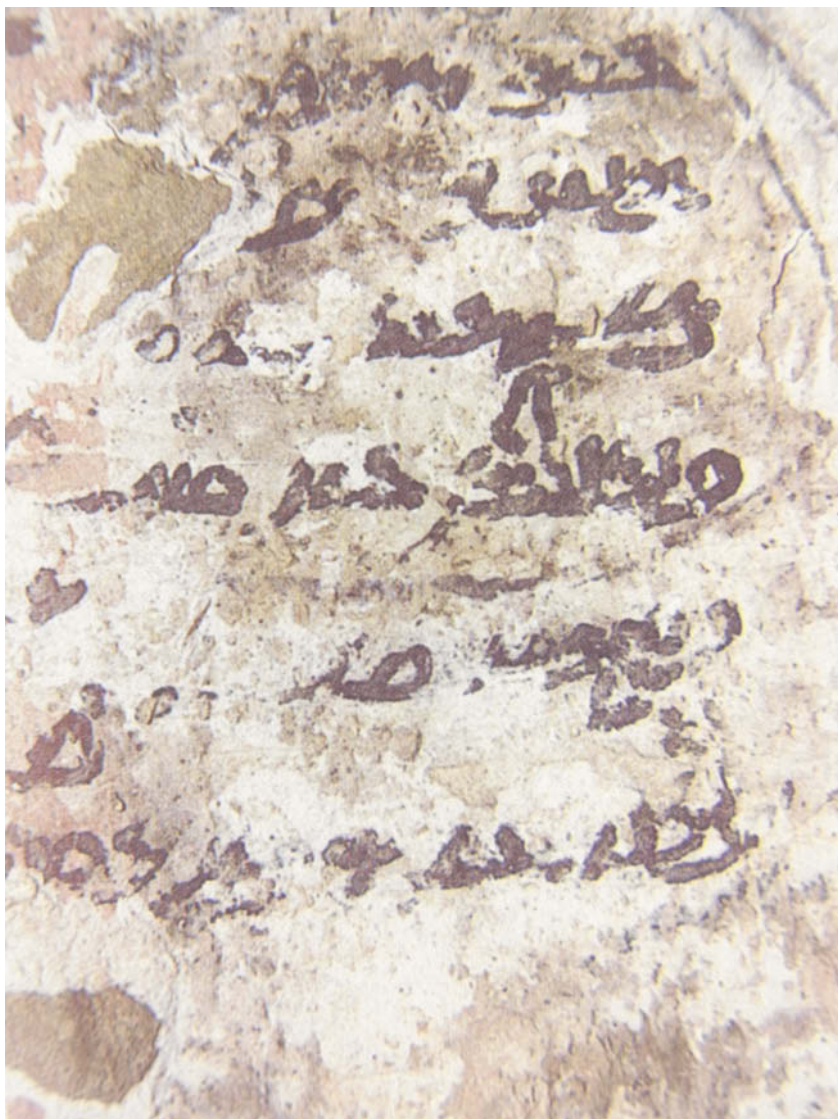


Fig. 14

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Fig. 15

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Fig. 16



Fig. 17

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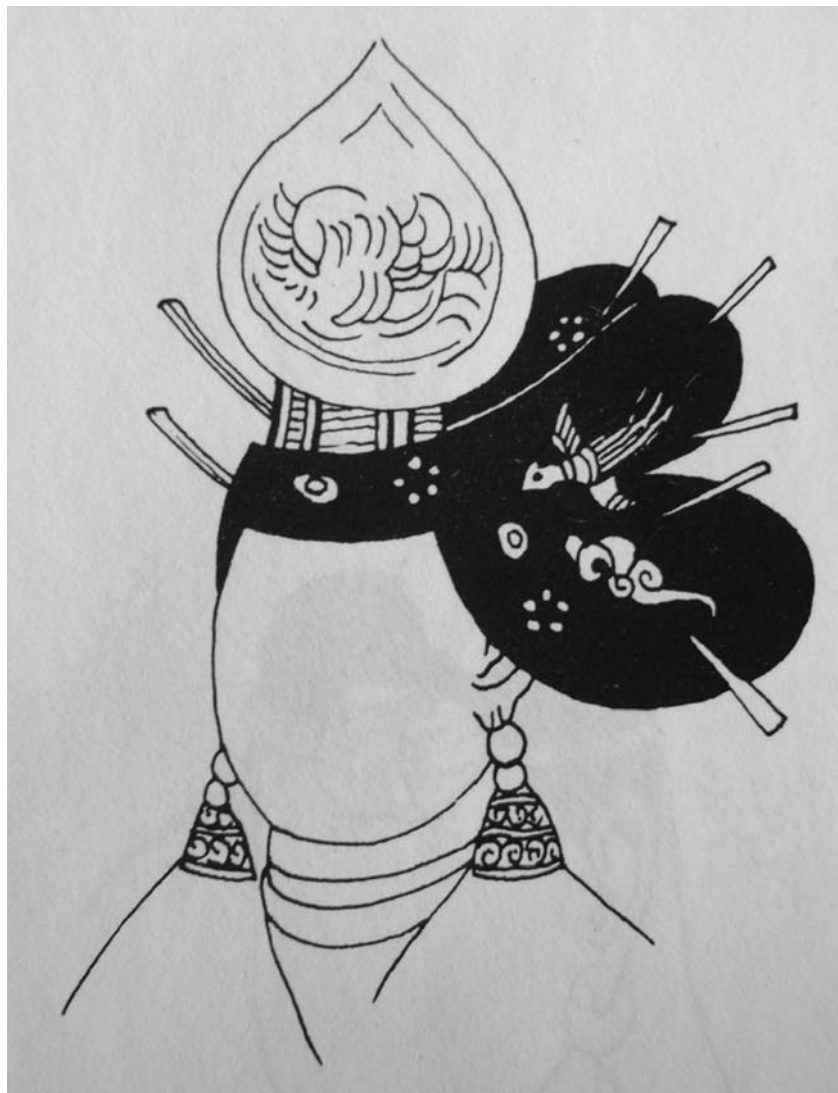


Fig. 18

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Fig. 19

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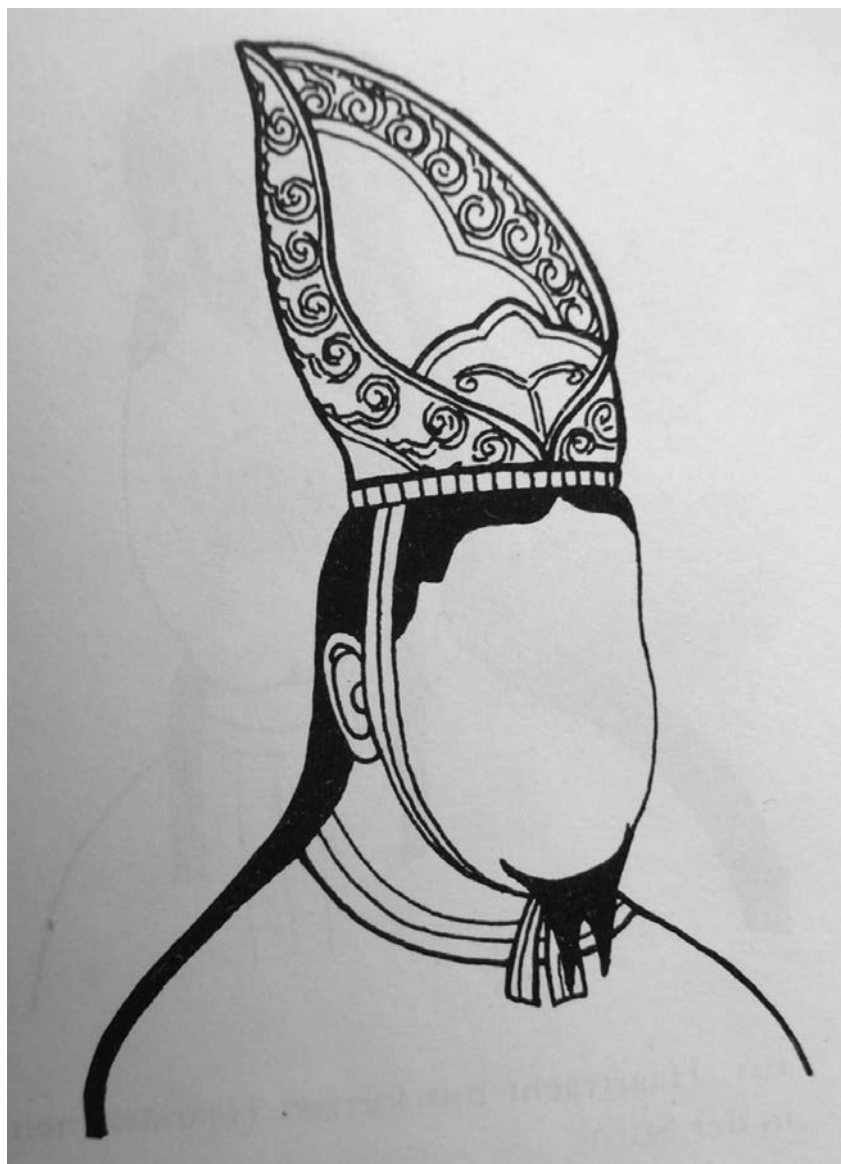


Fig. 20

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 21

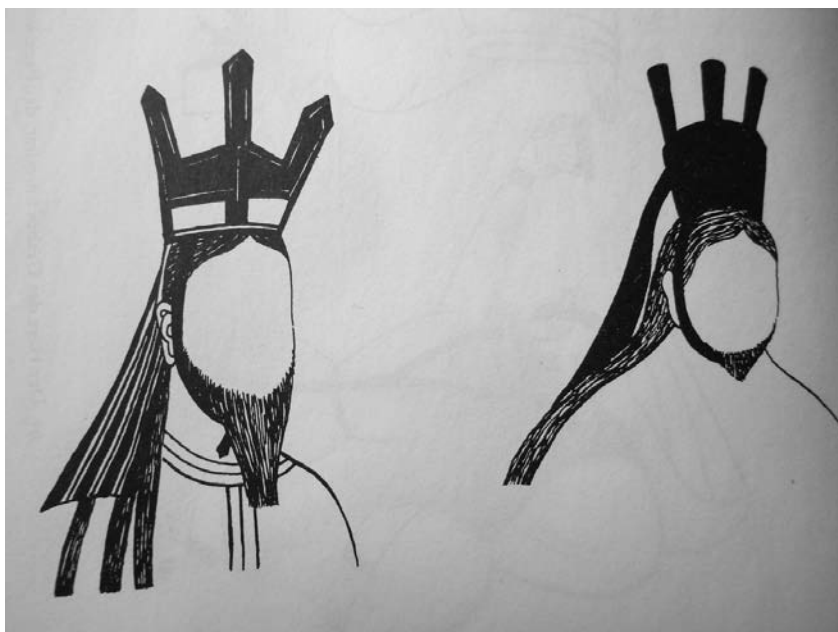


Fig. 22

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 23

ILLUSTRATIONS

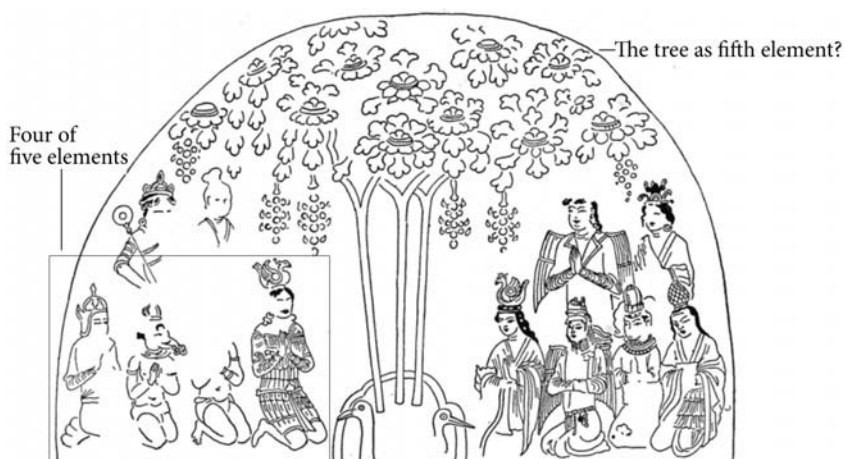


Fig. 24

ILLUSTRATIONS TO ZSUZSANNA GULÁCSI,
*THE CENTRAL ASIAN ROOTS OF A CHINESE
MANICHAEAN SILK PAINTING IN THE COLLECTION
OF THE YAMATO BUNKAKAN, NARA, JAPAN*

ILLUSTRATIONS



Register 1: The Light Maiden's Visit to Heaven Stages of Visit:
(1) Greeting by host upon arrival,
(2) Meeting with host in palace,
(3) Farewell to host

Register 2: Sermon Performed around Statue of Manichaean Deity (Mani)

Register 3: States of Good Reincarnation Four Classes of Chinese Society: (1) Merchants, (2) Artisans, (3) Farmers, (4) Scholar-officials

Register 4: The Light Maiden's Intervention in the Judgment after Death

Register 5: States of Bad Reincarnation The Tortures of Hell:
(1) Person shot with arrows, (2) Person sawn into two, (3) Person crushed by fiery wheel, (4) Demons waiting for their prisoner

Fig. 1: Sermon on Mani's Teaching of Salvation, Chinese Manichaean Silk Painting, Yamato Bunkakan, Nara, Japan 1a: Complete hanging scroll (142.0 cm × 59.2 cm), colors on silk, ca. 13th century

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 2a: Sermon Performed around Statue of Manichaean Deity (Mani), Register 2 of Fig. 1a



Fig. 2b: Fragment of Sermon Scene, intracolumnar book painting on bifolio fragment MIK III 8259 folio 1(?) recto, Museum of Asian Art, Berlin



Fig. 2c: Fragment of Sermon Scene, marginal book painting on folio fragment, MIK III 6265 & III 4966c recto, Museum of Asian Art, Berlin

Fig. 2: Sermon Scenes in Southern Chinese and East Central Asian Manichaean Art

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 3a: Mani. Detail of silk painting with enlarged area of right shoulder, ca. 13th c. Yamato Bunkakan, Nara, Japan



Fig. 3b: Jesus. Detail of silk painting with enlarged area of right shoulder, 12th-13th c. Seibun-ji, Kofu, Japan



Fig. 3c: Mani. Detail of statue with enlarged area of right shoulder, 1339 CE, Xiedian, Quanzhou, China

ILLUSTRATIONS

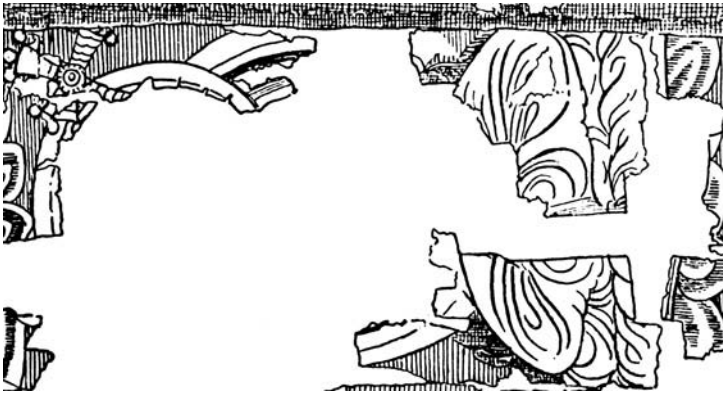


Fig. 3d: Jesus. Detail of silk painting with Primary Prophets, drawing of lost textile, Kocho, ca. 10th c. (after Le Coq 1924)



Fig. 3e: Jesus. Detail of textile painting (MIK III 6286 side 2[?]), Kocho, ca. 10th century, Museum of Asian Art, Berlin



Fig. 3f: Jesus in digital reconstruction of Fig. 3d (after Gulacsi 2009, Fig. 13b)

Figs. 3a–f: Images of Mani and Jesus in Southern Chinese and East Central Asian Manichaean Art

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 4a: The Light Maiden's Intervention in the Judgment after Death, Register 4 of Fig. 1a



Fig. 4b: Fragment of Judgment Scene, full-page book painting on folio fragment (MIK III 4959 verso) Kocho ca. 10th c., Museum of Asian Art, Berlin



Fig. 4c: Fragment of Judgment Scene, intracolumnar bookpainting on folio fragment (MIK III 6258a verso) Kocho ca. 10th c., Museum of Asian Art, Berlin

Fig. 4: Judgment Scenes in Southern Chinese and East Central Asian Manichaean Art

'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and other Gnosticism

Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty

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